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ABSTRACT

In an effort to move concerns of American Indian/Alaska Native education into the general arena of public education, the National Education Association developed six issue papers, each with proposed actions and suggested readings. "Cultural Values Affecting American Indian/Alaska Native Students," focuses on the prevalence of cultural value systems, effect of culture on students, group emphasis, moderation in speech, and noncorporal behavior controls. "Infusion of American Indian/Alaska Native Culture into the Curriculum," discusses student needs and lists specific cultural ideas and activities that can be introduced into 14 subject areas. "Focus on American Indian/Alaska Native Student Concerns," addresses cultural adjustment to school environments, health problems, academic skills, and counseling. "Improving Relations between Schools and American Indian/Alaska Native Communities," considers student, community, school, parent, and teacher interrelationships. "Methodologies Which Affect and Improve the Self-Image of American Indian/Alaska Native Students," considers classroom environment and integrated curricula, emphasizing language arts and teacher-student interaction patterns. "Looking to the Future for American Indian/Alaska Native Students," reviews contemporary trends and forecasts future directions. "The Quest for Quality Education," a booklet designed to raise awareness about the unique situation of American Indian/Alaska Natives with reference to public education is included at the end of the document. (NEC)

American Indian/ Alaska Native Education:

Quality in the Classroom

Human and Civil Rights
National Education Association
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Arizona State University
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OHOYO

Contents

Foreword

American Indian/Alaska Native education has been a concern addressed primarily by American Indian and Alaska Native educators, parents, and interested citizens. It is a concern that has not yet found its way into the mainstream of the American education system. It has been addressed in isolation, primarily within American Indian/Alaska Native schools and communities. With approximately 70 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native youth currently being educated in public schools, the concerns of Indian people regarding the education of their youth need to be recognized and addressed by the non-Indian world as well.

In an effort to move the concerns of American Indian/Alaska Native education into the general arena of public education, the National Education Association (NEA) has taken two actions. First, it published *The Quest For Quality Education*, a booklet designed to raise awareness about the unique situation of American Indians/Alaska Natives with reference to public education.

Second, NEA brought together a select group of educators to explore and clarify concerns that are considered important and helpful to teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native children. That group identified six issues considered to be the most critical and of the greatest concern to educators of these children. NEA then developed an issue paper with proposed actions and suggested readings on each. The six papers presented here include:

1. Cultural Values Affecting American Indian/Alaska Native Students
2. Infusion of American Indian/Alaska Native Culture into the Curriculum
3. Focus on American Indian/Alaska Native Student Concerns
4. Improving Relations Between Schools and American Indian/Alaska Native Communities
5. Methodologies Which Affect and Improve the Self-Image of American Indian/Alaska Native Students
6. Looking to the Future for American Indian/Alaska Native Students

These papers are presented with the hope that they will provide new information and practical suggestions which will make education for American Indian/Alaska Native students more relevant.

We are indebted to the following people for the time and expertise they so willingly shared with NEA. This group represents educators from elementary through higher education.

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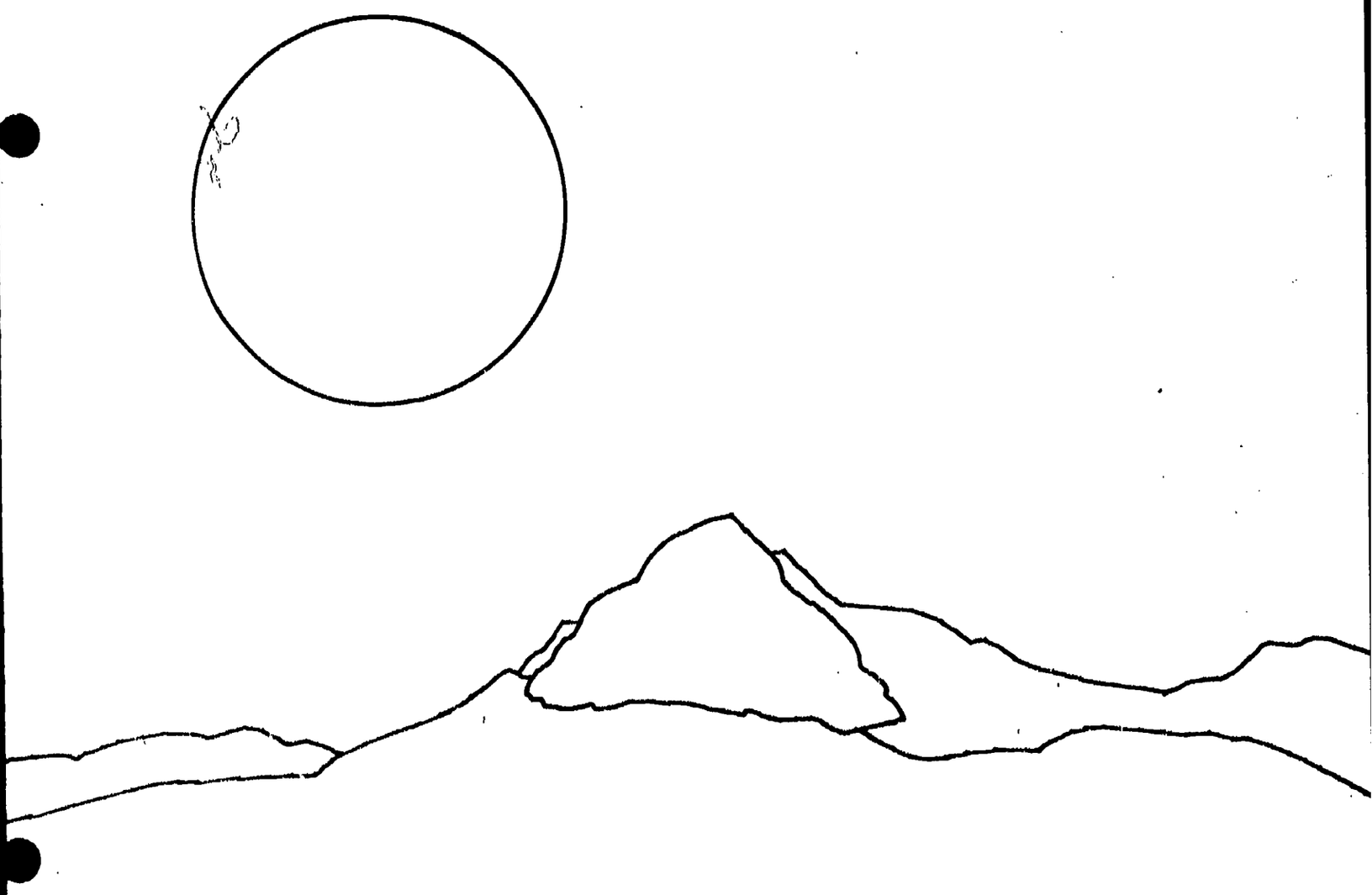
Deserving of special appreciation in the completion of this task are Joann Sebastian Morris who served as consultant for the project and whose creativity and writing skills were of inestimable value, and Ron Houston, NEA Human and Civil Rights Specialist, who brought the group together and coordinated the entire effort.

Cultural Values Affecting American Indian/Alaska Native Students



Cultural Values Affecting American Indian/Alaska Native Students

American Indian/Alaska Native people are practitioners of the theory of cultural pluralism. They have chosen a course of co-existence as opposed to total merger with mainstream America. Thus, while the majority of contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native students enjoy rock and new wave music as much as their non-Indian peers, most also retain traditional aspects of their native culture which differentiate them from their classmates.

The first time a child experiences and formally learns about other cultures often occurs in a school setting. This is the principle location where American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters learn about the values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of the dominant society. If cultural conflicts arise, if Anglo beliefs are misunderstood by native students or if American Indian/Alaska Native values are misinterpreted by non-Indians, it is frequently the educator who will be called upon to serve as the cultural broker.

The purpose of this paper is to heighten the awareness of educators to the importance of the cultural background of American Indian/Alaska Native children; to improve intercultural relationships, student-to-student and between student and teacher; and to increase the comfort level of non-Indian teachers of Indian children as well as the comfort level of American Indian/Alaska Native students in an educational setting.

It is uncommon to have the opportunity to discuss cultural variances openly. We may sense differences between groups but are often unable to articulate specific cultural distinctions. In addition, people often seem fearful of speaking about differences. Yet, most fail to recognize that differences in and of themselves are not bad; only our reaction to them has the potential to be negative or, preferably, positive.

