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POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

DIRECTIVE AND PROCEDURES

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1. Effective Date

This Directive and its procedures supports the implementation of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program Policy approved by Council on March 29, 2017. The Policy and the Directive will be reviewed at least every five years.

2. Application

The following Directive is to support the implementation of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag's Post-Secondary Education Support Program Policy in a consistent, objective and transparent way. It provides more details regarding a number of aspects of the related Program Policy as well as a clarification about how the Policy is implemented by the different Departments. Finally, it confirms the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders.

3. Definitions

Under this program policy,

“Academic year” as defined by the post-secondary education institution.

(appeal, appeal committee)

“Attestations of Collegial Studies (ACS)” are credited and recognized collegial programs of study that are shorter in duration, usually equivalent to one year, and built from existing Diploma of college studies programs. They have been specially created for adults, to reflect the most recent job market reality.

“Canadian residency”, for the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP), means the applicant has resided in Canada for twelve consecutive months prior to apply to the PSESP.

“CEGEP” is an abbreviation of Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel. CEGEPs operate in Quebec. CEGEPs offer specialized professional or vocational education in specific employment fields as well as general 2-year programs that allow students to graduate with a diploma and then pursue undergraduate studies at the university level.

“Certificate of Indian status”, commonly referred to as the status card, is an identity document issued by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) confirming the individual is registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act*.

“College” is usually used to refer to technical schools that offer specialized professional or vocational education in specific employment fields. They include colleges of applied arts and technology, colleges of applied sciences, etc. In the Quebec education system, a college diploma is required in order to continue onto university (see definition of CEGEP).

“Co-op program” means a program of study where the student alternates between academic studies and paid work placements related to his/her areas of interest.

“Council” are individuals who have been democratically elected every four years to represent Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members and provide directions to an administration responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and services to Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members. The Council is comprised of one Chief and seven councillors. Each councillor is assigned one or more portfolios such as Education.

“Diploma of college studies (DCS)” means a pre-university or career (technical) diploma at the college/CEGEP level.

“Eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag member” means a Micmacs of Gesgapegiag member meets all admission requirements of the post-secondary education institution, and the funding application requirements of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Policy.

“Gesgapegiag Education Services” is the Department within the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Administration responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag PSESP Policy, Directive and Procedures.

“Immediate family” means the student’s: spouse or common-law partner; father and mother and the spouse or the common-law partner of the father or mother; children and the children of the student's spouse or common-law partner; grandchildren; brothers and sisters; grandfather and grandmother; father and mother of the spouse or common-law partner and the spouse or common law partner of the father or mother; relative who resides permanently with the student or whom the student permanently resides; and, parent surrogate by tradition.

“Mature Students” is normally classified as a student who is at least 25 years old at the start of their program of study, and usually has been away from school for at least two years. Mature students can also include students away from school for decades or students with no secondary education as situations allow. It should be noted that the requirements for admission and the definition of the term "mature" vary, not only from one post-secondary education(PSE) institution to another, but within a given PSE institution depending on the program of study.

“Micmacs of Gesgapegiag” is the legal name of one of three Mi’gmaq communities on the south shore of the Gaspésie with a total population of almost 1,500 of which close to 50% live in the community. For the purpose of this policy, the term can also mean the administration arm responsible for the development, delivery and review of programs and services.

“Micmacs of Gesgapegiag member” means an individual registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act* and whose name is on the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Band Membership List (Registry Group) maintained by INAC.

“Part-time students” are students in less than the required number of courses to be considered full-time, as defined by the post-secondary education institution.

“Post-secondary education institutions” are degree, diploma, certificate and ACS granting institutions that are recognized (approved “by a province”), and including educational institutions affiliated with or delivering accredited post-secondary education programs by arrangement with a post-secondary education institution. (list of eligible post-secondary education institutions: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1450118747581/1450118780992#chp4>)

“Post-secondary education program” means a recognized program of study offered by a recognized post-secondary education institution for which completion of secondary/high school or equivalent is required for admission and the program duration is one year (2 semesters) or longer.

“Program of Study” includes all post-secondary education programs, at least one academic year in duration, leading to an ACS or a certificate, diploma or degree. Programs less than one academic year which are prerequisites to post-secondary programs of at least one academic year are included.

“UCEPP” means a university or college entrance preparation program offered in post-secondary education institutions, to enable students to attain the academic level required for entrance into a recognized post-secondary program of study.

“University graduate” can be completed after an undergraduate degree. It involves additional study in a particular area of interest, and may include research or the completion of a thesis. For the purpose of this policy, the term university graduate will encompass: advanced or professional degree, masters and, doctoral programs.

“University undergraduate” is the first degree you can complete at the university level. It is commonly called a baccalaureate or bachelor’s degree, and may be further classified as honours or general. A student can also complete certificate, an undergraduate certificate or diploma.

“Work placement” means either Co-operative (co-op) education, work placement or internship programs offered by a post-secondary education institution and designed to provide students with on-the-job experience as part of their program of study. Co-op students alternate between academic studies and paid work placements related to their areas of interest. Some internships and work placement are paid while others provide academic credits towards a degree.

4. Context

The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) provides support services as well as financial assistance to eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members who want to access and pursue post-secondary studies. Financial assistance can be provided from federal or provincial funding programs as well as investment from Micmacs of Gesgapegiag own source revenues. In making decisions about the allocation of funds available to support post-secondary students, the priority will be to fund the maximum number of students. If funds remain available, applications received for academic achievement scholarship and/or graduation incentives will then be considered.

The objectives of the PSESP are to:

- Promote access to post-secondary studies among Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members who meet the requirements of post-secondary education institutions;
- Support students to persevere and graduate with a post-secondary education diploma that confirms they have the necessary skills and competencies to access the labour market and pursue individual careers;
- Develop the human resources capacity of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag for its benefit and future development and the well-being of its Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members; and,
- Offer financial support to eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members accepted in a recognized post-secondary education program offered by a post-secondary education institution and that will lead to a recognized post-secondary education diploma.

