



POLICY 21

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF SUPPORT STAFF

The Board believes in the importance of the continuing professional development of its support staff. The Board, therefore, supports training activities that will enhance the competence of its support staff members as identified in the goals of the support staff member's professional growth plan.

Specifically

1. A CUPE Professional Growth Committee will be established in accordance with the Collective Agreement to develop procedures to guide the administration of the CUPE Professional Growth Fund.
 - 1.1 The CUPE Professional Growth Committee shall meet a minimum of two times annually.
 - 1.2 The Superintendent or designate shall submit Budget reports to the CUPE Professional Growth Committee Chairs.
 - 1.3 The CUPE Professional Growth Committee shall submit an annual budget report to the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 1357.
2. The CUPE Professional Growth Fund budget will be established by the CUPE Professional Growth Committee and will be considered on a year-to-year basis which runs September 1 through to August 31.
 - 2.1 The schedule for approved expenses and expense limits is to be found in CUPE PG Funding Application Form 21-01.
 - 2.1.1 Accommodation Maximums
 - 2.1.1.1 Accommodations may be paid to the maximum of:
 - 3 nights at \$150.00 per night
 - 2.1.1.2 Shared Accommodation:

When accommodation is shared, each individual may claim an equal portion for the room.

Accommodation maximums will be considered individually, based only on the portion that the individual has claimed.

2.1.1.3 Overnight accommodation, receipt must be attached. An allowance of \$30.00 per night will be paid for the use of private accommodation (no receipt required).

2.1.2 Where the conference fee includes accommodations and/or meals, these items may not be claimed separately.

Applicants may claim:

2.1.2.1 The Conference fee; or

2.1.2.2 The Sum of:

- The maximum Conference fee allowed under this policy; and
- The maximum accommodation costs allowed under this policy; and
- The maximum meal allowances allowed under this policy, per day of conference attendance.

2.2 CUPE support staff members may be entitled to financial assistance for one conference per school year providing funds are available.

2.3 The CUPE Professional Growth Committee may fund those members who have not received financial assistance in the previous school year.

2.4 If a CUPE support staff member attends a first conference at a total claim cost under \$150, they may request to attend a second conference in the same school year, provided funds are available.

2.5 A CUPE support staff member who is unable to attend an approved conference shall immediately notify the CUPE Professional Growth Committee Chair.

3. The CUPE Professional Growth Fund shall be maintained as a single fund in its entirety and shall be administered by the CUPE Professional Growth Committee as identified in Administrative Procedure 439 – CUPE Professional Growth Fund Committee, section 1.1.

4. For the purposes of this policy, CUPE support staff shall include all probationary or permanent employees as defined in the CUPE collective agreement employed by the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, with the exception of CUPE support staff members on unpaid leave or layoff.

5. The CUPE Professional Growth Committee will consider all CUPE Professional Growth leave applications. All CUPE professional growth leaves financially assisted by the CUPE Professional Growth Fund require prior approval by the Professional Growth Committee.

- 5.1 For pre-approval, the CUPE PG Funding Application form (Form 21-01) shall be submitted to the CUPE Professional Growth Committee Chair by email: CUPE1357pg@gypsd.ca a minimum of 10 working days prior to the leave, unless a deadline is specified by the committee. Applications received less than 10 working days, may or may not be approved.
 - 5.2 The CUPE support staff member shall submit a copy of the conference brochure and/or agenda indicating the applicant's session choices with the application form.
 - 5.3 All approved Professional Growth Leaves shall be with pay for the number of hours regularly worked.
6. All activities funded by the CUPE Professional Growth Fund must align with the CUPE support staff member's Annual Professional Growth Plan.
 - 6.1 The CUPE support staff member shall submit a copy of his/her Professional Growth Reflection Sheet (Form 21-03) to the CUPE Professional Growth Committee Chair within 30 calendar days after attending a conference.
 7. CUPE support staff members share responsibility for their own professional development, with the Division. Therefore, the financial support provided by the CUPE Professional Growth Fund is intended to cover a portion of the cost of the professional development activity.
 - 7.1 The CUPE support staff member shall submit a CUPE PG Funding Expense Claim Form (Form 21-02) complete with accommodation, conference registration confirmation, and any other receipts, to the CUPE Professional Growth Chair within 30 calendar days after attending the conference. Reimbursement of expenses will not occur until both the Expense Claim Form and CUPE Professional Growth Reflection sheet have been submitted.
 8. The CUPE Professional Growth Committee will consider applications by CUPE support staff for attendance at convention sessions, conferences, workshops that fulfill the requirements of Guideline 6, above. For the purposes of this policy, convention sessions, conferences or workshops will be referred to as "conferences".
 9. School or Department/Area Projects
 - 9.1 A school or department project is a professional growth activity developed for the staff of a school or department. Other employees may be invited to participate.
 - 9.2 An area project is a professional growth activity that focuses on a topic of interest to employees from several schools or departments.
 - 9.3 Each school or department shall be entitled to one school or department project and employees in a subject/interest area can apply for an area project in addition to the school or department project.

- 9.4 Applications for Request for School or Department/Area Projects (Form 21-04) shall contain a projected budget for the project. No release time will be considered. Funding approved by the CUPE Professional Growth Committee will be allocated for the following purposes:
 - 9.4.1 The expenses and cost of speakers;
 - 9.4.2 The cost of consumable materials for use in the project;
 - 9.4.3 Expenses associated with organizing the project.
- 9.5 The applicant may attend the Professional Growth Committee meeting at which the request is to be considered.
- 9.6 Deadline – The CUPE Professional Growth Committee will consider the request within twenty (20) working days after receiving the application which should be submitted a minimum of six weeks prior to the project.
- 9.7 Financial assistance for School or Department or Area Projects will be paid on the following basis:
 - 9.7.1 The project will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$2000.
 - 9.7.2 The project must be employee initiated and offer benefits to an identified group of employees.
 - 9.7.3 Release costs will not be covered for employees participating in the project.
 - 9.7.4 School, or Department or Area Project costs shall be paid by the school or department at the time of the project and, upon submission of the CUPE Professional Growth School-Area Project claim form (Form 21-05) and Professional Growth Reflection Sheet (Form 21-03) to the CUPE Professional Growth Chair, reimbursement shall occur.
 - 9.7.5 CUPE Professional Growth School-Area Project Claim Form 21-05 and CUPE Professional Growth Reflection Sheet Form 21-03 are to be submitted to the CUPE Professional Growth Chair or designate within 30 days after the project completion.
10. All decisions made by the CUPE Professional Growth Committee are to be communicated to the applicant.
11. Courses are not funded by the CUPE Professional Growth Fund; however, the Board shall reimburse an employee for tuition costs relative to a course taken to upgrade his/her skills as provided by the collective agreement. Administrative Procedure 431 – Support Staff Professional Growth Reimbursement outlines the procedures for qualification, application and reimbursement under this section.

12. Appeals

- 12.1 Requests must be in written format.
- 12.2 Requests must be submitted to the CUPE Professional Growth Chair to be brought to the CUPE Professional Growth Committee.
- 12.3 Requests must be submitted within two weeks of notification of the original application decision.
- 12.4 The applicant submitting the request shall attend the meeting addressing the request, in person or by videoconferencing.
- 12.5 An applicant may appeal a committee decision to the Board of Trustees.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, School Act

Developed: November 2005
Amended: March 4, 2008
Amended: June 20, 2012
Amended: June 19, 2013
Amended: January 15, 2014
Amended: June 18, 2014
Amended: August 26, 2015
Amended: August 23, 2017