Prevalence of Cultural Value Systems

What one values in life is generally learned from family members and significant others. For many children, teachers become early significant others. The process of incorporating a value system is generally an unconscious one. In historical times, American Indian/Alaska Native children were informally taught tribal or community held attitudes and beliefs through storytelling. It is rare that children are taught cultural values in a formal manner, even in today's society. Nonetheless, we cannot underestimate the influence our value system has on us.

When speaking of Amerian Indians/Alaska Natives, it is difficult but not impossible to make generalizations about them. While there are close to 500 separate tribal entities still in existence, there are core beliefs and behaviors shared by the majority of American Indian/Alaska Native people.

The conscientious educator will be cautious about interpreting even the core value system as *always* being applicable to all American Indian/Alaska Native students in their classroom or school district. There are always exceptions to every generalization.

Most of the key values, attitudes, and behaviors to be discussed were more prevalent in times past. We cannot ignore the influence that other value systems have on contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native children. Living now within the dominant society, native children cannot help but be influenced by Anglo-American values, although some may be in complete opposition to traditional American Indian/Alaska Native values.

Effect of Culture on Students

The extent of the traditional background American Indian/Alaska Native students bring with them to the classroom may vary according to how acculturated their parents are, how much contact with a home reservation or native community is maintained, and how willing the students themselves are to maintain the native culture.

The variance among American Indian/Alaska Native students and adults is just as wide as that found within the larger society. There may be individuals who hold almost totally to traditional American Indian/Alaska Native values and beliefs. At the opposite end of the spectrum are individuals who have fully assimilated the Anglo value system and behaviors. Between these two extremes fall the greater percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native parents and their children.

Pressure to conform to an unfamiliar value system may cause frustration for young American Indians/Alaska Natives. Identity problems may result from the conflict they experience. It is not easy to balance two sets of value systems on a daily basis. Disorientation often results. Questioning one's tribal beliefs occurs. As a result, some American Indian/Alaska Native students decide it is simpler to emulate only the values and behaviors of Anglo teachers and classmates. This decision causes them to become alienated from their native culture. Unfortunately, even after native students have modeled themselves after Anglos around them, they are often still not completely accepted. Hostility and even greater frustration can result.

While most American Indian/Alaska Native students have learned to modify their behavior to match that which is expected of them, particularly in a school setting, there remain others who continue to experience strong value conflicts. If these young people have less experience with the Anglo society and are less affluent than their non-Indian peers, they feel inferior and less accepted. A paradox results. They feel forced to retain their Indian identity, having been

rejected (in actuality or in their imagination only) by the dominant society, yet they are equally pressured to live with Anglo-Americans and model non-Indian behaviors in order to succeed in school or on a job.

American Indian/Alaska Native students may react to a sense of marginality by behaving in certain ways, some more predictable than others. Educators and support personnel may experience one or more of the following types of students in their classroom or school.

Some students raised in a native community or reservation setting may reject the dominant society altogether and prefer contact strictly with other American Indians/Alaska Natives. Their contacts with Anglos will be superficial. These students will undoubtedly remain in a native setting or return to one as soon as possible. Other students may be raised in a traditional setting but leave and spend several years in the dominant society. They reject it, however, and turn to intertribal social action groups for support, eventually returning to their own native setting.

Other students, no matter where their childhood was spent, continue to feel marginal between both cultures. They may be equally as unhappy in a strictly native environment as they are uncomfortable in the dominant society. Some act out negatively and are rejected by Indian and non-Indian alike. Others turn to religion to sustain them. Still other American Indian/Alaska Native students may have grown up according to Anglo norms and have made the necessary adjustment. While not hostile, many remain anxious about their acceptance by Anglos.

As enlightened, near-twenty-first century educators, we want to provide our students, all students, with the best education and learning environment possible. Essential to a positive learning environment is a shared feeling of acceptance. The opportunities for students to discuss cultural variations are rare. Yet, if we allowed such discussion among pupils, and between fellow teachers, we would pave the way for an understanding between ethnocultural groups, an understanding sorely needed by our society. It would bridge major cultural gaps and ease the cultural stress experienced by American Indian/Alaska Native students, as well as other ethnic youngsters. In the pages which follow, three core values important to American Indian/Alaska Native groups will be explored in relation to their possible effect in the classroom.

Group Emphasis

Most tribes emphasize the needs of the group over those of the individual. In traditional times, the members of an American Indian/Alaska Native group or band had to work together to survive. Each member of the group was important and had a significant role to play for the betterment of all. Strong feelings of group solidarity existed. Contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native adults and children experience strong desires to remain members of their cultural group and continue to exhibit concern for the welfare of the group.

The emphasis on living and working as a group implies a need for social harmony and an avoidance of aggression. To minimize conflict between individuals, an unemotional demeanor was maintained. This tradition-based behavior might account in part for the stereotype of American Indian/Alaska Native people as stoical. It was a behavior often used during the early transition period when American Indians and Alaska Natives first interacted with Anglos. Uncertain how to behave among them, emotions were masked. In times of tension, we may still see this behavior become operational. American Indian/Alaska Native students and parents usually prefer to avoid disharmony and so withdraw from unpleasant situations.

Also, most American Indians/Alaska Natives have a low ego level and do not generally promote their individual needs or desires over those of others. They stress the importance of personal orientation over task orientation.

This value is often at variance with usual school procedures which emphasize individual, not group, accomplishments. As a general rule, the dominant society tends to esteem the rugged individualist. In school settings, educators will note that American Indian/Alaska Native children may not forge ahead as independently as others, although they are likely to work very well in group situations.

Moderation in Speech

A second value that is still retained by most American Indian/Alaska Native cultural groups centers around moderation in speech, coupled with keen listening and observational skills. In the historical past when American Indians/Alaska Natives were living in their own societies and saw the same small group of individuals daily, small talk was unnecessary. In contemporary social settings, American Indian/Alaska Native people still tend to emphasize the emotional component rather than the verbal. The difference in the degree of verbosity may cause some non-Indians to view American Indians/Alaska Natives erroneously as shy, withdrawn, disinterested, or unsociable.

Many American Indian/Alaska Native students will come to school with limited or nonexistent English proficiency. Even if they learn English as a first language, they are likely to be raised among other relatives who speak their native language. As a result, many American Indian/Alaska Native students do not hear standard English spoken in the home and may speak English with Indian-specific accents. Due to the fact that their grasp of English may not be strong or fluent, American Indian/Alaska Native students and parents may need a longer time to formulate their responses. This too affects their degree of verbal skills.

To American Indian/Alaska Native people, being a good listener is highly valued. Traditionally, tribal culture and history were passed on orally by a few selected storytellers and orators. Listening skills in all others were emphasized. Many American Indians/Alaska Natives have continued to develop a keen sense of perception that detects verbal insincerity in others. Living in nature in

days past accustomed them to sharpen their listening as well as their observational skills. Most American Indians/Alaska Natives note fine details and are careful observers of nonverbal messages and signals.

Since most classrooms tend to reward students for arriving at a correct answer before their peers (emphasis on the individual) and for vocalizing the correct answer (emphasis on verbal skills), many American Indian/Alaska Native students undergo frustration and confusion. At home, they are taught to be softspoken and moderate in speech; yet, in the classroom, social behavior is measured by a student's ability to verbalize. Most teaching methods emphasize speaking over listening. Importance is placed on expressing one's individual opinion. It is rare that an American Indian/Alaska Native student's keen listening or observational skills are utilized or encouraged.

Noncorporal Behavioral Controls

The final example to be offered demonstrates the difference in child rearing practices between American Indians/Alaska Natives and non-native groups. Traditional American Indian/Alaska Native societies believe that direct personal criticism and harsh discipline damage a child's self-image and are thus to be avoided. Spanking did not occur. Even today noncorporal means of discipline are preferred, including: using facial and other gestures, ignoring, ridiculing, shaming, or withholding all praise and attention. Sibling and peer pressure continue to be important means to control behavior. American Indian/Alaska Native communities across the country oppose school systems that use corporal punishment as a primary means of disciplining children.

Among certain tribes, relatives other than the natural parents—e.g., the mother's brother—are responsible for disciplining a child, thereby leaving the parents free for a closer, nonthreatening relationship with their children. School officials are often confused and may become concerned if natural parents don't engage in the active disciplining of their children.

In traditional American Indian/Alaska Native societies, criticism of another was generally communicated indirectly through another family member rather than directly as in the dominant society. When direct criticism of an American Indian/Alaska Native child or adult is made by a teacher or other school official, strong reaction may occur since this is seen as rude and disrespectful behavior.

What Can NEA Members Do?