The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag wants to exercise due diligence when approving expenditures to ensure that such expenditures are in accordance with the criteria and eligible expenditures set out in its Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Policy, Directive and Procedures and, that the Policy has been applied fairly, that all applicants have been treated equitably and decisions made by Micmacs of Gesgapegiag are transparent.

5. Admission to the Program

Procedures

5.1 Student Priority Categories

The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag may not have sufficient funds to financially support all eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members under the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP).

Therefore, the Education Services will use the following 7 categories to rank all applications received:

Category One:

Full-time students currently supported financially by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag under the PSESP and who have successfully completed year one or subsequent years of their post-secondary education program of study OR full-time students who ceased to attend during the previous post-secondary school year because of valid reasons (which must be documented by a valid medical certificate or in the case of a death in the immediate family by a valid medical certificate or a letter from the student's faculty advisor dated no more than two weeks after having officially withdraw from school).

Category Two:

- a. Deferred secondary/high school graduates due to lack of funding who apply for full-time studies; and,
- b. Current secondary/high school graduates continuing on to post-secondary education without a break in studies who apply for full-time studies.

Category Three:

- a. Full-time or Part-time students whose applications for support were deferred due to lack of funds and who are re-applying for support (who do not fall under category 2); and,
- b. Part-time students already supported financially by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag's PSESP and who apply for funding to attend school full-time.

Category Four:

- a. Full-time Students already studying at a recognized post-secondary education institution who have never received financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag PSESP; and,
- b. Mature Students who meet PSESP requirements and who apply for the first time to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag's PSESP.

Category Five:

Students who have completed an undergraduate degree (with or without financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag's PSESP) and continue on to a graduate program of study with or without a break in studies.

Category Six:

Full-time students who withdrew from their post-secondary studies OR students who were dismissed previously from a post-secondary education institution.

Category Seven: Students who apply for funding for part-time studies.

5.2 Pre-Admission

Once an application is received, the Student Services Coordinator will indicate on the Application Form the date of receipt.

The Student Services Coordinator will take all applications received by the deadline and review the documents provided with the application form against the list of required documents indicated in the Policy. Where an application form is incomplete and/or required documents are missing, the Student Services Coordinator will inform the applicant by e-mail about the missing information. Until such information is provided, no further analysis of the application will be done. The Student Services Coordinator may also request additional documents such as two documents proving Canadian residency (e.g. provincial health card).

The Student Services Coordinator will complete the analysis of **all complete applications** and prepare recommendations for support based on the funding available. In doing so, the Student Services Coordinator will determine the level of support that each applicant could be eligible for. If the total funding required by all the applicants exceeds the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) approved budget, the Student Services Coordinator will rank the applicants based on the Student Priority Categories. The Student Services Coordinator will present his/her recommendations to the Director, Education Services, who is responsible to approve, defer or refuse applications. The Director, Education Services, will then communicate in writing his/her decision to each applicant.

After, if funds are still available, applicants who have provided information and the required documents after the deadline as well as applicants who applied after the deadline may be considered for financial support. The Student Services Coordinator will follow the same procedures as above.

5.3 Definitive Admission

For each pre-admitted student, the definitive admission will take place once the student provides: 1) the required documents as per the PSESP Policy; and 2) **signs a contract** with the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Education Services.

Applications submitted by	Transcripts provided by	Courses schedule provided by
June 15th	College/CEGEP/University: June 15th Secondary/High School: June 30th	September 30th
November 15th	November 15th	January 15th
March 15th	March 15th	June 20th

6. Level of Financial Support

Procedures

Based on funding provided by the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and additional funding from community revenues and approved by Council of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, financial support may be provided for the following expenditures:

	FULL-TIME STUDENTS	PART-TIME STUDENTS
TUITION	Actual cost of tuition and other compulsory student fees Initial professional certification and examination fees Admission (max 2) and registration fees	Actual cost will be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course(s). Admission and registration fees if applicable
BOOKS AND SUPPLIES	Actual cost of books and supplies which are listed as required by the post-secondary education institution for his/her program of study	Actual cost of books, if not already included in the tuition, will be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course(s).
LIVING ALLOWANCES	A monthly amount based on the student's situation (see Appendix B for rates)	Not admissible
TRAVEL	Actual cost of one return trip to the student's permanent place of residence from the nearest post-secondary institution that offers the program of study selected by the student, for the student and, if applicable, for each dependent (not more than two trips per academic year)	Not admissible

Full-Time Students

Once the student contract is signed and all required documentation is received, the Student Services Coordinator will proceed with the request for payment for the first deposit of living allowances, travel and books as well as the payment of tuition.

Tuition

The following are eligible expenditures: actual cost of tuition and other compulsory student fees; Initial professional certification and examination fees; and, admission (max 2) and registration fees. Once a student is definitely accepted for post-secondary education financial support by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, the Student Services Coordinator will reimburse the student for any admission and registration fees based on the receipts provided by the student.

The Student Services Coordinator will send the letter of financial support to the student's post-secondary institution. The Coordinator will inform the student by e-mail about when and to whom the letter of support was sent. The letter of support will confirm to the post-secondary institution that the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag will pay the tuition and ask the post-secondary institution to send an invoice as soon as possible to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Education Services for payment. Upon the

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receipt of the invoice, the Student Services Coordinator will prepare a request for payment to be approved by the Director, Education Services. The request for payment will then be sent to the Department of Finance who will proceed with the payment to the post-secondary institution. Once the payment is made, the Student Services Coordinator will inform the student by e-mail. The post-secondary institution will then send to the Student Services Coordinator the tuition fees receipt so it can be placed in the student's central file. The Student Services Coordinator will send an electronic copy to the student by e-mail.

