

DATE: November 26, 2019

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Funds for 2020-2021 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program

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

RESOURCE STAFF: Trish Kolotyluk, Renée Thomson

ISSUE

An allocation of funds from the 2020-2021 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.

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 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program is 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, exempt staff have the opportunity to apply for tuition and leave support to participate in 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 few years (Attachment II) are included in this report.

RELATED FACTS

- The Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program is aligned with the District Priorities and Cornerstone Values.
- The program ensures that exempt staff members across Edmonton Public Schools have access to opportunities that would serve to enhance their professional capacity and allow them to stay current with industry standards and trends.
- Support for professional development assists in the attraction of exempt staff to Edmonton Public Schools and in the retention of those employees.
- In order to facilitate application, review and approval processes for this program, it is necessary that they be initiated well in advance of the period of support (Attachment III).
- Exempt staff have the opportunity to submit an application for support in January for courses that take place between July 1, 2020, and August 31, 2021, or in September for courses that take place between December 1, 2020, and August 31, 2021, (Attachment III).
- The application process for this program 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 needs. Additional considerations are the

anticipated benefits to 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 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program, requests for support from exempt staff varied as greatly as their roles with Edmonton Public Schools.
- 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.

ACTION REQUESTED

That an allocation of \$150,000 from the 2019-2020 operating budget be approved for the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program for the purpose of granting exempt staff professional improvement leaves and tuition support for the 2020-2021 school year.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

The number of applications for support from exempt staff has remained stable over the past several years. A commitment of \$150,000 is consistent with the annual allocation that has been approved for this program for the past four years. Based on historical data and the number of exempt staff, it is anticipated that this amount will adequately cover the requests for support in 2020-2021 (Attachment IV).

A selection of statements from staff members who were granted support through the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program has been included with this report (Attachment V). Program participants reflected on the benefits of their professional learning and how it has been effectively integrated into their work responsibilities.

NEXT STEPS

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

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I	Comparison by Year: Total Number of Applicants and Number of Successful Applicants
ATTACHMENT II	Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program History
ATTACHMENT III	2020-2021 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program Timelines
ATTACHMENT IV	Comparison by Year: Student Enrolment and Number of Exempt Staff
ATTACHMENT V	Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation

RT:jw

EXEMPT STAFF PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

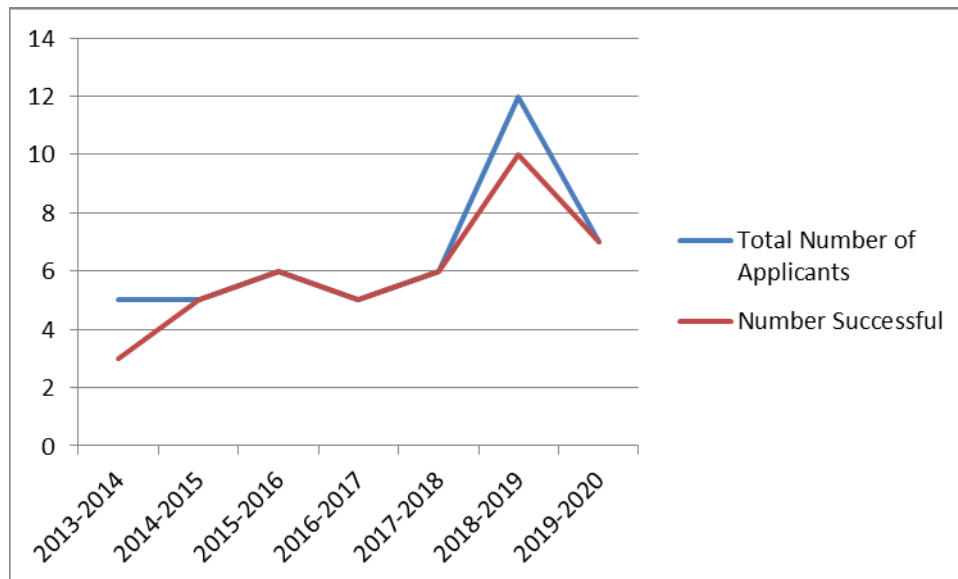
**COMPARISON BY YEAR: TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND
NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS**

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL
2013-2014 ¹	5	3
2014-2015 ¹	5	5
2015-2016 ¹	6	6
2016-2017 ²	5	5
2017-2018	6	6
2018-2019	12	10
2019-2020	7	7

¹ Applications from exempt staff were assessed using processes outlined in the Teachers’ Collective Agreement.

² The Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program was established.

COMPARISON BY YEAR: TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS



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
2018-2019	\$150,000	0.600	\$47,147	\$52,902	\$100,049
2019-2020	\$150,000	0.440	\$32,699	\$37,730	\$70,429

2020-2021 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

JANUARY 2020 APPLICATION INTAKE

(for courses that take place between July 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021)

Activity	Date
Exempt Professional Improvement Program information and application package are communicated to exempt staff and made available online	October 25
Information meeting for interested staff (4:15 - 6:00 p.m. Conference Centre, Centre for Education)	December 3
Due date for applications	January 10
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 13 - 31
Review of applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application packages prepared for committee review • Committee workshop conducted • Review of applications completed 	January 13 - 31 February 6 February 13
Compile background information with input from assessors	February 18 - 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"> • Letters and agreements sent to successful applicants • TM to Board • District News announcement 	March 2 - 6 March 11 March 13

