

PIF Frequently Asked Questions

All terms of the current Collective Agreement and Staffing Guidelines will apply during the term of the PIF grant

1. Who is eligible to apply?

Teachers with 3 or more years with the District

Teachers who are not currently on Sabbatical Leave.

Teachers who have not received PGS Tuition Funding this traditional calendar year.

2. When are the grant period deadlines?

Friday noon: Grant Period 1 – Closes last Friday in September:

Friday noon: Grant Period 2 - Closes second Friday in January

Friday noon: Grant Period 3 - Closes last Friday in April

The PIF Committee typically meets shortly after the grant period deadlines to review and approve applications.

When are applicants notified?

Applicants will typically receive notice of their successful application within one month of the granting period deadline. Unapproved applications will be provided with a rationale.

3. How much money might I receive for PIF Funding?

Up to \$10,000 CAD maximum per granting period (in any combination of tuition and leave funding).

4. Does the PIF committee provide a list of recognized universities or colleges?

The PIF committee does not provide such recommendations, but recognized institutions must be accredited post-secondary institutes.

5. How do I apply?

PIF applications are available from Human Resources on the [ASK](#) portal or through the ATA Local 55 website www.atalocal55.ca under the heading Funding - PGS & PIF

6. How is the leave administered?

Applicants can submit their applications at any time during the granting period. The committee meets 3 times per year to review applications and will then notify applicants of the results, typically within one (1) month of the review meeting.

7. What are the selection criteria?

The selection committee reviews the applications based on their professional experience, educational background, preparation for the proposed leave or studies and potential benefits to teaching and learning for the teacher, the student and the District. The criteria further expects that all courses are accredited (can be transferred between institutions) and from a recognized post-secondary institute or the equivalent.

8. What happens if I do not complete the program?

An applicant who has been approved for a PIF grant or leave or both but is unable to complete the proposed activity must inform the Superintendent of Personnel in writing prior to the starting date.

Should a teacher become ill, or require access to any other type of leave while on their PIF, they will immediately report the illness and make a request for the appropriate type of Leave using HR Self-Service. The PIF Leave may continue after the new leave has been completed and after having informed the Superintendent of Personnel.

N.B. Failure to inform the Superintendent of People Services could result in forfeiture of all funding eligibility for 2 years.

9. While on PIF leave do I receive full pay and benefits?

Yes

10. Which types of institutions are eligible for tuition?

Only accredited post-secondary institutions.

11. Can I take on-line courses?

Yes

12. Can I apply for PGS and PIF funding?

Applicants **may** apply for **PIF and PGS Conference and Workshop Funding** in the same granting period year, but **CANNOT** apply for both PIF Tuition and PGS **Tuition** funding, **within the same granting period.**

13. Can I use PIF funding for conferences or workshops?

No – please apply for PGS (Professional Growth Subsidy) Workshop Funding

21. Does the District dictate the areas of study?

The District may indicate teaching areas that are in high demand, but this does not impact the application or selection process. Teachers are encouraged to pursue areas of professional interest. If District and personal goals align everyone benefits.

22. Do I have to do a professional development presentation following the grant?

There is a general expectation that you share your PIF experience in one or more of the following ways:

- At the school level
- On a Professional Development day
- Through a Specialist Council
- Mentorship opportunities
- Teachers' Convention
- Presenting at a conference
- In a written format

24. Will a PIF grant leave cover expenses such as travel, food, books, or other costs?

No, the PIF Tuition funding covers tuition costs, graduate student fees (if itemized on the institution's statement of account) and technology fees (if itemized on the institution's

statement of account). It also covers guest teacher leave costs if applied for and granted under the "Leave" portion of the application. Other costs (books, student union fees, etc) will not be covered.

25. If I am eligible for one leave day per course registered in, can I take them one at a time to reduce guest teacher costs to the approx.. \$235.00 daily rate?

- Yes, if the leave days are approved.
- Only the days used will be honoured, there is no residual time, therefore you cannot bank unused days.
- Leave days must be utilized **within the course dates**.

26. How are the additional Guest Teacher costs calculated?

The second day of any ongoing assignment will be at the grid rate for the guest teacher.

In the event that the same day to day assignment is interrupted by a PD day, a holiday or Teachers' Convention the second day of the assignment immediately thereafter will be at that teacher's grid rate until such a time as that assignment ends.

27. Can I add my teacher paid day or unspecified day(s)?

This will depend on the nature of your proposal and the total number of days away from your current assignment which will require District approval.

28. Can part time teachers apply?

Yes, if you have been employed for a minimum of 3 years

29. Are administrators eligible for PIF leave?

Yes - Assistant Principals and Vice Principals should inform their Principal of the requested leave and Principals should inform their Area Director.

The final decision resides with the Superintendent of People Services.

30. Are teachers on leave eligible to apply?

It depends: if you are currently on leave and have a continuing contract you may apply, however if you are going to be on leave during the granting period you are ineligible for the PIF grant.

31. Is the PIF Tuition Grant a taxable benefit?

No

32. How long does it take to process my reimbursement?

Please note that processing time of reimbursement are relative to the quality of the reimbursement submission. Processing of check requisitions is between four (4) and six (6) weeks once the submission has been received and reviewed. Receipt submission forms and leave submission forms are available at www.atalocal55.ca .

Refer to "PIF GUIDELINES" for further information.

Submit this application to:
Professional Improvement Fund

Email - pif@ataloc55.ab.ca