If a student withdraws from one or more courses, any reimbursement of tuition will be sent by the post-secondary education institution automatically and directly to Micmacs of Gesgapegiag. Upon the receipt of a reimbursement, the Department of Finance will put the amount into the Education Services Post-Secondary Education Program budget. The Student Services Coordinator will put a copy of the check from the institution in the student's central file and will send an electronic copy to the student by e-mail.

The same procedures will be applied for each semester.

Books and Supplies

The Student Services Coordinator will provide each student \$375.00 upfront for books and supplies. Students will then send receipts of their books and supplies purchases with their courses syllabus by the end of September (end of January for the winter semester and end of June for the summer semester). The Student Services Coordinator will send a reminder in October to students to provide receipts. For the students who will not have provided the information requested by the end of October, the Student Services Coordinator will deduct \$375.00 from their November living allowance. For students where the total amount from the receipts received is lower than \$375.00, the difference will be deducted from their November living allowance.

If the cost of books and supplies exceeds \$375 per semester, the student will provide receipts of their books and supplies purchases with their course syllabuses in order to be reimbursed by Education Services for the difference.

Part-Time Students

Tuition, Books and Supplies

The following are eligible expenditures: actual cost of tuition and other compulsory student fees; admission and registration fees if applicable; and, the reimbursement of the actual cost of books, if not already included in the tuition. These expenditures will only be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course(s) with all required documentation provided.

The student is responsible to provide the course(s) syllabus, the receipts for books and supplies as well as the school transcript confirming the successful completion within one month of the completion of the course(s). The Student Services Coordinator will prepare a request for payment to be approved by the Director, Education Services. The request for payment will then be sent to the Department of Finance who will proceed with the payment to the student.

If the student does not provide all the documentation within one month of the completion of the course, the Student Services Coordinator will contact the student by e-mail AND by phone to remind the student. Two months after the reminder, if the student has not yet provided the information, the Director, Education Services, will inform the student by letter that he/she is no longer eligible for the reimbursement.

If a student withdrew from school before November, an overpayment note will be put in the student's centralized file and the Student Services Coordinator will implement the Accounts Receivables procedures.

The Student Services Coordinator will apply the same procedures for the winter semester and, if applicable, the summer semester. Since the summer semester is shorter, receipts will be required the second month of the summer semester.

7. Scholarship and Graduation Incentives

A student who would like to be considered for the academic achievement scholarship and/or the graduation incentives will have to complete the Scholarship and Graduation Incentives Application Form and ensure that the Student Services Coordinator has received his/her official school transcript.

While both part-time and full-time students can be considered for graduation incentives, only full-time students can be considered for academic achievement scholarship.

The Director, Education Services, **can ONLY approve** scholarships and/or incentives if funds remain available after the completion of review and approval of applications for financial support for the following school year (approximately in August of each year). The Director, Education Services, will communicate verbally and in writing with the students who have applied for scholarship and/or graduation incentives to let them know if funds are available. If funds are not available, the Student Services Coordinator will keep the list of applicants so that, if funds become available during the fiscal year, the Student Services Coordinator will make recommendations to the Director, Education Services.

8. Limits and Duration of Support under the PSESP

The Student Services Coordinator will ensure he/she has all required documentation confirming the official length of the program of study taken by the student. The Student Services Coordinator will track the number of months/semesters the student has been financially supported by Micmacs of Gesgapegiag by recording such information on the Length of Support Record Table and ensuring such table is in each student file.

9. Exceptional Measures

Procedures

The analysis of any application under these exceptional measures will be done using the same procedures as any regular application under this Program, including being subject to the Student Priority Categories.

9.1 Support for transition into a post-secondary program of study also called University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP)

Some students may not have the pre-requisite courses to be accepted in a regular post-secondary program of study. A student may be supported financially by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag to complete the necessary courses prescribed by the post-secondary institution to be accepted in a regular post-secondary program.

In support of objectivity and transparency, the following criteria will be used by Gesgapegiag Education Services to guide its decision to approve or not financial support for a student under the University College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP). These criteria are in line with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada National Program Guidelines 2016-2017 regarding UCEPP:

1. The applicant does not have the pre-requisites to be admitted into a regular college or university credited program of study. This is confirmed in a formal assessment from the post-secondary education institution. The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Student Service Coordinator may refer to the Ministry/Department of Education in the applicant's province or territory of residency for information on student admissibility to a regular post-secondary program of study.
2. If the applicant has his/her permanent residence in the province of Quebec, the applicant has demonstrated that the pre-requisite courses **cannot** be taken through adult education, CEGEP and/or any government supported academic upgrading and/or employability measures.
3. If the applicant has his/her permanent residence outside the province of Quebec, the applicant has demonstrated that the pre-requisite courses **cannot** be taken through adult education or any government supported academic upgrading and/or employability measures in the province of their permanent residence.
4. The post-secondary education institution is an eligible institution.
5. The institution has confirmed in writing the list of the necessary courses it will provide the applicant to attain the academic level for university or college entrance and that the applicant will be automatically accepted as a student of a regular college or university credit program upon successful completion of the UCEPP courses of studies.

6. The institution has confirmed in writing that it will take a maximum of two full-time semesters basis for the student to meet all the pre-requisites for his/her chosen post-secondary education program.
7. The applicant must not have been financially supported previously by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag for post-secondary studies (an exception may be made for valid documented reasons). When for valid documented reasons, the applicant should have already provided to the Student Services Coordinator a doctor's certificate and/or a letter from the student's faculty advisor when the student withdraw for his/her program of study. If not, the student will be considered as previously financially supported by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag.

The Student Services Coordinator will complete the analysis of the application only once all documents have been provided (see above criteria 3 to 5 inclusively). In doing so, the Student Services Coordinator may contact the applicant's post-secondary institution, any provincial or territorial educational organization or other departments within the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag to seek additional information. The applicant will have to be available to provide any additional information requested by the Student Services Coordinator.

