



ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL

BOARDING HOME PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Revised: May 1, 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Athabasca Tribal Council Boarding Home Program is to provide placement services to students attending high school in the Alberta region. The boarding home family provides room and board to a high school student. The objective is to have the student integrate with the family while being provided with residential accommodation and academic/personal support in a safe and supportive environment while the student pursues his/her high school education.

2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for entry into the Boarding Home Program, the student must meet the following criteria:

- a. The student must be a registered member of one of the Athabasca Tribal Council (ATC) First Nations:
 - Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
 - Chipewyan Prairie First Nation
 - Fort McMurray First Nation #468
- b. The student's permanent place of residence must be with his/her parents or legal guardians on Reserve or on Crown Land at the time of application.
- c. The student is from an ATC community that does not have educational facilities and/or regular school services/programs available to the student, thereby, making daily school attendance from the parental home impossible (e.g. high school, special education or vocational programs). ***The parents/guardians must obtain a letter from the local school advising that the program the student wishes to pursue is not available locally.***
- d. The student's parents/legal guardians have completed all application forms, arranged for a suitable boarding home, and registered their child in a high school.
- e. The student must be registered in Grade 10, 11, or 12 at the time of application.
- f. The prospective boarding home parent(s) must have an R.C.M.P and Child Welfare clearance ***prior*** to being accepted as boarding home parents.
- g. The student has read, understood and agreed to abide by the rules of the Boarding Home Program.

3. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING FOR INELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Off-Reserve Students

Students residing off-reserve must apply to the Northland School Division for funding.

Out-of-Province Students

A student who is residing outside of the Province of Alberta must apply to their respective School Divisions.

Private School Students

Students wishing to attend private schools must apply directly to Indian and Northern Affairs.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

Step 1: Obtain Application Package

The parents and student must arrange a meeting with the Education Coordinator to obtain an application package from the Athabasca Tribal Council office.

Step 2: Complete and Return Application Forms and Documents

Ensure that both parents and boarding home parents have ***completed and signed*** the appropriate documents. Boarding home parents must provide records of R.C.M.P and Child Welfare clearance. ***No boarding home payments will be issued until these records have been received by the Education Coordinator.***

IMPORTANT: It is the parents' responsibility to gather and submit both the parent and boarding home parent applications and all supporting documents. Incomplete applications and/or missing supporting documents will be declined for funding and returned to the sender.

The annual application deadline will be June 30th. Please ensure all applications are in by this date.

Step 3: Arrange for Boarding Home Visit

Arrange for a boarding home visit with the Education Coordinator. Before funding is approved, the Education Coordinator must meet to view the boarding home and to discuss the terms and conditions with the parents, boarding home parents and the student.

Once the Education Coordinator deems that the home is suitable for the student. The student will be admitted into the Boarding Home

Program and monthly remuneration will be issued on the 7th of every month for the duration of the academic year (September – June).

5. TYPES OF SUPPORT

Room and Board

Boarding Home Parents shall receive \$1,000/month to cover the costs of the student's room and board. This amount will be direct deposited or mailed out on the 1st of each month.

School Supplies

The Education Coordinator will provide each student with a package of school supplies at the beginning of the school year. Replenishment supplies will be available at the beginning of the second semester.

Registration Fees and Bus Passes

The Athabasca Tribal Council will cover fees for school registration and bus passes. This amount will be paid directly to the school.

Seasonal Transportation

The student will be entitled to receive \$180 per semester for seasonal travel.

6. CRITERIA TO REMAIN IN THE PROGRAM

To remain in the Boarding Home Program, the student must:

- a. Maintain a full course load.
- b. Pass a minimum of 75% of course load.
- c. Maintain regular attendance at school with no more than five (5) blocks of absences per month unless otherwise excused by the parents or boarding home parents.
- d. Adhere to program, home, and school expectations.
- e. Attend school, counseling sessions and/or workshops recommended by school or the Athabasca Tribal Council.
- f. Maintain a positive attitude toward peers, boarding home parents, school and program personnel.

7. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Education Coordinator

The Education Coordinator will be responsible for the following duties:

- Coordinate and supervise the Boarding Home Program.
- Meet with parents and boarding home parents to conduct initial placement visits and discuss terms and conditions of the placement.
- Provide guidance services to students.
- Work as a liaison person between the school, student, and parents.
- Provide attendance and progress reports to parents.

Parents/Legal Guardians

Parents/Legal Guardians shall be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining close contact with their children, by telephone and home visits, while they are away from their community.
- Attend parent/teacher interviews and maintain close contact with school personnel and Education Coordinator on their child's progress.
- Complete a "Parental Waiver" if they would like to take their child/ward from the boarding home on weekends or if they allow their child/ward to spend a weekend in town with friends. The signed waiver must be left with the boarding home parents.
- Supply their child with all toiletries, spending money, clothing, and any other items the child considers necessary for day-to-day living.
- Make necessary travel arrangements for their child traveling back to their home communities during the weekend and/or holidays.
- Ensure their child has completed medical, dental and eye examinations prior to relocating. Potential medical complications should be identified, addressed and disclosed to the Boarding Home Parents and Education Coordinator.
- Inform Boarding Home Parents and Education Coordinator of any outstanding commitments and responsibilities of their child (e.g. probation, community service).
- Notify the Education Coordinator when their child is relocated during the school year.

***IMPORTANT – if Parent(s)/Guardian(s) opt to voluntarily move their child/ward from one boarding home to another during the school year, the

Parents)/Guardians(s) must notify the Education Coordinator BEFORE or by the 21st of the month prior to the move. Otherwise, the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be responsible for the Room and Board payment of \$1,000, to the new Boarding Home Parent(s), for the first month their child/ward moves in.

- Provide their child with a calling card or allow them to call collect.
- Ensure that their child has money for extra-curricular activities.

Boarding Home Parents

Boarding Home Parents are responsible for the following:

- Obtain an R.C.M.P and Child Welfare clearance. (R.C.M.P clearance can be obtained in person at the local R.C.M.P detachment. Child Welfare clearance can be obtained in person at the Child and Family Services department of Athabasca Tribal Council office. These records must be directly forwarded to the Education Coordinator at the Athabasca Tribal Council.)
- Establish and discuss expectations and house rules (e.g. curfew, chores, meals) upon the student's arrival at the boarding home.
- Ensure a high standard of care for the student who is placed in their care by creating a warm and supportive home environment.
- Provide a quiet place for the student to study and to check that the student's homework is being done.
- Ensure that the student is being fed well-balanced and nutritious meals including school lunches.
- Provide the student with the use of a bed and all beddings, towels, bathroom and laundry facilities.
- Ensure that the student maintains regular attendance at school and to contact the school when the student has a legitimate reason for being absent.
- Liaise with parents, school authorities, and Education Coordinator to resolve difficulties the student may be experiencing during the academic year.
- Take the student to hospital for treatment, should he/she experience a serious illness or injury. To ensure coverage for medical care, please remember to identify the student as Treaty/Status. In addition, the Education Coordinator must also be immediately notified of the incident.
- Ensure that a student who is a minor is never left alone in the house overnight.

- Do not give students an allowance or loan money. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child has money for extra curricular activities.
- Notify the Education Coordinator when there are changes to the number of people residing in the home. Individuals who have moved in after the boarding home student takes residence must also undergo the R.C.M.P and Child Welfare background check. These records must be sent to the Education Coordinator.

Boarding Home Students

Boarding Home Students are expected to carrying out the following responsibilities:

- Behave in an acceptable manner and show respect, understanding, and tolerance toward others.
- Maintain regular school attendance with no more than five (5) blocks of absences per month unless otherwise excused by the parents or boarding home parents.
- Complete all homework, assignments, and household chores.
- Abide by the rules of the home, Boarding Home Program and school.
- Ask for help when struggling with academic or personal issues.

8. LIVING IN THE BOARDING HOME

Sleeping Arrangements

The student may be expected to share a room with a peer of the same sex. Student's privacy will be respected. However, boarding home parents have the right to inspect the room when necessary.

