

DATE: November 27, 2018

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Funds for 2019-2020 Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program

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

RESOURCE STAFF: Trish Kolotyluk, Renée Thomson

REFERENCE: Teachers' Collective Agreement-September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2016, Clause 23

ISSUE

An allocation of funds from the 2019-2020 operating budget is requested to support the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program, through which teachers would be able to access tuition and leave support for post-secondary coursework as per Clause 23 of the Teachers' Collective Agreement.

BACKGROUND

Edmonton Public Schools recognizes that professional development for staff is a critical aspect in supporting successful outcomes for students, as well as for succession planning. The Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program is in direct support of Board Policy GE.BP - Organization for Instruction, which states that "effective teachers who have strong knowledge of pedagogy and subject content knowledge, make a significant difference to student learning and achievement." The program is also in direct support of District Priority 2, Goal Three, which states that throughout their careers, all staff members are to be "provided opportunities to enhance their professional capacity and leadership within a culture of collaboration."

For many years, District teachers have had the opportunity to apply for tuition and leave support through the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program to undertake professional improvement activities. A comparison of successful applicants by year (Attachment I), as well as a synopsis of funds, F.T.E.s and support granted over the past 10 years (Attachment II) are included in this report.

RELATED FACTS

- The Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program is guided by Clause 23 of the Teachers' Collective Agreement.
- Clause 23.2 outlines the conditions under which, upon application, leave for professional improvement may be granted to a teacher for a school year or portion of the year.
- Clause 23.6 specifies that tuition support for professional improvement may be granted, upon application, to a teacher on continuing contract and with two or more years of service with Edmonton Public Schools.
- Clause 23.7 states the maximum amount the District may allocate for the Teacher Professional Improvement Program as "3/4 of 1% of the annual grid costs, calculated as of the preceding November 30".
- The Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program application process is rigorous. Assessment of applications is completed by a committee of District leadership staff who consider the alignment of

applicants' proposed professional improvement plans with District Priorities and identified programming needs. Additional considerations are the anticipated benefits to learners, the school and the District, as well as connections to the applicants' professional growth plans and career goals.

- For the 2018-2019 Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program, support was granted primarily for courses and programs of study in the areas of leadership, counselling/mental health, curriculum, literacy, special needs/inclusion and mathematics.
- It has been an administrative practice to maintain a holdback of a portion of the allocation to address potential increases to leave allowance costs and tuition fees in the next academic year, as well as potential fluctuations in the exchange rate for tuition fees paid to international post-secondary institutions. The holdback for the 2018-2019 Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program was 2.4 per cent.
- In order to facilitate application, review and approval processes for the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program, it is necessary that they be initiated a year in advance of the period of support (Attachment III). The 2019-2020 Clause 23 Professional Improvement program was announced to District teachers on October 26, 2018. Applications will be accepted until January 11, 2019. A panel of District leadership staff will review and assess the applications between February 5 and February 12. Recommendations from the assessors will be compiled and forwarded to the Superintendent for consideration by February 22. By March 1, the completion of these processes will be signaled by the Superintendent's approval of the tuition and/or leave support for successful applicants, including details related to the distribution of the allocated funds. Between March 4 and March 8, applicants will be notified of the support granted to them.
- In addition to the support available through the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program, tuition support for coursework related to core subject areas, second languages and selected priorities established by the District will continue to be available to District teachers through the Teacher Development Program. In 2017-2018, over \$90,000 was reimbursed to District teachers through this program for tuition fees.
- The Teachers' Collective Agreement includes a commitment of District funds to Edmonton Public Teachers Local 37 of the Alberta Teachers' Association to administer and distribute funds in support of professional development activities or resources related to teachers' individual professional growth plans. Edmonton Public Schools will provide \$750,000 in 2018-2019, as well as \$875,000 in 2019-2020 to Local 37 in support of the Staff Development Fund.
- Access to and support for professional development has been a significant bargaining issue in negotiations with the Alberta Teachers' Association.

RECOMMENDATION

That an allocation of \$1,300,000 from the 2019-2020 operating budget be approved for the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to teachers for the 2019-2020 school year.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. The allocation of funds for 2018-2019 is increased to \$1,300,000.
2. The allocation of funds for 2018-2019 remains at \$1,200,000.

Student achievement is positively impacted by the application of teachers' professional learning within the classroom and school community. An increased allocation of funds would allow a greater number of

certificated staff to develop a deeper understanding of educational theories and practice, curricula and subject content in support of District initiatives.

