

Notice to Community:

Re: Seabird Island Education Law

On June 18, 2025, Chief and Council moved to circulate the proposed **Education Law 2025** to the community. The proposed Education Law 2025 is an updated version of Education Law 2022. The revised sections that align with the governance structure update passed by Chief and Council are summarized on the pages that follow.

In our move to Education Jurisdiction, one step was to enact our own Education Law to replace the Independent School Act. The Education Law 2022 came into effect on July 1, 2022, but the question of governing authority and primary oversight over education have been a topic of discussion since then.

While the Education Law 2022 had the Education Committee as the body of oversight, Chief and Council have now concluded that they should have the ultimate decision making authority, similar to a school board in the public education system. The Education Law thus needs to define that a subset of Chief and Council will form a Board of Education. The proposed Education Law 2025 reflects this change.

According to our Law-Making Protocol, the proposed Education Law 2025 must be made available to community members for 30 days (from June 25, 2025).

A meeting is scheduled at the end of the 30 days (July 30, 2025) to present and discuss the proposed Education Law 2025.

Community members then have 30 days to provide their comments to Chief and Council (to August 29, 2025).

Chief and Council can then accept amendments to the proposed Education Law 2025 or move to approve the proposed Education Law 2025.

Summary of the Seabird Island Education Law 2025

What is the Seabird Island Education Law?

On July 1, 2022, Seabird Island adopted Seabird Island Education Law (the “Law”). Under the Law, Seabird Island First Nation has assumed jurisdiction over First Nations education of Kindergarten to Grade 12 students on Reserve. Some changes have been recommended to the law, and the new proposed law is being called the proposed Education Law 2025.

What is being asked of community members?

Changes have been recommended to the Education Law 2022, and under the Education Law Making Protocol, the community has role to play in reviewing the proposed Education Law 2025:

1. A member of Council introduces a draft of the proposed Education Law 2025 (June 18, 2025)
2. Council prepares a notice to the community to advise of proposed changes to the Education Law 2025 (posted June 25, 2025)
3. Members may obtain a copy of the proposed Education Law 2025 (June 25, 2025)
4. A community meeting will be held to discuss the proposed Education Law 2025 (July 30, 2025)
 - a. The Education Law 2025 will be presented,
 - b. Copies of the law and a summary will be available, and
 - c. Members will be invited to make comments.
5. Members then have 30 days to provide comments. (to August 31, 2025)
6. Following the 30-day period referred to in section 5, Council will review any comments received during the consultation process and determine whether to amend the proposed Education Law.
7. If Council decides not to amend the proposed Education Law, they may vote on it at their next duly convened meeting.
8. If the law will be amended again based on comments received, steps 2-6 will be repeated.
9. A majority of Council (50% plus one) must vote in support of a proposed Education Law, or amending a proposed Education Law, as the case may be, in order for it to be passed or amended.

What does the Seabird Island Education Law 2025 say?

The governing authority under the Education Law 2025 will be the Board of Education. The Board of Education will be made up of at least 3 members of Chief and Council, and such other members as Chief and Council may appoint. Its duties and powers will be as follows:

- a. lead Seabird Island's education strategy, policy and planning and to determine priorities and allocate resources to meet Chief and Council's objectives for the operation of the Seabird Island education system;
- b. ensure that policies and procedures for the effective and efficient operation of Lalme'Iwesawtexw are developed and implemented;
- c. approve and monitor the annual Lalme'Iwesawtexw budget;
- d. provide such information and reports as Chief and Council may require, including as to how Lalme'Iwesawtexw is meeting the educational, operational and financial expectations of Chief and Council;
- e. approve the terms of reference for any committee established by the Board of Education pursuant to this Law and ensure adherence thereto;
- f. approve the terms of reference for the Parents' Committee and ensure adherence thereto; and
- g. report to the Community at the quarterly and annual meetings.

Committees

The Board of Education may establish committees with composition and terms of reference as the Board sees fit, to provide advice or input with respect to Lalme'Iwesawtexw operations or as per the terms of reference for that committee.

The Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and Students

The Law requires students to comply with Lalme'Iwesawtexw policies and procedures. It also provides parents the right to be informed of their child's progress, attendance and behaviour, and to consult with a student's teacher or principal with respect to their child's educational program. The Law gives parents the right to establish and to belong to a Parents' Committee, which provides a voice for parents off reserve, encourages parent involvement in school activities, and supports teachers and staff in matters such as fund raising, parents' committee activities etc.

Other aspects of the law remain the same:

The Education Program

The Law contains a number of provisions establishing requirements for the effective operation of the education system. These include:

- A requirement that any Locally Developed Courses comply with *First Nations Education Authority Rules for Courses Required to Graduate*;
- That the Board of Education Committee ensure a calendar for each school year that complies with First Nations Education Authority requirements; and
- The rules around who may enroll in an education program provided by Lalme'lwesawtexw (Seabird Island Community School), including that students other than Members of the Seabird First Nation may enroll in Lalme'lwesawtexw (Seabird Island Community School) provided Seabird receives funding for such students.

Appeals

The Law provides an appeal mechanism of administrative decisions that significantly and directly affect the health, education or welfare an individual.

Role of First Nations Education Authority

The Law provides that the *First Nations Education Authority Rules for the Certification and Regulation of Teachers* and the *First Nations Education Authority Rules for the Certification of Participating First Nations Schools* apply to Seabird teachers and to the Lalme'lwesawtexw (Seabird Island Community School).

Seabird is entitled to two directors on the FNEA board, one of which must be a Seabird member.

Diplomas

The Law allows the Board of Education to issue a Seabird Island Graduation Certificate to a student attending the First Nation school who has met the graduation requirements established by the Board of Education and approved by the First Nations Education Authority in accordance with the *First Nations Education Authority Rules Establishing Graduation Requirements*.

It further allows the Board of Education to request FNEA issue a First Nations Graduation Certificate in respect of a student who has met those same requirements, and may request that British Columbia issue a British Columbia Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood) or a British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma (Adult Dogwood) in respect of a student if that student has both completed an education program at the grade twelve level at the Lalme'lwesawtexw

(Seabird Island Community School) and has achieved learning outcomes substantially comparable to those required for graduation by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

Regulations

Chief and Council may make regulations respecting the procedures for appointing or delegating authority to the Board of Education and any committee established pursuant to this law; and

for the purpose Chief and Council considers necessary or advisable to facilitate the establishment and operation of the Education Committee.