



## **National Indian Education Association**

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### **NIEA RESOLUTION 11-020**

**TITLE:** Requesting the Federal Government to Provide Full Funding for the Administrative Costs Incurred by Indian Tribes which Operate Federal Indian Grant Schools.

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 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 Indian, Alaska Natives 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 Federal Government has total responsibility for the support of 183 Federal schools for Indian Children, nearly all of which are located in Indian reservation communities. Federal Law and policy encourage Indian tribes to take over direct operation of these schools from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Interior Department, with the promise that tribes will be supplied with funds for administrative expenses they incur for operation of these schools. A statute establishes a formula which identifies the portion of Indian School funding needed to cover these administrative costs. 25 USC §2008 (d). For decades, this promise has been consistently broken. In School Year 07-08, 125 of the schools were operated by tribes, but the Congress appropriated only 65.75% of the amount needed to properly fund the administrative cost formula; and

**WHEREAS**, a funding shortfall of this magnitude jeopardizes all tribally-operated school's ability to comply with legal requirements and sound management standards. In areas such as fiscal, procurement, personnel and property management; insurance; grant oversight; recordkeeping; auditing; legal and security, a school cost steadily increase. Yet for the past several years, the amount supplies to cover these costs – so fundamental to prudent operation – has actually declined. How can a tribal school comply with mandated internal control standards when it cannot afford to hire the minimum administrative staff needed to implement those standards; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress must assure Indian communities, which chronically suffer from some of the highest unemployment rates in the nation, have an equal opportunity to put people to work in meaningful and needed jobs. Proper funding of Indian school administrative costs will help achieve this goal in Indian Country. Tribes would be in a position to immediately fill business

office, property management and other vital school administrative staff positions and to comply with the fiscal management requirement of their Federal grant and contracts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) fully funds the administrative cost needs of tribally-operated schools for the remaining part of the SY2008-09 and for SY2009-10. It is calculated on information supplied by BIA:

- SY07-08: 125 tribally-operated schools received only 65.75% of the amount required by the law.

Total need	\$67 million
Appropriation	<u>\$44 million</u>
Shortfall	\$23 million
- SY08-09: The final percentage of need funded has not yet been calculated by BIA, but it will be less than 65.75%. Using an estimated shortfall of \$25 million, \$12.5 million should be supplied for the remaining ½ of this school year.
- SY09-10: More schools are expected to be tribally-operated and eligible for administrative cost funding. A conservative estimate of the shortfall in the appropriation for SY09-10 - \$25 million – is the amount that should be supplied for this upcoming school year; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NIEA hereby recommends to the Federal Government, Congressmen, Appropriation Committee and Standing Committee to fully fund Administrative Cost, incurred by Indian Tribes with operated Federal Indian Grant Schools.

Submitted by: Milton Jim