A selection of statements from staff who were granted support through the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program has been included with this report (Attachment IV). Many program participants reflected on their ability to better meet the increasingly complex needs of their students as a result of their professional learning. Several program participants speak to improved student success with the integration of new strategies and perspectives within their classrooms and schools. Many indicate that they are sharing their learning with colleagues.

Over the past decade, the gap between the maximum possible allocation and the approved allocation has continued to widen. In 2009-2010, the approved allocation of \$1,300,000 was 52 per cent of the maximum possible allocation. The approved allocation of \$1,200,000 for 2018-2019 was 33 per cent of the maximum possible allocation (Attachment II).

In September 2017, there were 98,914 students enrolled in the District. This year, our September enrolment count was 101,865. As our student enrolment continues to grow, so does the number of teachers we employ. In 2017-2018, 447 teachers were granted continuing contracts. This year, 492 teachers will undergo the recommendation process for continuing contracts. In turn, the number of requests for support through the Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program continues to increase. In 2009-2010, 64 certificated staff requested support through this program. In 2018-2019, we received 137 applications, which is an increase of 33 per cent over 2017-2018 and an increase of 114 per cent over 2009-2010 (Attachment I). It is anticipated that the number of requests for support will continue to grow.

Of the 137 requests for support through this program, based on the relative strength of the applications, 58 applicants were granted the support they requested and were eligible to receive, 46 were granted partial support and 33 were not granted support. Those applicants who were not granted the tuition support they requested could apply for support through the Staff Development Fund, and depending on the course(s), through the Teacher Development Program.

Without an increased allocation of funds, the number of staff who can be supported through this program will potentially decrease. Applications that would have met the criteria for a level of support in previous years will not be supported to the same degree as similarly assessed applications in previous years. As well, more applicants will not receive any support.

For these reasons, Option 1 is considered most appropriate.

NEXT STEPS

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

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I	Comparison by Year of Successful Teacher Certificated Applicants
ATTACHMENT II	Professional Improvement Program History
ATTACHMENT III	2019-2020 Professional Improvement Program Timeline
ATTACHMENT IV	Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation

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ATTACHMENT I

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS BY YEAR		
YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL
2009-2010	64	64
2010-2011	60	58
2011-2012	87	84
2012-2013	71	70
2013-2014	86	75
2014-2015	70	68
2015-2016	72	71
2016-2017	95	90
2017-2018	103	99
2018-2019	137	104

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM HISTORY

YEAR	FUND MAXIMUM AS PER CLAUSE 23.7	APPROVED ALLOCATION	% OF MAXIMUM	APPROVED TOTAL LEAVE FTE	ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR LEAVES	ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR TUITION	TOTAL ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR LEAVES & TUITION
2008-2009	2,392,026	1,300,000	54%	11.67	763,271	274,958	1,038,229
2009-2010	2,504,746	1,300,000	52%	6.54	382,159	349,969	732,128
2010-2011	2,774,936	1,200,000	43%	12.19	756,640	306,366	1,063,006
2011-2012	2,899,830	1,200,000	41%	15.65	768,459	316,283	1,084,742
2012-2013	3,005,090	1,200,000	40%	12.48	785,786	296,530	1,082,316
2013-2014	3,062,822	1,200,000	39%	11.56	706,110	354,758	1,060,868
2014-2015	3,019,266	1,000,000	33%	7.20	517,762	367,680	885,442
2015-2016	3,111,487	1,000,000	32%	8.026	561,457	400,757	962,214
2016-2017	3,286,102	1,000,000	30%	9.40	577,248	371,809	949,057
2017-2018	3,402,751	1,100,000	32%	7.818	521,808	545,100	1,066,908
2018-2019	3,587,437	1,200,000	33%	8.09	589,115	581,762	1,170,877

2019-2020 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

Activity	Date
Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program and application package are communicated to District teachers and made available online	October 26
Information meetings for interested staff (4:15 - 6:00 p.m. Conference Centre, Centre for Education)	November 19, 29
Obtain data to calculate maximums as per Clause 23.5 of Teachers' contract	November 30
Due date for applications	January 11
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 14 – February 1
Review of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application packages prepared for committee review • Committee workshop conducted • Review of applications completed 	January 14 – February 1 February 5 February 12
Compile background information and committee input	February 13 - 20
Recommendation to the Superintendent	February 22
Approval of leaves and tuition support by the Superintendent	March 1
Communication of support granted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters and agreements sent to successful applicants • TM to Board • District News announcement on Connect 	March 4 - 8 March 13 March 15

**Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation
2017-2018 Clause 23 Professional Improvement Program**

Tammy Berry

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Policy Studies with a specialization in Educational Administration and Leadership (EPSB cohort)

“With increasing complexity in schools, an isolated educator does not have the expertise to address all the demands; a greater impact can be made when a collaborative community leverages the combined strengths of all members.”

