



National Indian Education Association

110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Suite 104

Washington, DC 20002

(202) 544-7290 / (202) 544-7293 fax

NIEA RESOLUTION #06-01

**Title: AFFIRMING THE EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS OF NATIVE CHILDREN
AND CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE INJUSTICES**

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, The history of education in Native America includes years of forced separation, during which American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian children were removed from the families, communities and cultures and assimilated into foreign environments in the name of education, and

WHEREAS, We, the indigenous people of the United States of America have a right to regain and retain local control over the education of our own children, and

WHEREAS, the United States Federal Government and the government of the State of Alaska have, through their policies, reinforced a system of education that has failed to promote culturally appropriate curricula and instructional practices, and

WHEREAS, Common sense dictates and research confirms that it is not only appropriate but beneficial, both socially and academically, to educate children using a culturally based model that honors their heritage and values and transmits their own cultural perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom, and

WHEREAS, It is the right of Native children, as it is the right of children everywhere, to receive an education that immerses them in the culture, values, heritage and language of their own people, and

WHEREAS, Experience has taught us that we must take responsibility for and ownership of the education of our own children if they are to remain Native and not become victims of the ultimate identity theft – the loss of the history, language, values, and the cultural knowledge which makes them Native and has sustained the indigenous people of America for countless ages, and

WHEREAS, The circle has turned and the time has come for us to call for an end to both the intentional and unintended educational oppression of our people which has been manifested in educational policy and practice and has included patronizing curricula, assimilationist instructional environments, and biased educational materials, and

WHEREAS, We desire to exercise our rights as American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians American people and as parents to make and active and dominant role in the education of our children,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the delegates of the 2006 Annual Convention of the National Indian Education Association that we affirm the right of all American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian people to take control and ownership of the education of their own children and affirm the right of said people to an educational system reflective of their cultures, heritage, languages and values including meaningful oversight of the educational process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in keeping with the theme of this year's convention theme of "Completing the Circle of Knowledge", and in the spirit of reconciliation and cultural healing, we invite all Native peoples to join together in calling upon the government of the United States of America to acknowledge the injustices made in the enforcement of the educational policies governing Native people.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was duly considered and passed by the NIEA Board of Directors on November 30, 2006 at which a quorum was present.

Verlie Ann Malina Wright

Dr. Verlie Ann Malina Wright, President (2006-07)
National Indian Education Association