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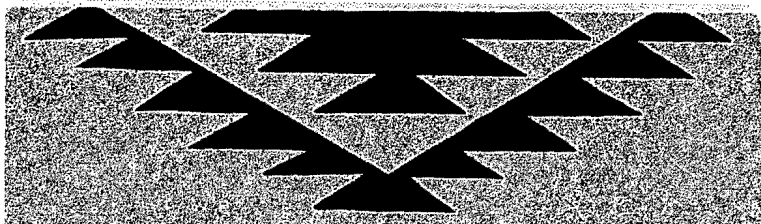
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Second Floor

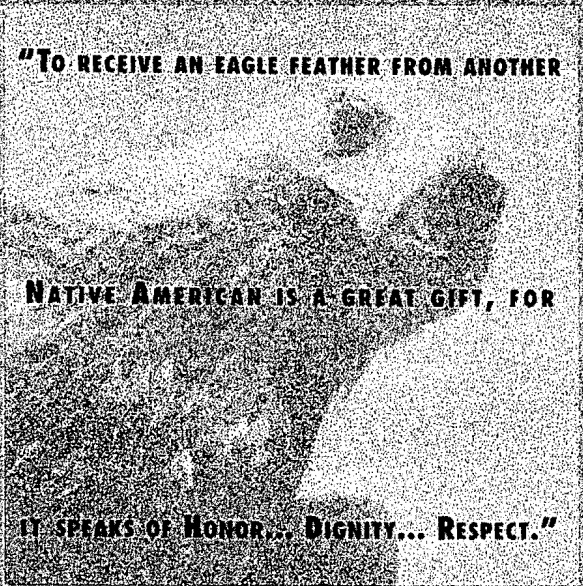
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"TO RECEIVE AN EAGLE FEATHER FROM ANOTHER



NATIVE AMERICAN IS A GREAT GIFT, FOR

IT SPEAKS OF HONOR... DIGNITY... RESPECT."



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WHAT IS THE NIEA

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was founded in 1969 to give American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) a national voice in their struggle to improve access to educational opportunity. NIEA is the largest and oldest Indian education organization in the nation and strives to keep Indian Country moving toward educational equity. Inherent in this is the desire to place control of Indian education firmly in the hands of Indian people and keep the federal commitment to Indian education intact.

ROOTS OF INDIAN EDUCATION

From the first European immigration to this country, formal education has been used to assimilate American Indians, and later, Alaska Natives away from their cultures and into the national mainstream. The federal effort to expand the nation further westward also defined the legal basis for Indian education through the myriad of treaties and agreements with Indian nations. In exchange for millions of acres of tribal lands, education was guaranteed to all Indian people. The resulting "trust responsibility" for American Indian education exists to this day.

For decades the federal government determined what was in the best interest of Indian people and developed educational policies that did more to undo the fabric of Indian life than rebuild it. It wasn't until the Merriam Report of 1928 and the 1969 Senate report entitled "Indian Education: A National Tragedy - A National Challenge" that federal laws and policies began to change to reflect the actual versus perceived needs in Indian education. As current events in Indian education have shown, there is much that still needs to be done to maintain the educational momentum:

■ In 1991, the Federal Report 'Indian Nations At Risk' shed light on the condition of Indian education as we entered the 90's proving that even though progress was being made at all educational levels, American Indians and Alaska Natives still rank at, or near, the bottom of every educational indicator;

■ In 1992, the White House Conference on Indian Education represented a formal acknowledgement by the U.S. that, even after 200 years, the federal responsibility to meet the educational needs of all Indian people remain unfulfilled; and

■ In 1995, the first National American Indian and Alaska Native Education Summit was convened which brought the federal responsibility for Indian education to the agency level where national policy is implemented.

The outgrowth of this historic sequence of events has been a declaration by Indian nations for the development of a document which conveys the federal responsibility for Indian education through the uniform delivery of programs government-wide. In 1997 NIEA and Indian nations will forward to the White House the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement (CFIEPS) which formally establishes a plan for serving the educational needs of all American Indians and Alaska Natives.

PURPOSE OF NIEA

NIEA was established to ensure that the Native voice is not excluded in federal policy decisions that directly impact on Indian education. With many Native languages and traditions near the brink of extinction, NIEA firmly believes that access to education can be used to help preserve rather than replace Indian traditions. For Indian people the link between education and culture is a fundamental one.

Today, there are over 550 American Indian and Alaska Native tribes recognized by the federal government and hundreds of unrecognized groups. According to the U.S. Census the Indian population is young and growing faster than the national average. American Indians under the age of twenty five now exceed the national average. With more Indian children

annually entering the national education mainstream the need for Indian education advocacy becomes even more critical.