It is important for educators to understand the rationale behind the values influencing another culture's behavior. It is helpful to understand the American Indian and Alaska Native point of view, for example. It makes it easier to understand why American Indian/Alaska Native students' beliefs and behaviors may sometimes be different from those of their schoolmates.

NEA's goal is to improve human relations wherever possible: to create a learning environment open to all viewpoints and conducive of the best

behavior from all concerned. What might be done to stimulate movement toward that goal?

1. Recognize and accept that several conflicting value systems are always at work in most school settings.

2. Stressing mutual understanding.

3. Respect the rights of American Indians/Alaska Natives and others to their own beliefs.

4. Accept the American Indian/Alaska Native students and teachers as individuals, not as a group stereotype.

5. Read and learn more about American Indian/Alaska Native value systems.

6. Seek assistance from local American Indian/Alaska Native leaders and speakers.

7. Meet and interact with more American Indian/Alaska Native parents and community members.

8. Understand the background of the local American Indian/Alaska Native community.

9. Become aware of religious beliefs and tribal taboos (especially important for schools on or near a reservation).

10. Initiate classroom discussions about cultural value systems, particularly in junior and senior high school classes.

11. Learn the values of each culture represented in your classroom and school.

12. Expose American Indian/Alaska Native students to Anglo-American culture, but do not impose it.

13. Make allowances for value differences, and for possible mutual misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

14. Build better relationships by encouraging mutual respect and courtesy toward one another.

15. Read and share all six NEA issue papers on American Indians/Alaska Natives.

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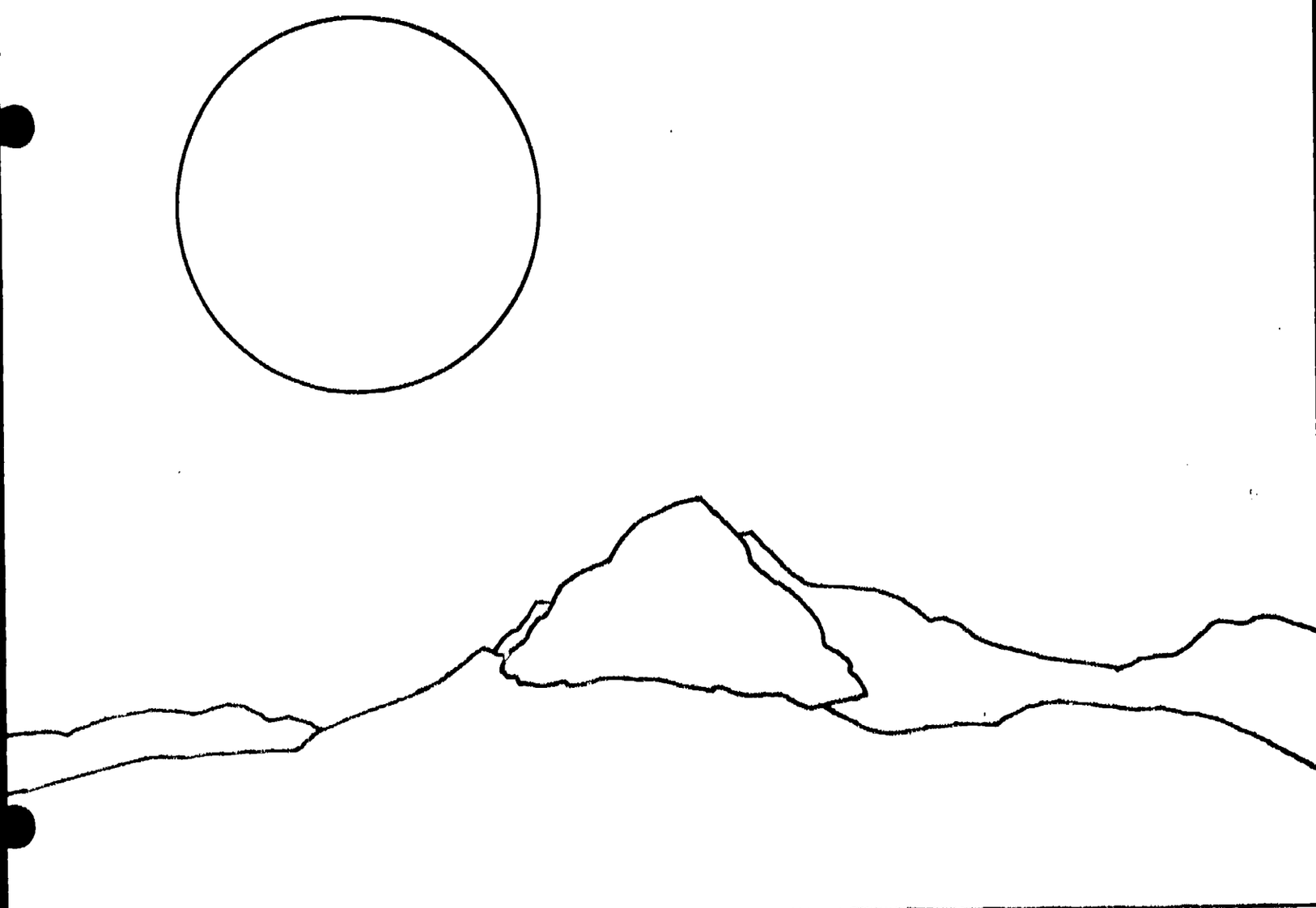
Infusion of American Indian/Alaska Native Culture into the Curriculum



Infusion of American Indian/Alaska Native Culture into the Curriculum

The Need Among All Students

The world in which we live is culturally diverse. It is obvious to us now that the melting pot theory has remained more theory than reality. American Indian/Alaska Native people, like other ethnic groups, continue to retain their own value systems, standards of behavior, life styles, and languages.

Most Anglo-American children grow up experiencing and being influenced by one predominant way of life. The tendency is strong to compare and judge others, based upon their proximity to matching the values and beliefs of the dominant society.

On the other hand, American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters and children of other ethnic backgrounds grow up experiencing at least two world views. They learn the traditional values and customs of their ancestors, while also experiencing the ways of Anglo-Americans.

It enriches children to broaden their view of humankind. All students benefit from cross-cultural education. Classes that incorporate factual and updated material about American Indian/Alaska Native groups are needed, not only by Anglo-American students but by children from other ethnic groups as well. American Indian/Alaska Native students would also benefit greatly. Many are not raised automatically knowing their tribal culture and history. They generally need additional time to learn about their heritage.

Culture-based curriculum can be introduced at any grade level, although it is best to introduce such information early in a child's development. Very young children learn negative concepts about American Indian/Alaska Native people from television, long before they enter a formal classroom. These erroneous and stereotypical images should be eliminated as early as possible.

Indian-specific curriculum content can be infused into all subject areas, not just social studies. It is more natural for children to learn positive or at least neutral facts about American Indian/Alaska Native groups on an ongoing, preferably daily, basis than to study them for but one day or one week out of the school year. Children sense that such studies are considered extracurricular and that after the special day or week of study, they will return to the "real" subjects.

Infusing American Indian/Alaska Native culture into the regular curriculum does not necessarily diminish the need for American Indian/Alaska Native studies courses at the junior high and senior high school levels. Students still need the opportunity to specialize and study a particular regional group or tribe in depth.

The Need Among American Indian/Alaska Native Students

While expanding students' interest in and knowledge of American Indian/Alaska Native cultures is beneficial to an entire student body, it is especially advantageous to native student populations. Irreversible damage has been done to the self-image of many American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters after hearing years of derogatory, erroneous, or stereotyped information about their culture. Their feelings of self-worth are diminished.

There will be situations when a proud-spirited American Indian/Alaska Native student will question the teacher's knoweldge of American Indian/Alaska Native culture or attempt to correct an erroneous image presented. Too often such behavior is met with anger, not acknowledgment, and with indignation, not understanding.

To enable American Indian/Alaska Native children to improve their self-image to relieve them from the need to speak in behalf of their culture, and to spare non-Indian students from unnecessary negative feelings toward American Indian/Alaska Native people, the curriculum must be altered to reflect an improved attitude toward American Indians/Alaska Natives.

Another extremely important effect of increasing the quantity and quality of Indian-specific curriculum in the classroom would be an increase in the interest and motivation levels of American Indian/Alaska Native students, influencing them to remain in school longer.

The dropout rate for American Indian/Alaska Native students is among the highest in the country, ranging from 40 percent to 80 percent. Studies show that two principle reasons for this high "push-out" rate are lack of relevant curricula and poor self-image. If a culture-based curriculum were adopted, American Indian/Alaska Native students would feel valued and worthy and begin to sense that they are an important part of American society.

