



National Indian Education Association

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NIEA RESOLUTION #06-11

Title: TO SUPPORT MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION, FULLY FUNDED RESEARCH, PROTOCOL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURES TO ENACT THE “KINDERGARTEN READINESS” POLICY.

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, education for the benefit of American Indians and Alaska Natives is a fundamental trust obligation to American Indians and Alaska Natives that the United States has promised to provide in perpetuity to American Indians and Alaska Natives in numerous treaties, statutes, Presidential proclamations and orders and policy statements; and

WHEREAS, education for American Indians and Alaska Natives pays enormous dividends for the United States by improving dramatically the lives and earning power of those who graduate from high school, colleges, graduate schools and vocational schools throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives that graduate from Tribally controlled schools, such as K-12 school systems operated by the Tribes themselves that emphasize culturally appropriate educational models, and graduates of the Tribal Colleges and Universities and vocational schools that many Tribes have created are even more likely to be successful and to contribute substantially to the betterment of the United States and of their own Tribes; and

WHEREAS, the Congress has enacted standards for achievement in the No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001 that requires schools to educate children to specific levels, and meeting these standards requires that sufficient funding be provided for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, cuts in, or elimination of, education budgets of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and of the Department of Education have occurred and continue to be proposed in such areas as: pre-school education, including the Baby-Face and HeadStart programs; elementary and secondary school construction; Tribal colleges and universities, including tribally controlled postsecondary vocational institutions; Johnson O'Malley technical support funds for schools with large American Indian populations; Indian School Equalization Program funds; Impact Aid funds; and scholarships for American Indian and Alaska Native students that the BIA has provided for many years; school libraries at both the K-12 and postsecondary level; and construction of new facilities for Tribal colleges and universities, among other things; and

WHEREAS, these cuts have already reduced, and could reduce still further, the ability of schools to meet the standards of the No Child Left Behind Act, to meet the needs of an increasingly technology oriented 21st century, to meet accreditation standards and to serve an ever-increasing and younger population on many Indian reservations; and

WHEREAS, these cuts and proposed cuts to education of American Indians and Alaska Natives violate fundamental human rights and legal and moral standards as provided in treaties, statutes, and such documents as the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples pending in the United Nations and must be stopped immediately.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NIEA does hereby urge the federal government to fully fund its fundamental education obligation to American Indians and Alaska Natives and to cease immediately any budget cuts that would diminish the fulfillment of that responsibility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NIEA does hereby urge the Tribal Budget Advisory Council, which is working with Executive Branch officials in developing the President's 2008 budget and for future budget years, to actively support fulfillment of the all trust responsibilities of the United States to American Indians and Alaska Natives in the area of education, and to actively oppose any further cuts in education programs that fulfill this critical trust responsibility, now and in future fiscal years.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully 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