The Student Services Coordinator and the Director, Education Services, will then apply the same pre-admission procedures towards a decision.

At the end of the first semester, or equivalent (as defined by the post-secondary education institution offering the program), continued financial support for the following semester will be subject to receipt of a transcript confirming the successful completion of the first semester. The student will be responsible to provide such confirmation. Until the receipt of such confirmation, no tuition will be paid as well as other eligible expenditures (see level of financial support).

9.2 Support for a period that exceeds the limit and duration of the program of study

Students enrolled in Levels I and II may be assisted for up to one additional academic year per level if such an extension is determined necessary by the post-secondary education institution and confirmed in writing by the institution's dean or the department head. Students enrolled in Level III may be assisted for up to one additional academic year for medical or personal reasons.

Students may be assisted in Level I studies after dropping out of Level II studies if not previously funded for Level I.

Students who have completed a Level II or III program of study, with or without financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, are not eligible for financial support for lower levels of program (s) of study. That said, a full-time student may be supported financially for an additional degree at the bachelor level (level II) which has an undergraduate degree or undergraduate courses as a prerequisite.

Student financial support will not exceed the limits set out in the paragraphs above. Where students change programs within one of the levels or temporarily pause from their studies, the regular academic years or semesters financially supported by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag for each program of study within each level (levels I, II and III) will be counted for financial support purposes. Students who become eligible for financial support and who have previously completed a portion of post-secondary education studies without financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag may receive assistance for the balance of their program of study but will not be reimbursed for previous expenses.

The Student Services Coordinator will be responsible to keep track of the number of months/semesters used by the student through the Length of support Record Table that will be kept in the student's central file.

9.3 Support while not meeting the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Policy

The Director, Education Services, may approve an application which does not meet all the eligibility and/or admission requirements of the PSESP Policy as well as requesting a level of support that exceeds the level of financial support (e.g. monthly allowances) allowed under the Policy. There could also be a situation where, for increased employability purposes or career enhancement, an applicant would benefit from an additional program of study. Exceptionally, Level 2 may include financial support for an additional degree at the bachelor level which has as a prerequisite an undergraduate degree or undergraduate courses. The applicant will have to provide a letter from the employer confirming the need to pursue the program of study and that the employer cannot fund the cost entailed by pursuing the program of study.

10. While receiving financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag

During every term, the Student Services Coordinator will stay in touch with students and be available to provide information and advice. This will be done mainly through e-mails and by phone. It could also involve visits to post-secondary institutions. The provision of financial and other support(s) to students requires that the Student Services Coordinator establishes and maintains working relationships with the majority of postsecondary education institutions attended by Gesgapegiag students.

Students are responsible to provide a copy of their course(s) schedule at the beginning of each semester and, at the end, a transcript and when applicable the diploma obtained. The Coordinator will send reminders to the students by e-mails.

In keeping open communications with funded students, the Coordinator will ensure that students understand their academic and contractual obligations to Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Education Services.

Procedures

While receiving financial support from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, a student could be in a situation of overpayment.

For example, a student who decides to drop one or more course(s) needs to: first, ensure he/she is still considered full-time; and 2) do it before the deadline for reimbursement of tuition. The student may have to reimburse part of the tuition for the course(s) dropped.

Another example is when a student changes status from full-time to part-time or withdraws from his/her program of study mid-semester. The student is responsible to inform immediately the post-secondary education institution and the Student Services Coordinator of his/her withdrawal. In the event that a student withdraws mid-semester and does not inform the institution and the Coordinator, the student will be held financially responsible for any tuition, other fees and living allowances received and unjustified. The student will have to repay the total amount to the Micmacs of Gesgapagiag.

In such a situation, the Director, Education Services, will inform the student in writing (letter and e-mail) of the total amount of overpayment and will ask the student to communicate with him/her over the next five working days to discuss and agree on a repayment schedule. The amount and the period to repay the total amount will depend on the individual's financial situation. However, depending on the amount owed, the repayment schedule will not exceed the number of months/semesters remaining until the completion of the program of study.

A copy of the letter, the signed repayment schedule agreement and any correspondence related to this issue will be kept in the student's central file. The Director, Education Services, will provide a copy of the letter and the signed repayment schedule agreement to the Department of Finance to be included into the departmental Accounts Receivable System. The Director, Education Services, will provide quarterly updates to the Financial Controller on all the post-secondary repayment files and will be responsible to ensure that repayments by the student are taking place. On a monthly basis, the Student Services Coordinator will provide an update to the Director, Education Services.

Once the student has repaid all the money, the Director, Education Services, will send a letter to the student to confirm that he/she no longer owes money to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag with respect to financial support received through the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP). A copy of the letter will be put in the student's central file and a copy will be sent to the Financial Controller to close the student's account receivable file.

If a student does not sign a repayment schedule agreement or does not reimburse the total amount according to the agreed upon schedule, the student will no longer be eligible for education related financial support from any Department of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag until the total amount is

reimbursed. In addition, as a member of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, the member will be subject to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Accounts Receivable Procedures¹.

11. Information Management

Procedures

The Student Services Coordinator is responsible to ensure every active student file includes all the mandatory documents required for admission to the PSESP, proof of full-time/part-time status during each semester and any other document and correspondence related to the student's situation. The Coordinator is also responsible to keep receipts and invoices in the appropriate student's file.

The confidentiality of student files is ensured by the use of a locked filing cabinet located in the office of the Student Services Coordinator as well as electronic files created on the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag main server and only the Student Services Coordinator and the Director, Education Services, have access to these files.

The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Education Services will ensure that all the information collected regarding each applicant and student will be used, stored and kept secure according to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Information Management Policy².