Curriculum Content

When American Indians/Alaska Natives are studied, most curricula emphasize their historic, not contemporary lifeways. However, there are three distinct and equally important time periods which should be covered: 1) Pre-Columbian societies, 2) transitional societies (when contact was causing much culture conflict for native and non-native alike), and 3) contemporary societies. Educators should not confine their discussions with students to only one or two of these time frames; all three are essential.

Frequently American Indian/Alaska Native cultures are studied solely in terms of the physical aspects of native life. Children learn what foods they ate, what type of housing a particular tribe utilized, what clothing the people wore, and what mode of transportation the group used. While this information is important, it represents a discussion of material culture only.

It is equally as important to highlight the values and beliefs shared by a particular American Indian/Alaska Native group. For example, a teacher may describe a dance done by a selected tribe and point out the special clothing

worn, any special items held by the dancers, the background music, and other material aspects of the culture. But, it is equally as important to understand the values transmitted through the ceremony to the dancers and audience alike. The study of American Indian/Alaska Native values gives greater depth to the meaning of the material culture.

Teaching cultural values is especially crucial in the elementary grades since research has demonstrated that one's attitudes are formulated very early in life. Discussions should be continued into junior high and senior high classes to reinforce the act of bridging cultural gaps.

Studying American Indian/Alaska Native cultural values also helps Indian students to begin to understand themselves, to appreciate the deeper meaning of their tribal ways, and to understand what makes them different. They recognize that being different is not necessarily bad or anything of which they should feel ashamed.

The following list of classroom ideas should prove helpful to curriculum developers, multicultural education specialists, classroom teachers and others interested in incorporating additional information about American Indian/Alaska Native cultures into the curriculum. The ideas can be developed into a daily lesson plan, a study unit or a mini-course.

Although the course titles appear to apply to secondary level students, the suggested topics are applicable to the elementary grades as well. The list highlights uncommon culture-based lessons but is by no means exhaustive. The creative educator will formulate additional ideas that make the curriculum relevant while also instilling pride and positive feelings toward the cultural heritage of American Indians/Alaska Natives.

General Art

Historic art: Pictographs; e.g., picture writing on skins, shields, and tipis depicting events

Petroglyphs (rock carving)

Crafts

Feather work, emphasizing the significance of certain feathers and noting various tribal styles for usage and wear

Doll making (Bodies may be of corn husk, wood, leather, palm, or other plant fiber)

Business Education

Minority business advances and current problems

American Indian/Alaska Native businesses, local and national

English

- *Communication Skills*

  Cherokee syllabary

  Comparison of American Indian/Alaska Native sign language and deaf signing

- *Literature*

  Traditional oral literature: creation stories, legends

  Contemporary fiction, non-fiction, and poetry of American Indian/Alaska Native authors

- *Media*

  Current events from local and national American Indian/Alaska Native newspapers

  Treatment of American Indians/Alaska Natives on film

- *Speech*

  Famous American Indian/Alaska Native speeches and orators, historic and contemporary

  Debates on various American Indian/Alaska Native issues; e.g., role of women, fishing rights, water rights, and treaty rights

Health Education

Current American Indian/Alaska Native health statistics

American Indian/Alaska Native health workers; e.g., Dr. Carlos Montezuma, Dr. Rosa Minoka Hill

Home Economics

- *Foods*

  Traditional foods noting tribal differences based on geography

  Traditional modes of food preparation; e.g., drying and smoking

- *Clothing*

  Changes between traditional and current styles in ceremonial clothing, noting tribal differences and variety of materials used

  The use of American Indian/Alaska Native designs and motifs in contemporary fashions

- *Personal Development*

  Historic and contemporary role of American Indian/Alaska Native women, noting tribal differences

  Historic and contemporary women leaders, chiefs, chairpersons and council members

Humanities

American Indian/Alaska Native philosophy of life and value system

American Indian/Alaska Native religions, religious movements, and spiritual leaders, historic and contemporary

Industrial Education

Traditional house styles and construction noting tribal and geographic differences and influence on contemporary architecture

Woodworking and carving, noting different tribal motifs

Mathematics

Counting objects in various tribal languages

Geometric shapes in beadwork of various tribes and in Seminole patchwork

Music

Traditional American Indian/Alaska Native music noting tribal styles: work songs, love songs, lullabies

Contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native music and musicians: e.g., Buffy St. Marie, Floyd Westerman, Louis Ballard

Physical Education

Historic and contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native sports and activities: running, lacrosse, archery, and relays
American Indian/Alaska Native athletes: e.g., Allie Reynolds, Billy Mills, Jim Thorpe, and Johnny Bench

Reading

Critical reading to discriminate between factual and biased writing

Library skills improvement by supplementing reading center and school library with books, newspapers, and magazines by and about American Indians/Alaska Natives

Science

- *Physical Science*

  Tribal variations in the colors and qualities associated with the four directions

  Importance of water to historic and contemporary Southwestern tribes, incorporating study of irrigation systems

- *Life Science*

  Relationship between American Indian/Alaska Native groups and their environment

  American Indian/Alaska Native knowledge of medicinal properties of plants

- *Earth Science*

  American Indian/Alaska Native knowledge of the stars and constellations, with and without observatories

  Soil conservation techniques of American Indians/Alaska Natives: terraced gardens, rotated crops, and use of fish as fertilizer

Social Studies

- *History*

  Treaty and document study for various tribes

  Role of Navajo Code Talkers in winning World War II

- *Geography*

  Importance of American Indians/Alaska Natives in geographic explorations

  States, cities, lakes, and rivers retaining American Indian/Alaska Native names

- *Government*

  Tribal government systems, historic and contemporary

  Influence of the Iroquois constitution, the Great Law of Peace, on the writing of the U.S. Constitution

- *Economics*

  Historic economic systems: corn and shells used as money

Contemporary tribal resources and economic development efforts

- *Sociology*

  Federal relocation programs influencing American Indian/Alaska Native urban migration

  Sociological problems of reservation and urban-based American Indians/Alaska Natives

What Can NEA Members Do?

1. Incorporate as many of the preceding suggestions as possible in your classroom and school.

2. Add to the classroom suggestions for your grade level or subject specialization.

3. Involve local American Indian/Alaska Native educators and knowledgeable community members to research or edit materials or lesson plans to ensure authenticity.

4. Purchase American Indian/Alaska Native-approved and-developed teacher's guides, kits, books, maps, audio-visual aids, and other print and nonprint materials.

5. Subscribe to American Indian/Alaska Native newspapers and journals for current information.

6. Develop teacher in-service sessions.

7. Work with local institutions of higher education to develop preservice classes on American Indian/Alaska Native cultures.

8. Share this document with your local multicultural education committee, if one exists.

9. Establish a school- or district-wide multicultural education curriculum committee if none exists, and expand on these curriculum suggestions for other ethnic groups.

