



**TNEC**  
Tribal Nations Education Committee

**TRIBAL NATIONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE (TNEC)**

**OPEN MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** June 20, 2024 | **Time:** 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM | **Location:** Zoom | **Facilitator:** Chair Harper

**ATTENDANCE**

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

<b>VACANT</b>	Greater Minnesota		
<b>Beth Tepper, Vice-Chair</b>	Twin Cities Metropolitan Area	X	
<b>Zhawin Gonzalez</b>	Twin Cities Metropolitan Area		X

\*Alternate

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES**

Name	Area/Organization
Melanie Franks, Tribal Liaison	MDE
Rafael Eubanks, Tribal Liaison	OHE
<b>Dr. Harstad, Director</b>	MDE, OAIE
Graham Hartley	MDE
Rochelle Pemberton, Director of Indian Education	Cass Lake-Bena school district
Maddy Blaser, IEFA Specialist	MDE, OAIE
Betsy Blackhawk, Education Specialist	MDE, OAIE
Dennis Olson, Commissioner	Office of Higher Education

**MEETING**

Time	Item	Owner
10:00 AM	<p><b>CALL TO ORDER</b></p> <p>Meeting Called to Order by Chair Harper</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p><b>Committee Rollcall</b> Quorum met.</p> <p><b>Approval of Agenda</b> Motion made by Beth Tepper to approve agenda. Seconded by Dana Goodwin. Motion carried.</p>	Chair Harper
10:08 AM	<p><b>Open Floor Discussion</b></p> <p>The committee used space in their schedule to prepare for their discussion with the MDE Tribal Liaison. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The July professional development opportunity for districts in Mille Lacs.</li> <li>• The committee would like to see an agenda.</li> <li>• Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College and other tribal colleges: is there an opportunity to partner and provide consistency for educators?</li> <li>• Status of the Field Hearing and were the committee’s comments and feedback incorporated into the updated draft.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee would like the Tribal Liaison to attend the full public meeting.</li> <li>• The committee would like the Tribal Liaison to meet with them during their July retreat at MDE, preferably after they have met with MDE Government Relations.</li> <li>• Status updated on the communications plan that was requested of Commissioner Jett in May.</li> <li>• Status update on the updated government-to-government consultation policy.</li> </ul>	
10:23 AM	<p><b>Minnesota Department of Education, Commissioner’s Office</b> Melanie opened the floor to questions from the committee.</p> <p><b>Field Hearing Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Q: Did the liaison incorporate the comments, recommendations, questions into the field hearing report? When was it posted?</b> <b>A:</b> It’s been posted online, but not sent out publicly. Comments and recommendations were incorporated. Open to continuing the discussion.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Why weren’t we notified?</b> <b>A:</b> It wasn’t a priority. Did not commit to notifying the committee when it would be posted.</li> <li>• Melanie clarified that the Field Hearing report is specifically about what MDE heard and learned at the field hearings. It is not a report on the state of American Indian education in Minnesota.</li> <li>• <b>Q: When can we expect the report on the state of American Indian education? That’s required in statute.</b></li> <li>• A discussion was had about state statutes and whether the Commissioner was required to provide a field hearing report or a report on the state of American Indian education, or both.</li> <li>• Melanie will seek clarification from the Commissioner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tribal Relations Training in July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Q: Is Tad (Johnson) working on the teacher training for the new statute related to American Indian culture?</b> <b>A:</b> Yes.</li> <li>• Melanie would like the TNEC to sit on a panel at the July training session to answer questions from educators about their work, their priorities, and the types of assistance they may be able to offer.</li> <li>• Committee members have not yet committed to being present/participating.</li> <li>• The committee has not provided feedback on the draft agenda provided by Melanie, but changes can still be made, as long as it’s received by the end of June.</li> <li>• The email from Melanie with her ask was forwarded to the committee in May.</li> <li>• <b>Q: How can individuals from the tribal colleges work with MDE to create consistency in curriculum or trainings?</b> <b>A:</b> Under <a href="#">MN Statute 1065</a>, MDE is required to model this training after the statewide Tribal State Relations Training, but they are open to working with others as well.</li> <li>• Jennifer Murray offered that FDL is interested in partnering.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Who are your partners/collaborators on the teacher and administrator training sessions?</b></li> <li>• <b>Q: What can be required up front related to licensure renewal?</b></li> <li>• <b>Q: What will be created for them to fulfil their required hours?</b></li> </ul>	Melanie Franks, Tribal Liaison

