



SELKIRK FIRST NATION

Post-Secondary Education

STUDENT SUPPORT POLICY

EFFECTIVE November 1, 2015

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Selkirk First Nation affirms its commitment to assist SFN Citizens to obtain post-secondary education.

This Policy sets out guidelines and eligibility criteria respecting assistance.

Selkirk First Nation may provide assistance to SFN Citizens who are ordinarily resident in Canada, regardless of whether the Citizen has status under the *Indian Act*. All assistance is subject to the availability of funds.

By doing so, Selkirk First Nation hopes to enable SFN Citizens to:

- Gain access to post-secondary education
- Achieve their greatest education and career potential and become self-reliant by obtaining the qualification needed to pursue individual careers

Scope:

Selkirk First Nation's assistance may be available to eligible Students wishing to undertake a qualifying program of study at a qualifying post-secondary education institution (see definition p. 5).

Assistance will be provided in accordance with this policy.

Selkirk's support may be provided in three ways:

1. Administrative Assistance (see Part I);
2. Direct Financial Support (see Part II);
3. A Scholarship Program (see Part III);
4. General (see Part IV)

1.1 Recognition of students:

The Selkirk First Nation will recognize learning achievements of Selkirk FN students once each year.

Definitions:

Citizen	-means the person is on the official Citizenship list of the Selkirk First Nation
Dependant	-means someone who is reliant upon someone else for their basic wellbeing and necessities of life excluding spouses
Distance education	-means a program or course that can be completed using the internet and mail where assignments and submissions are done through email or regular mail
Enrollment “J” Number	-is the number assigned to a citizen when they are enrolled by SFN as a Selkirk First Nation Citizen. Citizens can find out their enrollment number by contacting the SFN Enrollment Officer at 867-537-3331
Full time student	-means any student enrolled in three or more accredited courses per semester
Manager	-refers to the Selkirk First Nation Education Manager or his/her designate
On-line course	-means a course of study that is taken on a computer through the internet
Ordinarily resident	- means someone who normally resides in Canada as evidenced by a Health Care card for a Canadian province or territory, a utility bill, a driver’s license, tax assessment or rental agreement, etc.
Part-time Student	-means any Student enrolled in less than three accredited courses per semester
Qualifying Institution	-means a post-secondary education institution included in the “Master List of Designated Educational Institutions” published by the Government of Canada
Qualifying Program	-means a course of study leading to a certificate, diploma or degree granted by a Post-secondary education institution including university/college entrance preparation.

Student	-means a Citizen who is enrolled, or is seeking to enroll, in a qualifying Program
Transcript	-the official institutional record of a student's marks

2. INTAKE

2.1 Advertisement of Student Support:

Student Support information will be advertised at least 30 days prior to the intake dates of March 15, May 15 and November 15 respectively in the SFN Newsletter and other Yukon Media sources and posted in SFN offices as well as on the Selkirk First Nation website.

2.2 Application Process:

The SFN Post-Secondary Student Support program will provide interested applicants with a Student Resource Package. The Student Support Policy and Student Resource Package will be available at the SFN Administration Building, and on the Selkirk First Nation website at www.selkirkfn.ca.

SFN citizens living outside of Pelly Crossing can be mailed this information by contacting the SFN Post-Secondary Student Support Program (SFN PSSSP) at the following address:

Selkirk First Nation
Attn: SFN Education Program
Box 40
Pelly Crossing, Yukon Territory, Canada, Y0B 1P0
Phone: (867) 537-3331
Fax: (867) 537-3902
Email: [education2 @selkirkfn.com](mailto:education2@selkirkfn.com)

The following forms must be completed and returned to the SFN PSSS Program before the application deadline dates:

- Student Application Form;
- SFN Sponsorship Agreement;

Incomplete applications will not be accepted, students must provide all supporting documents with the application.

