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NIEA RESOLUTION 07-08

TITLE: SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND FULL FUNDING OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES

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, Native American/Alaska Native students are more likely to drop out of school. score lower on 4th and 8th grade National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading and math tests and are the least likely to complete a core academic track or take advanced academic courses in high school; and

WHEREAS, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians are significantly less likely than their peers to earn at least a bachelor"s degree; and

WHEREAS, many schools are ill-equipped to accommodate culturally appropriate programs; and

WHEREAS, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) threatens Native American languages and cultures; and

WHEREAS, funds are being cut that help fund educators to teach cultural languages because of pressures to comply with the letter of NCLB; and

WHEREAS, learning in a native language not only does not interfere with the development of English skills but actually promotes greater achievement in English; and

WHEREAS, the Native American Language Act of 1990 (Public Law 101---477) states that it is the policy of the United States government to encourage and support the use of Native American languages as a medium of instruction.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION urges the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and other national educational organizations to fully support opportunities for American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students to retain and use Native American languages. with Native Language instruction.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the National Indian Education Association supports the full funding of Native American language programs.