2020-2021 PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIMELINE

SEPTEMBER 2020 APPLICATION INTAKE

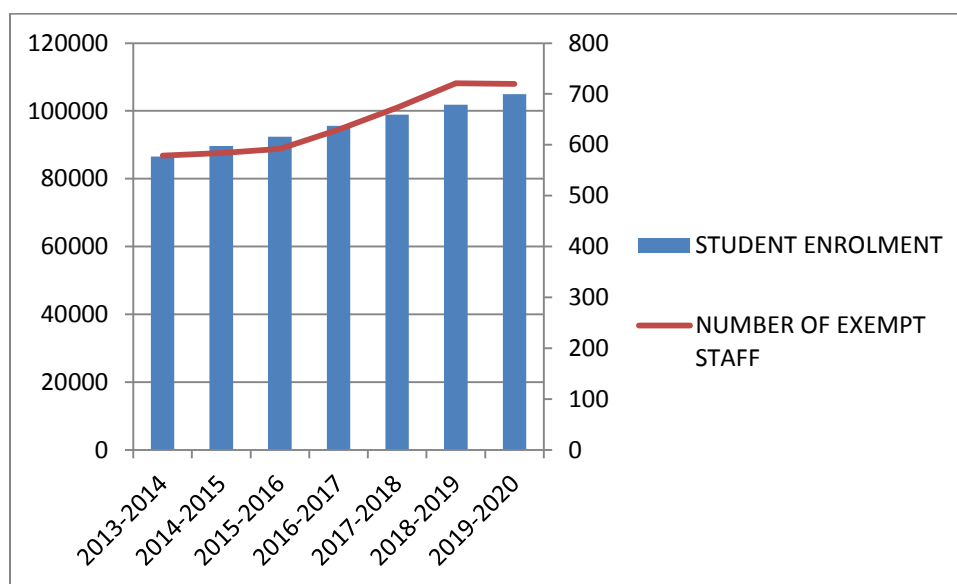
(for courses that take place between December 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021)

Activity	Date
Due date for applications	September 18
Processing of applications	September 21-25
<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• Review of applications completed	September 21-25 September 28 - October 2
Compile background information with input from assessors	September 28 - October 2
Recommendation to the Superintendent	October 19
Approval of leaves and tuition support by the Superintendent	October 23
Communication of support granted	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters and agreements sent to successful applicants• TM to Board• District News announcement	October 26-30 November 10 November 20

COMPARISON BY YEAR: STUDENT ENROLMENT AND NUMBER OF EXEMPT STAFF

YEAR	STUDENT ENROLMENT	NUMBER OF EXEMPT STAFF
2013-2014	86,554	579
2014-2015	89,660	584
2015-2016	92,358	592
2016-2017	95,642	630
2017-2018	98,914	673
2018-2019	101,865	721
2019-2020	104,930	720

COMPARISON BY YEAR: STUDENT ENROLMENT AND NUMBER OF EXEMPT STAFF



**Selection of Reflective Statements: Benefits of Program Participation
2018-2019 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program**

Julia Dalman

University of Alberta - Master of Education in Educational Policy Studies with a specialization in Theoretical, Cultural and International Studies in Education

"...I have been able to create alliances with University of Alberta professors to discuss the creation of a new education course that creates opportunities for teacher training with a specific community focus, connect ELL teachers with amazing new resources as well as funding for resource development, and explore the opportunity of publishing exciting findings regarding the power of Social Innovation Labs as a form of Action Research in education... Work like this helps EPSB continue to be an example of exemplary education practices in Alberta, and internationally."

Julie Kucher

Prosci Canada - Change Management Certification

"I used the tuition support to take training in the area of change management. This has directly benefited both myself and EPSB as I have had a reassignment of duties and support multiple projects in HR by applying CM methodology."

Amie Mangan

University of Alberta - Master of Arts in Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation

"I learned about both automatic and reflective processes, and how the physical and social environment can enhance or limit individuals' opportunities to make healthy choices."

Linda McConnell

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners - Certified Fraud Examiner designation

"I learned about and honed my skills on fraud detection as well as prevention and deterrence. I met several other professionals from across Canada as well as from the US and was able to learn from their experience sharing. Having achieved the designation, I am now able to access a vast network of other professionals in fraud detection as well as resources particular to school boards and public sector entities."

Linda McFalls

University of Alberta - Doctor of Philosophy in Secondary Education with a focus on the interplay of social emotional development, trauma, mental health and neuroscience in educational settings

"Alberta Education has also developed Leadership Quality Standards (2018) outlining principal competencies in order to better target their role in student engagement, learning, and well-being. I hope to contribute to student social emotional health by engaging EPSB school principals as critical partners in my... research in exploring how the neurosciences and right-hemispheric functions of arts, imagination, metaphor and poetic language may contribute to the journey of knowing self and the ways that self influences others both consciously and unconsciously."

Shaminder Parmar

Athabasca University - Master of Business Administration for Executives

"Through the MBA courses I have completed in the past year (Financial Accounting, Global Economics, Human Resource Management), I have improved my ability to lead, negotiate, and market my interests

to stakeholders. Being better at negotiating and marketing the interests of EPSB allows me to improve my ability to obtain favourable land assembly, design, and servicing standards for future school sites. This work is essential to ensuring we obtain strategically assembled school sites for constructing high quality spaces for EPSB staff and students. These skills also allow me to communicate more effectively with public organizations and Edmonton's business community (such as developers and builders) to establish partnerships that are beneficial to the District."

Carol Van Kuppeveld

Royal Roads University - Graduate Certificate in Executive Coaching

"Working to achieve Certified Executive Coach status through Royal Roads University will provide direct benefits to both Leadership Development the unit, and the development of leaders across the District. Our District has been working to develop a coaching culture for a number of years. As supervisor of Leadership Development it is my responsibility to take a key role in visioning around how to grow the culture and to plan for the instruction of staff in coach approach to staff supervision and development. Additionally, I will be providing leadership coaching to first and second year principals. Research clearly supports that this type of coaching speeds leaders' transition in the role of principal, reduces their sense of isolation, improves confidence in decision making and planning."