

**DATE:** November 26, 2019

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Funds for 2020-2021 Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff

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

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Trish Kolotyluk, Renée Thomson

**REFERENCE:** Teachers’ Collective Agreement - September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2018, Clause 9

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## ISSUE

An allocation of funds from the 2020-2021 operating budget is requested to support the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff, through which teachers would be able to access tuition and leave support for post-secondary coursework as per Clause 9 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 Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff 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 3, 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.”

Through this program, teachers have the opportunity to apply for tuition and leave support to undertake professional improvement activities that are aligned with District Priorities and areas of need. A comparison of successful applicants by year (Attachment I), as well as a synopsis of funds and support granted over the past 10 years (Attachment II) are included in this report.

## RELATED FACTS

- The Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff is guided by Clause 9 of the Teachers’ Collective Agreement.
- Clause 9.2.2 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 9.2.7 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 9.2.8 states the maximum amount that may be allocated for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff is “3/4 of 1% of the annual grid costs, calculated as of the preceding November 30”.

- The Professional Improvement Program application process is rigorous. Assessment of applications is completed by a committee of 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 Edmonton Public Schools, as well as connections to the applicants' professional growth plans and career goals.
- Successful applicants agree to a return of service to Edmonton Public Schools of one year for tuition support and three years for a full-time leave with an allowance; part-time leaves are prorated accordingly.
- For the 2019-2020 Professional Improvement Program, support was granted primarily for courses and programs of study in the areas of leadership, counselling/mental health, curriculum, literacy, 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 2019-2020 Professional Improvement Program was 2.83 per cent.
- In order to facilitate application, review and approval processes for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff, it is necessary that they be initiated a year in advance of the period of support (Attachment III).
- In addition to the support available through the Professional Improvement Program, tuition support for coursework related to core subject areas, second languages and selected priorities established by Edmonton Public Schools will continue to be available to teachers through the Teacher Development Program.
- The Pilot Project on Staff Development Fund, as outlined in Letter of Understanding #4 in the Teachers' Collective Agreement, concludes at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. At this point, it is unknown whether this funding will continue beyond 2019-2020.
- 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 2020-2021 operating budget be approved for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to teachers for the 2020-2021 school year.**

## CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

Student achievement is positively impacted by the application of teachers' professional learning within the classroom and school community. A selection of statements from staff who were granted support through the Professional Improvement Program has been included with this report (Attachment IV). Many program participants reflected on the positive impact their professional learning has had on their ability to meet the increasingly complex needs of their students. Several program participants speak to improved student success with the integration of new strategies and perspectives within their classrooms and schools. Many describe how they are building collaborative relationships with students, colleagues and the community and how they are sharing their learning with colleagues.

For the past several years, the number of teachers hired has increased to keep pace with our growing student enrolment. In the 2010-2011 school year, Edmonton Public Schools employed 5235 teacher certificated staff; this school year, we employ 6280 teacher certificated staff. This has resulted in an increased number of applications for support through the Professional Improvement Program

(Attachment V). In 2010-2011, 60 certificated staff requested support through this program. In 2019-2020, we received 144 applications, which is an increase of 140 per cent over 2010-2011 and an increase of 5.12 per cent over 2018-2019 (Attachment I). It is anticipated that the number of requests for support will continue to grow.

Of the 144 requests for support through this program in 2019-2020, based on the relative strength of the applications, 42 applicants were granted the support they requested and were eligible to receive, 70 were granted partial support and 32 were not granted support.

The Teachers' Collective Agreement specifies the maximum possible allocation for the Professional Improvement Program. For 2019-2020, the approved allocation of \$1,300,000 was 35 per cent of the maximum (Attachment II).

An increased allocation of funds would allow a greater number of teacher certificated staff to develop a deeper understanding of educational theories and practice, curricula and subject content in support of our students. However, given the current provincial economic climate, a request for increased funds for the Professional Improvement Program may not be advisable at this time. An allocation of funds in the amount of \$1,300,000, which is consistent with the approved allocation for the current school year, will allow a portion of our teacher certificated staff to receive support. The anticipated increases in tuition costs for Alberta universities will further impact the number of staff who can be supported through this program.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

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

#### **ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES**

ATTACHMENT I	Comparison by Year: Total Number of Teacher Certificated Applicants and Number of Successful Applicants
ATTACHMENT II	Professional Improvement Program History
ATTACHMENT III	2020-2021 Professional Improvement Program Timeline
ATTACHMENT IV	Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation
ATTACHMENT V	Comparison by Year: Number of Teachers and Number of Teacher Certificated Applicants

