



# Office of Chief and Council Government of Siksika Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Siksika Nation Post-Secondary Funding Announcement**

(Siksika Nation – April 6, 2021) In an announcement made to Siksika Nation’s post-secondary students March 4<sup>th</sup> in a virtual info-session by Old Sun Community College staff to students, Siksika Nation Chief Ouray Crowfoot announced upcoming changes to post-secondary funding for Siksika Nation members which will allow more access to post-secondary education beyond K-12.

“When our ancestors agreed to the terms of the Blackfoot Treaty on the shores of Blackfoot Crossing on September 22, 1877, one of the meaning and intent of the treaty was to ensure our People will have access to education. So much so, that an educational provision was specifically spelled out in the treaty.” Shared Crowfoot.

“We are going to hold Canada accountable to honour the treaty right our People have for education. Education, as we see it is not merely K-12, but is a lifelong experience. Education is our modern-day buffalo and is a tool to help remove barriers, provide opportunities and provide our People with the key to success. Education can open doors and provide us with opportunities to not merely survive but to thrive.” Added Crowfoot who understands firsthand the barriers and opportunities that come with getting a post-secondary education. Crowfoot is a graduate from Brigham Young University and East Carolina University with a Masters in Business Administration and a Masters of Accountancy with a Professional Designation: Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Until now, Siksika has followed the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) guidance for funding Siksika Nation Post-Secondary students, which has resulted in the deferral of many students because of the capped funding that has been in place since 1996. Starting April 1, 2021, Siksika Nation will be funding eligible students based on an updated Siksika criteria, as developed by Old Sun Community College. The goal is to provide as many Siksika Nation members with the opportunity for education as possible.

Old Sun Community College has received accreditation both from National & International organizations and leadership believe the Nation is more than capable of developing criteria for its members. “We have enough stumbling blocks in our path to success, being denied to opportunity to further our education should not be one of them. So, as long as our students have the grades and meet the criteria, as developed by Old Sun Community College, we will ensure those students will have the opportunity to attend Post-Secondary institutions of higher learning.” Concluded Crowfoot.

Old Sun Community College has developed the criteria by which students will be funded. The criteria will be presented to Council for approval & then made available to Nation Members. Nation members should expect this criterion to be released by end of May.