



**Stswecem'c
Xget'tem**
FIRST NATION

1. Post-Secondary Student Support Policy

1.1 General Policy

- 1.1.1 Stswecem'c Xget'tem is committed to creating employment and education opportunities for SXFN members, both now and in the future.
- 1.1.2 SXFN requires expertise in the areas of finance and commerce, forestry, computer science, economic development, environmental science (Stewardship), education and engineering. Post-secondary students must take the time to carefully consider educational planning and careers that are needed within the SXFN organization now and in the future.
- 1.1.3 Graduates who are successful in applying for and receiving a letter of offer with SXFN may receive a signing bonus on the condition that one must remain in the position for at least one year and live within the community.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of the Stswecem'c Xget'tem First Nation (SXFN) Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) Policy is to ensure that students have up-to-date information about the program and that financial support is available to post-secondary students attending university or college.
- 1.1.5 Any questions about the contents of this guide may be addressed to the Education Director or by email to: educationdirector@xfn.ca.

1.2 Post-Secondary Student Support Program

- 1.2.1 The Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) provides non-repayable financial support to status First Nations students interested in obtaining a certification, diploma or degree from a community college, under-graduate studies, advanced professional or post-graduate studies at eligible colleges and universities in Canada and at First Nation Educational Institutions.
- 1.2.2 SXFN encourages all students to give thought to their educational studies and the reasons why they are choosing a particular diploma or degree. The Education Director or an educational counsellor are available to discuss options and to help to

ensure that the university or college provides certifications or degrees that will lead to future employment.

- 1.2.3 Students who make application for post-secondary financial assistance are required to complete the Application Forms on the website and submit all supporting information to the Education Director.

1.3 Eligibility Criteria

- 1.3.1 To be eligible to apply for financial assistance under the SXFN PSSSP, applicants:
- a. must be a registered member of SXFN. Students are required to submit proof of status by providing a copy of a status card; and
 - b. must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible Post-Secondary Program of studies and must maintain satisfactory academic standing as determined by the post-secondary institution.

1.4 Eligible Post-Secondary Studies

- 1.4.1 Eligible post-secondary studies include for example, sciences, education, arts and so on. Students may also apply to the University and/or College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP) prior to entering in a degree or diploma program.
- 1.4.2 Eligible post-secondary institutions are degree, diploma or certificate-granting institutions that are recognized by a province or territory in Canada or abroad. They include educational institutions affiliated with, or those that deliver post-secondary programs by arrangement with a post-secondary institution, as well as First Nations designated and directed institutions. If the program of studies is in a foreign institution, the student must provide evidence that it is recognized in Canada as an acceptable post-secondary program of studies.
- 1.4.3 UCEPP programs must provide the student with the necessary courses to attain the academic level for post-secondary institution entrance.
- 1.4.4 Delivery method may be in-class, e-learning, distant learning, or virtual learning as long as it meets all eligible criteria of the university or college.

1.5 Levels of Post-Secondary Studies

- 1.5.1 Post-secondary student support is provided for levels of post-secondary study, which are as follows:

- Level I:** University College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP) (12 months)
- Level II:** Community College, Certificate or diploma programs (12 to 24 months)
- Level III:** Undergraduate university degree programs (40 months)
- Level IV:** Advanced or professional degrees, master programs (24 months)
- Level V:** Doctoral programs (24 months)

1.5.2 Acceptance into the university preparatory programs do not impact on a student's availability to attend an undergraduate program.

1.6 Limits of Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary Studies
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1.6.1 Assistance for books, travel and living allowances may be provided to students to complete one program at each level as noted above.

1.6.2 The duration of assistance in 1.6.1 is defined by the university/college official length of the program in which the student is enrolled.

1.6.3 Students enrolled in Level II may include assistance for additional degree programs at the bachelor level.

1.6.4 Students who have completed Level II, III, IV programs, with or without financial assistance for their studies, are ineligible for program assistance for lower levels.

1.6.5 Student financial support will not exceed the limits set in the above paragraphs. Where students change programs within one of the Levels, the academic years used for each program within each Level will be counted towards their overall eligibility for financial assistance.

1.6.6 Students who become eligible for assistance and who have previously completed a portion of post-secondary studies without assistance from this program may receive assistance for the balance of their program of studies but will not be reimbursed for previous expenses.

