

DATE: November 28, 2017

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2018-2019 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program

ORIGINATOR: Angela Anderson, Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources

RESOURCE STAFF: Trish Kolotyluk, Renée Thomson

REFERENCE: Response to Staff Group Budget Presentations, 2012-2014

ISSUE

An allocation of funds from the 2018-2019 operating budget is requested to support the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program, through which exempt staff members would be able to access tuition and leave support for post-secondary coursework. As well, we are requesting that the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program be continued as an ongoing District program.

BACKGROUND

There has been a long standing practice in the District to consider applications from exempt staff for tuition and leave support using the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program processes and application package, which is embedded in the Teachers' Collective Agreement. Surplus funds from the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program allocation were used to support the professional growth and development of exempt staff.

In keeping with the District's commitment to exempt staff, an application process was drafted with input from the Exempt Liaison Committee and the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program was implemented in December 2015 as a pilot.

In March 2016, the Board approved an allocation of \$150,000 from the Central surplus to provide five exempt staff members with tuition and professional leave support for coursework undertaken in 2016-2017 (Attachment I). Two applicants were granted their full request and three were granted partial support (Attachment II).

In October 2016, the Board approved an allocation of \$150,000 from the 2017-2018 operating budget for exempt staff requests for tuition and leave support through a second year of the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program. All six applicants were granted their full request for support.

RELATED FACTS

- The implementation of the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program is aligned with the District's Cornerstone Values and supports Priority 2, Goal Three which is to enhance the professional capacity of District staff.

- The Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program ensures that exempt staff members across the District have access to opportunities that would serve to enhance their professional capacity and remain current with industry standards and trends.
- Support for professional development contributes to the attraction and retention of employees.
- While most requests for support from exempt staff have been for programs that follow typical university admission deadlines and timelines, we have also received inquiries and requests for some programs that do not. Due to the nature of professional learning for Exempt staff, two application intake periods will be scheduled for this program.
- An allocation of \$150,000 would allow for a three per cent holdback of funds to address potential increases in tuition fees, as well as fluctuations to international exchange rates for coursework undertaken through universities outside Canada.
- In order to operationally facilitate the Exempt Professional Improvement Program, it is necessary to begin the application, review and approval processes well in advance, as outlined in Attachment III.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That an allocation of \$150,000 from the 2018-2019 operating budget for the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program be approved for the purpose of granting exempt staff professional improvement leaves and/or tuition support for the 2018-2019 school year, and that the program be continued on an ongoing basis. An annual request for a budget allocation to fund this program will be brought forward in the fall.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

Providing an dedicated program to support exempt staff professional development honours commitments the District has made in response to Exempt Liaison Committee budget presentations to the Board of Trustees and ensures that related processes are transparent.

Considering the ratio of teachers to exempt staff, a commitment of \$150,000 is aligned with the request for support for teachers through the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of this recommendation, the attached program timelines will be followed (Attachment III).

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I	Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program History
ATTACHMENT II	Professional Improvement Program – Successful Exempt Applicants by Year
ATTACHMENT III	2018-2019 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program Timeline

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EXEMPT STAFF PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM HISTORY

YEAR	APPROVED ALLOCATION	APPROVED TOTAL LEAVE FTE	ACTUAL GRANTED FOR LEAVES	ACTUAL GRANTED FOR TUITION	TOTAL ACTUAL GRANTED FOR LEAVES & TUITION
2016-2017	\$150,000	1.467	\$106,861	\$35,585	\$142,446
2017-2018	\$150,000	0.644	\$47,129	\$39,304	\$86,433

EXEMPT STAFF PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS BY YEAR		
YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL
2013-2014*	5	3
2014-2015*	5	5
2015-2016*	6	6
2016-2017	5	5
2017-2018	6	6

* Applications from exempt staff were assessed using Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program application processes.

2018-2019 EXEMPT STAFF PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

FIRST APPLICATION INTAKE

Activity	Date
Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program information and application package are communicated to District exempt staff and made available online	November 17
Information meeting for interested staff (4:15 - 6:00 p.m. Conference Centre, Centre for Education)	December 5
Due date for applications	January 12
Processing of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of applications confirmed • Background information compiled (previous leaves, degrees, grid placement, years of service, summary of request, projected costs) • Applications prepared for review by committee of leadership staff 	January 15 - 31
Review of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application packages prepared for committee review • Committee workshop conducted • Review of applications completed 	January 15 - 31 February 2 February 9
Compile background information with input from assessors	February 12 - 16
Recommendation to the Superintendent	February 23
Approval of leaves and tuition support by the Superintendent	March 2
Communication of support granted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants • TM to Board • Staff Update communicated on District intranet • Letters and agreements sent to successful applicants 	March 5 - 9 March 14 March 15 March 16

SECOND APPLICATION INTAKE

Activity	Date
Due date for applications	September 14
Processing of applications	September 17 - 28
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receipt of applications confirmed• Background information compiled (previous leaves, degrees, grid placement, years of service, summary of request, projected costs)• Applications prepared for review by committee of leadership staff	
Review of applications	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application packages prepared for committee review• Committee workshop conducted• Review of applications completed	September 17 - 28 October 4 October 12
Compile background information with input from assessors	October 15 - 19
Recommendation to the Superintendent	October 26
Approval of leaves and tuition support by the Superintendent	November 2