



# Understanding Program Unit Funding (PUF) for Alberta's Children

## FAQs about PUF

### What is PUF?

- Program Unit Funding aka 'PUF' is a grant provided by Alberta Education to school authorities for children with severe disabilities (based on formal diagnosis) who are **older than two years, eight months of age, and younger than six years on September 1.**
- PUF is provided for diagnosed children who require specialized supports before beginning Grade 1.

### How does a child qualify for a PUF designation?

- The school authority requires a **letter from a qualified professional** (physician, pediatrician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or speech-language pathologist) **confirming a diagnosis or delay, developmental assessments, or descriptions of concerns** involving significant impacts on the child's learning.
- The school authority applies for PUF from Alberta Education.
- **Alberta Education** approves requests for funding based on the information provided to them from the school authority.



**Minimum 3 Years of age before September 1, up to a Maximum of 6 years before September 1**

Call **780-225-4311** to speak with Amy Corser, GYPSD's Director of Inclusive Learning

## FAQs about PUF

### How long can a child receive PUF support?

- Children can qualify for the PUF designation for **up to three years in total based on their age when they start to access PUF:** two years in a Pre-K program and one year of kindergarten if they meet the Special Education Coding Criteria as per Alberta Education for a severe disability/delay.

### What support does the PUF designation provide?

- Children with a PUF designation receive an **Individual Program Plan**. The plan identifies developmentally appropriate goals for the PUF child.
- The goals are constructed in consultation with educators, specialists, and the child's parents.
- Children receive a range of therapy supports, depending on the delay or diagnosis, and support from an educational assistant.
- The Rehabilitation/Educational Specialists who support the child and inform the plan may include:
  - Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP)
  - Occupational Therapists (OT)
  - Psychologist
  - Behavioural Specialists
  - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultant
  - Blind and Low Vision Consultant
- A certificated teacher takes responsibility for the plan to ensure the child receives instruction, services, and support to meet the individualized program plan (IPP) goals.



**Minimum 3 Years of age before September 1, up to a Maximum of 6 years before September 1**

Call **780-225-4311** to speak with Amy Corser, GYPSD's Director of Inclusive Learning

## FAQs about PUF in GYPSD

### How does a family apply for a PUF designation in Grande Yellowhead Public School Division?

- PUF designation requires a **letter confirming a formal diagnosis or delay.**
- Parents with concerns about their child's development should share their concerns with a **physician and request an assessment as early as the concern is noted.**
- Once the family has the letter confirming the delay or diagnosis, parents **contact the elementary school principal** where a **Pre-K** program is offered.
- The school authority applies for the child to receive **PUF.**



### We missed the Pre-K window. Is it too late for PUF in kindergarten?

- PUF is available for diagnosed children who are **less than 6 years old on September 1.** Contact your local elementary school principal or call **GYPSD's Inclusive Learning Director, Amy Corser, at 780-225-4311.**

### What else should a family know about PUF in GYPSD?

- PUF is a grant to support eligible children. PUF children are integrated into Pre-K or Kindergarten programs with age-related peers. Their program plan is implemented and monitored by a certificated teacher and/or Learning Support Teacher (LST).
- Children must be enrolled in the school jurisdiction by September 30.
- Parents are **key partners in PUF success** and must be actively involved in the process.
- Each child's program goals are informed by their specific and unique educational needs.
- Parents need to inform staff if their child is not yet potty-trained.
- In GYPSD, Junior Kindergarten programs are available for both 3 and 4-year-olds; kindergarten beginning at 5 years.
- **Contact Amy Corser at 780-225-4311 for details specific to your community.**



**Minimum 3 Years of age before September 1, up to a Maximum of 6 years before September 1**