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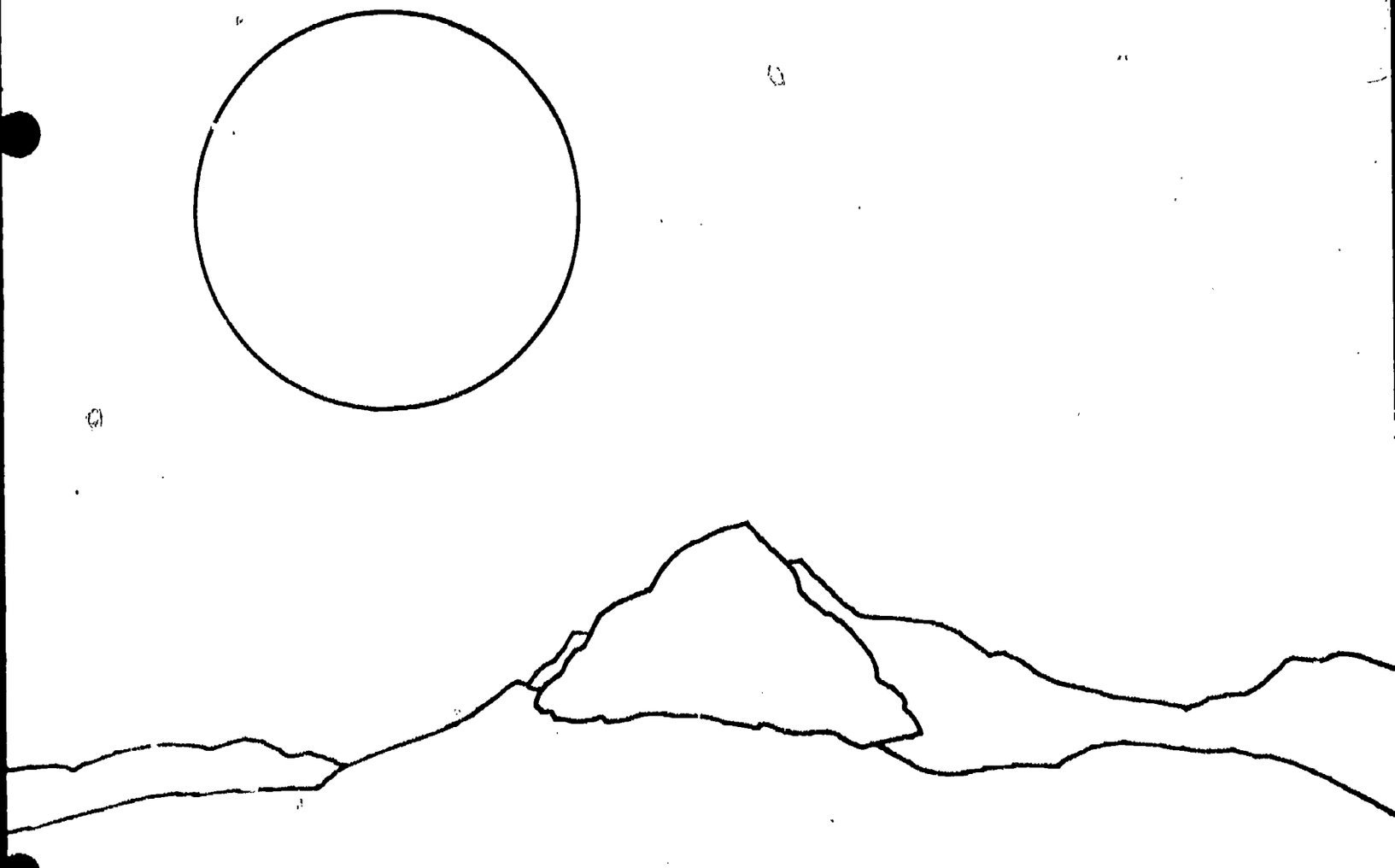
Focus on American Indian/Alaska Native Student Concerns



Focus on American Indian/Alaska Native Student Concerns

To work with and relate to American Indian/Alaska Native students, it is important to be aware of some of the students' key concerns related to the education process. As with the cultural factors discussed previously in the first NEA issue paper, many of the concerns of American Indian/Alaska Native students are common to other cultural groups, and not all native students will share the exact problems cited. Suggested approaches and classroom techniques are incorporated throughout this issue paper.

Cultural Adjustments to the School Environment

Being American Indian/Alaska Native is no problem in itself; but being American Indian/Alaska Native in a non-Indian world frequently is. They often feel somewhat alienated from the school environment. For some, the sense of feeling different and apart continues through all twelve grades. Frequently, this problem is compounded by there being few other American Indian/Alaska Native students in the same school. This is particularly true in large urban public schools, where an estimated 30 percent of the total Indian population of 2,500,000 now resides.

Often, teachers and school support personnel are unaware that American Indian/Alaska Native students undergo culture conflicts and don't recognize when these youths are having difficulty adjusting to another culture. While the adjustments are greater for students raised on the reservation, youths raised off the reservation experience similar cultural adjustments.

It is helpful to give American Indian/Alaska Native students time to adapt to the classroom and to their peers, most of whom will likely be non-Indians. American Indian/Alaska Native educators have noted difficulties some native students have when making the transition from one grade to the next. Again, it seems, adjustment time is in order.

The emphasis placed on time and the careful scheduling of activities in a school setting may also cause problems for the American Indian/Alaska Native student. Most non-Indians are unaware that native cultures have an entirely different view of time; it is viewed as flowing, as always being with us. In the historical past the sun, moon and growing seasons marked the passage of time. Many American Indian/Alaska Native languages contain no word for time.

Contemporary American Indians/Alaska Natives have learned to alter their behavior to correspond to the Anglo-American view of time as being linear

and moving at a fixed, measurable rate. Nonetheless, many American Indian/Alaska Native students continue to be influenced by the traditional view of time and do not understand the importance of being punctual. Being tardy is frequently not seen by them as being a problem.

Educators may want to discuss the difference in the way time is viewed and used. Students can learn to adapt to the dominant society's view of time and recognize that while they are in school the school's orientation to time (the scheduling of activities, classes, appointments with counselors, and meetings with parents) must be maintained.

Attendance problems also plague American Indian/Alaska Native students. They often have high truancy and transfer rates. Not all problems related to attendance signal a truancy problem, however. Occasionally the youths are afraid or ashamed to go to school because they do not have good clothes to wear, or because they do not understand the homework assignment or the subject matter to be discussed that day, and do not want to show ignorance. In other instances, they may be needed by the family to help with seasonal work, such as harvesting crops or helping with livestock. On still other occasions, the student's attendance is required at important family or tribal ceremonies.

The dropout rate for American Indian/Alaska Native students is at least twice the national average. At the heart of this problem is a strong feeling of alienation. When American Indian/Alaska Native youths feel culturally dislocated and when they must learn from curriculum materials and tests that are culturally biased in favor of the dominant culture, they initially experience psychological withdrawal from the school system and may eventually withdraw physically.

To ease their pressure, it is important to the students to feel wanted and part of the school. They need to feel accepted as individuals *and* as American Indians/Alaska Natives. The infusion of positive, factual, and updated material about their cultures in the curriculum is critical to achieve this goal.

Encouraging American Indian/Alaska Native students' participation in extracurricular activities is seen as another way to counter the dropout problem. The more involved they are in school-related sports, clubs, or other activities, the less likely they are to give in to peer pressure to leave school. Parents need to be notified of attendance problems before the situation becomes a dropout problem. While most of the parents may not be actively involved in the school, their behavior often signals a lack of confidence in themselves to influence the school system, *not* a lack of concern for their child's education.

In the past, education was used by the federal government as a means to separate American Indian/Alaska Native children from their families and culture. Frequently when these young people returned home, they were as strangers and misfits who belonged wholly to neither their own nor the Anglo world. Most traces of this fear of education are gone. American Indian/Alaska Native parents now recognize education as an important tool to gain needed

skills and knowledge which will increase personal and tribal self-sufficiency. They want their children to succeed.

The students' sense of isolation is affected by the unfortunate fact that there are few American Indian/Alaska Native adults in teaching, counseling, or other staff positions to serve as role models. Reservation-based youths are daily able to observe their adult population working in a variety of leadership roles. The same cannot be said for students residing off-reservation. It would be beneficial for school districts with large American Indian/Alaska Native student populations to increase their outreach and recruitment efforts to hire more Indian personnel. The use of local American Indian/Alaska Native community organizations and newspapers is recommended.

American Indian/Alaska Native students may also lack a sense of support. Too often their parents do not belong to parent groups affiliated with schools. The community is not visibly represented, and the youths do not feel they have advocates speaking on their behalf. Establishing a parent-community advisory committee or a district liaison position staffed by a certificated American Indian/Alaska Native would be in order. A few farsighted districts and associations have developed education commissions, task forces, and permanent committees to focus specifically on American Indian/Alaska Native student concerns. By such activities and structures, the youths feel their education-related concerns and problems are taken seriously and sense others' interest in them.

Problems Related to Physical Health

Due to the low income level of many Indian families, health problems may be present in the children which naturally affect academic performance. School staffs may want to check students' health records periodically. Check the hearing of American Indian/Alaska Native youths. What may have been perceived as a language barrier may in fact be a hearing difficulty.

It would be beneficial for school staff members to speak with local American Indian/Alaska Native health professionals about any health needs that are peculiar to the community. In rural and reservation communities, Indian Health Service personnel may be available as well as tribal community health representatives. In urban areas, Indian free clinics may be present. Clinics frequented primarily by the local American Indian/Alaska Native community could provide information on health problems specific to the population.

Parents should be encouraged to enroll their children in school breakfast and lunch programs, where available. Immunization programs should also be stressed to American Indian/Alaska Native parents. School districts may want to consider providing a parent training session devoted to preventive health measures.

Like all young people across the country, Indian youngsters are tempted to indulge in using alcohol, drugs, and other chemicals. But unlike others, there is

probably no ethnic group other than American Indians/Alaska Natives to whom the stigma of chemical dependency (usually alcohol-related) is attached so strongly.

While alcoholism is a major health problem among American Indian/Alaska Native populations, it does little good to the self-image of youths to continue the stereotype of the irresponsible Indian dependent on alcohol. When American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters continuously hear, read, and see negative characterizations of their people, many begin to feel that such behavior is expected of them. The cycle of self-fulfilling propheey begins.