With respect to reporting, the Student Services Coordinator will assist the Director, Education Services, in the preparation of any report to the Board of Education, the Council, funding agencies e.g. (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) and to the Community while respecting the confidentiality of personal information. Such responsibility includes the input into the Annual Register for Post-Secondary Students and the financial reconciliation between the Gesgapegiag Band's general ledger covering the school year and the Annual Register.

¹ To be developed

² Idem

12. Appeal of Decision

Procedures

In order to ensure effective use of resources and time, an applicant must proceed as per the following steps (see Graph 1).

Step 1: The applicant must review the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program Policy, Directive and Procedures to ensure that there may be cause for an appeal. For example, an application that is deferred because of lack of funding is not grounds for appeal.

Step 2: The applicant must raise the issue with the Director, Education Services, in writing. This will allow the Director to review with the Student Services Coordinator the applicant's situation and information provided at the time of application and get back to the applicant within 5 working days. If the Director's decision remains the same, or the Director fails to get back to the applicant within 5 working days, the applicant can file an appeal using the Notice to Appeal Form (Annex A) available at www.gesgapegiag.ca.

Step 3: The applicant will send his/her Notice to Appeal Form to the Director General of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag electronically (by e-mail) or by fax within 5 working days after receiving the review decision of the Director, Education Services (step 2 above). Within 24 hours, the Director General will send copies of the completed Notice to Appeal Form to the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Appeal Committee as well as to the Director, Education Services. See Annex J for the terms of reference of the PSESP Appeal Committee.

Step 4: The Chair of the PSESP Appeal Committee will schedule a call with the members of the Committee, within the next 48 hours, to determine if the appeal is receivable or not and if all the previous steps in the process have been followed. If the appeal is not receivable, the Chair will communicate in writing to the applicant the committee's rationale. **The applicant will have no further recourse.**

If the appeal is receivable, the Chair will communicate with the applicant by phone or electronically to determine an agreed upon date, time and place of the appeal hearing. The appeal hearing should take place within the next 10 working days.

Step 5: The appeal hearing will take place either in person or virtually (conference call, videoconference or other internet based videoconferencing applications). The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag will assume the reasonable costs associated with the participation of the applicant and the members of the Appeal Committee to the appeal hearing.

The Director, Education Services, may at the request of the Chair of the Appeal Committee attend part of the hearing in order to provide the Committee with relevant background information. The applicant will also have an opportunity to present some facts as well as responding to questions from the Committee. Then, the three members committee will deliberate and make its final decision. The Chair of the Appeal Committee will communicate their decision to the Director General using the PSESP Appeal Process Record of Decision Form within 5 working days (Annex B).

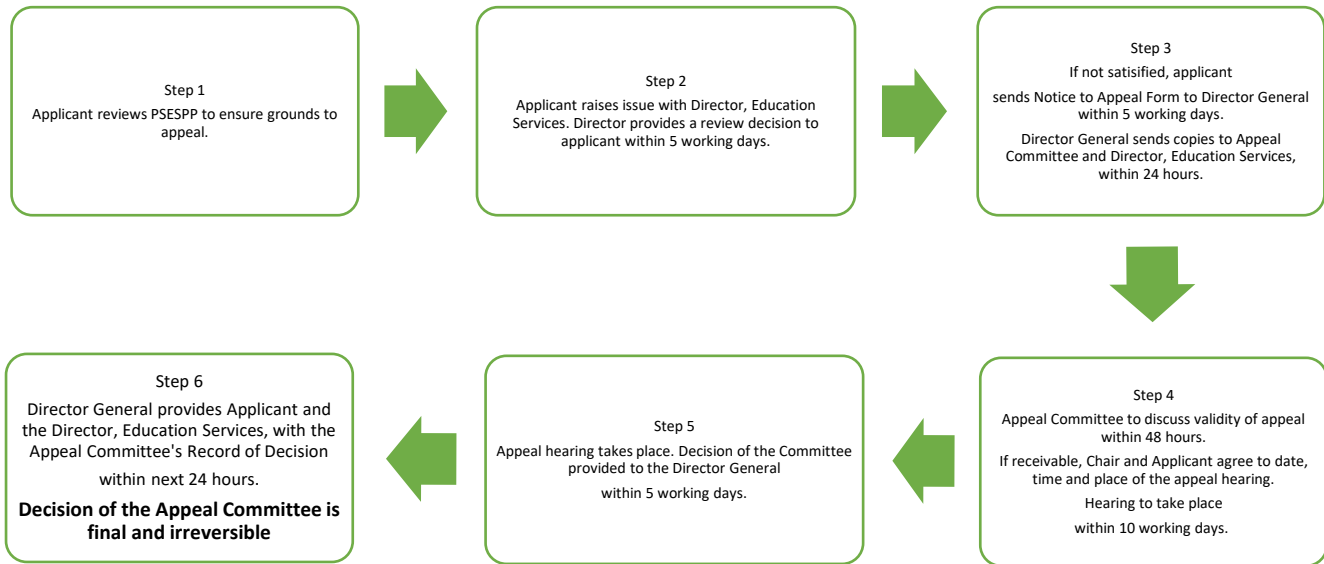
Step 6: Once received, within the next 24 hours, the Director General will send a copy of the Appeal Committee's Record of Decision to the applicant electronically and by mail. The Director, Education Services, will also receive a copy. The Director, Education Services, will be responsible and accountable to the Director General for any follow up actions related to and implementation of the decision of the Appeal Committee.

The Director General will inform the Council of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag of the decision. The office of the Director General will keep a copy of the Appeal Committee's record of decision as per the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Information Management Policy, Directive and Procedures³.

The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and irreversible.

³ idem

Graph 1: Six Steps of the Appeal Process



13. Roles and Responsibilities

There are a number of individuals who play a role in the administration of the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) and who have specific responsibilities.