Kathleen Durance

University of Alberta - Doctor of Education in Educational Policy Studies with a specialization in Educational Administration and Leadership

“I found the insights I gained particularly helpful in working with our staff on honoring the complex diversity of our population, including developing authentic inclusion of our First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples’ perspectives.”

Nouha El-Ali

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Policy Studies with a specialization in Educational Administration and Leadership

“I have gained further insight into timely research and pedagogical methodologies that I have infused into my coaching and mentoring of staff. My graduate studies have, and will continue to support the district's vision in fostering the four accountability pillars, thus enriching the quality of learning for all communities we serve.”

Kym Francis

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Psychology with a specialization in Special Education: Reading, Writing and Oral Language Disabilities

“...I have been able to target intervention for my students with academic deficits, and have seen improvement in their reading and writing abilities. Additionally, I have been able to share my knowledge with my elementary teaching peers and expand the scope of assessment, to provide intervention to our younger students. This has improved our students’ motivation, engagement, and achievement.”

Kimberley Dawn Froese

University of Calgary - Master of Education in Interdisciplinary Studies with a specialization in Supporting and Enhancing Children's Mental Health

“There is increased heterogeneity in our student population as well as increased numbers, severity, and complexity of student needs... My newfound knowledge has equipped me with tools allowing me to anticipate and prevent problems before they occur and has widened my awareness of the continuum of supports that can be provided to support students with or at-risk of more significant mental health issues.”

Kimberly Hamilton

City University of Seattle - Master of Counselling

"...I've needed to use the skills I've learned around grief and loss, emotional regulation, looking for signs of trauma and pushing for mental health support... My learning has... also educated me in the many issues that I need to keep on my radar when working with members of the LGBTQ community."

Carla Klassen

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies with a focus on leadership

"As the new K-12 curriculum rolls out, I have seen the impact of cross-curricular learning through my action research project and will be able to apply my learning to my classroom and school directly."

Jason Leboeuf

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies with a focus on leadership and school improvement

"I have developed a stronger, research-based understanding of assessment and evaluation of student progress."

Petra Nagtegaal

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Psychology with a specialization in Special Education: Reading, Writing and Oral Language Disabilities

"With this knowledge, I am able to provide my students with an explicit, appropriate, and effective pre-literacy base for reading and writing... I am eager to help my students with special needs become successful throughout all their years of school by teaching them to have strong foundational skills."

Debbie Piasetsky

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Elementary Education with a focus on curriculum and pedagogy

"Through this program, I have deepened my understanding of literacy and why students sometimes struggle to develop the skills needed to be successful. I have also learned specific strategies which I have been able to put to use with students in my day-to-day work... I will share my growing expertise at the school, catchment and district level by modeling strategies through my own personal teaching and presenting information at professional learning sessions."

Thomas Reikie

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Secondary Education with a specialization in Curriculum Studies

"I have no doubt that in a long-term basis my graduate studies will allow me to re-envision curricular engagement in a more student oriented light."

Margaret Veis

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Elementary Education with a focus on language and literacy education

"I will do everything I can to use my learning from the 2017-2018 Professional Improvement Program to help my colleagues work through the new provincial curriculum implementation process, including curriculum alignment with both new and current resources."

Alicia Welsh

University of Toronto - Master of Education in Language and Literacies Education

“...We examined relevant research on teaching and learning second and foreign languages in classroom settings in order to explore effective and efficient approaches to Second Language Acquisition... Throughout the course, we considered the influences of community, home, school, and cultural heritage on second and additional language acquisition and language use.”

Leanne Whitefield

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies with a focus on using collaborative learning models to support professional growth and leadership

“Given the rapid proliferation of technology and changing needs of our students and society, learning can no longer be an isolated, one-way transfer of knowledge, but rather a series of interactions that can happen anywhere, at any time... This paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning can enrich our students’ understanding of learning, while developing 21st century competencies that are not easily measured through standardized testing.”