ADVOCACY

For almost three decades, NIEA has played a pivotal role in improving federal Indian education policies through its advocacy work on behalf of Indian people. Continual oversight of current and proposed congressional legislation allows NIEA to respond immediately to issues affecting Indian education. Even in light of the positive gains American Indians and Alaska Natives continue to make in educational achievement, Indian programs are constantly being threatened with reduced funding and outright elimination. NIEA is one of only a few Indian non-profit organizations in the country that does not rely on federal contracts or grants and is therefore able to advocate freely on behalf of its members.

ANNUAL CONVENTIONS

For over 25 years, NIEA has been conducting the largest gathering of Indian educators in the U.S. The NIEA annual convention attracts over 3,000 attendees and provides a showcase for approximately 300 exhibitors of education services, recruiters and American Indian and Alaska Native arts and crafts.

The convention brings together Indian leaders, congressional representatives and educators from throughout the United States and Canada. Issues are discussed through forums and workshops where Indian and non-Indian educators alike share common concerns, ideas, and obtain solutions to specific problems. Topics cover K-12 to postsecondary to research issues as well as special education and child welfare concerns.

CONTRIBUTIONS

I would like to support the work of the National Indian Education Association in its efforts to improve education programs on Indian reservations and communities, and to increase educational opportunities for all Indian students in U.S. public schools and colleges. Enclosed is my contribution for:

()\$25 ()\$50 ()\$100 ()\$_____

Please complete the reverse side of this coupon and mail to NIEA's office in Alexandria, Virginia. Your contribution is tax deductible and will be acknowledged. Thank you for your support.

BECOME A MEMBER OF NIEA

I would like to join in the National Indian Education Association efforts to help improve education for all American Indians and Alaska Natives. Enclosed is my annual membership fee as checked below:

- () General Member (U.S. Indian): \$75
- () Assoc. U.S. Member (Non-Indian): \$75
- () Assoc. Int'l Member (Non-Indian): \$75
- () Student Member (U.S. Indian Student):\$20

NIEA membership is open to anyone, 18 years or older. Only American Indians or Alaska Natives who are U.S. citizens may join as "General" or "Student" members with NIEA voting rights. Student members must be 18 years old and in college full-time.

Membership includes: a quarterly newsletter; member rate at the annual convention; voting rights on U.S. Indian education issues; legislative advocacy assistance on Indian education issues and networking capability with Indian educators throughout the U.S.



Contribution or Membership Application: Please Type or Print Clearly

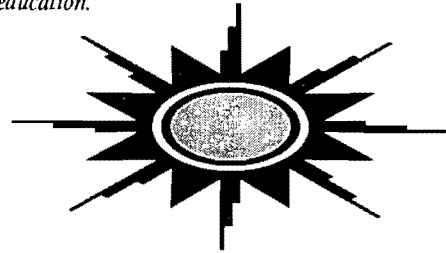
Name: _____
Tribe: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____ Apt./Suite: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: () _____ Ext.: _____

Contribution Amount: () \$25 () \$50 () \$100 Other: () \$ _____
Please send check or money order payable to: NIEA, 121 Oronoco Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 838-2870, Fax: (703) 838-1620, E-Mail: niea@mindspring.com

NIEA's FUTURE VISION

Since its inception, NIEA has been at the vanguard of every significant Indian education milestone to date. As NIEA and Indian educators move to implement the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement in 1997, there will still be a need for ongoing dialogue with Indian constituents and the Congress. NIEA's future vision is to continue the education of policy makers on Indian education issues to implement long-term solutions to educational inequality. In addition, NIEA continues to broaden its scope by:

- Holding periodic forums throughout the country on diverse topics such as: current Indian education policy, legislation and appropriations; language and culture preservation; welfare reform; adult education and education technology issues.
- Development of an Internet Web Page where the public can find information about NIEA and Indian education.



NIEA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

The vision of the National Indian Education Association is limited only by the amount of financial support it is able to secure. The future activities proposed by NIEA are now technologically feasible and cost effective. NIEA needs the support of foundations, corporations, and individuals to help continue the progress Indian education has made in the lives of America's only indigenous population. Your support ensures that control of Indian education remains focused on the actual need of American Indians regardless of changes in national political climate. All donations are tax deductible.

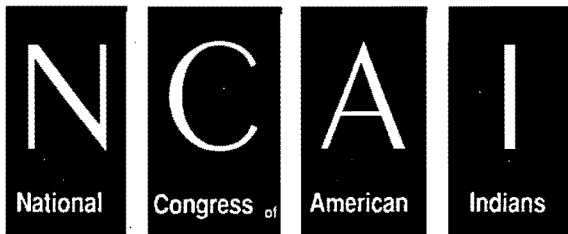
NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
121 Oronoco Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



THE NIEA MISSION

The mission of the National Indian Education Association is to support traditional Native cultures and values, to enable Native learners to become contributing members of their communities, to promote Native control of educational institutions, and to improve educational opportunities and resources for American Indians and Alaska Natives throughout the United States.



Profile

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), founded in 1944, is the oldest, largest and most representative national Indian organization. NCAI serves the needs of a broad membership of Indian and Native governments and organizations.