- **Q: What will be shared with session participants about renewal requirements?**  
**A:** Melanie offered the following in response:
  - Specific time has not been allotted at the sessions to cover this topic, but PELSB will be there to answer questions related to licensure renewal.
  - OHE will also be there to answer questions from attendees.
  - MDE has been primarily collaborating with Tribal Sovereignty Institute and the Tribal State Relations planning team.
  - They have had conversations with about half of the Tribal Nation leaders.
  - They are open to feedback from the committee.
  - They've been collaborating with the OAIE who will provide IEFA updates, AIEA updates, and guidance on vetting curricular resources.
- Dana Goodwin wonders if there is a way to develop a cycle with PELSB to ensure that classroom teachers have the required training, and questions what oversight exists.
- **Q: Is MDE or PELSB able to approve resources, professional development, etc. that might be offered by the districts?**
- Melanie agrees that this is needed. It's her understanding that PELSB has heard what TNEC and others are saying and they are engaging with appropriate communities and the OAIE on what they will recommend. They are still in the rulemaking process. There is an opportunity to define how this looks and that it meets the intent of the requirements, and she acknowledges that continued discussion on this topic is warranted.
- Dana appreciates the measures that passed in 2023, but many items were not brought before the committee and inclusion is needed because the TNEC has valuable insight to offer. Being a part of the initial process and vetting will be helpful for all.
- **Q: Will there be CEUs available for the training?**  
**A:** We are offering 14 or 15 hours, which will be through UMD.
- **Q: What are the topics that the training will cover?**  
**A:** Topics include:
  - History of American Indian Education
  - History of AIEA and AIPACS
  - IEFA
  - Ojibwe and Dakota language exercises
  - American Indian Education district staff panel
  - TNEC panel
  - A Game night
  - Federal Indian policy eras
  - Boarding school presentation from Tribal State Relations Training
  - Circle within a circle storytelling event
- **Q: Can you share the agenda?**  
**A:** It's a draft, pending TNEC confirming their participation.
- **Q: What do you want TNEC participants to cover?**  
**A:** That's up to the committee. Covering statute is always a good idea.
- **Q: Is anyone covering tribal consultation?**  
**A:** No. Dr. Harstad is planning something for the Superintendent's conference though. We can have materials on the topic available as an option.
- **Q: Will there be any documentation for those attending the training to show that they've taken the training?**

<p><b>A:</b> Yes. If needed they will be connected with UMD to get CEU hours and a certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Q: Will UMD be charging?</b> <b>A:</b> No.</li> <li>• MDE is offering a flat \$500 reimbursement per participant to help with the cost of the training. There is a cost for lodging.</li> <li>• Billie Annette expresses appreciation for this training and the intent behind it and hopes that it isn't a one-time thing.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Is there a room block?</b> <b>A:</b> Yes, and MDE will approve individual TNEC reimbursements for their attendance and lodging.</li> <li>• MDE understands that this training will not be exhaustive. Should additional funding become available, the training will be expanded in the future.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Is there a statute outlining the Commissioner's responsibility for the education of American Indian students?</b> <b>A:</b> All of the statutes related to education would apply.</li> <li>• Maria Burnette offered that she thought there was a more formal report required of the Commissioner related to the state of American Indian education in Minnesota, like what the federal government does.</li> <li>• <b>Q: What time would the panel be?</b> <b>A:</b> Whatever time works for the TNEC. We have you tentatively slated as the keynote on July 23 from 5pm-6pm.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Committee Request:</b> The committee would like Melanie to join them at their retreat at MDE in July to discuss communications at MDE and legislative measures. <b>Response:</b> Melanie agrees and can attend on July 19.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Do you have an update on the communications plan?</b> <b>A:</b> When Adosh provides an update, it will be sent to the Tribal Nations and to TNEC and then it is up to the committee/Nation to decide whether it's relevant or not.</li> <li>• <b>Q: Who will that come from?</b> <b>A:</b> Probably from Melanie.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Presenter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Get clarification on the report(s) and statutes from the Commissioner.</li> <li>✓ Share the new draft agenda and reservation information for the July tribal relations training.</li> <li>✓ Research the Commissioner requirements within statutes and report back to committee.</li> <li>✓ Attend committee retreat.</li> <li>✓ Remind Commissioner about retreat and attendance request.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Contact Melanie if you want to participate in the TNEC panel.</li> <li>✓ Provide feedback on agenda items to Melanie asap, but no later than next week.</li> </ul>	
<p>11:17 AM</p> <p><b>Minnesota Department of Education, Standards and Assessments</b></p> <p><b>Common Terminology</b></p>	<p>Jennifer Dugan, Director</p>

- The committee is asked to consider the use of the terms Dakota, Anishinaabe, Ojibwe, Chippewa, and American Indian in the language of the law related to standards.
- Current language in academic standards references “Minnesota’s American Indian tribes and communities” which is possessive.
- TNEC representatives on standards committees have requested to use the terms Dakota and Anishinaabe/Ojibwe.
- Tribal community members have expressed a need to revise the language during IEFA discussions.
- The use of consistent language in both MDE and legislation is stressed.
- **Q: Does Tribal community members mean Tribal Nations?**  
**A:** Yes.
- Dr. Harstad offers the use of “Minnesota’s” implies possession and MDE would like to move away from that and are looking for suggestions on how to rephrase this.
- Melanie Franks is the contact person for your suggestions.
- Melanie offers that the Governor’s office is working on this and will send something out soon.
- Jen Murray notes that there are several inconsistencies between the language in various standards, which would be confusing to educators trying to implement standards and teach.

#### **Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC)**

- Tribal contract schools do not submit common course catalog information to MDE, so that info is missing from their data related to Language Revitalization.
- TNEC previously advised MDE to reach out to the Tribal contract schools in order to understand what reporting or submitting data to the common course catalog looked like.
- Jennifer reports that she will no longer be overseeing this outreach/activity. Karen Mollett will be taking over and coordinating with Dr. Harstad (OAIE) and Melanie Franks, Tribal Liaison.
- Future information on this will be communicated by Karen.

#### **Statewide Assessment Reports Redesign**

- Phase 1 of survey complete.
- Currently analyzing data from the surveys.
- Phase 2 will include focus group discussion during the summer, estimated mid-August.

#### **Community Reviews**

- MDE has been hosting events around the state to gather input and feedback.
- Future opportunities will be shared with the committee to share out with their communities.
- Encouraging participation is appreciated.

#### **Academic Standards**

- **Finalized:**
  - Arts and Physical Education were implemented in 23-24.
  - Standards and benchmarks that include Tribal Nations provided in 2023.

- Science will be implemented in 24-25.
- Standards and benchmarks that include Tribal Nations provided in 2023.
- English Language Arts will be implemented in 25-26.
- Standards and benchmarks that include Tribal Nations provided prior to meeting.
- Social Studies will be implemented in 26-27.
- Standards and benchmarks that include Tribal Nations provided prior to meeting.
- **Going through Rulemaking:**
  - The first year of Mathematics implementation is projected to be 27-28.
  - Standards and benchmarks that include Tribal Nations will be compiled once finalized.
- **Q: So the next time Social Studies will be up for revision is 2027?**  
A: No 30-31.
- **Q: Did that get shortened?**  
A: No. There's a gap between revision and implementation. Revision is every 10 years and then there is time to plan and implement.
- Jen Murray returns to the language use: Minnesota first vs. Tribal Nation first and the confusion this could cause educators.

### Working Groups

- The Computer Science working group has finished.
- [Read the legislative report on the Computer Science State Strategic Plan.](#)
- Additional funding was not granted to implement recommendations from the group.
- Conversations are ongoing
- The Holocaust, Genocide of Indigenous People, and Other Genocides working group is on pause.
- Legislation requires that the group meet by September 1, 2024.
- MDE does not know what this will look like.
- **Q: What does it mean it's on pause?**  
A: The May meeting was cancelled and further outreach will come before September 1. There is no work happening at this time.
- MDE received public comment on the committee member list that resulted in the removal of a member.
- **Q: Can you provide an update on Art Standards? Do you have a list of the artists?**
- **Q: Where are we with the Ethnic Studies work group?**  
A: Ethnic Studies will meet on Tuesday, June 25 in the cities. This is in response to feedback from the redesign team.
- **Request to Presenter:** Dana Goodwin would like the dates sent to both her and Jackie Probst.
- The dates that are in the assumptions document are the correct meeting dates going forward.
- Jennifer Dugan is meeting with Alina to get a status update on the Native Arts standards later today and will provide an update as able.
- The committee is interested in learning how the artists were selected.
- The committee would like the full list of artists used for outreach.
- Personal Finance working group is ongoing.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A survey was open from January 29-February 26 to gather information about the current status of personal finance and general financial literacy in schools.</li> <li>• They will meet on June 11 and again in August.</li> <li>• There will be an opportunity to provide feedback this fall.</li> <li>• Jen Murray would like to know more about why the Holocaust group work was cancelled.</li> <li>• Jennifer Dugan said it was due to expressed concerns about membership.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Presenter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Send link for Phase 2 focus group discussions (summer) when available.</li> <li>✓ Send Ethnic Studies workgroup meeting dates to Dana and Jackie.</li> <li>✓ Provide update on Native Arts standards, confirmed artist information, and full list of artists who were contacted</li> <li>✓ Send opportunities for feedback on Personal Finance Course work group</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If your community wants to host an in-person focus group let Jennifer know.</li> <li>✓ Share the phase 2 link once received.</li> </ul>	
<p>11:50 AM</p> <p><b>Department of Children, Youth, and Families</b></p> <p>Anita provided general updates on the new Department of Children, Youth, and Families which will open on July 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional money was appropriated during the legislative session.</li> <li>• The state legislature is requiring the DCYF commissioner to designate someone to lead the coordination for children with disabilities and mental health needs within the agency and across all ages.</li> <li>• The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) houses programs for homelessness that were originally slated to move to the DCYF but they are no longer moving, reportedly because of their good work and established partnerships.</li> <li>• The legislature appropriated \$2M in 24-25 for community outreach and feedback with various groups, organizations, entities, and governments, including TNEC, MIAC, and Tribal councils and organizations.</li> <li>• The legislature appropriated \$12M in 26-27 to invest in critical agency operations to support services.</li> <li>• Tiki Brown is the Commissioner designee. She’s currently an assistant commissioner over Child Protection and child and family services. She has a background in SNAP.</li> <li>• In the 2024 legislative session, and Intergovernmental Children, Youth, and Families Advisory Council was mandated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Purpose: provide advice, consultation, and recommendations to the commissioner.</li> <li>○ Membership: Participants must develop a process to administer the committee that ensures each participating Tribal Nation and county are represented. Participation is optional for Tribes, and also includes the Association of Minnesota Counties and the MN Association of County Social Service Agencies.</li> <li>○ Must meet quarterly.</li> <li>○ It will start operating on July 1 of 2025.</li> <li>○ Will manage partnerships with 87 counties and the 11 Tribal Nations (as desired by the Nation).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Anita Fineday, Tribal Implementation Liaison</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tribes expressed concern about having less say than counties and being “out voted”.</li> <li>○ Will coordinate services for children with mental health services and disability services.</li> <li>○ \$340K in FY24-25 and \$1.458M in 25-26.</li> <li>○ <b>Q: Why isn’t the system set up more equitably? There is a difference between county governments and sovereign nations.</b> <b>A:</b> That is similar to what was heard from Tribes and why there were many that did not want to participate. Example: A county gets one vote, and a Tribe gets one vote, but counties are not equal to Tribes, which are sovereign nations.</li> <li>○ The current model for the council is based on the MDOH.</li> <li>○ Each Tribal government will decide if it wants to participate.</li> <li>○ This information has been discussed with Tribal councils and TNEC will continue to be updated.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No new policy decisions this session.</li> <li>● Chapters were renumbered/created and recodified as a part of the new division implementation.</li> <li>● Child welfare statutes were not recodified.</li> <li>● Investments in programs and services include establishing a permanent summer EBT program.</li> <li>● There is \$5,200 in funding available for additional voluntary Pre-K seats., as well as new language putting all of public pre-K programs under a single set of standards and requirements.</li> <li>● Additional funding for early learning scholarships.</li> <li>● Starts on July 1. Anita referenced reviewing the PowerPoint for details.</li> <li>● In the DCYF, there’s going to be an Executive Director of Tribal Relations that oversees at least 2 other people. Sam Moose has been selected for the position. Public announcement to follow later today.</li> <li>● Additional positions will be announced as well.</li> <li>● Anita’s job ends June 30, 2025. She will help with onboarding Sam.</li> </ul>	
12:20 PM	<p><b>Open Floor Discussion</b></p> <p><b>August In-Person Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maria Burnette will share lodging information for the in-person meeting at Grand Portage asap.</li> </ul> <p><b>July Committee Retreat:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kristen is coordinating food for the week.</li> </ul>	
1:15 PM	<p><b>Minnesota Department of Education</b></p> <p>Jyoti came before the committee to discuss gap analysis for homeless students in Minnesota.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Information was brief and provided in a document that was shared with the committee prior to the meeting.</li> <li>● Vonda Carr suggested that it would be best to connect Jyoti with the Bois Forte housing resource coordinator, who works specifically on homelessness. Contact: <a href="mailto:skinnunen@boisforte-nsn.gov">skinnunen@boisforte-nsn.gov</a>.</li> </ul> <p>The committee had no questions or comments.</p>	<p>Jyoti Wadhwa, Homeless Education Specialist</p>

1:25 PM	<p><b>Office of Higher Education (OHE)</b></p> <p>The Commissioner provided a brief overview of recent work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioner Olson was a presenter at a counselor training supported by ACES, which had roughly 150 school counselors in attendance.</li> <li>• Laura Gerhardson, who manages the Minnesota Indian Scholarship was also present.</li> <li>• They provided information on recent changes in financial aid options and opportunities for Native students and answered questions.</li> <li>• A number of counselors had not hear of the American Indian Scholars Program.</li> <li>• OHE staff are available to present on this and similar topics upon request, both in-person and virtually, at community events, districts, etc.</li> <li>• There were a lot of technical issues that states and families struggled with during the recent FAFSA update and rollout.</li> <li>• Minnesota is performing better than some other states related to closing the filing gap but had an 8-9% decline in FAFSA filing from last year to this year.</li> <li>• Commissioner Olson is interested in hearing about any potential policy changes for the next fiscal year and what the TNEC and their respective Nation’s would like to prioritize.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Presenter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attend the July committee retreat with staff to present information to the committee.</li> <li>✓ Send Kristen preferred date and time.</li> </ul>	Commissioner Olson
1:41 PM	<p>Minnesota Department of Education</p> <p><b>Committee Retreat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retreat logistics were discussed, including start and end times, and divisions that should be present.</li> <li>• Invitations have not been sent yet.</li> <li>• <b>Q-Presenter: Do you want presenters during the closed meeting or on that date?</b>  <b>A:</b> No presenters during the closed meeting, but the closed meeting will end at Noon and presenters can be scheduled at 1pm onward.</li> </ul> <p><b>Legislative Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are looking at adjusting timelines for American Indian Education Aid, Annual Compliance, and other efforts.</li> <li>• Reviewing ways the statutes will have to change.</li> <li>• Jen Murray suggests the committee review the spreadsheet and then come to the retreat prepared to discuss and identify priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New staff starting next week.</li> </ul> <p><b>General Questions and Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Q: With AIEA applications, when revisions are made and funding is taken away or denied, is there an appeal process?</b>  <b>A:</b> Funding is not taken away. It is not approved to be spent on unallowable items. At this point there is no formal appeal process.</li> </ul>	Dr. Harstad, Director

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A process for this would be helpful, but its not clear how the process should be managed and who should oversee it.</li> <li>• If there is an appeal process, the AIPAC should be involved in that process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Presenter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Draft retreat schedule.</li> <li>✓ Review the potential for date changes in legislation: AIEA, Annual Compliance, plus any others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item(s): Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review legislative spreadsheet and American Indian education statutes and programs and let Dr. Harstad know of potential/suggested changes.</li> </ul>	
2:03 PM	<p><b>Adjournment</b></p> <p>Motion made by Beth Tepper to adjourn. Seconded by Jen Murray. Motion carried.</p>	Chair Harper

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**SUBMITTED BY:** KRISTEN AEIKENS | **DATE:** JULY 12, 2024