Students **must** provide with the application:

- a) documented proof of acceptance or a conditional letter of acceptance into a qualifying institution or other qualified program;
- b) a copy of the course outline;
- c) an original copy of most recent transcript(s) if a continuing student;

If all the required information is not included in the application; the application will be deferred until the next intake date (see dates 2.1) or may be rejected. Students are responsible for updating their application if they wish their application to be considered at the next intake.

Funds spent by the applicant prior to the application being approved are not eligible for reimbursement.

2.3 Application Deadlines:

All applications are date stamped upon receipt.

Application deadlines are as follows:

March 15	Summer Semester (starting May to August);
May 15	Fall Semester (starting September);
November 15	Winter Semester (starting January)

3. ASSESSMENT & SELECTION:

3.1 Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible for assistance under the Student Support Program the following criteria must be met:

1. Must be a SFN Citizen who is ordinarily resident in Canada and not funded for Post-secondary assistance from any other First Nation.
2. Must have met university, college or other approved program entrance

requirements and be accepted for enrolment in the program of studies. A letter of acceptance or conditional letter of acceptance must accompany the application for assistance.

3. All courses for student support must be delivered by accepted, recognized institutions as listed in the “Master List of Designated Educational Institutions” published by the Government of Canada.
4. Applications from returning students who owe SFN money from previous student support may be refused further support until a repayment plan has been completed.

3.2 Previously Sponsored:

Students who have been previously sponsored but either withdrew or were unsuccessful in their previous program of studies, and/or are seeking another choice of studies **may** be considered for assistance.

3.3 Selection Priority Criteria:

All applicants are given fair and equitable consideration under this policy. If the applications for assistance exceed the available budget, applicants will be prioritized according to Selection Priority categories.

Approval of applications for full time and part time students shall be based on priority categories. Sponsorship is contingent upon the availability of funds. If demand exceeds funding, the following priorities will be considered.

The following defines the Selection Priority Categories in order of priority:

- 1st) Continuing students who are enrolled in approved post-secondary programs of study; this includes undergraduate students entering graduate programs, without a break in studies. Students with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher (75%) will be given preference.
- 2nd) High school graduates and college entrance preparation programs
- 3rd) Students returning to school after a break in their program of studies
- 4th) Students who have been previously sponsored but either withdrew or were unsuccessful in their previous program of studies, and/or are

seeking another choice of studies.

3.4 Notification:

When an application is approved, deferred or rejected, applicants will be informed in writing within 5 days of the application being reviewed. The written notification will outline:

- a) assistance approved and SFN requirements, or
- b) explanation for rejecting or deferring the application.

When an application is deferred to the next intake, a written notification by mail or email will be provided to the applicant outlining the following:

- a) confirmation of receipt of application;
- b) date the application was deferred; and
- c) reasons for deferment.

The deferred files will be reviewed at the next SFN EC review meeting unless that is too late for the program being applied for. Students must advise the SFN PSSSP if they want their application to be considered at the next SFN EC meeting. If the reasons for deferment are other than lack of SFN funds; students must address the reasons for deferment when they request to have their application considered again. If the reasons for deferment are not resolved, the application will not be considered.

If a student does not agree with a decision by SFN, the best option for resolution is to use the appeal process described in section 10.

Students are cautioned that turning to social media or abusive emails to air grievances may constitute a criminal offense and may jeopardize future funding. SFN is required by law to maintain a harassment free workplace and takes this obligation seriously. Students are encouraged to use the appeal process outlined in Section 10 of this policy to address grievances.

Applicants are advised to avoid committing funds or making expenditures before their applications are approved. Assistance or reimbursement for monies spent before approval will not be considered.