The founding members of NCAI stressed the need for unity and cooperation among Indian governments and people, for the security and protection of treaty and sovereign rights and for the betterment of the quality of life for Indian people. From its modest beginnings with some 100 people, NCAI has become the leading Indian membership organization, now serving a diverse network of nations with a combined citizenry comprising more than three quarters of the American Indian and Alaska Native national population.

The NCAI is organized as a representative congress of consensus on national priority issues. Indian and Native governments pass laws to become members of NCAI, selecting official delegates to the NCAI Convention, Executive Council, and conferences. The delegates deliberate issues of pressing concern in accordance with their government's policies, goals and needs. NCAI has led and participated in a myriad of coalitions with other national and regional Indian organizations, business interests, environmental and civil rights groups, and legal and other professional organizations, among others to attain the goals of NCAI's broad-based membership.

NCAI Founding Principles

- ♦ Protect Indian and Native traditional, cultural and religious rights
- ♦ Seek appropriate, equitable and beneficial services and programs for Indian and Native governments and people
- ♦ Secure and preserve Indian and Native rights under treaties and agreements with the United States, as well as under federal statutes, case laws and administrative decisions and rulings
- ♦ Promote the common welfare and enhance the quality of life of Indian and Native people
- ♦ Promote a better understanding among the general public regarding Indian and Native governments, people and rights

The NCAI Fund, was founded in 1967 because of the need to conduct research and education programs to benefit Indian Country. The NCAI Fund was designed to compliment and reinforce the advocacy work of the organization. The NCAI Fund is held in trust and administered by the Officers and Executive Director of NCAI, who comprise the NCAI Administrative Board. The NCAI Fund administers all restricted public and private grants, programs and contracts, while the NCAI administers non-restricted funds and direct advocacy activities.

Current NCAI Issues & Activities

- ♦ Protection of programs and services to benefit Indian families, specifically targeting Indian youth and elders
- ♦ Promotion and support of Indian education, including Head Start, elementary, postsecondary and Adult Education
- ♦ Enhancement of Indian health care including prevention of juvenile substance abuse, HIV-AIDS prevention and other major diseases which afflict American Indians
- ♦ Support of environmental protection and natural resources management
- ♦ Protection of Indian cultural resources and religious freedom rights
- ♦ Promotion of the right of Indian economic opportunity both on and off reservations, including securing programs to provide incentives for economic development and the attraction of private capital to Indian Country
- ♦ Protection of the right of all Indian people to decent, safe and affordable housing

*The National Congress of
American Indians
is participating in the
Combined Federal Campaign.
Please consider checking 0442.*

The **National Congress of American Indians** needs the support and contributions of tribal and individual members to continue our work to promote Indian treaty, traditional, cultural and other rights as provided via Executive Order or acts of Congress or court decisions. The **NCAI** engages in both legislative and administrative advocacy on behalf of its membership. Moreover, the **NCAI** strives to ensure that all member tribes and individuals are informed and educated about all such issues affecting the well-being of Indian nations.

The **NCAI** is proud to provide the **SENTINEL** to its membership on a quarterly basis. The **SENTINEL** provides an update on NCAI activities and is a resource for information on legislation, appropriations, regulatory activity and court decisions.



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Indians

A Call to Action For American Indian Education

Concept Paper

American Indian Education And The National Education Goals

American Indian societies have an unbroken continuous experience in America. The continuity of their unique social and cultural heritage with a future in which all American Indians can participate effectively and meaningfully in their communities and the larger society is directly dependent upon the education of tribal members. Educated tribal citizens are vital to the vibrant and meaningful economic, social and cultural life of their communities and the broader community in which we all live.

Improving education for American Indians is vital to the National goals to prepare every student for responsible citizenship, continued learning and productive employment.

The education of American Indians remains a national challenge for which the federal government has an enduring special responsibility.

American Indian learners have "unique educational and culturally related academic needs." The educational situation and status of the American Indian population reflects great need requiring focused national attention so that the national educational goals can be accomplished for all learners. American Indians are over represented among the poor with a poverty rate more than twice the national average. 38 percent of American Indian school age children live below the poverty level. American Indian Students have the lowest high school completion and college attendance rates of any minority group. American Indian learners had significant gaps in achievement in reading and math when compared to other learners. There is a heritage of federal involvement in the education of American Indians. All federal Indian education legislation recognizes "the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of Indian learners" Successful approaches and strategies have been developed recognizing the needs of Indian learners in Tribal schools and Indian federal programmatic efforts and need to be developed and modeled through out the schools Indian learners attend. These approaches are valuable models for many other learners.

