



TNEC
Tribal Nations Education Committee

TRIBAL NATIONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE (TNEC)

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 21, 2024 | **Time:** 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM | **Location:** Bois Forte, Zoom | **Facilitator:** Chair Harper

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members	Tribal Nation, Community, or Area of Representation	Present	Absent
Vondalee Carr	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	X	
<i>*Leanne Hoffman</i>		X	
Tara Dupuis	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	X	
<i>*Jennifer Murray</i>		X	
Maria Burnett	Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	X	
Laurie Harper, Chair	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	X	
<i>*Dorothy Robinson</i>			
Jesse Kodet	Lower Sioux Indian Community	X	
<i>*Jackie Probst</i>			
Niiyo Gonzales	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe		
<i>*Raina Killspotted</i>		X	
Billie Annette, Secretary	Minnesota Chippewa Tribe	X	
Paul Dressen	Prairie Island Indian Community	X	
Glenda Martin	Red Lake Nation		X
<i>*Annamarie Hill</i>			X
Carrissa Pickit	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community		X
<i>*Dan Morgan</i>		X	
Carrie Trutna	Upper Sioux Indian Community		X
<i>*Roberta Bjerkeset</i>			X
Dana Goodwin	White Earth Nation	X	
<i>*Trista Ayers</i>			
Vacant	Greater Minnesota		
Beth Tepper, Vice-Chair	Twin Cities Metropolitan Area	X	

*Alternate

PUBLIC ATTENDEES

Name	Area/Organization
Dr. Harstad	Director, Office of American Indian Education, MDE
John Poupart	
Anita Fineday	Department of Children, Youth, and Families

MEETING

Time	Item	Owner
9:20 AM	<p>Meeting Called to Order</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p>Committee Rollcall: Quorum met.</p> <p>Approval of Agenda Motion made to approve agenda. Seconded. Motion carried.</p>	Chair Harper
9:20 AM – 10:00 AM	<p>General Discussion</p> <p>The committee had a general discussion about the work that continued during the closed meeting, when many attendees were no longer present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking points include the mission, updating the bylaws, the budget, and the relationships with government agency personnel. Tribal consultation, AIPACs, and the political nature of education in the state were also discussed. Defining who needs to be at the table for tribal consultations, including American Indian education staff, who are at times are not included. The importance of tribal consultation in Indian education, citing historical context and current challenges. The need for TNEC to be included in MDE’s update process for the Tribal Consultation policy. TNEC should develop its own tribal consultation definition and policy for the metro schools. The use of American Indian Education Aid for Native student first until such time they are succeeded at the same or greater levels than their peers. The impacts of the political climate and perspectives influencing school boards. Dr. Harstad will work with the committee on how the Tribal Consultation guidance should look. 	Chair Harper