Meals at Residence

Boarding home parents will set meal schedules. A student, who will not be home for mealtime, should give proper notice to the boarding home parents.

Telephone Use

The student is expected to respect household use of the telephone. All calls should be kept to a maximum of ten (10) minutes unless a mutual agreement has been made between the boarding home parents and the student.

A student wishing to make long distance calls must have his/her own calling card or call collect. The student may not charge long distance calls or accept collect calls on the boarding home parents' telephone number.

Chores

A rotating schedule of household duties may be arranged in the home to ensure that the student makes a meaningful contribution to the home in which he/she is living, just as would be expected of a family member.

Neatness of Room and Personal Hygiene

The student is expected to keep his/her room clean and tidy. The student must wash his/her own clothes and respect bathroom routines.

Use of Television

Use of the television by other members of the home must be respected. A schedule of household use should be established, especially in cases where there is only one television. The student must keep in mind that study time must be a priority.

Curfew

The student is expected to be home by 10:00pm during school nights and midnight during weekends. Prior consent must be obtained from the boarding home parents if the student wants to stay out past curfew.

A student who persistently violates curfew or fails to come home at night without informing the boarding home parents of his/her whereabouts may be immediately withdrawn from the boarding home program.

9. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The student must attend school every day unless there are legitimate reasons for being absent (e.g. illness). The parents or boarding home parents must phone or send a written explanation to the school to provide the reasons for the student's absence. The boarding home parents are expected to see that the student in their care attends school daily.

A student who incurs 5 or more unexcused absences in one month may be withdrawn from the Boarding Home Program. Please refer to the "Disciplinary Action" section of this handbook for an outline of the course of action the Education Coordinator will take to discourage the student from further missing school.

Student attendance will be monitored by the Education Coordinator and monthly attendance reports will be sent to the parents and boarding home parents.

A student who is withdrawn from two courses due to school attendance policy violations will be withdrawn from the Boarding Home Program.

10.ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Study Sessions

To attain academic success, students must have adequate study time. A student should spend a minimum of two hours a night reading, reviewing, and completing assignments. The scheduled study time must be arranged by the parents and boarding home parents.

Student Report Cards

Report cards are issued quarterly by the high school to the boarding home parents and to the Education Coordinator. Copies of the report cards will be sent to parents in their home communities.

11. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR and DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Addressing Unacceptable Behaviour

The student is expected to behave properly at school, in the boarding home and in the community. This includes obeying the laws and rules at school and at home. Students must show respect, consideration, and tolerance towards others.

When a student demonstrates unacceptable behaviours, the boarding home parents must first discuss the problem with the student immediately. Do not allow the problem to get too serious before dealing with it. Remember, the Education Coordinator is there to assist if the problem cannot be resolved within the home. The Education Coordinator will implement the progressive disciplinary actions outlined below.

Disciplinary Actions

- Step 1: A student who regularly gets into trouble or causes constant disruptions will receive a verbal warning from the Education Coordinator.
- Step 2: If the adverse behaviour persists, the student will receive a written warning From the Education Coordinator outlining the concerns and consequences Which may include loss of privileges. Copies of letters given to the student will be sent to the parents and boarding home parents.
- Step 3: If the student does not show any improvements, a further written warning from the Education Coordinator will be issued. The student may be required to attend mandatory counseling and/or be placed on a behaviour contract. Students who refuse counseling or break the contract will be withdrawn from the program.

Step 4: The final step will be removal from the Boarding Home Program. Students will not be eligible to reapply until the following academic year. The decision to re-admit the student will be based on the severity of the infraction and at the discretion of the Education Coordinator.

12. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Athabasca Tribal Council has a zero tolerance for drug and alcohol abuse. If a student is caught with illicit drugs or alcohol either in school or in the boarding home, the student will be withdrawn from the boarding home program.

Re-entry into the program will only be granted when the student has sought help through addictions counseling and has demonstrated a commitment to recovery. A letter from a doctor or counselor will be required to validate the student's progress.