Intergovernmental complexity: Tribal, Federal, and State Government Involvement in the education of American Indians. The complexity of the inter-governmental arena in which American Indian learners are provided schooling requires a focused federal Indian Education policy which recognizes the authority of tribal governments, the federal /tribal government relationship and the heritage of federal involvement in the education of American Indians in federal, tribal and state schools. The political/legal status of American Indian Tribal governments includes as an aspect of their inherent sovereignty a plenary authority in the education of tribal members. The federal government, through Bureau of Indian Affairs operated schools, directly provides schooling to American Indians and provides financial support to Tribal controlled and operated elementary, secondary and post secondary institutions. All Federal Indian education legislation formally recognizes the "unique educational and culturally related academic needs" of Indian learners in all school settings

Most American Indian learners attend State operated and controlled school districts primarily in Indian reservation areas and in regional metropolitan areas in which there are federal and tribal/federal grant programs for Indian learners. Outside of the Federal Indian education program dollars made available to State school districts, the federal government has a significant investment in educational programs and approaches to improve education for all learners. These efforts need the enhanced capacity of tribal governments to represent their needs and those of Indian parents and community members to assist State school districts provide effective and meaningful schooling for Indian learners as an area of special concern.

Recent Federal government consideration of the unique status and situation of American Indian Education. Since 1991 with the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force there have been a number of focused efforts to study and describe the current educational needs of American Indians including The White House Conference on Indian Education, and the American Indian Alaskan Native Education Summit. The President's meeting with Tribal leaders included discussion of the importance of education. All efforts recognize the valued contribution and heritage of past efforts beginning with the historic Indian Education Act of 1972 and that these efforts need to more effectively influence an agenda for education reform which is responsive to Indian learners, and which more effectively involves other federal programs and other educational jurisdictions. With significant reflection on these efforts the National Indian Education Association has developed a Proposed Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement.

A Call To Action For American Indian Education

There is a need for a comprehensive national Indian educational policy focusing on how to effectively represent and involve American Indian learners, Tribal Governments and Indian communities in the national agenda to accomplish the national education goals.

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will read independently and well by the end of the third grade, master challenging mathematics by the end of the eighth grade and be prepared, motivated and have access to higher education.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a safe, drug free, personally supportive environment in school.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a linguistic and cultural environment in school that offers students opportunities to maintain and develop a firm knowledge base which meets high standards.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have an intellectually challenging program in school that meets community as well individual academic needs.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have stimulating early childhood education environment that is linguistically, culturally, and developmentally appropriate.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a dedicated and well prepared teacher who is competent and knowledgeable in effective teaching strategies for learners with unique educational and culturally related academic needs.**

Strategies for the Federal Government to Accomplish "The American Indian Education Call to Action"

- * Equity in school programs, facilities, and finances across Native communities, and in schools run by the federal government, tribal government and public schools in general. Modernize tribal educational facilities, support the construction of tribal educational facilities and insure that tribal educational facilities are connected to the Internet
- * Expand school choice and accountability through supporting the continued development of tribal controlled educational institutions at all levels.
- * Assist the development of the educational governance capacity of tribal governments to establish educational objectives and standards for tribal members to prepare Tribal members for responsible citizenship, continued learning, and productive employment and define appropriate linguistic and cultural learning environments.
- * Develop intergovernmental agreements between Tribal governments and/or the Federal government with State governments affecting the education of American Indian learners attending State controlled and operated school districts to more effectively represent the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of Indian learners so that Indian learners may accomplish National educational goals.
- * Create National Indian education goals for the support for Native languages and Cultures in Tribal communities and Schools
- * Assist Tribal governments and educational authorities develop an effective research and policy development capacity to study and analysis educational practices and approaches and to comment on government sponsored educational and programmatic research.
- * Develop a national Indian teacher and education leadership program to train American Indian Alaskan Natives for the classroom and other positions of educational leadership

Draft June 2 1997 David Beaulieu

Preface to the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement

Who Will Benefit?

- Over 600,000 individual American Indians and Alaska Natives who are enrolled in formal education programs - from early childhood to graduate study - in the United States. These students, like all Americans, deserve world class education. Indian students, more so than most Americans, depend on the federal government to provide quality education.
- Over 550 Indian tribes who recognize the importance of education, seek opportunities to become more involved, and want to assume greater control of the education of their tribal members.
- Federal agencies who will have a comprehensive and coordinated approach to improve Indian education based on a policy statement defined by Indian country.

Intent

- The intent of the policy statement is to set national guidelines in Indian education for federal agencies, including the Departments of Education, Interior, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor. Guidelines will direct and define federal agency implementation of existing congressional and executive branch Indian education policies and mandates in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.
- The policy statement will provide direction for new Indian education initiatives from Congress and the Administration, including budget appropriations.
- Ultimately, the policy statement will help ensure that all Indian students achieve academic success in schools in an environment of increased tribal involvement and control.

Importance of the Policy Statement

In what ways?

To improve the quality of Indian education. The history of Indian education has been difficult. The Meriam Report (1928) and the Kennedy Report (1969) documented the failure of formal education and called for more Indian involvement, control, and relevancy in the educational process. The Indian Nations At Risk Task Force (1991) recognized "twenty years of progress" during the 1970-80s, but concluded that Indian communities were "nations at risk" educationally. The White House Conference on Indian Education (1992) reached similar conclusions and made specific recommendations for improvement.