4. Decision Making

4.1 Student Registry:

To ensure privacy, all student files will be handled in confidence and all SFN EC members and staff must sign an Oath of Confidentiality. The SFN PSSS Program is responsible for maintaining a confidential student database. This database shall include the following information:

1. Student's name;
2. Institution attending;
3. Program of study;
4. Financial support provided;
5. Type of certification/diploma or degree received;
6. Additional information;
7. Enrollment Number (J)

4.2 SFN Education Committee: (SFN EC)

SFN EC is a standing advisory committee empowered by the SFN to guide education and training support for all SFN citizens. It is comprised of four SFN citizens and one alternate appointed by the Council. The SFN EC Committee will be chaired by the SFN PSSSP who will advise the Committee but will not vote on committee recommendations. The SFN EC and SFN Education staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy and shall adhere to the Terms of Reference of SFN EC. SFN EC has the mandate to review and recommend student applications for funding. SFN may from time to time identify priority courses of study demanded by economic or environmental requirements of the First Nation. The SFN EC also evaluates this policy on an annual basis and recommends changes or additions to it.

Due to the high demand for Student Support, the SFN EC will review all student applications and where applicable recommend assistance in accordance with this Policy and within the budget allocated to the Student Support program. The SFN EC also acts as an initial appeal body for decisions made by SFN Education staff.

SFN EC reviews applications for scholarships and makes recommendations to Council.

The SFN EC meets to review applications in March, May and November of each year.

PART I

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE

The SFN PSSSP will be the point of contact for all applicants and will be the official responsible for administration of this Policy.

Students are advised to discuss their education or training aspirations with the SFN PSSSP as early as possible to optimize the chances of obtaining funding assistance.

5.1 Accessing Alternate Funding

The SFN PSSSP will keep up-to-date on sources of funding and eligibility criteria and assist students to identify and apply for alternate sources of funding for education.

5.2 Ensuring Pre-requisites are Met

The SFN PSSSP) will assist applicants to identify prerequisites for the chosen area of studies. This assistance may include career counseling, upgrading, job experiences and college preparation.

5.3 Case Management

Students may be assisted using a case management approach when deemed appropriate. The SFN PSSSP may assist the Student to identify and access other appropriate support resources when identifying what a student may need in order to enhance the potential for success in their studies.

PART II

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

The following lays out the financial assistance available to students pursuant to this policy.

The purpose of the Student Support Policy is to **assist** students to complete post-secondary studies. It is intended to supplement, not replace other support that may be available to students.

All assistance provided pursuant to this policy is subject to the availability of funds and normal SFN expenditure approval processes. Funding for attending institutions outside of Canada are paid at the same rate as for Canadian institutions.

6.1 Amount of Assistance:

The following defines the different types of assistance available to full time students pursuant to this policy for tuition fees, books and supplies, travel, and living allowance.

Tuition

Tuition assistance will be based on actual costs. The following guidelines apply to tuition payments:

- a) eligible students will have their tuition, registration and related fees paid directly to the institution;
- b) where the tuition rates are above \$ 3,000 per semester, tuition costs exceeding this amount are the student's responsibility.

Living Allowance

Living allowances for full time students will be based on the rates set by Council, see PSSS Funding Table.

Books

An allowance for books is provided, see PSSS Funding Table.

Travel

Travel assistance for student living in the Yukon and attending an "Outside" Institution is provided, see PSSS Funding Table. Receipts must be submitted for reimbursement.

Part-time and Online Students

Part-time students or students taking online courses will only be eligible for books and tuition.

7. STUDENT OBLIGATIONS:

7.1 Sponsorship Agreement:

Upon approval of sponsorship, all students will be required to sign a binding Sponsorship Agreement; any breach of this agreement may mean the student may be required to repay all or a portion of funds issued.

7.2 Performance Expectations:

All students are expected to:

- a) successfully complete the training
- b) maintain good attendance
- c) improve performance during a probationary period
- d) access appropriate resources if referred by the SFN PSSSP (eg. counseling or tutorial assistance)
- e) make every effort to utilize their education upon graduation

7.3 Notification of Changes:

Students **must** notify the SFN PSSSP promptly of the following:

- a) amendments to course syllabus (addition or deletion of courses);
- b) changes in program of studies;
- c) change in status from full-time student to part-time student or changes to online courses;
- d) change of address, telephone, email, etc.;
- e) change of dependant status; or
- f) immediate notice of withdrawal or dismissal.

