



s7ulh wa nexwniwéyah (Our Ways of Education)

Reclaiming Education: Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

1. What does reclaiming education mean?

- Reclaiming education means taking back control over the education of our children, from preschool to Grade 12. If we reclaim our education, then we will have law-making authority over our education system, including teacher certification, courses required for graduation, and curriculum development.

2. Why should we vote yes?

- Residential schools aimed to take our language, culture, and heritage from us. After decades of work to overcome this, we now have an opportunity to reclaim our community's right to educate our children, our way.
- By overseeing our education system, we can make decisions in the best interest of our learners. This is our chance to return to Skwxwú7mesh ways of education and work as a community to build an education system that promotes, protects, and revitalizes our language and culture. Our children will be taught based on Skwxwú7mesh worldview and will grow up confident in their values and heritage.

3. Why are we doing this now?

- By pursuing education jurisdiction, we are carrying on the legacy of those who have been working towards reclaiming our inherent right to govern the education of our community, for decades.
- This is our chance to return to Skwxwú7mesh ways of education—s7ulh wa nexwniwéyah—and work as a community to build an education system that promotes, protects, and revitalizes our language, culture, and values.

4. What schools will we have control over?

- If we reclaim our education, then our law-making powers will cover community (on-reserve) schools and students from preschool to Grade 12.

5. Will our education system be open to anyone?

- It will be up to our Members to decide who will have access to our education system, whether it is limited to just our Members or if it is open to anyone.

6. How much decision-making control will the Nation have?

- Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw will exercise control over education in several ways, from the establishment of our school system to our school operations:
 - i. We will be part of the FNEA, where we will work collaboratively with other First Nations to develop education standards and school/teacher certifications.

- ii. We will develop our own Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Education Law, which describes how we will run our community's education. This will be a collaborative process where Members are engaged in the development of our law.
- iii. We will have administrative control of school operations through the CEA.

7. How much input will parents of students have regarding decisions affecting their children's education?

- After a positive vote in December, we will continue to engage and consult with community Members as we develop our Education Law. It is through this process where we begin to shape and make choices around curriculum and teacher certification. You are in this process with us and we will ensure we are designing this together. All the input we receive will be used to guide the development of the Education Law.
- Input from Members and parents of students is critical to this process of reclaiming education. The law can guide the involvement of the community through the CEA.

Community Vote

8. When is the community vote?

- Voting will take place from December 1 to 30, 2022.
- In-person voting will be open on December 1, 2022 and December 30, 2022 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Totem Hall and Chief Joe Mathias Centre.
- Online voting will be open from December 1, 2022 at 9 a.m. to December 30, 2022 at 8 p.m.
- Mail-in ballots will be available upon request. All mail-in ballots must be received by December 30, 2022.

9. What are we voting on?

- As a Nation, we must vote yes and approve these 2 documents in order for us to reclaim control of our preschool to Grade 12 community education:
 - i. The process for how our Education Law will be developed and approved (Education Law-Making Protocol)
 - ii. An education agreement with Canada (Jurisdiction Agreement)
- We will continue to share information with you leading up to the vote on in December to ensure you have a good understanding of the 2 documents we are voting on, and how you can vote.

10. How can we vote?

- Members will be able to vote in person, online, or by mail.

11. Where will in-person voting be?

- In-person voting will be done at Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver and Totem Hall in Squamish.

12. Who can vote?

- All Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Members who are over the age of 18 on voting day are eligible to vote, including Members living outside our community.

13. Can we vote in advance?

- Members may submit a mail-in ballot ahead of voting day, as long as the ballot is received by December 30, 2022.
- Online voting will be open from December 1, 2022 at 9 a.m. to December 30, 2022 at 8 p.m.
- In-person voting will be held on two days: December 1 and 30, 2022. In-person voting will be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Totem Hall and Chief Joe Mathias Centre on both days.

14. How many votes are needed for the vote to be successful?

- The vote will be successful if at least 60% of votes cast are in favour.

15. Why is the voting threshold 60%?

- Council voted to set the threshold for approval at 60% to be in line with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Election and Referendum Law.