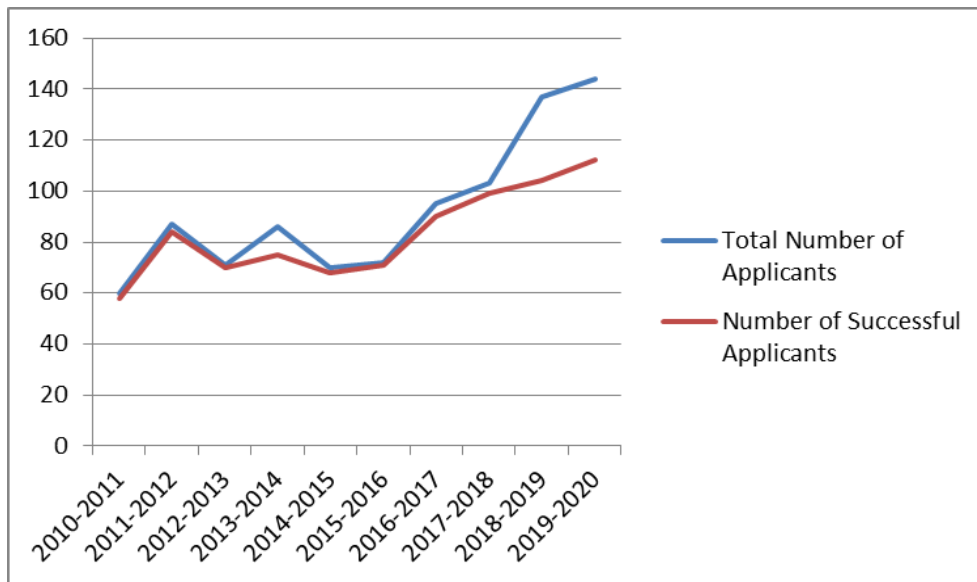
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**PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

**COMPARISON BY YEAR: TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHER CERTIFICATED APPLICANTS AND NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS**

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL
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
2019-2020	144	112

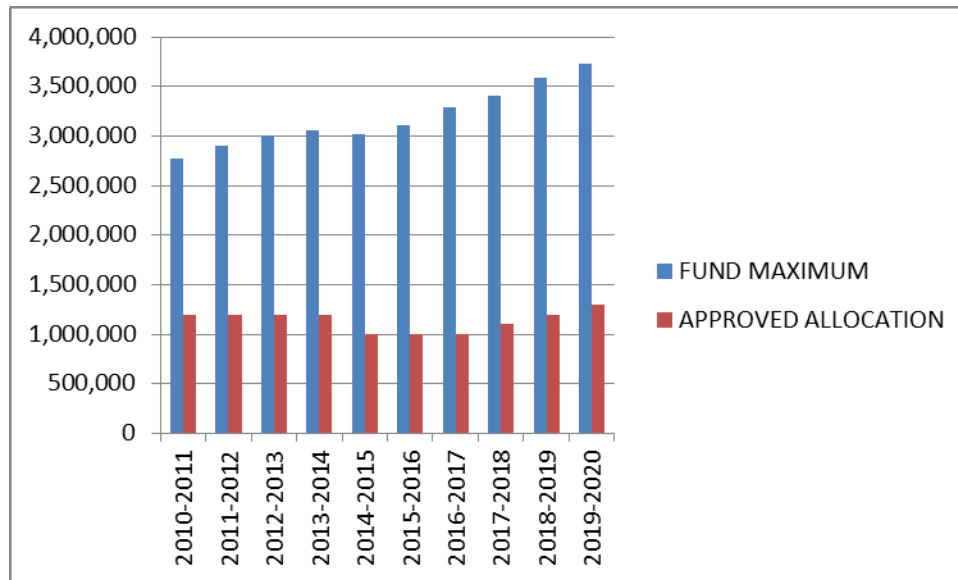
**COMPARISON BY YEAR: TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHER CERTIFICATED APPLICANTS AND NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS**



**PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM HISTORY**

YEAR	FUND MAXIMUM AS PER CLAUSE 9.2.8	APPROVED ALLOCATION	% OF MAXIMUM	APPROVED TOTAL LEAVE FTE	ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR LEAVES	ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR TUITION	TOTAL ACTUAL \$ GRANTED FOR LEAVES & TUITION
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	3,725,511	1,300,000	35%	11.072	679,106	584,120	1,263,226