The misuse of glue, gasoline, alcohol, and drugs has contributed heavily to the dropout rate among American Indian/Alaska Native youths. However, in our position as educators or support personnel, we can assist them to stay in school longer with instruction in substance abuse and chemical dependency.

In schools with large American Indian/Alaska Native student populations, it would also be beneficial to engage American Indian/Alaska Native speakers on the topic of substance abuse. The local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) can help locate American Indian/Alaska Native members. Most of the adults who belong to AA are more than willing to work with youths. Other speakers are needed to cite the dangers of glue and gasoline sniffing. All young children, not only the American Indian/Alaska Native students, need to hear and discuss the facts about the possible damage to health that results from these abuses.

Improving Academic Skills

A long-range dream for American Indian/Alaska Native tribes, bands, and villages is to have a well-educated, skilled population. To achieve this goal, a shorter term objective is to encourage and assist American Indian/Alaska Native youths to stay in school longer. In addition to examining school environmental factors and possible health-related problems that may serve as deterrents, the student's academic skills must also be considered.

Many American Indian/Alaska Native youths need help to improve their grades and achievement scores. An important beginning is for teachers to meet with the child, and the parent whenever possible, to stress the importance of education, and to recognize and allay the fear of achieving in ways that may be considered non-Indian. On an individual basis or in groups, American Indian/Alaska Native students can be taught the correlation between education and earning power. Locating tutors for the students is also very beneficial.

Like other students whose native language is not English, or whose parents' native language is other than English, American Indian/Alaska Native students have difficulty with language arts. Even in homes where the bilingual parent(s) may strive to speak only English to the children, it is generally not standard English that the student hears and duplicates.

Reading difficulties may arise because of the lack of vocabulary, or a lack of life experiences. Many American Indian/Alaska Native youths, whose families are poor or have lived a large portion of their lives in a rural or reservation environment, will not be familiar with objects and concepts considered commonplace in urban areas. For these students, it is valuable to provide background information and experiences whenever possible. As educators, we must remember that all children do not come to us with the same variety or quality of life experiences.

Where major language problems exist, bilingual programs are necessary. While other ethnic groups are readily identified as being bilingual, American Indian/Alaska Native groups are too often not so recognized. The general public forgets that there remain almost 500 separate tribes, bands, and groups, over 200 of which still retain their native language. Bilingual education programs for American Indian/Alaska Native students are sorely needed. According to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1974 decision in *Lau v. Nichols*, a school district has a constitutional obligation to provide appropriate language training to its non- or limited-English speaking students.

While all American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters are not bilingual, it is estimated that 25 percent begin school unable to speak English. When tested, those who can speak English, are often classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Assigning such LEP students to English as a Second Language classes frequently helps improve their communication skills.

Often factors which influence the academic achievement of American Indian/Alaska Native youths include culturally biased standardized tests and measures, as well as culturally irrelevant and biased classroom materials and textbooks. Many educators and other specialists have worked years to address both of these important concerns. Fortunately, there now exist tests and measures that are less biased to Anglo-American culture. Work must still continue, however, to develop truly culture-free standardized tests. American Indian/Alaska Native educators should be encouraged to involve themselves more in such research.

Concern over curriculum materials that demonstrate insensitivity to and ignorance of American Indian/Alaska Native cultures has existed for decades. Only in recent years have tribes, groups, organizations, and individuals recognized their right to insist upon accurate and unbiased representations of their people.

The need is great for all youngsters to learn factual, nonstereotypical information about the historic and contemporary American Indian/Alaska Native people of this country. Many educators, Indian and non-Indian alike, have given untold amounts of time and energy to develop materials and to put them to use in the classroom. Yet much research and interpersonal work remain to be done.

Students achieve when the subject and content interest them. Incorporating Indian-specific content material into as many courses as possible would assist

American Indian/Alaska Native youths to see that their culture is important, valued, and worthy of study. When school districts demonstrate their consideration and respect for American Indians/Alaska Natives, they cannot help but positively influence the students' attitudes toward education in general and their school in particular. It could be a pivotal factor in keeping the youths in school longer.

Counseling

A final area to be highlighted which relates to American Indian/Alaska Native students' academic needs is the role of the counselor. Frequently American Indian/Alaska Native youths need assistance with class scheduling. They may not know the consequences of selecting certain classes and may find themselves being tracked into vocational subjects rather than subjects with a college preparatory emphasis. In the recent past, government-run boarding schools for American Indian/Alaska Native students routinely tracked boys into agricultural and vocational courses and girls into homemaker skills development class ;; none were offered college preparatory courses. Such sexist and racist tracking should never be endorsed today.

To increase the level of motivation in American Indian/Alaska Native students, counselors frequently need more knowledge of and informational materials on postsecondary education possibilities open to American Indians/Alaska Natives, and scholarships available from tribes, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), universities, and special interest organizations. School districts can write directly to local tribes or to those tribes representing their American Indian/Alaska Native student body and to the closest BIA regional office for pertinent postsecondary and financial aid information.

What Can NEA Members Do?

1. Recognize that American Indian/Alaska Native students undergo a clash of cultures when entering most public schools.

2. Make allowances for additional time that may be necessary before a smooth adjustment from one culture to another can be made.

3. Take students, who have recently relocated from rural and reservation communities, on an excursion of their new school.

4. Recognize that American Indian/Alaska Native students and parents hold a different view of time.

5. Stress the need for punctuality and dependability in the school environment.

6. Involve parents as soon as possible when attendance problems surface to avoid a dropout problem.

7. Encourage American Indian/Alaska Native youths to involve themselves in extracurricular activities to increase their sense of belonging.

8. Motivate native students to remain in school as long as possible.

9. Discuss with older youths the need for more American Indian/Alaska Native professionals by tribes, and for organizations and agencies whose focus is American Indian/Alaska Native concerns.

10. Encourage your district to hire more American Indian/Alaska Native teaching and nonteaching staff.

11. Establish local and district-wide American Indian/Alaska Native parent and community advisory committees or commissions.

12. Provide orientation and training sessions for American Indian/Alaska Native parents.

13. Learn about specific health problems that may affect the American Indian/Alaska Native student population.

14. Show films and distribute brochures and other literature on the dangers of chemical dependency.

15. Stimulate in-class discussions to explore methods of overcoming frustration, boredom, and discrimination.

16. Locate peer tutors to work with American Indian/Alaska Native youths on academic subjects.

17. Provide additional exposure to and practice in language arts skills needed by many American Indian/Alaska Native students.

18. Locate and utilize the best current versions of culture-free, standardized tests.

19. Incorporate Indian-specific content into all subject areas and grade levels.

20. Ensure that sexist and racist tracking does not occur in your school or district.

21. Develop a file of resource materials citing postsecondary financial aid available to American Indian/Alaska Native students and institutions specializing in Indian-specific courses.

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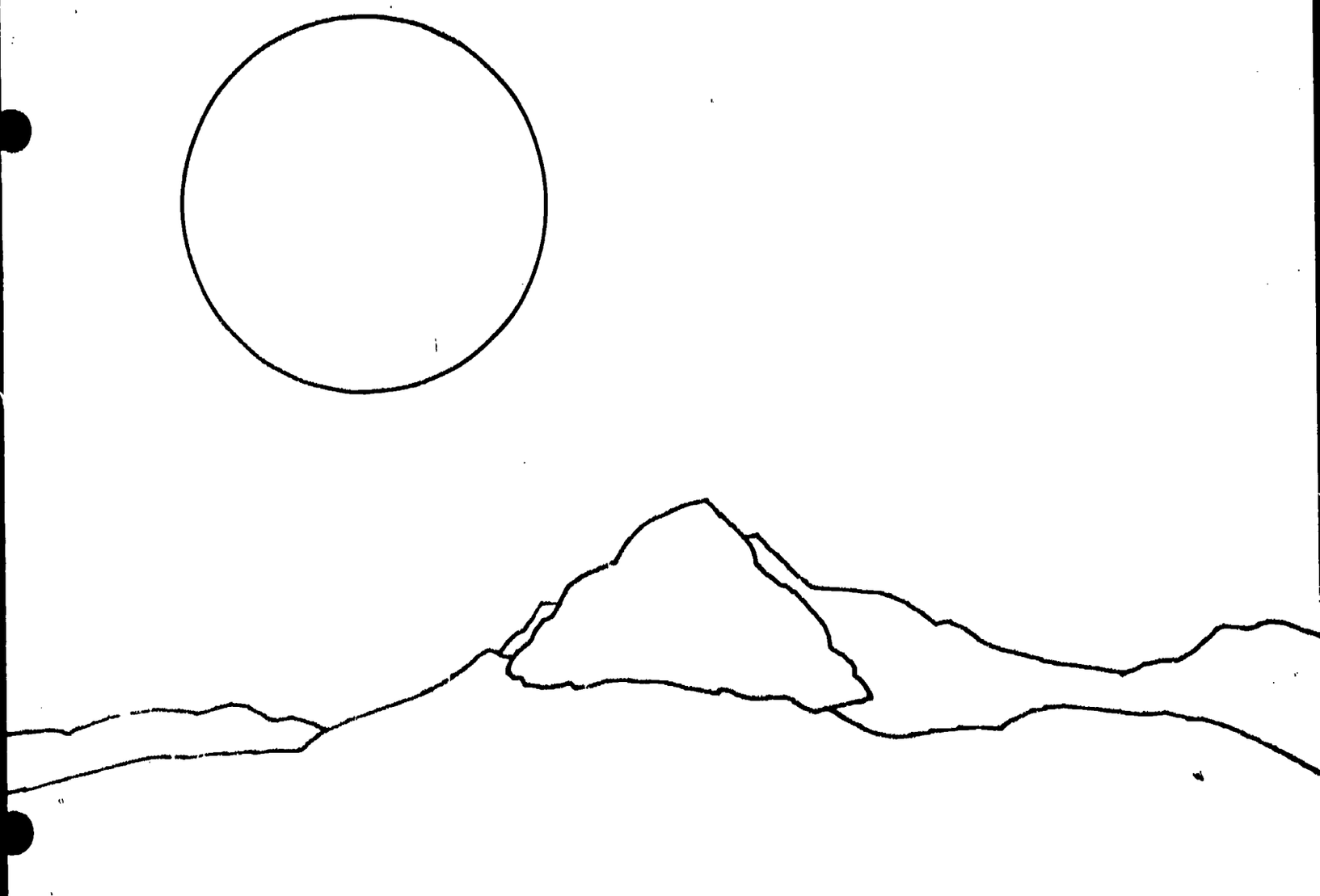
Improving Relations Between Schools and American Indian/ Alaska Native Communities



Improving Relations Between Schools and American Indian/ Alaska Native Communities

Establishing and maintaining good public relations is an important goal held in common by most schools. This objective becomes more complex when students from a variety of cultures attend one school. In such instances, school personnel are responsible to several different communities rather than one homogeneous community. Ideally, outreach is made to each ethnic group to solicit its support and involvement and to obtain input on particular pressing issues facing the school.

Too often, however, schools lack personnel who are familiar with the various ethnic groups and key community leaders. At the same time, language and culture barriers may inhibit ethnic parents from more than a cursory involvement with the school. Such is usually the case with American Indian/Alaska Native parents.

The lack of involvement of these parents is often misinterpreted to mean disinterest in the education of their children. A more accurate assessment of their behavior is that they lack experience in interacting with school staffs; feel they do not have the expertise warranted to speak to the curriculum or counseling needs of their children; and are doubtful about how their input, once given, will be received or instituted. Not wishing to feel intimidated or appear foolish, they remain inactive but not disinterested.

Maintaining positive relations with individuals and institutions influential in their lives is important to American Indian/Alaska Native people. In general, they tend to be very people-focused and group-oriented. Some speculate that this characteristic results from centuries of living in small groups and villages. To have survived as a group, much cooperative behavior was necessary. Harmony between individual members of the tribe or band was valued highly.

Even in contemporary times, American Indians/Alaska Natives seek harmony in their interpersonal relationships and avoid situations in which an amicable balance cannot be achieved. This affects schools directly in that American Indian/Alaska Native parents will become involved and stay active as long as positive, open relations can be maintained. If they sense or experience rejection or indifference, they will avoid such an inharmonious situation by staying away from the school.

There are ample opportunities for American Indian/Alaska Native students, parents, and community members to establish good working relationships with

those in the education system. The avenues open include involvement with the local school, district administrative offices, nearby colleges and universities, state departments of education, and national education groups and associations. Primary emphasis in this document will be upon improving community relations at the local school level.

Relationships Between American Indian/Alaska Native Students and the School Community

The key relationship for most school children is that which they have with their teachers. This is certainly the case for American Indian/Alaska Native youths. It is particularly true that students recently arrived from a rural or reservation area to a more urban school setting will look to their teachers for direction regarding proper behavior, approved procedures, and other unfamiliarities.

It is important for teachers and support staff to know the cultural background of their students. How traditional or acculturated are the American Indian/Alaska Native pupils? This information may influence attendance and behavior. Do they still speak their native languages? The answer to this question will provide insight into levels of English language fluency and proficiency. Have they had much exposure to modern technological society? This question affects their reading comprehension and the ability to do well on standardized tests that are not wholly culture-free.

It is a wise investment of time and effort for the school staff to become as familiar as possible with their local American Indian/Alaska Native student and adult populations. There are generally fewer surprises, misunderstandings and miscommunications once this knowledge is gained.

The influence of a child's family cannot be underestimated. It is valuable, therefore, for the school community to learn about the family background of the students. Is the extended family important in the American Indian/Alaska Native community? If so, one may expect many of the children to be raised by aunts, grandparents, and relatives other than the natural parents. This need not be an indication of problems within the child's nuclear family. Who is responsible for disciplining the child? Among many tribes, aunts and uncles have that responsibility, not the natural parents. Is the clan system still viable? If so, staff may meet, at school functions and conferences, clan relatives who may not be related to the child but whose authority and support are considerable. Is the child's tribe matrilineal or patrilineal? If it is a matrilineal society, educators must be respectful and defer to the female members of the family.

In the upper grades, the quality of the relationship between students and their school counselor can be influential. Because it is difficult for most American Indian/Alaska Native students to open themselves to a stranger, it may take some time before rapport is established. Generally, American Indian/Alaska Native people are unaccustomed to discussing aspirations,

dreams, or personal problems with those who are not family members, but it can be accomplished to the benefit of both parties once the level of trust is raised.

Student-to-student relationships also shape the experiences of American Indian/Alaska Native youths. In some rural areas and many reservation communities, these students make up a majority of the student population. In such situations, American Indian/Alaska Native students feel comfortable and experience less isolation. In urban areas, it is more common that the size of the American Indian/Alaska Native student population is relatively small. It is critical in such settings that positive human relations skills are fostered among all students to ease the alienation and apprehension of American Indian/Alaska Native pupils and other ethnic group members who are numerically in the minority.

In some school districts, federally funded Indian education programs have been established to meet the special cultural and academic needs of American Indian/Alaska Native youths. Such programs are beneficial by allowing time for students to learn more about their cultural heritage; many provide academic skills enrichment.

Yet, nationwide, there still exists the need for American Indian/Alaska Native student leadership programs. Such training programs could provide the youths with an avenue to evaluate and expand their leadership skills, which in turn could increase self-confidence, improve personal relationships, and upgrade academic achievement.

Relationships Between the American Indian/Alaska Native Community and the School Community

Integral to the student's relationship with the school is the degree of cooperation and rapport that exists between the larger American Indian/Alaska Native community and the school district. Such relationships require nurturing from both entities.

Outreach efforts to parents can be improved in most school settings. To increase parental activity, small working committees might be established. An American Indian/Alaska Native-focused committee would be valuable to discuss school-related problems specific to the American Indian/Alaska Native student population. American Indian/Alaska Native parents and community members could also be notified of school-wide committees and projects and encouraged to become members. These include textbook purchase committees, a film review committee, a special events committee and other groups, in addition to the PTA.

To demonstrate a willingness to open the school to American Indian/Alaska Native involvement and to afford parents the opportunity to become more comfortable with the school environment, the principal might consider allowing the use of the facility for other cultural events: a pow-wow, a reception for an honored elder or other visiting tribal leader, a health fair, and

other social events and planning meetings. Night classes that may be of cultural interest to the adult American Indian/Alaska Native population could also be offered at the local school in conjunction with the adult education office.

In turn, American Indian/Alaska Native parents and community members can share information with the school highlighting upcoming special events, such as lectures, festivals, dances, rodeos, sports tournaments, and other activities. Teachers may be able to plan field trips to the events given sufficient advance notice. It would be a very positive step toward establishing or improving rapport between local educators and the American Indian/Alaska Native community, if more non-Indian teachers attended reservation or community-sponsored and tribally-focused events.