- To continue making progress in Indian education using a comprehensive policy framework that reflects the views of Indian people.
- To better coordinate Indian education at the federal level. Current Indian education policies are fragmented among various treaties, statutes, agencies, and programs.

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@ 3:00



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

121 Oronoco St. • Alexandria, VA 22314 • Phone: 703-838-2870 • Fax: 703-838-1620 • E-mail: niea@mindspring.com

May 21, 1997

Ms. Mike Cohen
Special Assistant to the President for Education
Domestic Policy Council
Old Executive Office Bldg.
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Cohen:

I want to thank you for agreeing to meet with members of the Native American Advisory Group which has worked on development of the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement (CFIEPS). We have set aside June 6 at 3 p. m. for this meeting in your office.

I have just received word that many of our elected tribal officials may be in town on June 3-4 to meet with Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt. I am wondering if you would consider moving our meeting up by a day to June 5? This would allow several of our tribal leaders an opportunity to attend both meetings. At this point in time, we have tentative commitments from Mr. Ron Allen, President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and Chairman Apesanahkwat from the Menominee Nation in Wisconsin. We have also invited Mr. Arlen Washines, Councilman from the Yakama Indian Nation in Washington. Other representatives will include: Lorene Willis, President, National Indian Education Association (NIEA); John Cheek, Legislative Analyst, NIEA; Ms. Melody McCoy, and Mr. James Kawahara, attorneys for the Native American Rights Fund (NARF); Dr. John Tippeconnic, Professor, Pennsylvania State University; Ms. JoAnn Chase, Executive Director, NCAI and Mr. Jack C. Jackson, Governmental Affairs Director, NCAI and myself.

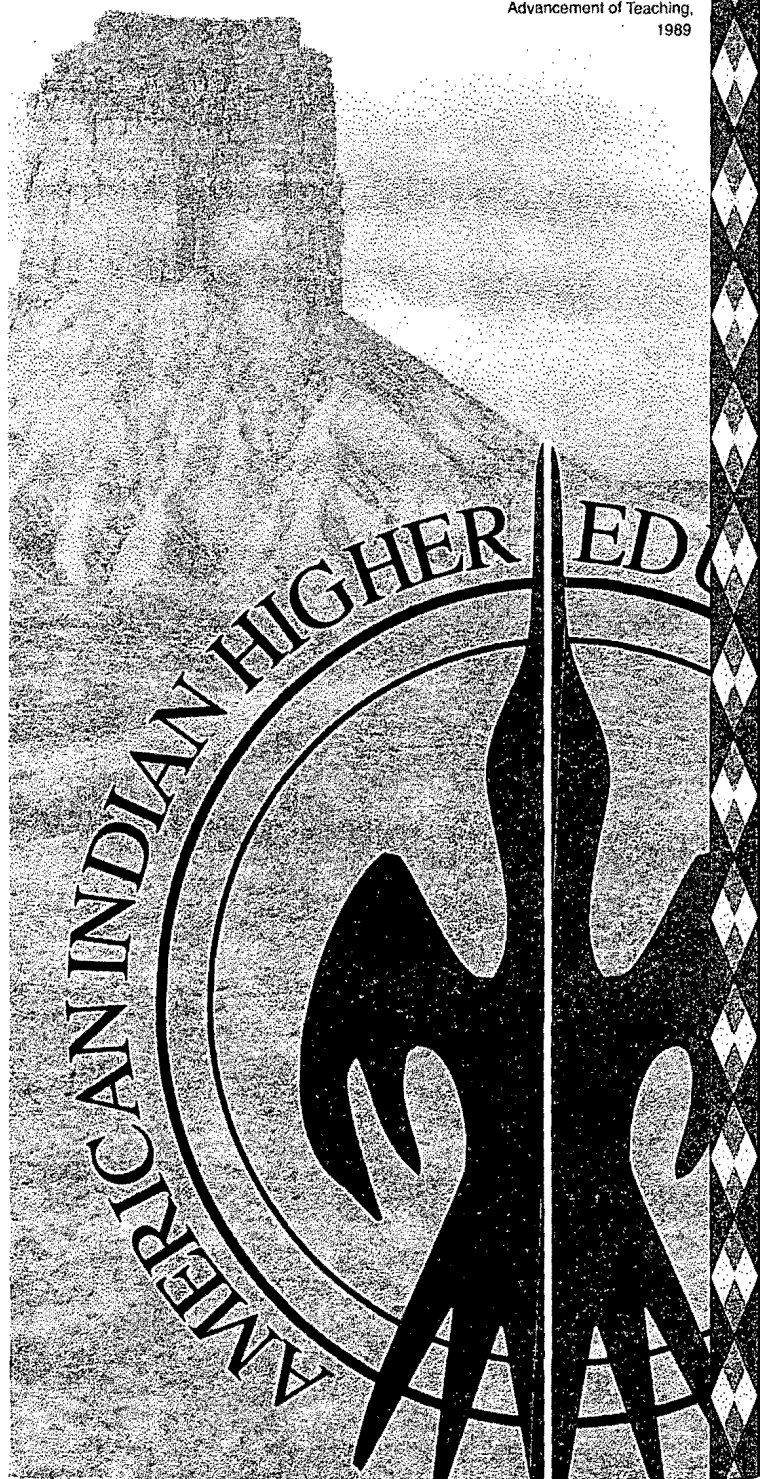
I will give you a call tomorrow afternoon, May 22, to see if this earlier time is possible. If this change is not convenient for you, we will stay with our original time. Thank you very much for your assistance. You can also send me an E-mail at: niea@mindspring.com. There is actually no period at the end. I will be at the Interior Department tomorrow morning.

