

Building a better Alberta



June 3, 2011

Successful Northern Student Teacher Bursary extended

Annual \$8,000 grants attracting teachers to schools in northern Alberta

Edmonton... A two-year financial support pilot program designed to encourage student teachers to seek jobs in northern Alberta schools is being hailed as a success and has been extended.

The Northern Student Teacher Bursary is funded by the Alberta government and administered by the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC).

The initiative is designed to attract students in a post-secondary teacher-preparation program to northern Alberta communities by providing scholarships of \$16,000 (\$8,000 in each of the last two years of their studies.) Successful applicants must live and work in the north for three years after graduating.

Practicum funding is also available to bursary recipients to a maximum of \$2,000 (\$1,000 per year) to help offset increased costs of travelling and living in the north.

The extension for the 2011-12 fiscal year will provide bursaries for 20 more students at a cost of \$336,000.

In 2009 - the first year of the program - 56 bursaries were awarded. Of those, 12 students completed studies in the spring of 2010 and 10 are currently working for a participating school division. Five more students finished in December 2010 and two of them are working in northern school jurisdictions. Of the remainder, 37 completed their studies this spring. The other two will finish in December 2012.

In 2010, an additional 20 two-year bursaries were awarded. These students plan to complete their studies between December 2012 and December 2013.

Applications forms for these bursaries will be available as of Aug. 1. Applications must be submitted to the NADC by Oct. 15. Bursaries will be paid out to successful applicants in January 2012.

To apply online, download an application or for more information about the Northern Student Teacher Bursary, visit www.benorth.ca or visit Alberta Education's website at www.education.alberta.ca (click on Administrators then Education Sector Workforce Planning).

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Backgrounder: Northern Student Teacher Bursary Frequently Asked Questions

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Northern Student Teacher Bursary Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Northern Student Teacher Bursary?

The *Northern Student Teacher Bursary* is designed to attract and retain graduating teachers to northern Alberta communities by providing bursaries of \$16,000 (\$8,000 annually) to teacher preparation program students in the last two years of their studies. It will also offer financial support to help students with the cost of practicum placements in northern school jurisdictions.

Who is involved in the development and administration of the Northern Student Teacher Bursary?

Alberta Education, in collaboration with the Northern Alberta Development Council and the Alberta Scholarships Program, is responsible for the development and implementation of the *Northern Student Teacher Bursary*. Superintendents of northern school jurisdictions helped determine the eligibility criteria and selection processes for prospective bursary program students.

Who can apply for the bursary?

Eligible program participants are Canadian citizens enrolled in the final two years of a teacher preparation program in an accredited Canadian post-secondary institution. While all students who meet the minimum criteria are strongly encouraged to apply, preference will be given to students who:

- Demonstrate strong academic achievement;
- Express an interest in living and teaching in a northern community;
- Have a major or minor in any of the following courses:
 - Chemistry
 - Construction/Carpenter Trade
 - Cosmetology/Esthetics
 - Counselling
 - Cree
 - Drama
 - Electro-Technologies/
Electrician
 - Fabrication/ Welder Trade
 - Fashion/Design Studies
 - Foods/Cook Trade
 - French Immersion
 - Hairstylist Trade
 - Mathematics
 - Mechanics/Auto Service
Technician Trade
 - Music Elementary
 - Music/Band Junior/Senior
High
 - Physics
 - Science
 - Special Education

Are there certain academic requirements for students to be considered for this bursary?

To be considered, students must be in good academic standing after the first two years of post-secondary study.

Why is the Northern Student Teacher Bursary necessary?

Teacher attraction and retention in northern, rural and remote Alberta locations is a significant workforce challenge. Without sufficient numbers of qualified teachers who live and work in the community, schools struggle to provide high quality programming for students. The *Northern Student Teacher Bursary* is expected to help attract and retain teachers to northern and rural communities.

When will selection and bursary disbursement take place?

Applications must be submitted to the Northern Alberta Development Council by Oct. 15. Screening and selection will take place in October. Students will be notified of their application status by November. Bursaries will be paid out to successful applicants by January 2012.

What is the teacher practicum funding?

Students who are awarded bursaries must commit to carrying out their teacher practicum within a participating northern school division. The practicum funding is designed to help students with the cost of travel and basic living expenses they incur while fulfilling this commitment. Funding is available up to established maximum amounts based on the practicum duration and the type of expenses incurred.

How much money is Alberta Education providing for this program?

Alberta Education has allotted \$336,000 over a two-year period beginning in 2011. This funding is part of Budget 2011.

What are participants expected to contribute?

Upon graduation, students will be required to provide a return service commitment for an agreed length of service in one of Alberta's northern school jurisdictions.

Which communities are participating in the *Northern Student Teacher Bursary* program?

There are 21 school jurisdictions eligible to participate in the program. A map of the participating communities can be found on the Northern Alberta Development Council's website at www.benorth.ca by following the link to the NADC's boundaries.

How will students be informed of the *Northern Student Teacher Bursary*?

The Northern Alberta Development Council is leading the promotion of the program and is working on a variety of activities, including:

- A web page on the Northern Alberta Development Council website - www.benorth.ca;
- Collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders including post-secondary teacher preparation programs to promote the program;
- Posters to be displayed at teacher preparation institutions;
- An information session to be held in the fall; and
- Use of social networking sites including Facebook.

Where can I find more information on the program?

Additional information and application forms for the bursary program can be found on the Northern Alberta Development Council bursaries website at www.benorth.ca. Applications will be made available to students in early September 2011.

For more information, please contact:

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