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**JAMES SMITH CREE NATION**  
**HOME  
OF  
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**Post Secondary Student Support Services**

**JAMES SMITH CREE NATION Post-Secondary Student Support Program Board Policy Documents**

**Approved by the Board August 6, 2021**

**Background:** James Smith Cree Nation The James Smith Cree Nation is currently comprised of three separate and individual Nations, represented by three Chief and Councilors, including;

James Smith Cree Nation;  
Chakastaypasin First Nation, and;  
Peter Chapman First Nation.

Historically, through a series of government measures, including the dissolution of the Chakastaypasin reserve south of Prince Albert in the 1880s, and the forced amalgamation of Peter Chapman First Nation in 1902, the three Nations have been considered under one political umbrella.

Although each of present Nations are recognized to varying degrees by both provincial and federal governments as independent, the formal separation and re-establishment of each Nation as requested by the Nations has not occurred.

The James Smith Cree Nation reserve (including both IR James Smith 100 and IR Cumberland 100A) is located on the Saskatchewan River, approximately 58 kilometers east of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The combined population of the James Smith Cree Nation is 3,032 (INAC 2010).

The combined population of the James Smith Cree Nation is approximately 4600.

- Governance (Chiefs and Councils) use boards to help them carry out their activities.
- The Chiefs and Councils determine what boards are needed and assign authority to those boards.

As such, the James Smith Cree Nation, representing three bands, developed the Post-Secondary Student Support Program Student Policy Manual (revised April 17 - 18, 2018)

On page 2 of the PSSSP policy document, the responsibilities of the board are defined as follows:

- 1.1. *James Smith Cree Nation asserts that Post-Secondary Education is a Treaty Right under Treaty 5 and Treaty 6 and is the trust responsibility of the Federal Government of Canada.*
- 1.2. *The objectives of the Post-Secondary Program are to encourage and support qualified eligible students to acquire University, Technical, College, or professional qualifications so they can become self-sufficient and achieve their own potential.*
- 1.3. *James Smith Post-Secondary is the administering agency and organization for Post-Secondary funding. James Smith Post-Secondary became the administering organization in June of 1993.*
- 1.4. *The James Smith Chief and Council have delegated the post-secondary board to oversee the post-secondary program.*

## **Post-Secondary Student Support Program**

### **Brief Overview:**

- The Post-Secondary Program supports band membership to continue building their career goals for future success.
- The community takes pride seeing members succeeding, becoming independent, self-sufficient and reliant on their post-secondary goals and their accomplishments.
- The community supports this key initiative of education independency and through education individuals and their families have a solid foundation in the society we live in today.
- All PSSSP Students, young and old are seen as role models for this community. Education is one of the vital keys for First Nation people to compete in the competitive world around us.
- First Nation people are succeeding, making advances with higher achievement levels with the support of the JSCN PSSSP program.

### **Objectives of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program:**

- Education is seen by First Nations as lifelong learning and this program promotes this ideology.
- The PSSSP program welcomes all eligible applicants who are band members to help them pursue any career path they find interest in and promoting independence.

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to ensure that the Post-Secondary Student Support Program Board establish board practices which:

- are fair and reasonable
- provide policies to support the decision-making for student selection
- permit the orderly and efficient conduct of PSSSP board operations
- encourage a team approach to the attainment of PSSSP board's goals and objectives.

## Understanding roles and responsibilities

1. Leadership
2. The Board as a whole
3. Individual Board Members
4. Staff (Director and Administrative Staff)

### 1. Leadership's (Chief and Council) Role:

- Authorize the PSSSP Board to administer the program
- Provide the PSSSP Board with the financial resources as approved in the budget (April 1 - March 31 fiscal year)

### 2. Board Terms of Reference:

The role of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program Board is to allocate funds to eligible post-secondary students.

- The Post-Secondary Student Support Program Board includes equal representation from all three bands. The board includes three councilors; three Band Board Members; and three Elders, as well as one Director and one Administrative Staff.
- There are six voting members including: three councilors and three Band Board Members.
- Quorum is defined as four voting members.
- The non-voting Elders guide and support the board by sharing their wisdom and advice.
- There are up to six board meetings per year.
- The board Chair leads the board meetings.
- The board votes on who will be the board Chairperson at the beginning of each fiscal year.

