



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NIEA Resolution 2014-06

TITLE: SUPPORT FOR BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION IMMERSION DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

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 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 Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has initiated a realignment of the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) to improve educational services to BIE students; and

WHEREAS, Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell has issued a Secretarial Order outlining strategies to improve Indian educational opportunities within the BIE system; and

WHEREAS, the BIE realignment and Secretarial Order do not offer a program or support for immersion efforts within the BIE system including existing schools that offer immersion programs and BIE schools who wish to initiate immersion programs; and

WHEREAS, the BIE realignment promotes academic best practices but omits immersion research as a Best Practices Model; and

WHEREAS, the omission of immersion instruction as a best practices is inconsistent with congressional testimony offered by Obama Administration officials, Commitment to Immersion Plan within the Department of Education Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Blue Print, policy mandates contained within Executive Order 13592, and presidential statements during the president's historic Standing Rock speech; and

Whereas, the BIE has failed to fully implement the Native American Languages Act, Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act, Indian Education Act, and Tribally

Controlled Schools Act, which would greatly enhance immersion opportunities in BIE schools;
and

WHEREAS, Secretary Jewell has not included immersion funding in the Administration's annual budget request to Congress; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians, Great Plains Tribal Chairman Association, United Tribes of North Dakota and Tribal Interior Budget Council support an Immersion Demonstration Project in the BIE budget; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives Interior Appropriations Subcommittee offered support for BIE immersion efforts in its Fiscal Year 2015 Report language directing the BIE to consider immersion efforts; and

WHEREAS, NIEA has long supported through its mission, purpose, resolutions, briefing papers, congressional testimony, budget request, Administration transition papers, consultation hearings, and general advocacy the expansion of immersion opportunities in all educational venues; and

WHEREAS, NIEA requested \$368 million in new and increased spending for the BIE FY 2015 budget over enacted FY 2014 levels without including any standalone support for immersion efforts; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association supports a BIE immersion Demonstration Project in the amount of \$3 million annually and directs both the NIEA Board and Executive Director to pursue this appropriations request with the Office of Management and Budget, White House Council on Native American Affairs, White House Senior Policy Advisors, and Interior Appropriations leaders in both chambers of Congress; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association cannot support the BIE realignment without provisions that protect existing immersion programs and encourage the development of new immersion programs within the BIE school system.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was duly considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 18, 2014 at which a quorum of the membership was present.



Melvin Monette
President