13. APPEAL PROCESS

To ensure fairness and equitable treatment, the following appeal process may be used if a student, parent(s)/guardian(s) or boarding home parent(s) are unsatisfied with a decision made by the ATC Education Coordinator.

- i. The appealing person(s) must write and submit a Letter of Appeal, to the ATC Director of Education, within (10) business days of the occurrence of the situation/issue(s) he/she feel justified to appeal (e.g.: student termination from the Boarding Home Program).
- ii. The Letter of Appeal should be detailed in explaining the situation/issues(s) with specific reference to the section of the Athabasca Tribal Council Boarding Home Program Handbook that is disputed.
- iii. The ATC Director of Education, in consultation with the ATC Chief Executive Officer, will review the Letter of Appeal and any supporting documents. A written response will be sent to the appealing party within seven (7) business days from the date the Letter of Appeal was received of the ATC Administration decision. If the party is still not satisfied, he/she can further appeal to the ATC Board of Directors using the same process described above.
- iv. The ATC Board of Directors decision will be final. The appealing party will be notified of the Board of Directors decision in writing within seven (7) business days of receiving the 2nd Letter of Appeal.

CHIPEWYAN PRAIRIE FIRST NATION
BOARDING HOME STUDENT INTAKE PROCEDURE

Preamble

The primary purpose for transferring students to Fort McMurray or other regions within Alberta is to attend high school. While attending high school, some students experience difficulties and, in some situations, lead to early student withdrawal and relocation back to their home communities. The students then attend the community high school; however, their tuition dollars do not come with them.

To assess student readiness for the challenges presented in relocation, attending high school, succeeding in school, and remaining focused, the following criteria has been established:

Review Panel

The review panel will consist of;

- One representative from the sending school
- One representative from the Athabasca Tribal Council
- Two representatives from the Chipewyan Prairie First Nation

Purpose

To determine preparedness for the challenging expectations of a high school program, the panel will review the following:

- Grade 8 and 9 report marks
- Grade 9 attendance
- Previous attitude and behaviors
- Additional information deemed sufficient to make an informed decision.

To facilitate the smooth transfer, relocation, and resignation process, the panel will convene no later than June 15th of each year to select students relocating to outside high school.

**APPENDIX A
ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL
BOARDING HOME PROGRAM APPLICATION**

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Name of Parents/Guardians: _____ Date: ____/____/____
Month Day Year

Address: _____ Phone: (H) _____
_____ (W) _____
_____ (Cell) _____

Place of Residence: Reserve Crown Land Off-Reserve

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name of Student: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
Month Day Year

Treaty #: _____ Alberta Health Care #: _____

First Nation: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

| <u>Name of 3 Recent Schools Attended</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Grade Completed</u> |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ | _____ |

I hereby make application for my child/ward to attend school in:

Name of School: _____ Location of School: _____

Grade: _____ Expected Start Date: _____ Expected End Date: _____

Please indicate any health and medical conditions or learning disabilities your child may have.

Reason for Application:

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Relationship to Student

Date

APPENDIX B
ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I authorize the Athabasca Tribal Council and/or the boarding home parent(s) to carryout the following on my behalf:

1. To grant permission for medical, surgical, or dental treatment of which my child/ward may require. This may include examination or tests, immunization, inoculation, anesthetic, admission to and treatment in the hospital. I understand that the need of any of the above will be determined by a competent medical authority.
2. To apply for admission of my child/ward to secondary/vocational school or special training if necessary and for the Athabasca Tribal Council officials to arrange the school.
3. To obtain necessary school information such as report cards and attendance.