**COMPARISON BY YEAR: FUND MAXIMUM AND APPROVED ALLOCATION**



## 2020-2021 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff and application package communicated to teachers and made available online	October 25
Information meetings for interested staff (4:15 - 6:00 p.m. Conference Centre, Centre for Education)	November 18, 26
Obtain data to calculate maximums as per Clause 9.2.8 of the Teachers' Collective Agreement	November 30
Due date for applications	January 10
Processing of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receipt of applications confirmed</li> <li>• Background information compiled (previous leaves, degrees, grid placement, years of service, summary of request, projected costs)</li> <li>• Applications prepared for review by committee of leadership staff</li> </ul>	January 13 – 31
Review of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application packages prepared for committee review</li> <li>• Committee workshop conducted</li> <li>• Review of applications completed</li> </ul>	January 13 – 29 January 30 February 7
Compile background information and committee input	February 10 - 21
Recommendation to the Superintendent	February 21
Approval of leaves and tuition support by the Superintendent	February 28
Communication of support granted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters and agreements sent to successful applicants</li> <li>• TM to Board</li> <li>• District News announcement</li> </ul>	March 2 - 6 March 11 March 13

**Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation  
2018-2019 Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff**

**Tammy Berry**

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

“With the advancements and changes in society, the work world that students will enter is uncharted... What emerged from my Master of Education is: authentic and distributive leadership models, motivation, and collaboration weave together to create a supportive culture for teachers to be adaptive in their practices... Leadership can directly impact teacher practices activating an increase in student learning.”

**Jeff Bone**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Secondary Education with a focus on Career and Technology Studies*

“Through my studies... I have been able to expand my skill set and knowledge with respect to career and vocational education and leadership... I have learned how to incorporate key workplace competencies within a broader range of learning activities and I have shared my newfound expertise within my school, catchment and District in this regard.”

**Carley Bowman**

*Western University - Master of Professional Education in International Education*

“Overall, the district benefits from a colossal PIP ripple effect: the graduate education I was supported in attaining has boosted me as a teacher and educational leader of higher quality and character, which will impact all of my students, student teachers and colleagues, present and future for many years.”

**Kerri-Lynn Cayen**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies with a focus on leadership and assessment in numeracy*

“I am more able to support our new leadership team with research based practices and examples that will help us move our work in literacy and numeracy forward, which is necessary to improve student achievement. The course... taken last fall allowed me to examine our Mathematics curriculum more intentionally in terms of how pedagogy shapes teacher practice and has provided me with strategies to support our teachers by looking at interventions to support gaps in student learning and to develop a stronger proficiency in numeracy...”

**Doug Chester**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Psychology with a specialization in School Counselling*

“I am much better prepared, more confident, and without question more qualified to offer student counseling support to the students at my school... I have many more techniques at my disposal to effectively help kids, be they in emotional crisis, from a career counseling/post-secondary perspective, as well as approaching group counseling... I am better able to work effectively within the parent/student framework to both be a voice for students [and] an educated resource for parents. I can't speak enough about all the benefits that I am already, and will continue to access, as a result of the program I've completed.”

**Melinda Cooke**

*University of Alberta - Graduate Degree in Elementary Education - TESL*

"I have a much deeper understanding of curriculum, Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching English literacy in an integrated setting [and] using children's literature to promote learning and understanding of a very complex world."

**Kimberley Dawn Froese**

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

"Armed with a plethora of strategies and a toolkit of resources, the students of my high school have definitely benefitted from my newfound knowledge. Additionally, I have been able to share my ideas with counselors not only in my own catchment, but also across the district through our Career Pathways meetings. As I continue to engage in lifelong learning, implement ideas learned from my graduate studies, and share my knowledge, there lies great potential for the 'ripple effect' across the district."

**Stephanie La France**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Secondary Education with a specialization in Mathematics*

"The courses I took throughout this year allowed me to re-evaluate previous assumptions; become more aware of the complexities of teaching; develop ideas about how to curate a better practice through instruction, relationship building, and assessment; cultivate a better sense of confidence in myself and my practice; and develop skills necessary to take more of a leadership role..."

**Gina MacKechnie**

*University of Waterloo - Masters for Mathematics Teachers*

"My teaching practice has dramatically changed. I have a better understanding of how connections in the mathematics are made and more importantly how to lead my students to forming connections between concepts."

**Melissa Maduro**

*University of Portland - Master of Education with a specialization in Educational Leadership*

"I have learned a great deal about forming strong relationships with colleagues and students, as well as parents and the community at large. I am now confident in planning for multicultural classrooms, creating a safe and inclusive classroom and doing research in order to create educational experiences for students that will strengthen their critical thinking skills while working with their own talents to find success in their learning. I can now be an advocate for change and a leader who can inspire and motivate."

