



# **Seabird Island Education Jurisdiction Ratification Vote 2021**



# Seabird Island and Education Jurisdiction

## EJ 2021-2022

For many decades there has been an exhaustive effort by our First Nation leadership and communities throughout Canada to engage with the federal and provincial Governments to manage their own First Nation schools education program delivery and services.



"Education at SI was set in motion by our grandmothers years ago and we continue that work in their honour and for the benefit of our children and future generations."

*Stacy McNeil, SI Council & Ed Advisory*

First Nation communities and leadership have requested to have the ability to create relevant and local cultural, language and land-based programming for their children and youth.

Programming would include language immersion, learning about traditional cultural values and practices, and to learn about First Nations citizenship.



For Seabird Island this means the ability to facilitate Halq'eméylem language immersion, local cultural practices and to learn about Stó:lō citizenship such as who we are, our values, and our family histories.

Most important though, is the ability to have these courses recognized as credit towards Seabird Island students' graduation diploma.

Students will still learn academic courses as required for BC Grade 12 graduation and for further education, but they will be enhanced by actively participating in their cultural, language and lifelong learning.

Students will learn to build First Nations independence and future attachment to further education, training, and employment.

'EJ is important for the children to learn about fishing, like making and setting nets, cleaning, drying and canning of salmon.'

'It is important for our kids to learn about language, hunting, fishing and family. I lost all that when I went to St. Mary's Residential School. It's hard to learn when you are older.'

*Chief Jim Harris*



'EJ means local control of Canadian First Nation Education and Law Making Protocol'

*Tyrone McNeil, President STC*



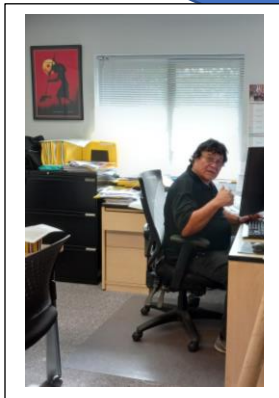
After many years of discussion and negotiations, a formal agreement called Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement will be signed with Seabird Island.

The Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement is a document that formally acknowledges that Seabird Island School is ready and prepared to facilitate education governance, funding allocation and program deliverables while meeting the existing Tripartite funding agreements with BC and federal governments.

**Self Governance Our Inherent Right to  
Govern Ourselves**

'This is a step closer for Seabird Island self governance. We already have taken on our own Membership Code, Property Taxation, Land Code, Financial Law, and Election Code. Next we are looking at is our own Child and Family Law, and...'

*Chuck McNeil, SI Strategic Advisor*



Seabird Island 1984

Seabird Island members will **vote** on this agreement by participating in a formal legal voting process to decide on Education Jurisdiction Ratification.

This is the process that Seabird Island needs to pursue to secure jurisdiction over education that will be acknowledge by the provincial and federal governments.

SEABIRD ISLAND NOTICE OF EDUCATION  
JURISDICTION RATIFICATION VOTE

**TO MEMBERS OF SEABIRD ISLAND**

**TAKE NOTICE** that a Ratification Vote shall be held in accordance with the Seabird Island Education Jurisdiction Ratification Process in order to determine if Eligible Voters approve the Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement<sup>1</sup> Between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada and Seabird Island, and the Education Jurisdiction Law-Making Protocol<sup>2</sup>

Law Making Protocol outlines how our own education laws will be developed, and how Seabird Island implements our education program, giving Seabird Island self governance over education.

The following question will be asked of the Eligible Voters of Seabird Island by ballot:

**As an Eligible Voter of Seabird Island:**

Do you approve of Seabird Island entering into the Education Jurisdiction Agreement, of adopting the Protocol, and of Chief and Council making minor amendments to either document, if required, before they are signed and adopted?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Eligible Voters will be able to vote in person, by mail, or electronically. ....

When the community vote is completed on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7 pm, Seabird Island members will have voiced their decision.

Once approved by the SI members, the process will continue with development of the education law, will be submitted to the federal government for signing by July 2022.

**SUMMARY CANADA-FIRST NATION EDUCATION JURISDICTION  
AGREEMENT (Version approved by NFNs June 18, 2021)**

**Parties:**

- The parties to the Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement ("Jurisdiction Agreement") are:
  - Canada, represented by the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations ("Canada"), and
  - the Participating First Nation, represented by Chief and Council ("PFN").
- The **whereas provisions** provide historical, political and legal context to the Jurisdiction Agreement, but are not legally binding.

**Part 2 – Exercise of Jurisdiction**

- The parties recognize PFN's jurisdiction over education on PFN land. This jurisdiction extends to non-member students who attend the PFN's school(s). • The PFN agrees to provide kindergarten to grade 12 education to eligible students attending the PFN's school(s). The PFN will also pay for the education of eligible students who are enrolled in a public school or an independent school. • An "eligible student" must be resident on PFN land (i.e. PFN reserve) and must be either: (a) 4 to 21 years old and enrolled in kindergarten to grade 12, or (b) at least 18 years old and enrolled in an

Once Seabird Island members vote YES to the ratification question the federal government will be informed. Seabird Island will be ready for Education Jurisdiction in September 2022!

**NOTE:** All above documents were delivered as part of members voting packages. Please contact us for a copy.



## Do you have questions regarding Education Jurisdiction?

If you would like more information regarding Education Jurisdiction, the Vote or how you can assist with the process, please contact Patricia Raymond, Education Jurisdiction Coordinator at the contact info below.

Please note we would be happy to facilitate small family gatherings to discuss EJ, or organize a Microsoft Team or Zoom meeting, or we can forward some more written information about EJ.



**VOTE YES\*** - Electronically, mail in or in person on Dec 8, 9, or 10, 2021 at the SI Millennium Hall from 11am to 7pm \*Covid Protocols will be in place.

### Additional Information can be found on-line too:

- First Nations Education Steering Committee – is the FN education representative who provide support for Education programming in BC.  
[www.fnesc@ca](mailto:www.fnesc@ca)
- Google 'First Nation Education Jurisdiction', and you will see current and d historical information regarding EJ as well as other BC FN Bands proceeding with the VOTE.
- The document '*2010 FN Control of FN Education*' by the Assembly of FN was shared to by Tyrone McNeil. It documents the history of our FN quest for education independence from the Native Brotherhood in 1972 to 2010. We can provide you with a copy.
- Seabird Island webpage on EJ; the brochure; SIB EJ 2009 Powerpoint; FNEESC Community Powerpoint 2021; 2010 FN Control of FN Education by Assembly of FN.

You may contact Patricia Raymond, Education Ratification Coordinator by Phone – 604-796-7018 Or By email – [patricia.raymond@seabirdisland.ca](mailto:patricia.raymond@seabirdisland.ca)