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withholding federal money for those that are out of compliance with consultation is only permissible if the commissioner says so. • TNEC has requested that MDE use the same format for consultation that the committee uses with the metro area districts, but that has not been met with a response. 	
<p>10:00 AM – 10:51 AM</p> <p>Elevating American Indian Insights on Living with the Earth for Minnesota Educators and Students</p> <p>John Poupart presented on a proposal that he is taking to the state legislature that is aimed at improving American Indian education in the state. The initiative’s is to bridge the wisdom of American Indian perspectives with Minnesota’s public education system. The goal is to create and integrate materials that embody American Indian views on environment and ecology into statewide curriculum. He is seeking the endorsement of the committee for this initiative. He is seeking a \$100k appropriation from the legislature.</p> <p>Q & A and General Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Who is the grant aimed at? Metro? Tribes? A: It pays for the people who would come in and provide the presentations, etc. in schools. • Q: Who are you asking the money from? A: Legislature. But we wanted support in Indian Country first before going to the legislature. • Q: When are you planning on introducing the bill? A: Right after this committee meeting. • Q: So with TNEC’s support you will take it from there? A: Yes • Q: So are you asking the MIAC to be the fiscal agent? A: Correct • Q: Do you think the money will have a big enough reach? A: We would make do with what we can. It’s a risky year to ask money from the legislature. That’s the minimum amount we can make do with. We will also look at other resources. • Q: What areas are you focusing on? A: We have to create a strategy. We haven’t created a plan. We need to look at where Indian populations are greatest. We need some strategic planning. • Dr. Harstad offered that MDE has a list of those districts with high populations of Native learners. Let the department know if you need our help. • Q: Who are you working with on this? A: Time for School Change (double check) and a few folks from the metro area. • Q: Do you have an outline or plan that you can share? A: I sent it to everyone yesterday. It’s not a formal plan, but information. • Q: You talked about creating lesson plans and creating curriculum. Is that already in place? A: No. • Q: What are you asking of TNEC today? A: Your support and understanding on what we are about to embark on. • Dr. Harstad offered that the U of M has some great programs that can maybe help with the initiative. She recommends asking for money. \$100k is not enough for the scope of the work. 	<p>John Poupart</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Feedback: We support the intent behind the work but aren't prepared to officially endorse this right now. The entire committee will need to agree to endorsement. Bring that back to TNEC with the monetary ask? • The presenter reiterated the total financial ask to the legislature and requested that the committee vote to support his initiative today so that he can take it the legislature. • Committee members were divided on support and requested additional information that could be shared with their respective Tribal Nations. • The presenter has not yet taken this information to MIAC. • Committee Request: Please send us a written plan with a budget so that we can take the information to our governments for consideration of support. • The committee agreed to vote virtually and provide a response. • Executive Assistant Action: Will share the information with the full committee once received. 	
11:20 AM – 11:50 AM	<p>General Discussion</p> <p>The floor was open to general topics/discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the meeting will be suspended at 11:50 AM for the MIAC meeting presentation. • Clarification surrounding IEFA funding, JPAs, and collected resources was provided by Dr. Harstad. She offered that a toolkit for educators will be provided online at some point. • General discussion surrounding the committee vacancy. • Executive Assistant Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft and post a position description for the greater Minnesota committee vacancy. ○ Send the position paper to the committee for review and comment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee action: Comments are due by February 29. ○ Send the committee bylaws to the committee for review and comment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee action: Comments are due by March 6. • Chair will print the position paper to bring to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) dinner on March 12. <p>Recess</p> <p>Motion made to recess for the MIAC meeting. Seconded. Motion carried.</p>	Chair Harper
1:00 PM	Meeting called to order.	Chair Harper
1:05 PM	<p>Department of Children, Youth, and Families</p> <p>Anita Fineday provided brief updates from the newly formed Department of Children, Youth, and Families, slated for formal launch in July 2024, and discussed the consolidation of early childhood programs in Minnesota, including the transfer of programs to the new agency and the implementation timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She provided a list of programs that will be moving, including childcare, early childhood, and child welfare programs, and mentions the goal of easier access and coordination. • She discussed various state programs moving to new locations, including early childhood services, education, and health services. • Anita offered that she has attended various consultations with different tribal organizations and agencies, including public safety, education, and equity advisory council meetings to ensure efficacy in this work. • There is a report due on 03/01 to the legislature. <p>Q & A and General Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Has the state identified a candidate for the commissioner yet? 	Anita Fineday