16. What happens if the vote isn't successful?

- If the community vote is unsuccessful, then the Nation's education will not change. We will have the same funding and control over our education as we do today.
- We can hold another community vote in the future, or choose not to reclaim authority over our education.

17. What happens next if the vote is successful?

- If Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw votes yes in December, then we will begin building our education system as a community. Together, we will ensure that our community education meets the needs and desires of our children and our community by shaping our curriculum, teacher certification, and graduation requirements.
- After a positive vote in December, we will continue to engage and consult with community Members as we develop our Education Law. It is through this process where we begin to shape and make choices around curriculum and teacher certification. We are in this process together.

Jurisdiction Agreement

18. What is the Jurisdiction Agreement?

- The Jurisdiction Agreement is an education agreement between Canada and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw. Members must vote to approve this agreement, along with our Law-Making Protocol, for us to move forward reclaiming education.

19. Does this agreement with Canada represent a treaty?

- The Jurisdiction Agreement is a sectoral self-government agreement between Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and Canada, not a treaty.

20. Will signing the Jurisdiction Agreement limit our ability to self-govern?

- Reclaiming education will not limit Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw's ability to self-govern.

21. Is there an end date for the Jurisdiction Agreement?

- There is no end date for the Jurisdiction Agreement. Our authority will not expire, so we can be confident that our children's education will never again be taken away from us.

Law-Making Protocol

22. What is the Law-Making Protocol?

- The Law-Making Protocol is one of the two documents that community will be voting to approve in December 2022. The protocol describes the process for passing and amending our Education Law, challenging the validity of that law, amending the protocol itself, and addressing conflicts of interest.
- This document must be approved during the community vote, so we can develop our Education Law, which describes how we will run our community's education.

23. What is the Education Law?

- If we vote yes in December, we begin building and shaping our education system through the development of our Education Law. This law will describe what our education system will look like, including governance processes, education standards, graduation requirements, certification of teachers and schools, consultation and decision-making requirements, and much more.

Students

24. What kind of graduation certificate will students get?

- Students graduating from Skwxwú7mesh's school system will receive a high school diploma that is recognized by post-secondary institutions and employers.
- The following options will be available for students graduating from our schools, as long as students meet the specific requirements established for each certificate:
 - i. The Dogwood or Adult Dogwood Diploma, with requirements set by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care
 - ii. A First Nations Graduation Certificate, with requirements set by the FNEA
 - iii. A Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Graduation Certificate, with requirements set by our Nation and approved by the FNEA

25. What happens if a student wants to transfer to a different school?

- Our education system will allow students to transfer to an equivalent grade in another school in the province. Students will be able to move freely between Skwxwú7mesh's education system and the public school system.

26. Can parents choose to send their children to schools outside of our community?

- Yes. Parents will not be required to send their children to our community schools.

27. Will we be providing education up to Grade 12?

- Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw will work to build our school system so that we can eventually provide education up to Grade 12.
- If Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw reclaims control of our community education, then that control will extend to both our current school and any future schools established in our community.