Sincerley,

Lorraine P. Edmo
Executive Director

"Tribally controlled colleges can be understood only in the historical context of Indian education and in the spiritual role they play in bringing renewal to their people"

Special Report: "Tribal Colleges, Shaping the Future of Native America," the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989



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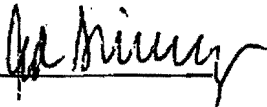
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DATE: 06-03-97

NOTE TO THE SUBGROUP ON EDUCATION OF
THE WHITE HOUSE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL'S
WORKING GROUP ON AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES

RE: Supplemental Documents on the Proposed Statement on National
Education Policy for Indians and Meeting Agenda for Wednesday,
June 4, 1997, MIB Room 4145, 3:00 p.m.

FROM: Ed Simermeyer 

Attached is an agenda and reference materials for our follow-up meeting with the representatives from NIEA, NACIE, NARF, and NACIE. The materials represent two supplemental documents that support the request for an executive order. The one brief document prepared by NARF and their colleagues is a draft simulating a framework for an executive order addressing education policy for Indians. The other document is a revision of what we discussed on Monday and represents a draft of a position paper that supports the request for an education policy for Indians and adds a student focus to what the original tribal policy statement presented. The purpose of our meeting today with the representatives from the Indian organizations is to review and discuss the documents. These representatives are preparing to meet with DPC staff on Thursday to present the proposed policy statement and request consideration for an executive order addressing comprehensive Federal Indian education. The expected outcome of our meeting today is to assist those representatives in preparing for that meeting and in generally understanding the level of support from the Federal agencies on the various provisions of the proposed policy statement. Based on the discussions and recommendations this afternoon, the supplemental documents are likely to be revised. Please call me on 202-208-7956 if you have any questions.

Attachments

cc: NIEA via FAX @ 703-838-1620

DRAFT

EDUCATION SUBGROUP OF THE WHITE HOUSE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL'S WORKING GROUP ON AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES

A G E N D A

MONDAY, JUNE 4, 1997
MAIN INTERIOR BUILDING
ROOM 4145

3:00 p.m.	Welcome Introductions Purpose	Michael Anderson, Deputy Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs
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Presentations

Position Paper	Department of Education
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Comments	Joanne Sebastian Morris, Director, Office of Indian Education Programs
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Framework for Executive Order	Lorraine Edmo, NIEA Jim Kawahara, NARF
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Comments	John Tippeconnic Pennsylvania State University
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3:30 p.m.	Discussion	Michael Anderson
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4:00 p.m.	Wrap-Up	Michael Anderson
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DRAFT

DRAFT (6/3/97)

**EXECUTIVE ORDER REGARDING
A COMPREHENSIVE FEDERAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT
FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES**

Quality education for American Indians and Alaska Natives is critical to the future of Native American tribes and cultures. Under treaties, statutes, and other laws the Federal government has a responsibility to provide quality education to American Indians and Alaska Natives and, based on the special government-to-government relationship between the Federal and Native American tribal governments, the Federal government must transfer control of education to those federally recognized tribal governments that seek it. The provision of quality education and tribal control of education are hindered by the fragmentation of American Indian and Alaska Native education policies among various statutes, orders, proclamations, agencies, and programs. This memorandum acknowledges the need for a coordinated, comprehensive federal education policy for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, I hereby direct the executive departments and agencies to work cooperatively with tribal governments to develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive federal education policy statement for American Indians and Alaska Natives. As part of their efforts, the executive departments and agencies shall incorporate to the fullest extent under the law the Proposal from Indian Country, dated March 1997, for a Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement, and my 10-Point Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century, issued January 1997.

Native American Rights Fund

1

DRAFT (6/3/97)

The success of this initiative is the responsibility of and requires the participation of, not just the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but all executive departments and agencies, including every component bureau and office, that administer education programs for and education funding to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The Department of the Interior shall be responsible for coordinating any inter-agency efforts to address the executive branch actions necessary to achieve the objectives of this memorandum.

We must continue to be committed to greater inter-governmental communication and cooperation. In addition to working more closely with tribal governments, we must enlist the assistance of State governments and public school districts, which provide education to over 85% of American Indian and Alaska Native students. I therefore request that the Department of Education work with State departments, boards, and offices of education and other relevant State and local authorities to facilitate the objectives of this memorandum.