<p>A: No. This is an appointed position. They will be in place on July 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Is there a physical location yet? A: Yes. They will stay in the MMB building. • Q: Is the new department familiar with the government-to-government consultative policy? How will that be rolled out for those agencies that are merging into the new dept? How will consultation with TNEC be implemented? A: That’s hard to answer. New people aren’t in place and therefore are not aware yet. • Q: How many people have been hired? A: None. New positions are either posted or will be posted very soon. • 18 people have been hired and will begin on 07/01 and will make up the executive team. 	
<p>1:45 PM – 2:30 PM</p> <p>Minnesota Department of Education, Office of American Indian Education Dr. Harstad provided a brief overview on recent division and department activities.</p> <p>Report to the state legislature on 02/20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gave an update to the Education Committee on implementation of all of the legislation that was passed last year. • Provided student gap information and the division org chart. • Updated them on American Indian student counts (state v. federal) and the number of aid eligible schools. • There are 49,661 American Indian students in the state, with 178 eligible schools or districts this year. <p>American Indian Education Aid (AIEA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved 30 plans thus far. • There are more issues arising related to recent changes to the law and programs. • The department has received reports from districts that they are unhappy with the shared time enrollment portion of the law. • The OAIE has received reports that implementation isn’t being done properly or within the intent of the guidance. • There are no districts that are where they need to be in the shared time enrollment. • There is slow progress in reaching the desired metrics for American Indian students, with only 2 districts (St. Peter and Little Falls) having better math scores than their peers. • Emphasized the importance of sharing a consistent message about American education aid being specifically for American Indian students. • A lot of conversation about proportional aid for pay for educators who fill a variety of rolls. • There are complaints about the difficulty surrounding proportional pay. • the proportional pay being difficult to accomplish/parse out. <p>Achievement & Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans are in place to support underrepresented student groups, including American Indians, but there is pushback from districts and A&I personnel related to using this funding instead of AIEA. • There is an AIPAC component that is sometimes being followed and sometimes not. • There is a new supervisor in A&I at MDE and they are working on consistent messaging and collaboration. <p>Language Revitalization</p>	<p>Dr. Harstad, Director</p>

- Grants come out 03/01.
- Finalizing in the next week.

Other:

- Attempting to proactively remind districts that American Indian students are permitted to wear regalia and other culturally significant items during graduation.
- Providing resources to support Indigenous Peoples Day for district use.
- There are two open positions at the OAIE.
- The Ethel Curry American Indian Leadership Scholarship encountered some issues due to staffing changes, but they are on track to disburse payments and fulfill implementation requirements.
- They are offering an AIPAC learning track at the MIEA conference with eight different presentations.
- **Committee Action:** They OAIE would like to have a Tribal Consultation Under ESSA presentation with TNEC, regarding the AIPAC role in the consultation process. Let the director know if you're interested.

Q & A and General Discussion

- **Q: Is there a list of districts that are eligible for AIEA but that didn't apply?**

A: Yes, but the division does not have the capacity to follow up with them.

- Districts are trying to use AIEA for IEFA, but it's not allowable because they are separate pots of money.

- **Q: How many roughly?**

A: 15 or less.

- Problems continue with districts not being eligible for AIEA due to a lack of AIPAC.
- **Committee request:** The committee is interested in knowing if any AIPACs declined AIEA.
- **Committee request:** Interested in learning more about St. Peter and Little Falls to learn best practices.
- **Q: If a district votes nonconcurrent three times, is the next step to consult with TNEC?**

A: That's up to the committee. Legislation was put forth but was not moved forward. The proposal that went forward was six random audits per year.

- There was general discussion about staff leaving districts and AIEA falling by the wayside as a result. Districts should have plans and staff in place to keep required operations running.
- General discussion about staffing issues that the division is hearing about, good and bad practices, and the lack of value placed on American Indian coordinator expertise.
- Adam Huett (MDE) sent the new enrollment data and there is a new category in the file: *Indigenous and People of Color*. The division reached out to Adam for clarification on the new category and will report back to the committee.
- Graduation rates come out the second week in March.
- MIAC has a resolution directing MDE to use the state American Indian count and not the federal.
- Special Education is the last "holdout" on full usage of the state count.
- Regarding CEIS data, the committee can submit a formal request for the information to the new director. They are required to respond.
- The committee reports that MDE hasn't responded to the TNEC data request from last August.

Motion made to adjourn. Seconded. Motion Carried.	
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NEXT CLOSED MEETING: MARCH 20, 2024

Submitted by: Kristen Aeikens | **Date:** March 15, 2024