Failure to provide prompt notice to the SFN PSSSP may result in penalties as per Section 8.2(2).

The SFN PSSS Program may request additional documents or information to

update the status of applicants. Students must comply with such requests to continue sponsorship.

7.4 Payment Conditions:

Funds will be provided to the student and/or the Post-Secondary institution, when:

- a) all required documentation is received and the application is complete
- b) SFN EC and SFN PSSSP approve the application ;
- c) a signed Sponsorship Agreement has been received by the SFN PSSS Program .

7.5 Payment Schedule:

All students approved for financial assistance will receive their funding on a semester-by-semester basis. Living allowances will be paid out on the 24th of each month. Failure to submit a due Transcript of Marks will result in a delay in receiving assistance.

Exceptions for **extraordinary** circumstances will be at the discretion of the SFN Education Committee.

7.6 Overpayment & Reimbursement:

1. Where the SFN PSSSP has determined that an overpayment of assistance has occurred, the SFN PSSSP will immediately notify the student in writing and the student shall either immediately repay the overpayment or sign a mutually acceptable repayment plan;
2. When a student withdraws without just cause from a course of studies for which assistance was approved; the student shall repay SFN such portion of the assistance that is considered an overpayment by the SFN PSSSP;
3. Where a student owes money to SFN; the student and SFN PSSSP will mutually agree on and sign a repayment plan;
4. Where fraudulent action is suspected, the SFN PSSSP will refer the matter to the SFN Education Committee and legal action may be taken by SFN.
5. SFN will not accept applications for assistance when there is an outstanding debt to SFN PSSSP or previous PSE Programs; unless a signed repayment plan is in place and being honored.

8.0 MONITORING PROCESS:

8.1 Duration of Support:

The following applies:

1. A student's funding will be reviewed by SFN EC if it is deemed that the student is taking longer to complete their program of studies than what is normally required for that program. Students can only receive assistance for a total of 60 months. If a student has to exceed 60 months to complete their studies they may apply for an exception to this rule if they have valid reasons. If approved, the student must enter into a new funding agreement with SFN that will include a commitment to assist SFN with their learned skill for an agreed period of time.
2. Students must advise the SFN Education Program if they have failed a course and must repeat the course in order to finish their program of studies. SFN may not provide funding for repeat courses as determined by the SFN selection priority process.
3. If a student is determined to have physical or mental disabilities as determined by a qualified practitioner as the reason for non-completion or extended period of study, the Education Department will seek to identify what support is needed to address barriers to success.

8.2 Performance:

In order to maintain funding sponsorship the SFN EC requires all students to have a reasonable performance record as evidenced by transcripts. Failure to comply may result in student probation or funding cancellation.

The following applies:

1. Medical exemptions to justify unsatisfactory performance will apply only when written notice is received from a physician;
2. When sponsorship is revoked due to course or program failure, withdrawal after the withdrawal deadline or dropping out without notifying SFN PSSSP; a student will be required to repay any outstanding funding received from SFN on a pro-rated basis.
3. SFN EC **will not** recommend future support until full repayment is received by SFN or a repayment Agreement has been signed and is being honored.

If a student's progress indicate failure to fulfill his/her responsibility as a sponsored student, the SFN PSSSP may take the following actions:

- a) Give a verbal warning;
- b) Give a written warning;
- c) Financial assistance revoked and repayment of outstanding assistance required (SFN EC approval required); and

8.3 Tutorial Assistance:

All students are required to maintain a passing grade point average (GPA) or maintain levels required by the Institution to graduate from the program.

If a student realizes that they need tutorial assistance to maintain an acceptable GPA, they may submit a special request on the prescribed form to the SFN PSSSP if the assistance is not already provided by the institution. If the assistance needed exceeds the allowance for tutoring in the rate schedule, the SFN EC will consider the request. Tutorial assistance may also include the assistance of an Elder if assistance is required for a language course.

8.4 Transcript of Marks:

Students are required to provide the SFN PSSS Program with an original Transcript of Marks issued by the Institution at the end of every semester and at the end of the program. **Continued sponsorship is dependent on the SFN Education Program receiving the Transcript of Marks.**

PART III

SCHOLARSHIPS

Selkirk First Nation may recognize students who excel in their program of studies by providing a scholarship.

The number of scholarships granted in any one year will depend upon number of applications and available budgets.

9.1 Eligibility

Must be a Selkirk citizen enrolled in a post-secondary program of studies at the

Bachelor's level or above.

Must have maintained a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

9.2 Application Process

Students can apply for a SFN scholarship by writing to the SFN PSSSP.

Applications must include:

- a copy of Transcript of your most recent marks or record of studies
- a letter or proof of acceptance into the program for the next term
- a statement giving your reasons for choosing your field of study, your future career and employment goals and commitment to completing the program

Applications must be received by June 1 to qualify for the school year beginning in September.

9.3 Approval Process

Applications will be reviewed by SFN EC and recommendations made to the Chief & Council, and decisions made by June 1st of each year.

9.4 Level of Support

Successful applicants may receive a scholarship subject to available budgets. Note: this will not affect the student's living allowance. .

9.5 Recipient Responsibility

Recipients must report any changes in circumstances or studies.

In the event that students withdraw from their studies at any point, they must immediately return a pro-rated portion of the scholarship. Failure to do so may result in future ineligibility for student support.

SFN scholarships are classified as income by Revenue Canada and must be declared when filing an income tax return.

PART IV - GENERAL

10. APPEAL PROCESS:

Any applicant may appeal any decision affecting their Student Support by writing to the SFN PSSSP advising of the reasons for the appeal. If a student does not agree with a decision by SFN, the best option for resolution is to use this appeal process. Students are cautioned that turning to social media or abusive emails to air grievances may constitute a criminal offense and may jeopardize future funding. SFN is required by law to maintain a harassment free workplace and takes this obligation seriously.

The appeal process will begin when such a letter is received by the Manager. The letter must be received within 30 days of the applicant being advised of the decision which they wish to appeal. After 30 days have passed, the decision in question can no longer be appealed.

Step 1

Within 10 working days of receiving the letter, the SFN PSSSP will:

- review the decision with the SFN EC who will make a decision regarding the appeal, and

- advise the appellant in writing of the appeal decision and the reasons for it as well as any action taken

If the appellant accepts the decision of the SFN EC by signing the designated form, the appeal process is considered complete.

Step 2

If the appellant does not accept the decision of the SFN EC, they must submit a new appeal letter to the SFN Executive Director within 10 days of receiving the SFN EC's decision letter.

The Executive Director will review the appeal with the SFN PSSSP and SFN EC and make a decision within 10 days of receiving the above letter.

Step 3

If the appellant does not accept the decision of the SFN Executive Director (ED), they must submit an appeal letter to the SFN Chief & Council within 10 days of

receiving the SFN ED's decision letter.

Within 30 days of receiving the above appeal letter, the SFN Council will address the appeal at a duly convened meeting. The appellant will be advised of the decision made by Council within 10 days of their meeting. The decision of the Council will be based on all evidence provided by the SFN PSSSP, the ED and the student and the resultant Council decision is **final**. The appellant has a right to present his/her case in person to the Council at his or her own expense.

If the Council rules in favour of the appellant, and the decision overrules existing policy, the policy in question will immediately be amended to reflect the Council ruling.

11. AMENDMENT PROCESS:

Amendments shall become official when approved by Council. Any changes made to this policy that have not been approved by Council are invalid.

The SFN PSSSP may approve changes to forms, procedures and administrative support documents related to this policy.

Approved by Selkirk First Nation Council on October 28, 2015

Approved by  _____

Chief Kevin McGinty on behalf of Council