### Timelines:

April 1	Funding amounts are known for the current fiscal year
May 15	Deadline for applications to be received to the staff (Director and Admin)
June 15	Financial reports are due for the past fiscal year.
July	The board meets to review the applications from eligible post-secondary students. Decision is made about which students will receive post-secondary support for the upcoming academic year.

### General understanding:

- *Accountability: The board is accountable to the Chief and Council to serve the community.*
- *Because the board is accountable to follow the policies outlined in the PSSSP policy manual, the board cannot make decisions based on the interests of individuals or even on the specific demands of groups.*
- *When a board passes a motion or accepts policies, it should be done at a board meeting.*
- *The board is said to "speak with one voice".*
- *i.e. board decisions do not have to be unanimous. But once the board has voted and decided, all members must respect the decision made.*
- *Board decisions can be changed by the board, but not by individual board members.*
- *The important focus of governance is the role of the board, not individual board members.*
- *The board, as a body, is responsible to make decisions within the guidelines provided to them.*
- *It is the board, not individual members, who have authority and make decisions.*
- *All discussion is respectful, and all board members are encouraged to express their opinions. When board members do not agree on an issue, the decision of the majority is the deciding factor, and other board members agree to disagree.*

### 3. Individual Board Member's Role:

All Post-Secondary Student Support Program board members are required to:

- a. Exercise their *fiduciary duty* and take steps to ensure that funds are spent in accordance with criteria outlined in the PSSSP policy manual.
- b. Exercise a *Duty of Care* by:
  - i. Maintaining communication with other board members and staff to respond to meeting requests in advance of meetings, and by participating in discussions and sharing open and honest discussion during meetings.
  - ii. Adhering to the PSSSP *code of conduct* guidelines.
  - iii. Advising the board of any issues that might be perceived as a *conflict of interest*

Should a board discover that they are in a real or potential conflict of interest, that individual shall:

    - make a full disclosure immediately
    - withdraw from the decision-making process
    - in no way attempt to influence other decision makers regarding the matters affected by the conflict of interest
  - iv. *Maintaining confidentiality* understanding that all board discussions are private, and confidential.
  - v. Attending meetings, or alerting staff if you are unable to attend.
  - vi. Taking the time necessary to review all the materials before the meeting.
  - vii. Taking part in professional development opportunities.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES

**As a** board member you have a duty to act honestly and in good faith in the best interests of the those you serve.

This requires each director to act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the board. It is key to avoid conflicts of interest and the perception of conflict of interest.

In general, a conflict of interest exists for a board member who uses their position to benefit themselves, friends, or families.

### **4. Director of Post-Secondary Student Support Program (Staff) Role**

The Director and staff are responsible for the day-to-day management of the PSSSP. Duties include:

- a. Setting the agenda, preparing all meeting materials, notifying board members of meeting dates and times.
- b. Sending applications to potential eligible students in the fall.
- c. Collecting applications from eligible students, and following up to ensure all materials are received i.e. transcripts; education plan
- d. Meeting with the board on a regular basis.
- e. Notifying students who have been approved to receive support.
- f. Preparing reports for the board members for each meeting.
- g. Reporting to leadership (Chiefs and Councils) about annual financials.
- h. Staying informed about new developments impacting the post-secondary student program.
- i. Identifying professional development needs and scheduling sessions to address those needs.
- j. Representing the PSSSP on the FSIN Technical board.
- k. Maintaining records that reflect all decisions and activities of the PSSSP.
- l. Identifying issues that might require an interim policy to the Board Chair.
- m. Handle grievances with students.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

To promote harmonious relationships and maintain a professional atmosphere, the Post-Secondary Student Support Program Board has a zero-tolerance policy, prohibiting all forms of harassment of fellow board members.

Board members directly involved in a conflict are encouraged to work to a mutual understanding and agreement for resolution.

- PSSSP board is committed to providing a safe, positive environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity