

Tribal Nations Education Committee (TNEC)  
Meeting Minutes approved December 16, 2021  
November 18, 2021  
Zoom Host: Bois Forte

## PARTICIPANTS

TNEC: Maria Burnett – Grand Portage (TNEC Vice-Chair)  
Travis Vake – Bois Forte  
Dana Goodwin – White Earth  
Trista Ayers – White Earth (Alternate)  
Jackie Probst – Lower Sioux  
Jesse Kodet – Lower Sioux (Alternate)  
Laurie Harper – Leech Lake  
Dorothy Robinson – Leech Lake (Alternate)  
Beth Tepper – Shakopee  
Billie Annette – MCT  
Edye Washington – Greater MN  
David Isham – Twin Cities Metro  
Brook LaFloe – Twin Cities Metro

GUESTS: Commissioner Dennis Olson, OHE  
Shannon Geshick, MIAC Executive Director  
Dr. Jane Harstad, Director MDE OIE  
Deputy Commissioner Stephanie Burrage, MDE  
Alina Campana, MDE Arts Specialist  
Tom Delaney, MDE Special Education Division  
Robin Widley, MDE Special Education Division Director  
Elizabeth Watkins, MDE  
Angela Mansfield, MDE COMPASS Program Manager  
Stephanie White, MDE COMPASS Coordinator  
Jean Duffy, MnMTSS Coordinator  
Calvin Lewis, MDE (for Michael Diedrich, ESEA Policy Specialist)  
Kat Edwards, MDE  
Teresa Taylor, MDE  
Leigh Schleicher, MDE English Learner Supervisor  
Tadd Johnson, Sr. Director of AI and Tribal Nations Relations  
Misty Blue, MIAC Project Coordinator for TRUTH Project  
An Garagiola-Bernier, Research Assistant, TRUTH Project  
Toka Owe Wanka Hokshila

- I. Maria called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
- II. Prayer was given by Billie.

- III. Rollcall: A quorum was present.
- IV. Approval of Agenda: Motion by Brook to approve. Second by Travis. Motion passed.
- V. Approval of October 21, 2021 minutes. Motion by Travis to approve. Second by David. Motion passed.
- VI. Old Business:
- a. Curriculum/Indian Education for All (Jane):
- RFP will be sent out in two weeks to those interested in writing curriculum (must follow the state RFP process.) TNEC asked for assistance in identifying curriculum writers.
  - MDE will be moving to NE Minneapolis on January 3, 2022; current location will be vacated December 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- b. Other Old Business:
- MDE will be moving to a new location (NE Minneapolis) on January 3, 2022. They will be vacated from the current Roseville location on December 3, 2021.
    - Strategic Plan Subcommittee Updates:
  - Brook reported she and Dana will be updating the website to include a curriculum tab, resources tab (including job postings) along with TNEC meeting calendar, minutes, etc. A report will be provided to TNEC for review/approval.
  - Billie reported Commissioner Mueller was invited and plans to meet quarterly with TNEC in 2022.
  - Maria presented the TNEC report at the MIAC meeting last week. She will send a written copy to Shannon.
  - Travis provided an update on the survey sent to TNEC regarding meeting/time spent/needed.
- VII. New Business:
- a. Alina Campa, Arts Specialist MDE
- Update on the Indigenous Representations Art Resources Project, including formation of Indigenous Representations Arts Steering Committee, and initial work that has included drafting a goal statement.
  - Power point shared (will be emailed).
- b. Callie Hargett, MN Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee – no show.
- c. Tom Delaney and Robin Widley, Special Education Division MDE:
- MDE is updating its state plan for special education, including setting goals for improving graduation rates of AI and Alaska Native students (federal terms in the project) with disabilities.
  - TNEC members are invited to a discussion and feedback session to review the state special education plan for improving graduation rates of AI and Alaska Natives with disabilities (possible dates: December 7, 16 or 22).

- Tom shared there are 3,900 AI students with disabilities – mostly in rural areas of MN. (Note: TNEC members think this reported number is low.) AI students with disabilities have the largest graduation gap.
  - In 2016-2017 the graduation rate was 51% and in 2020 it was 60%.
  - Wants to find what works and grow it.
  - On a national level MN is unique with the focus of AI students with disabilities (the only other state with this focus is Montana.)
  - TNEC invites Tom back for further discussion – he will be scheduled for an hour on the December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda.
- d. Angela Mansfield, Stephanie White and Jean Duffy, MDE – Collaborative MN Partnerships to Advance Student Success (COMPASS):
- Power point presentation (a copy will be sent).
  - Share vision and goals for COMPASS and talk about inroads for collaboration.
- e. Calvin Lewis (for Michel Diedrich, ESEA Policy Specialist) and Kat Edwards:
- Power point presentation – the North Star Accountability System (will send).
  - Discuss potential changes to MN’s ESSA state plan, particularly around accountability and school/district support.
  - See power point for next steps.
- f. Leigh Schleicher, English Learning Supervisor, MDE:
- Power point presentation (copy will be sent).
  - AI students are currently underrepresented in MN’s pre-K through grad 12 English learner (EL) population largely because the current MN EL definition does not specifically recognize AI students whose home primary language may be English. The MN EL definition does not match the federal definition of EL which specifically recognizes this unique group of ELs. Since the current MN EL definition does not specifically in NA students, these students cannot be identified as ELS and therefore do not generate EL state aid which qualifies these students for language development services so that their academic English literacy skills are addressed to enable them to successfully access the curriculum. Nonetheless, there remains the requirement to provide a high quality education to meet the needs of all students including AI ELs. Therefore, MDE supports a legislative change to the current definition to specifically include AI students.
  - Invites TNEC to voice agreement/disagreement the specific inclusion of AI students in MN’s English learner definition.
- g. Tadd Johnson, Misty Blue and An Garagiola-Bernier – TRUTH (Towards Recognition and University – Tribal Healing) project:
- Discussion TRUTH project. At the heart of this truth-telling project is community-led participatory research designed to give Tribes the opportunity to tell, in their words, the history of relations between their Nation and the University of MN. Mellon grant funding was received, sub-awarded to MIAC to hire a project coordinator/researcher, and the remaining funds to be distributed to each of the eleven Tribal Nations. These funds are for each Tribal Nation to appoint a Research Fellow who will tell their Tribe’s history

of relations with the University of Minnesota. (Note: Funds went to all but one Tribal Nation who declined.)

- Documents about TRUTH Project description was emailed prior to the meeting as well as a copy of the “Dear Tribal Leader” letter regarding the project.
- h. Commissioner Dennis Olson, OHE:
  - MN Future Together Grants – Commissioner Olson will continue to provide updates to TNEC.
  - Commissioner Olson recently spoke about land acknowledgment in Washington and pushed for a specific all to action, highlighted MN tribal consultation mandates.
- i. Executive Director Shannon Geshick, MIAC
  - MIAC has 3 resolutions re obligation of UM to Tribal Nations.
  - Concern regarding stipulations of the free tuition at UM – that they are only for enrolled tribal members, for 1<sup>st</sup> year entering freshman (is there funding after the 1<sup>st</sup> year), and financial eligibility restrictions (2 of 11 tribes would be eligible based on this). Commissioner Olson will send more information that will clarify (including the tuition funding is a 4 year commitment.)
  - There is also another concern about the messaging of being inclusive of enrolled members from all 11 tribal nations when the income requirements may not be inclusive of members of tribal nations who are economically successful (do members of Shakopee, Prairie Island, etc. meet income requirements due to their economic success in exercising their sovereignty through gaming? It seems misleading to put out that members of 11 nations qualify when in fact they won’t due to income guidelines.)
  - There is a meeting with MIAC and MDE scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup> and TNEC is invited to attend.
- j. Dr. Jane Harstad, MDE OIE Director:
  - MDE has 500,000 for tribal relations training for district administrators. Asks for TNEC to assist in planning for this.
  - Planning committee: Beth, Billie and Tadd volunteered for the committee. Contact Jane if interested.
  - Draft of finalized boarding school statement (power point slide).
  - Administrative position in OIE has been offered. Jane will share who the new hire is after paperwork is done. Start date for this hire will be December 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - Interviews for the MDE Tribal Liaison will begin tomorrow.
  - AI Program: There are 175 eligible districts; missing 125 plans; 7 or 8 won’t apply and the Commissioner will be reaching out to ask why; the deadline for the plans is November 30<sup>th</sup>.
- k. Legislative Update – none.
- l. Other New Business – none.

VIII. Adjournment: Laurie moved to adjourn. Second by Brook. Meeting adjourns at 3:05 p.m.