**Elisha Pinter**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies*

"My specific focus on spatial reasoning in mathematics has allowed me to embed my knowledge into numerous professional learning sessions and series for teachers within the District. I believe the information and access to research I have gained and shared with colleagues will help to provide more targeted supports for teachers and administrators."



**Bernice Pui**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Studies with a focus on leadership development and assessment practices*

"I will be using my Masters' research project to identify effective practices that enable educational leaders to foster technology integration to promote authentic learning. This project helps the school and our district in better fulfilling our mandate in Inspiring Education to develop a student who is engaged, ethical, and entrepreneurial."

**Ashleigh Rossiter**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Psychology with a specialization in Special Education*

"This program has deepened my understanding of effective, research-based literacy assessments and interventions. This understanding has enabled me to become a more effective classroom teacher, helping me to better target student areas of need and address [them] appropriately. The benefits of this were demonstrated through in-school data, HLAT, and PAT results. I believe these increased student achievement results will allow my Grade 9 students to find success throughout high school and obtain a meaningful career beyond school."

**Katherine Schock**

*University of Alberta - Master of Library Sciences with a focus on building school culture that supports and develops literacy at the secondary level*

"I went into this program sure that libraries could be important pieces of the learning and programming in schools; now finished, I am wholly convinced that libraries are essential to developing passionate lifelong readers, fostering supported inquiry approaches and critical thinking, empowering teachers to collaborate within and across disciplines to create meaningful learning experiences for students. This year, I began building collaborative relationships with teachers in Biology, English, Social Studies, Work Experience, and ELL. We worked together to scaffold, inspire, and support students in research, digital literacy, volunteering, and reading habits... I aim to continue this work, contributing to a culture of collaboration that empowers teachers to take risks (Priority 2, Goal 3) for student growth."

**Darylle M. So**

*University of Lausanne and Canton Vaud's Pedagogical School - Master of Education*

"Increasing oral-based communication in second language classrooms is my area of focus for my thesis and my goal is to share best practices with colleagues both in the FSL and French Immersion setting as well as other District staff who are involved in second language instruction and support. The ultimate goal is improving our second language programs across our District and providing the supports necessary for both students and teachers in order to succeed in the learning and teaching of second languages so that students can walk away with functional proficiency in the target language."

**Anita Sterne**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Elementary Education with a focus on early childhood education*

"The course work allowed me to refine my pedagogy through broadened learning and teaching approaches including Indigenous perspectives, multimodal formats to facilitate literacy and numeracy research-based approaches, incorporating technology and active global citizenship."

**Karen Teague**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education focusing on Literacy and Leadership*

"...I have been able to share my learning with staff through leading professional development that is focused on literacy. I believe that the support that I have received through the District has not only benefited me, but also my colleagues and most importantly our students."

**John Toporowski**

*California State University - Assistive Technology Certificate Program*

"My course covered Assistive Technology as it relates to education, communication, recreation, and mobility for individuals with disabilities. The course explored types of assistive technologies, functional assessments, and resources. Specifically, it helped me to identify the skills necessary to be an effective Assistive Technology Specialist, such as performing functional assessments, developing appropriate goals and objectives and selecting relevant assistive technology devices and services for my students."

**Jennifer Wolff**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Elementary Education with a focus on music*

"My passion for teaching and learning has grown considerably since my studies began and I saw the effects of my studies manifest themselves directly in my classroom during the 2018-2019 year. My students benefitted in that I was able to provide them with an enriched musical experience as a result of increased pedagogical skill and knowledge."

**Christina Woodbridge**

*University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Psychology with a specialization in School Counselling*

"This professional development has increased my confidence, skills and knowledge to be better equipped to support the increasing number of children and families in our district who struggle with mental health. I have a deeper understanding of different theories and interventions to promote successful change and support for the unique needs, expectations and responses of children... I am much more cognizant and sensitive of cultural differences, and how to approach multi-cultural needs."

**COMPARISON BY YEAR: NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND NUMBER OF TEACHER CERTIFICATED APPLICANTS**

YEAR	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	NUMBER OF TEACHER APPLICANTS
2010-2011	5,235	60
2011-2012	5,250	87
2012-2013	5,257	71
2013-2014	5,189	86
2014-2015	5,343	70
2015-2016	5,450	72
2016-2017	5,621	95
2017-2018	5,851	103
2018-2019	6,115	137
2019-2020	6,280	144

**COMPARISON BY YEAR: NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND NUMBER OF TEACHER CERTIFICATED APPLICANTS**