STUDENTS

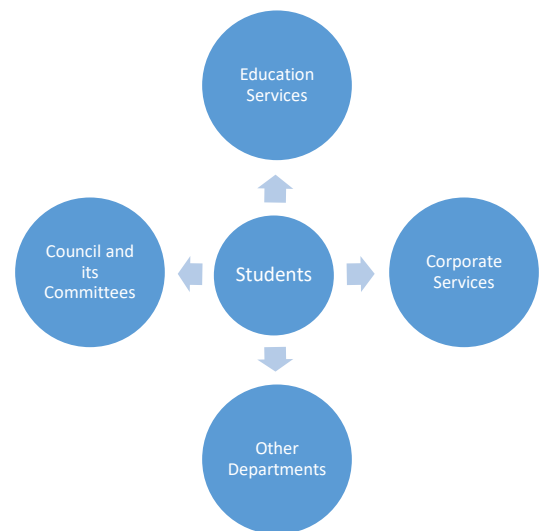
A Micmacs of Gesgapegiag member can submit an application for financial support to pursue a recognized post-secondary education program in a recognized post-secondary institution. Any student accepted for financial assistance will have to re-submit every year an application for funding.

Students are responsible to apply according to the deadlines specified in the Program Policy.

Every financially supported student will provide all the necessary and accurate information to the Student Services Coordinator as it pertains to: his/her personal information and individual situation; contact information during and in between semesters and school years, especially a valid telephone number and e-mail address; the program of study; the post-secondary institution; his/her course registration at the beginning of each semester, course syllabus and, academic achievement (transcript after each semester and diploma at the end of the program). Students are responsible for their academic and contractual obligations to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag.

Students are financially responsible for any late registration fees. They also have to notify immediately the Student Services Coordinator in the event of adding or dropping courses after registration for a current semester. If a student withdraws from his/her program of study mid-semester, the student is responsible to inform immediately the post-secondary education institution and the Student Services Coordinator of his/her withdrawal. In the event that a student withdraws mid-semester and does not inform the institution and the Coordinator, the student will be held financially responsible for any tuition, other fees and living allowances received and unjustified AND will have to repay all to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag.

Students who are financially supported by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag will make themselves available to the Student Services Coordinator to provide information and updates related to their studies and financial support received from the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag.



EDUCATION SERVICES

The Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) is managed by Education Services in collaboration with other Micmacs of Gesgapegiag departments.

STUDENT SERVICES COORDINATOR

Under the direct supervision of the Director, Education Services, the Student Services Coordinator is responsible for: implementing the PSESP, its related policy, directive and procedures. The Coordinator is the key point of contact for all Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members interested in post-secondary education. He/she will provide information about financial support and Gesgapegiag's Post-Secondary Education Support Policy. He/she will also provide information and advice to students.

While students are responsible to provide all the necessary and accurate information when applying into the Program, the Coordinator will be available to answer any question and facilitate the application process through telephone, e-mails and letters.

Once all the applications are received, the Coordinator is responsible to complete an analysis of all applications based on the PSESP Policy, Directive and Procedures and, prepare recommendations to the Director, Education Services. The Coordinator may consult other Departments and organizations, such as the Gesgapegiag Human Resources Commission and the Income Assistance coordinator, to find creative solutions in support of students' higher learning. Once decisions are made by the Director, Education Services, the Coordinator will prepare, for the Director's signature, the letter to be sent electronically and through mail to every applicant about the Director's decision.

During every term, the Coordinator is responsible to stay in touch with students and be available to provide support. This will be done mainly through e-mails and by phone. It could also involve visits to post-secondary institutions. The provision of support to students entails that the Coordinator has to establish and maintain working relationships with the majority of post-secondary education institutions attended by Gesgapegiag students.

While students are responsible to provide a copy of their course(s) schedule at the beginning of each semester and, at the end, a transcript and when applicable the diploma obtained, the Coordinator will send reminders to the students by e-mail. In keeping open communications with funded students, the Coordinator will ensure that students are aware of their academic and contractual obligations to Micmacs of Gesgapegiag.

With respect to the financial administration of the PSESP Program, the role of the Coordinator is to assist the Director, Education Services, in managing the budget. To do so, he/she will follow specific financial policies and procedures⁴.

The Coordinator will assist the Director, Education Services, with any short, medium and long-term plans, projections and priorities. The Coordinator will also support the Director, Education Services,

⁴ Gesgapegiag Financial Policy (2002)

for annual budget preparation and expenditure monitoring and reporting. Based on templates provided by the Department of Finance and financial information generated by the Gesgapegiag financial system, the Coordinator will prepare monthly financial reports, quarterly financial statements as well as annual financial statements in relation to the Post-Secondary Education budget. The Coordinator is responsible to inform immediately the Director, Education Services, of any potential surplus or deficit and, if requested, to provide options and recommendations on next steps.

With respect to monitoring expenditures, the Coordinator is responsible to ensure that all eligible invoices are processed by Education Services in a timely manner, according to procedures and service standards. While it is the responsibility of the Department of Finance to process payments, the Coordinator will establish a payment verification system in order to follow up with the Department of Finance when necessary. In situations where a student owes money to the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag, the Coordinator will apply specific procedures in line with the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Accounts Receivable Policy, Directive and Procedures⁵ and will provide a monthly update to the Director, Education Services.

The Coordinator is also responsible to ensure that receipts and invoices are in the appropriate student's file. The confidentiality of student files is ensured by the use of a locked filing cabinet located in the office of Coordinator as well as electronic files created on the Band's main server with restricted access. Only the Coordinator and the Director, Education Services, have direct access to the individual student information. Where information needs to be shared with the Director General, the Appeal Committee and Council, all information will be treated confidentially.

With respect to reporting, the Coordinator will assist the Director, Education Services, in the preparation of any report to the Board of Education, the Council, funding agencies e.g (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) and to the Community. Such responsibility includes input into the Annual Register for Post-Secondary Students and the financial reconciliation between the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag general ledger covering the school year and the Annual Register⁶. In performing such responsibility, the Coordinator will follow the requirements of the report and ensure the validity of the data recorded.

Because of his/her direct contact with the students, the Coordinator may also represent the students of Gesgapegiag on any internal or external committees where post-secondary education is being discussed. With that knowledge and experience, the Coordinator will play an active role in the development and the review of any strategic documents by undertaking research and consultation and, providing advice to the Director, Education Services.

⁵ To be developed

⁶ Either the register created by the First Nations Education Council or the register created by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada for reporting purposes

DIRECTOR, EDUCATION SERVICES

Under the leadership of the Director General, the Director, Education Services, is responsible and accountable for the planning, implementation, performance management and reporting of the Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP), its related Policy, Directives and Procedures.

The Director, Education Services, is responsible for the preparation of the annual PSESP budget to be approved by Council. This will include negotiating annual budgets and cash flow with funding agencies and ensuring reporting requirements are met.

Once the annual budget has been approved by Council, and based on recommendations for funding from the Student Services Coordinator, the Director, Education Services, will approve, defer or refuse applications for financial support or scholarships and incentives under the PSESP. The Director will then communicate in writing his/her decision to each applicant.

During the school year, if a student is in a situation of overpayment, the Director, Education Services, will inform the student in writing, discuss and agree on a repayment schedule. Only the Director, Education Services, the Financial Controller or the Director General can sign a repayment schedule agreement. The Director, Education Services, will ensure that any correspondence related to this issue as well as the original signed repayment schedule agreement are kept in the student's central file and that a copy of the signed agreement is provided to the Department of Finance. The Director will also provide quarterly updates to the Financial Controller on all the post-secondary repayment files and will be responsible to ensure that repayment procedures are followed by the student and Education Services.

The Director will lead the review of the PSESP, its related Policy, Directive and Procedures. He/She will ensure that any change to the Policy, Directive and Procedures is presented to the Director General, approved in principle by a Council's committee⁷, receives final approval from Council and communicated to students before implementation. Where a change is significant, such change will be communicated to the Community through the Community's website and facebook page.

With respect to reporting, he/she will report directly to the Director General who in turn will report to Council. In this regard, the Director, Education Services, will support the Director General by helping to identify issues that should be presented to Council either directly or through one of the Council's committees and to follow-up on Council committees' recommendations and/or Council's decision(s). This includes communicating the information to the appropriate stakeholder(s) and implementing policies and procedures approved by Council.

In implementing the PSESP Policy, Directive and Procedures, the Director, Education Services, will maintain open communication with students and community members even if the key interlocutor is the Student Services Coordinator. He/She will also maintain a working relationship with other Departments. The Director will oversee, supervise and direct the activities of the Student Services

⁷ Council may establish Committees such as the Board of Education.

Coordinator. He/She will hire the Coordinator, establish annual work objectives and evaluate the employee according to Gesgapegiag Human Resources Management Policy and Procedures.

Finally, the Director is responsible to monitor the PSESP's budget and expenditures on a monthly basis. He/She will direct the preparation of quarterly and annual reports in support of reporting activities to the Council and the Community.

CORPORATE SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Under the responsibility of the Financial Controller, the Department of Finance is responsible to issue payments to students and institutions according to the approved procedures and deadlines and to inform quickly the Student Services Coordinator and the Director, Education Services, regarding any budget, payment requisition or financial issue that would arise.

With respect to any accounts receivable, the Department of Finance will keep a copy of the letter sent by the Director, Education Services, to the student and a copy of the signed repayment schedule agreement into the departmental Accounts Receivable System. The Department of Finance will also keep a copy of the quarterly updates provided by the Director, Education Services, about all the repayment files. The Department of Finance will finally keep a copy of the letter sent by the Director, Education Services, to a student confirming that the total amount owed has been paid. If a student does not pay all the amount owed, the Department of Finance will apply the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Accounts Receivable Procedures.⁸

DIRECTOR GENERAL

The Director General is responsible to oversee, supervise and direct the activities of all officers and employees of Gesgapegiag and report to Council. The Director General reports directly to Chief and Council. The Director General is a voting member of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program Appeal Committee.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND EMPLOYERS

Gesgapegiag Human Resources Commission and the Income Assistance Coordinator may collaborate with Education Services to provide support to Gesgapegiag post-secondary students. Other departments may also contribute to the success of students by providing work experience either during the school year (part time) and/or during summer.

Employee training and professional development are legitimate expenses for any organization or business. With respect to other departments and employers, the financing of employee training and professional development should be pursued and promoted within their department or organization/business.

⁸ (under development)

COUNCIL

CHIEF AND COUNCILLORS

The Council of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag is ultimately responsible to provide its vision, priorities and strategic direction as it relates to support for higher learning of community members.

The Council is responsible for all matters relating to the financial administration of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag whether or not they have been assigned or delegated to an officer, employee, committee, contractor or agent by or under the Gesgapegiag Financial Administration Law⁹. The Council may establish policies and procedures and give direction respecting any matter relating to the financial administration of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag. In such case, the Council will approve the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Policy, Directive and Procedures.

The Council is also responsible to approve the PSESP annual budget. Should funds received by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) not meet all the financial needs of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag post-secondary students, the Council may approve additional funds from its own source revenues to support more eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members.

The Council is also responsible for the establishment and the mandate of any Council Committee. Therefore the Council will: approve the Terms of Reference for the Board of Education; determine the minimum qualifications and eligibility requirements of Committee members and chairpersons; appoint a Chairperson; and, evaluate the effectiveness of the Committee.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education, one of the Council's Committees, is responsible to provide advice to the Director, Education Services, on education matters, including the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Policy, Directive and Procedures and, make recommendations to the Council, through the Education Portfolio Councillor. The Board of Education represents the voices of community members and in that sense, will contribute to the establishment and the review of Education Services' purpose (mission), desired future (vision), values, goals and policies. It can also guide and monitor the development and implementation of programs, policies, strategic multi-year and operational annual plans related to post-secondary education.

EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR

The Education Portfolio Councillor ensures the liaison between the Council, the Board of Education and community members. As a member of the Board, the Councillor communicates the Council's vision and overall directions regarding post-secondary education support to Gesgapegiag students. If and when the Board reports to Council, it will be done through the Education Portfolio Councillor.

⁹ (under development)

APPEAL OF DECISION COMMITTEE

The Appeal Committee is responsible to review appeals received from applicants and/or students supported through the PSESP Program, conduct appeal hearings and provide a course of action to the Director General. Any decision of the Appeal Committee is final and irreversible and, will be communicated to Council by the Director General.

References

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Post-Secondary Education Support Program Policy

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Complaint and Appeal Policy, 2004

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Information Technology and Records Information Management Policy and Procedures¹⁰

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Governance Policy¹¹

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Accounts Receivable Policy and Directive¹²

Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Finance Policy, 2002

¹⁰ To be developed

¹¹ idem

¹² idem

List of Annexes (forms)

(titles of forms to be reviewed once forms approved)

- A. Application Form for new applicant
- B. Application Form for continuing student
- C. Checklist of documents provided by applicant (to be used by the Student Services Coordinator)
- D. Student Contract with Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Education Services
- E. Letter of Support to the Post-Secondary Education Institution related to the financial support provided by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag for the student
- F. Length of Support Record Table (to be used by the Student Services Coordinator)
- G. Template Letter from Director, Education Services, to a student when subject to accounts receivable procedures
- H. Repayment Schedule Agreement Template
- I. Notice to Appeal Form
- J. Appeal Committee Terms of Reference
- K. Appeal Process Record of Decision Form

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Appeal Committee

Terms of Reference

Background

In Gesgapegiag, it is also Council's responsibility for the final approval of new, revised, rescinded policies that reflect the First Nation's accepted procedures. On March 29, 2017, Council of Micmacs of Gesgapegiag approved its updated Post-Secondary Education Support Program Policy,

The objectives of the program are to:

- Promote access to post-secondary studies among Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members who meet the requirements of post-secondary education institutions;
- Support students to persevere and graduate with a post-secondary education diploma that confirms they have the necessary skills and competencies to access the labour market and pursue individual careers;
- Develop the human resources capacity of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag for its benefit and future development and the well-being of its Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members; and,
- Offer financial support to eligible Micmacs of Gesgapegiag members accepted in a recognized post-secondary education program offered by a post-secondary education institution and that will lead to a recognized post-secondary education diploma.

It is also Council's policy to establish any Standing Committees and any Special Committees it deems necessary to fulfill its mandate or to assist in meeting statutory obligations. On March 29, 2017, Council also approved the establishment of the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) Appeal Committee.

Mandate

The Appeal Committee will review appeals received from applicants to the PSESP as well as students supported through the PSESP, have appeal hearings and will provide a course of action to the Director General.

Composition

The Committee will be comprised of four members: two from the Board of Education, the Director General and one from another First Nation community who is involved in the management of learning, training and/or employment programs. The two members from the Board of Education will require excellent knowledge of all the community's learning, training and employment programs. Employees working for Education Services and Gesgapegiag Human Resources Development Corporation as well as Officers of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag (except for the Director General) cannot be members of the PSESP Appeal Committee nor can any member of the Council.

Quorum

Quorum necessary for the transaction of business at Committee meetings will be three including the Director General.

Voting Rules

As this represents a small committee, at least three members will have to vote in support of any proposed recommendation of the Committee. The Director General is a voting member.

Committee's Term

The Committee will exist until Council votes for its termination and members will be appointed by Chief and Council for the duration of the Committee.

In case of the resignation of a member, Council will have to appoint a new member before the next meeting of the Appeal Committee.

Chairperson

Appointed by Council, the Chairperson will be one of the two members from the Board of Education. The Chairperson will be responsible for the preparation of appeal hearing agendas, appropriate briefing material, minutes of all calls and meetings and the preparation and distribution of all Records of Decision. The Chairperson will also be responsible to ensure that information collected and documents produced are stored and kept secured based on the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag information management related policies.

Note Taker

One member of the Committee, excluding the Chairperson, will act as the Note Taker during the Appeal Hearing. The individual will be responsible to take minutes, record the Committee's decision on the Record of Decision Form and ensure appropriate validation of content, distribution of the minutes and appropriate sign off by the Chairperson.

Responsibilities

- To review completed Notice to Appeal Forms to determine if the appeal is receivable or not and if all the previous steps in the Appeal of Decision Process have been followed.
- To conduct appeal hearings and communicate their decision according to the Appeal of Decision Procedures.

Code of Conduct

Committee members will perform their responsibilities in accordance with the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Band Conflict of interest guidelines¹³ and the Policy regarding release of information to band members¹⁴.

A Committee member may be removed on the recommendation of the Committee chairperson if the Committee member has committed a breach of the Conflict of interest guidelines, breach of confidentiality, or otherwise had breached one of the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag policies, fails to perform the expected duties of a Committee member, or is no longer qualified or eligible to be a Committee member.

Monitoring and evaluating Committee performance

Annually, the Chairperson will evaluate the Committee's progress against its Terms of Reference, mandate and responsibilities. The results of the analysis will be presented to Council and used as the basis for the following year plan for the Committee. The Chairperson will continually monitor the performance of Committee members against their terms of appointment.

¹³ Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Band Conflict of Interest guidelines, approved April 20, 2001 and effective as of that date As amended May 13, 2002

¹⁴ Policy regarding release of information to Band members, adopted October 22, 2001

ANNEX K

PSESP APPEAL PROCESS RECORD OF DECISION FORM