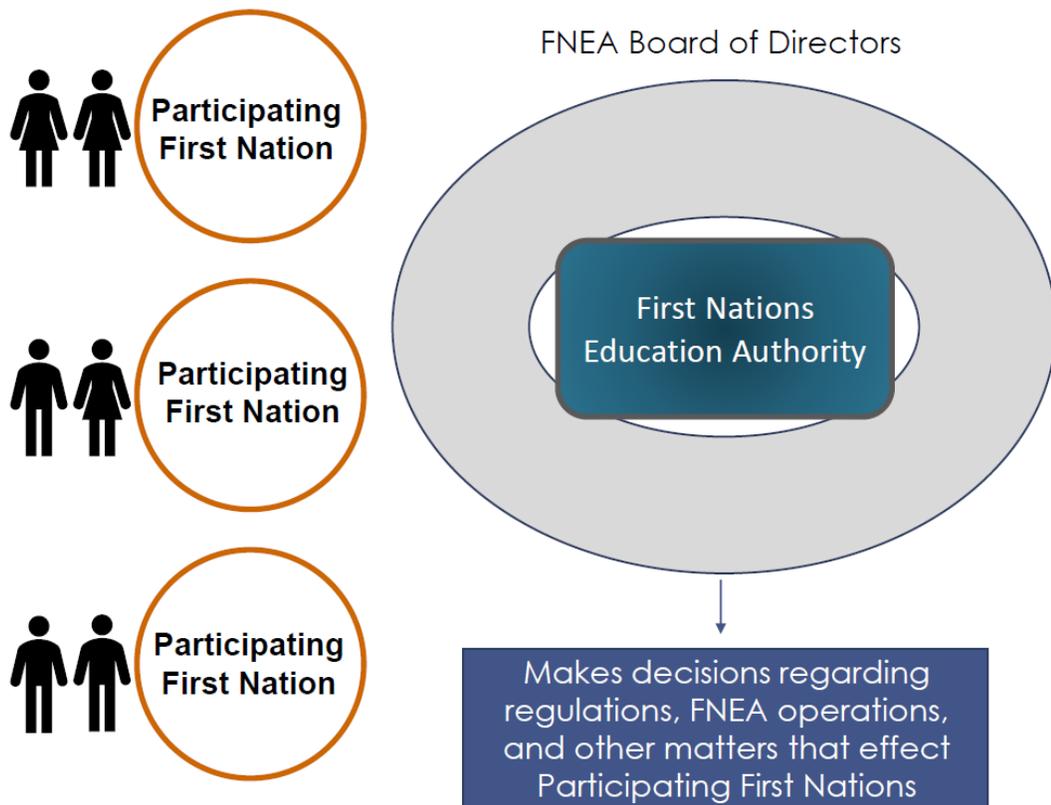
28. How will this impact Grade 12 students graduating from our school system?

- Students graduating from our school system will still be able to receive a graduation certificate recognized by post-secondary institutions, such as the provincial Dogwood Diploma, as long as they meet the specific requirements established for each certificate.

School Governance and Operation

29. What is the First Nations Education Authority (FNEA)?

- The FNEA is comprised of, operated by, and directed by First Nation appointees with jurisdiction (Participating First Nations) only—no government representatives. Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw will appoint directors to the FNEA.
- Through the FNEA, Participating First Nations, including Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, will jointly exercise and regulate teacher certification, school certification, and graduation requirements, including approval of courses for graduation purposes.



30. What does the First Nations Education Authority (FNEA) do?

- The FNEA develops the certifications and standards that will be included in our Education Law. This will include standards for school certification, teacher certification, and graduation requirements.
- These standards will be defined in the Education Co-management Agreement between S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh Úxwumixw and the FNEA.

31. Who controls the FNEA?

- The FNEA is entirely made up of and controlled by directors appointed by Nations with education jurisdiction—not government representatives.
- If our community vote is successful, then S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh Úxwumixw will appoint two directors to the FNEA.

32. What is the Community Education Authority (CEA)?

- S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh Úxwumixw will create an education authority under the provincial *Societies Act* to operate in-community schools.
- The CEA is similar to a local school board. It will report to the Nation and be responsible for: employing school staff, holding school assets (such as buildings), and administering funds received from Canada.

Funding

33. Will reclaiming education affect our ability to get government funding in the future?

- Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw will continue to receive the same funding and supports currently available, including direct First Nations School funding, as is laid on in the BC Tripartite Education Agreement.

34. Will we receive additional funding to operate our own school system?

- In addition to the funding we currently receive, through the Jurisdiction Funding Agreement, we will be provided one-time and ongoing funding from Canada to cover the costs associated with self-governance.

Teachers and Staff

35. What would reclaiming education jurisdiction mean for our current teachers and staff?

- Our schools will continue to employ provincially-certified teachers. This will include those with a teaching certificate issued by the BC Ministry of Education or a certificate issued by another Canadian province. Teachers who are already certified will not have to go through a new certification process.
- Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw will ensure that our teachers and staff receive the same (or better) salary as under their current agreement.