In addition, I will assume the following responsibilities:

1. To make the necessary arrangements for home placement of my child/ward.
2. Although my child is in the care of the boarding home parent, I will continue to fulfill the parental/guardianship duties and responsibilities of my child as outlined in the Athabasca Tribal Council Boarding Home Handbook.
3. I agree to ensure my child/ward has adequate and proper clothing, which will be required for school programs, and to meet the varying climate conditions while my child/ward is in the boarding home.
4. I agree to provide my child/ward with any additional monies required for personal spending.
5. I understand that boarding home parents are not responsible for the payment of long distance or for collect calls. It is my responsibility to provide a calling card for my child/ward.
6. I understand that the child/ward will be expected to abide by boarding home rules previously established by myself, the home, and the Athabasca Tribal Council. Should my child not live up to these expectations, he/she may be withdrawn from the Boarding Home Program.
7. I assume responsibility for encouraging my child/ward to attend school regularly, to obtain school information, and to attend parent and teacher interviews.
8. I understand that regular home visitations at my child/ward's residence are welcomed, provided I make prior necessary arrangements.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Relationship to Student

____/____/____
Month Day Year

APPENDIX C

ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL
BOARDING HOME STUDENT CONTRACT

I, _____ agree to the following conditions while
(Full Name of Student)

Attending school and living as a guest in a boarding home:

1. To respect and adhere to the rules of the boarding home parent(s), school authorities, and the ATC Education Coordinator.
2. To attend school every day and to notify my boarding home parent should I have a legitimate reason for being absent.
3. To devote effort and study time to the courses I am enrolled in and to complete all assigned school work to the best of my abilities.
4. To inform my boarding home parents and the Education Coordinator of any circumstances which are interfering with my performance at school.
5. I agree to accept my responsibilities as outlined in the Boarding Home Program Handbook.

Student Signature

Date

**APPENDIX D
ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL
BOARDING HOME PROGRAM APPLICATION**

BOARDING HOME PARENT(S) INFORMATION

Name of Parents/Guardians: _____ Date: ____/____/____
Month Day Year

Address: _____ Phone: (H) _____
 _____ (W) _____
 _____ (Cell) _____

RESIDENCE INFORMATION

Type of Home: Apartment Townhouse Mobile Home House Other

Number of Bedrooms: _____

List of occupants in the home:

| Name | Relationship to BH Parent | Age |
|----------|---------------------------|-------|
| 1. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. _____ | _____ | _____ |

R.C.M.P & CHILD WELFARE CLEARANCE

All potential boarding home parents must have an R.C.M.P and Child Welfare security clearance to qualify for entry into the Boarding Home Program. Please visit your local R.C.M.P detachment and the Athabasca Tribal Council Child and Family Services office to initiate the application process.

Room and board remuneration will not be issued until these records have been received and approved by the Education Coordinator.

Original receipts for costs associated to the clearance may be submitted to the Education Coordinator for reimbursement.

 Name of Boarding Home Parent(s) Signature Date ____/____/____

**APPENDIX E
ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL**

STATEMENT OF BOARDING HOME PARENTS

As boarding home parents, I agree to the following conditions for the duration of time the Athabasca Tribal Council high school student resides in my home:

1. To provide a home environment and standard of care that is safe, comfortable and stable.
2. To provide meals and lunches that are nutritious and well balanced.
3. To ensure the student receives prompt medical care when required and to notify the Athabasca Tribal Council and parents in the event of illness or accident.
4. To ensure to the best of my ability that the student's physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs are met.
5. To report to the Athabasca Tribal Council any significant behavioural or social changes in the student.
6. To allow the Athabasca Tribal Council to visit my home on a regular basis to monitor the placement and to ensure satisfactory care is being provided.
7. To provide a quiet time and place to encourage study on a regular daily basis.
8. To ensure that the student attends school each day.
9. To notify the school when the student will be absent.
10. To treat all student information provided by the school or counselors in a confidential manner.

Name of Boarding Home Parent(s)

Signature

____/____/____
Date

APPENDIX F



**ATHABASCA TRIBAL COUNCIL
EDUCATION OFFICE**
9206 McCormick Drive, Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 1C7
Phone: (780) 791-6538 ext: 243 Fax: (780) 791-0946

**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE
ENROLLMENT/ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

I consent to release all attendance, enrollment and academic information to the Athabasca Tribal Council for the duration of this 20____/20____ academic year.

Name of Parent/ Guardian (Please Print)

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Name of Student (Please Print)

Signature of Student

Name of Education Coordinator

Signature of Coordinator

_____/_____/_____
Date