With commitment and cooperation by all of the executive departments and agencies and with tribal governments, I am confident that we will be able to accomplish meaningful progress in the provision of quality education to American Indians and Alaska Natives and in the transfer of control of education to those tribal governments who seek it.

Native American Rights Fund

2

The Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement and

" A Call to Action For American Indian Education"

Preamble: This draft position paper of the Domestic Policy Council Working Group on American Indian Education was developed to support the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement, building upon that statement by incorporating other Indian education reports and the Presidents Call to Action. The paper attempts to synthesize these documents into an Indian learner focused position paper which recognizes the recommendations of the proposed Indian education policy statement.

Introduction:

American Indian societies have an unbroken continuous experience in America. The continuity of their unique social and cultural heritage with a future in which all American Indians can participate effectively and meaningfully in their communities and the larger society is directly dependent upon the education of tribal members. Educated tribal citizens are vital to the vibrant and meaningful economic, social and cultural life of their communities and the broader community in which we all live.

Improving education for American Indians is vital to the National goals to prepare every student for responsible citizenship, continued learning and productive employment.

The education of American Indians remains a national challenge for which the federal government has an enduring special responsibility.

Recent Federal government consideration of the unique status and situation of American Indian Education. Since 1991 with the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force there have been a number of focused efforts to study and describe the current educational needs of American Indians including The White House Conference on Indian Education, and the American Indian Alaskan Native Education Summit. The President's meeting with Tribal leaders included discussion of the importance of education. All efforts recognize the valued contribution and heritage of past efforts beginning with the historic Indian Education Act of 1972 and that these efforts need to more effectively influence an agenda for education reform which is responsive to Indian learners, and which more effectively involves other federal programs and other educational jurisdictions. With significant reflection on these efforts the National Indian Education Association has developed a Proposed Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement.

Intergovernmental complexity: Tribal, Federal, and State Government Involvement in the education of American Indians. The complexity of the inter-governmental arena in which American Indian learners are provided schooling requires a focused federal Indian Education policy which recognizes the authority of tribal governments, the federal /tribal government relationship and the heritage of federal involvement in the education of American Indians in federal, tribal and state schools. The political/legal status of

American Indian Tribal governments includes as an aspect of their inherent sovereignty a plenary authority in the education of tribal members. The federal government, through Bureau of Indian Affairs operated schools, directly provides schooling to American Indians and provides financial support to Tribal controlled and operated elementary, secondary and post secondary institutions. All Federal Indian education legislation formally recognizes the "unique educational and culturally related academic needs" of Indian learners in all school settings

Most American Indian learners attend State operated and controlled school districts primarily in Indian reservation areas and in regional metropolitan areas in which there are federal and tribal/federal grant programs for Indian learners. Outside of the Federal Indian education program dollars made available to State school districts, the federal government has a significant investment in educational programs and approaches to improve education for all learners. These efforts need the enhanced capacity of tribal governments to represent their needs and those of Indian parents and community members to assist State school districts provide effective and meaningful schooling for Indian learners as an area of special concern.

American Indian learners have "unique educational and culturally related academic needs." The educational situation and status of the American Indian population reflects great need requiring focused national attention so that the national educational goals can be accomplished for all learners. American Indians are over represented among the poor with a poverty rate more than twice the national average. 38 percent of American Indian school age children live below the poverty level. American Indian Students have the lowest high school completion and college attendance rates of any minority group. American Indian learners had significant gaps in achievement in reading and math when compared to other learners. There is a heritage of federal involvement in the education of American Indians. All federal Indian education legislation recognizes "the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of Indian learners" Successful approaches and strategies have been developed recognizing the needs of Indian learners in Tribal schools and Indian federal programmatic efforts and need to be developed and modeled through out the schools Indian learners attend. These approaches are valuable models for many other learners.

A Call To Action For American Indian Education

There is a need for a comprehensive national Indian educational policy focusing on how to effectively represent and involve American Indian learners, Tribal Governments and Indian communities in the national agenda to accomplish the national education goals.

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will read independently and well by the end of the third grade, master challenging mathematics by the end of the eighth grade and be prepared, motivated and have access to higher education.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a safe, drug free, personally supportive environment in school.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a linguistic and cultural environment in school that offers students opportunities to maintain and develop a firm knowledge base which meets high standards.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have an intellectually challenging program in school that meets community as well individual academic needs.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have stimulating early childhood education environment that is linguistically, culturally, and developmentally appropriate.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will be prepared, motivated and have access to affordable post secondary education and opportunities for life long learning.**

**** Every American Indian Alaskan Native learner will have a dedicated and well prepared teacher who is competent and knowledgeable in effective teaching strategies for learners with unique educational and culturally related academic needs.**

Strategies for the Federal Government to Accomplish "The American Indian Education Call to Action"

