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NIEA RESOLUTION 07-04

TITLE: RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT CHARTER SCHOOLS FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN, AMERICAN INDIANS, AND ALASKA NATIVES

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association is committed to increasing educational opportunities and resources for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students while protecting Native cultural and linguistic traditions; and

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association is the largest and oldest Indian education organization in the nation and strives to keep Indian Country moving toward educational equity; and

WHEREAS, state charter school laws help establish creative and innovative Native Charter school options for many rural reservation and urban Native communities in states such as Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, Oregon, Utah, North Carolina, California, and Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, through established charter school laws, tribal officials, parents, and educators are developing schools that serve the unique circumstances, needs and aspirations of their children, and creating a positive school climate where Native culture and lifestyles are respected and used in teaching and learning; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native schools represent the potential for tribal and other Indian communities to restore educational governance and decision-making at the community level; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native charter schools are public schools developed by parents, teachers, and community members, authorized by local and/or state school boards to develop creative, innovative, and flexible ways of educating children; and

WHEREAS, most Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native schools are designed to incorporate language and culture, making the curriculum relevant to the community, incorporating the voices and lessons of elders, leaders, and community members knowledgeable of the history, philosophy, art, and the belief systems of Native people; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native charter schools assert self-determination through local or state school board authority helping community members determine what is expected of students and what is expected of teachers, school officials; and

WHEREAS, Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native charter schools can provide academic, creative, and community-based experiential opportunities providing young adults to be

leaders knowledgeable about community needs in helping to build sustainable systems for progress and development; and

WHEREAS, The National Indian Education Association recognizes that the Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native Charter schools provide important school choice options for Native communities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION supports training opportunities and support systems for Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native Charter schools through workshops, forums, and networking sessions.