1.6.7 Retroactive funding is not permitted for studies in a previous fiscal or academic year.

1.7 Funding Priorities

1.7.1 SXFN reserves the right to make financial support to students based upon the following priorities:

- (1) **Priority One:** students who are presently enrolled in post-secondary studies, having successfully completed the previous term in post-secondary studies, and are continuing their studies;

- (2) **Priority Two:** any eligible applicant whose application for assistance has been deferred or refused due to a lack of program funding in the previous year and is reapplying for support;
- (3) **Priority Three:** any eligible high school graduate or mature student wishing to enroll in college or university for the first time;
- (4) **Priority Four:** any eligible applicant who has previously completed an undergraduate degree, community college certificate, has taken a break in studies and wishes to return to post-secondary studies.

1.8 Post-Secondary Sponsorship - The Annual Application Process
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- 1.8.1 Continuing students are required to submit an official transcript of final marks from the previous term of studies and a letter stating they plan to continue studies at the same university. All students are responsible for promptly providing the final transcripts for the term to the Education Director. Delays in submitting transcripts may impact receipt of financial assistance from SXFN.
- 1.8.2 All new applicants must submit both a fully completed 'Application for Post-Secondary' form and an official confirmation of acceptance letter from a recognized post-secondary institution. Incomplete application forms will not be reviewed or considered for financial assistance until all required documentation is submitted to the Education Director.
- 1.8.3 Eligible applicants whose application for assistance has been deferred due to lack of program funding in the previous year must re-apply for financial support.
- 1.8.4 Returning students who have left their studies will be required to include transcripts and marks with application, as an official confirmation of acceptance/re-enrollment from the institution they plan on attending.
- 1.8.5 If a student fails a course, SXFN will not provide additional funds to repeat the course.
- 1.8.6 Any outstanding educational funds owed to SXFN will need to be repaid in full before the application is considered.
- 1.8.7 When making an application, students must clearly state the term they are seeking financial support for, ie. Fall Term/Winter Term/ Spring Term and/or Summer Studies.

1.9 Application Deadlines

1.9.1 The following application deadlines apply to all students. Funding may only be provided for applicants who have met these deadlines:

Fall Term - September to January	July 20 th of each year
Winter Term - January to April	November 20 th of each year
Spring Term – May to June	April 20 th of each year
Summer Term – July to August	May 20 th of each year

1.10 Application Forms

1.10.1 Post-Secondary application fillable forms are found on the SXFN website (<https://sxfn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Application-Information.pdf>). Please complete the forms and submit them to: educationdirector@sxfn.ca.

1.10.2 The application forms can be submitted prior to receiving formal letters of acceptance from a college or university. All supporting documentation must be submitted before final approval is granted by the Post-Secondary Education Committee.

1.11 Allowances

1.11.1 A full-time student attending a recognized post-secondary institution and approved for an allowance is entitled to one of the following:

Type of Student	Amount
a. Single Student Rate	\$1,500.00
b. Married student with employed spouse: each additional dependent child (\$100.00)	\$1,700.00
c. Married student with unemployed spouse: each additional dependent child (\$100.00)	\$2,000.00
d. Single student with 1 dependent child: each additional dependent child (\$100.00)	\$1,850.00

1.11.2 Full-time students who are eligible to receive a regular monthly allowance must establish a bank account for direct deposit. The first cheque will be deposited into the account starting August 30th and the last cheque will be deposited on March 31st.

1.11.3 Students employed on a full-time basis are not entitled to an allowance.

- 1.11.4 Students receiving on-campus room and meal fees will receive a pro-rated living allowance.
- 1.11.5 A copy of your Child Tax Benefit Entitlement is required if you are claiming dependent children.

1.12 Tuition

- 1.12.1 SXFN pays the tuition directly to the college/university. SXFN provides a sponsorship form directly to the college/university to cover all costs related to tuition, mandatory fees, books, materials, and transit fair. The exception is that SXFN does not pay for medical and dental; these expenses can be paid individually or chosen to opt-out of.
- 1.12.2 Some universities and colleges may enter a Third Party Billing Agreement with SXFN. Students must contact the Institution's Financial Department to determine if they do Third Party Billing and inform the Education Director. In the case of Thompson River University (TRU), the student is provided with a copy of the tuition invoice for the semester with the understanding that the student will forward the invoice to SXFN for payment.

1.13 Books

- 1.13.1 SXFN may sign a 'Third Party Billing Form' provided by the university or college, which includes an amount for books with a defined amount that is directly related to your program and the campus bookstore.
- 1.13.2 Students may select the books required for the Program and the university bookstore will charge the expense to the student's account. However, if for any reason students are required to purchase additional books, they will be required to pay up front and send the receipt to the Education Director for reimbursement.

1.14 Tutoring

- 1.14.1 Students experiencing difficulties with a course may apply for tutoring assistance. Students are required to find a tutor for the specific course, identify the expense per hour plus tutoring time, and forward a plan to the Education Director for approval. The Education Director will discuss the plan with the student, and approval of the plan and funding will be required prior to hiring of the tutor.

1.15 Transcripts

1.15.1 The due date for submission of transcripts are as follows:

Fall Term - September to January	January 20 th of each year
Winter Term - January to April	May 20 th of each year
Spring Term – May to June	July 20 th of each year
Summer Term – July to August	September 20 th of each year

1.15.2 Failure to submit transcripts may result in the discontinuation of financial assistance from SXFN. Students having difficulties obtaining transcripts on time must contact the Education Director.

1.15.3 Incentive Awards will not be awarded until transcripts have been submitted to the Education Director.

1.16 Financial Support

1.16.1 SXFN financial support to post-secondary students is dependent upon the program having the budget to support all students and that students are in good standing with their university or college.

1.17 Annual Incentives Awards

1.17.1 **Academic Achievement Award:** Students enrolled in Level I and Level II with a grade point average of B (3.0) or above are eligible to receive a maximum of \$500.00.

1.17.2 **Incentive Award:** Students enrolled in Level III and Level IV with a grade point average of B (3.0) or above are eligible to receive a maximum of \$1,000.00.

1.17.3 **Strategic Studies Scholarships:** Students enrolled in a program of studies such as commerce, business, environmental science, computer sciences, forestry, and engineering with a sessional grade point average of B (3.0) or above are eligible to receive a strategic studies incentive up to a maximum of \$1,000.00.

1.17.4 **Graduation Award:** Students enrolled in Level I to Level IV who successfully obtain their certificate, diploma, degree are eligible to receive an award of \$500.00. This is a one-time award for each eligible student.

1.17.5 **Incentive Awards:** Incentive awards will not be awarded until transcripts have been received by the Education Director.

1.18 Bursaries, Grants, Scholarships

1.18.1 Many scholarships, bursaries and prizes are awarded to the general population of most post-secondary institutions throughout Canada. These awards are often advertised in the school calendars. Here are a few organizations supporting aboriginal post-secondary students:

- Indspire Award: www.indspire.ca has a number of opportunities for applications during the year
- Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth: www.ccab.com
- RBC Royal Bank Aboriginal Student Awards Program: www.rbc.com/careers/aboriginal

1.19 Graduation

1.19.1 SXFN Council encourages all graduates to apply for employment opportunities that are listed on the SXFN website.

1.20 Academic Probation/Dismissal/Withdrawal Policy

1.20.1 **Academic Probation:** Any student, whether full-time or part-time, whose grade point average has fallen below a 2.0 (C) in any given year of study will be placed on Academic Probation. All students placed on Academic Probation are expected to improve their academic standing with their university/college to maintain continued sponsorship. Students must provide a statement from the university/college that they are no longer on Academic Probation to the Education Director.

1.20.2 **Academic Dismissal:** Any student required to withdraw from a university or college program of studies will be required to wait a minimum 12 months before a new application will be considered by the Education Director.

1.20.3 **Voluntary Withdrawal:** Any student who voluntarily withdraws from their program of studies or drops from full-time to part-time studies, whether permanently or temporarily, must contact the Education Director immediately.

1.20.4 **Note:** In all cases it is the student's responsibility to contact the Education Director as soon as possible to discuss options and to ensure that all documentation is submitted as soon as possible. Delays could affect future post-secondary funding.

1.21 Disputes and Grievances Guideline Process

- 1.21.1 The Grievance process is designed to provide an orderly and effective process for the consideration and resolution of student grievances. A student should discuss the complaint with the Education Director.
- 1.21.2 The grievance is to be submitted by the student in writing to the Education Director.
- 1.21.3 The student will clearly state grounds for the grievance.
- 1.21.4 The Education Director will investigate the grievance or dispute within 14 days of receiving the written notice from the student.
- 1.21.5 The Education Director will formally respond by letter to the student with a plan of action, if required.
- 1.21.6 If warranted, the Education Director may provide copies of all relevant material to the Band Administrator for any further action, if required.
- 1.21.7 If warranted, the Band Administrator will bring to the attention of Chief and Council the grievance/dispute that may require political intervention.
- 1.21.8 Notwithstanding the right to grieve, it should be understood that such a process does not carry the authority to change the federal government’s post-secondary funding policies and guidelines.

Process	Date
First Reading	December 21, 2021
Second Reading	January 18, 2022

Effective Date: January 18, 2022