- * Equity in school programs, facilities, and finances across Native communities, and in schools run by the federal government, tribal government and public schools in general. Modernize tribal educational facilities, support the construction of tribal educational facilities and insure that tribal educational facilities are connected to the Internet**
- * Expand school choice and accountability through supporting the continued development of tribal controlled educational institutions at all levels.**
- * Assist the development of the educational governance capacity of tribal governments to establish educational objectives and standards for tribal members to prepare Tribal members for responsible citizenship, continued learning, and productive employment and define appropriate linguistic and cultural learning environments.**
- * Develop intergovernmental agreements between Tribal governments and/or the Federal government with State governments affecting the education of American Indian learners attending State controlled and operated school districts to more effectively represent the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of Indian learners so that Indian learners may accomplish National educational goals.**
- * Create National Indian education goals for the support for Native languages and Cultures in Tribal communities and Schools**

- * Assist Tribal governments and educational authorities develop an effective research and policy development capacity to study and analysis educational practices and approaches and to comment on government sponsored educational and programmatic research.
- * Develop a national Indian teacher and education leadership program to train American Indian Alaskan Natives for the classroom and other positions of educational leadership

Executive Order Considerations;

The development of an Executive Order will focus attention on what federal agencies will be required to do and on reporting results on the accomplishment of "The American Indian Education Call to Action" and the implementation of the strategies proposed.

Draft June 3 1997, David Beaulieu

For the Domestic Policy Council Working Group on American Indian Education



United States Department of the Interior



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Brimley, Michigan

Blackfeet Community College
Browning, Montana

Cheyenne River Community College
Eagle Butte, South Dakota

College of the Menominee Nation
Keshena, Wisconsin

Crownpoint Institute of Technology
Crownpoint, New Mexico

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Albuquerque, New Mexico

Standing Rock College
Fort Yates, North Dakota

Stonechild Community College
Box Elder, Montana

Turtle Mountain Community College
Belcourt, North Dakota

United Tribes Technical College
Bismarck, North Dakota

New Member:

Little Priest Tribal College
Winnebago, Nebraska

Welfare Reform and Financial Crises Batter Nation's American Indian Colleges, Yet "Underfunded Miracles" Persist

New Carnegie Foundation Study Shows Tribal Colleges Provide Crucial Alternative to Welfare; \$22 Million Grant From W.K. Kellogg Announced at D.C. Press Conference

Washington, D.C. -- Thirty American Indian tribal colleges scattered across the United States are "underfunded miracles," providing job training, cultural awareness and an alternative to welfare dependency in some of the nation's poorest and most isolated communities.

These are among the key findings in a comprehensive new study of American Indian tribal colleges, conducted over the past two years by the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The Foundation's 99-page report, *Native American Colleges: Progress and Prospects*, was released today at a Washington, D.C. press conference.

At the same event, officials of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation announced a \$22 million, four-year initiative to support Native American higher education, parts of which are dedicated to the tribal colleges' work.

"Despite overwhelming obstacles, America's tribal colleges are educating thousands of our people, providing them with perhaps their only chance at economic self-sufficiency," said Dr. Janine Pease-Pretty On Top, president of Little Big Horn College in Montana.

Many of those obstacles are financial. As the Carnegie report demonstrates, American Indian tribal colleges are chronically underfunded, substantially below the average level of community colleges nationally.

Although Congress has authorized federal funding for tribal colleges (which unlike other colleges, are not eligible for state or local government money) at the rate of \$5,820 annually per fulltime student, actual appropriated funds are only \$2,860. Even that amount has been declining since 1994.

-- MORE --

In its key recommendation, the Carnegie report calls for full funding of the schools.

Despite financial crises, and in many cases, woefully inadequate campus facilities, the new Carnegie report shows that tribal colleges are indeed succeeding at providing economic opportunities for their 25,000 currently enrolled students.

At Navajo Community College in Tsaile, Arizona, for example, 80% of new students are unemployed and receiving welfare at the time of enrollment, according to statistics compiled by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC).

Following graduation, only 10 percent are on welfare. Of the remainder, 40 percent have found employment and 50 percent have transferred to mainstream four-year colleges. Similar results have been recorded at other tribal colleges.

"Eight years ago, it was the Carnegie Foundation whose original report on tribal colleges brought our existence to the attention of America at large," concluded Dr. Gerald "Carty" Monette, president of Turtle Mountain Community College in North Dakota and president of the board of directors of AIHEC.

"With this new study, the Carnegie Foundation is once again placing its distinguished imprimatur on our work, for which we are doubly grateful," continued Monette.

"These grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation are an infusion of funds that will help us survive as we meet the challenges of the future. Kellogg has shown itself to be a national leader in education. We hope this will encourage others in the private sector to join us in similar partnerships."

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EDITOR'S NOTE - Copies of the full Carnegie Foundation report, *Native American Colleges: Progress and Prospects*, are available to journalists by contacting AIHEC at 703-838-0400.