Relationships Between American Indian/Alaska Native Parents and School Staff Members

The quality of the relationship between American Indian/Alaska Native parents and their child's teacher has some bearing on the student's attitude toward and behavior in school. In their role as the principle interactors with the child, teachers hold the primary responsibility for outreach to individual parents.

Like other parents, American Indians/Alaska Natives need to know that their involvement in the education of their child is desired, needed, and valued. The increased visibility of American Indian/Alaska Native parents on the school grounds positively affects the behavior and attitude of the students.

In addition to regularly scheduled open houses and parent consultations, American Indian/Alaska Native parents can be invited to judge art shows, talent contests, speech debates, style shows, sports events, and other contests. Some parents may wish to pursue classroom aide or bilingual interpreter positions if they are notified of such opportunities.

Frequently American Indian/Alaska Native parents are asked to serve as speakers for the school. Yet, not all of the parents are active in or knowledgeable about their traditional culture. It is erroneous to believe that all American Indian/Alaska Native parents can naturally provide classroom lessons or auditorium presentations. Those who have the expertise may be working full time and be unable to donate time to the school. Others may have the cultural knowledge but are inexperienced in public speaking or uncertain how to alter their presentation for various grade levels. If the cultural experts are willing to give of their time freely, teachers should spend a certain amount of time with these parents and assist them to gain the school-related technical knowledge needed. By such an arrangement, the parents gain in skills and the students are rewarded with comfortably paced presentations geared to their interests and grade level.

Relationships Between American Indian/Alaska Native Educators and the School Community

Local American Indian/Alaska Native educators and support personnel can and often do play a pivotal role in encouraging and improving intercultural relationships. They can introduce local American Indian/Alaska Native leaders to the school system and ease their discomfort in an alien environment. Indian teachers are invaluable as in-service trainers and curriculum writers on Indian cultures, as long as they have the needed cultural knowledge, gained from life experiences not from books alone.

Staff recruitment efforts will also be easier if American Indian/Alaska Native educators supply schools with an updated list of local and national Indian newspapers and radio programs with which to advertise. If the school atmosphere is not oppressive, Indian staff can serve as needed ombudsmen, candidly and factually interpreting community concerns to the local administration.

Being knowledgeable about their local school and the district at large, American Indian/Alaska Native staff are able to determine where representation is needed on important committees and task forces which advise the school administration on such topics as multicultural education, desegregation, and affirmative action. They are also able to enlist the support of individuals and American Indian/Alaska Native organizations willing to volunteer services to the school system.

In summary, great strides can be made to increase the quantity and quality of interaction between all segments of the school community and the American Indian/Alaska Native community. It will take time, energy, and a sincere desire for open communication exchanges but it is worth everyone's efforts.

Both communities will gain in valuable skills and expertise. And, most importantly, American Indian/Alaska Native students will experience long-lasting benefits from improved school-community relations.

What Can NEA Members Do?

1. Encourage the improvement of relations between the American Indian/Alaska Native community and your local school.

2. Recognize there are several reasons why American Indian/Alaska Native parents may not be active in school affairs.

3. Acknowledge that American Indian/Alaska Native parents want harmonious relations with the school.

4. Familiarize yourself with the cultural background of the student population.

5. Recognize the importance of extended families and clan relationships in certain American Indian/Alaska Native communities.

6. Establish trusting, nonprobing relationships with young American Indian/Alaska Native counselors.

7. Endorse the hiring of American Indian/Alaska Native professional and classified staff.

8. Request in-service training on American Indian/Alaska Native cultures in general and the local community in particular.

9. Foster mutual understanding and respect between students.

10. Encourage the establishment of American Indian/Alaska Native student leadership programs.

11. Make a commitment to reach out to American Indian/Alaska Native parents of your students and to other community leaders known to you.

12. Notify American Indian/Alaska Native community members of school committees and task forces of which they can become members.

13. Endorse the use of the school site for community-sponsored events and meetings.

14. Provide training to willing but inexperienced American Indian/Alaska Native speakers about organizing and formating a presentation for various age groups.

15. Solicit the input and active involvement of local American Indian/Alaska Native educators and school support staff.

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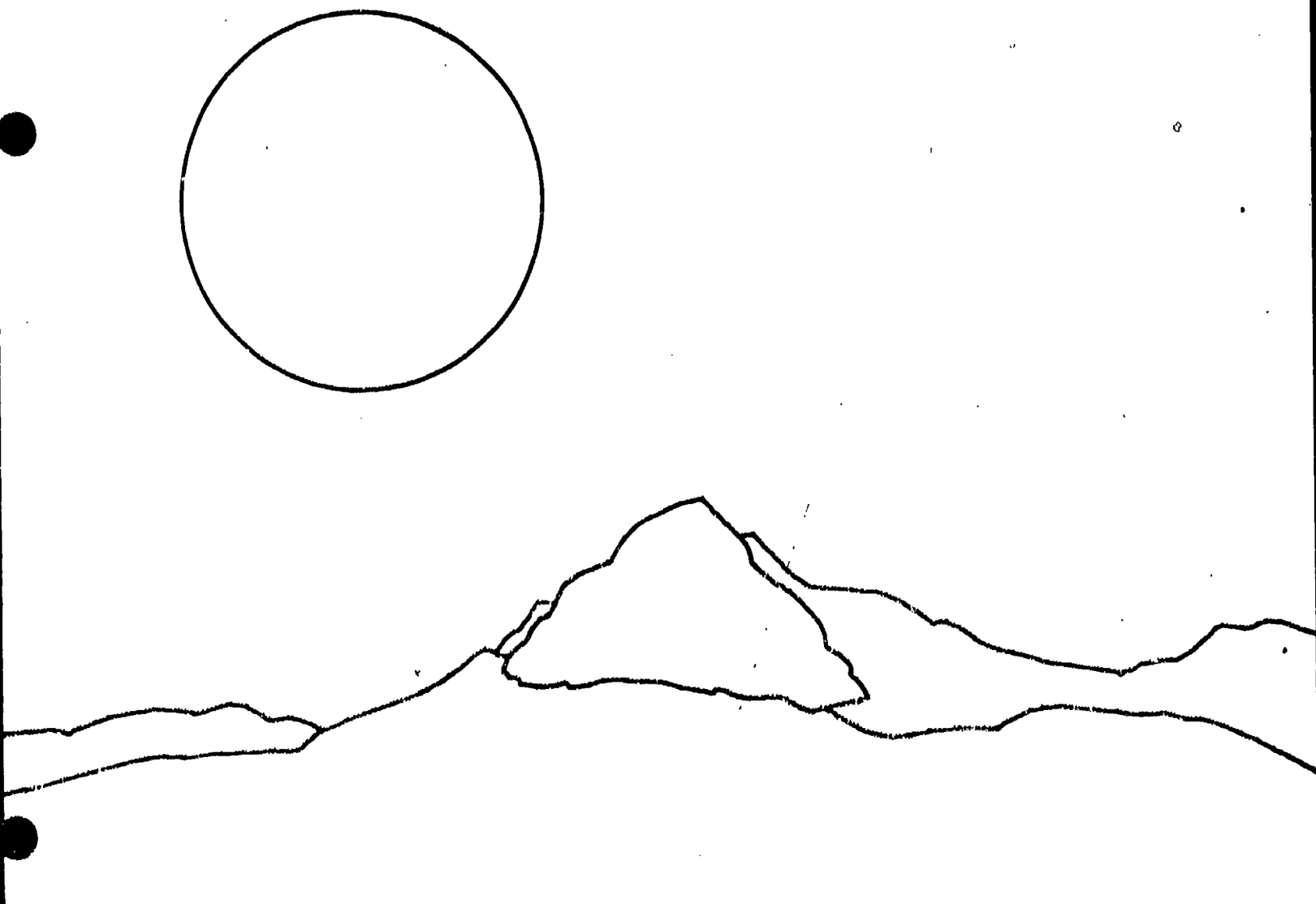
Methodologies Which Affect and Improve the Self-Image of American Indian/Alaska Native Students



Methodologies Which Affect and Improve the Self-Image of American Indian/Alaska Native Students

An important determinant of student academic achievement and socialization is self-perception. A student's self-image can be affected by a number of factors. Influences in the home environment are paramount in a child's early developmental years.

As the child comes of school age and as an increasing number of hours per day are spent in learning and social activities outside the home, the school environment takes on a greater role in shaping the student's self-concept. In the school setting there are also greater numbers of individuals impacting the child than at home. The influence of classmates also increases in importance as the child matures.

Students' opinions of themselves can be affected by their talents and capabilities, or lack thereof, in any or all of the following arenas: academic subjects, sports activities, and socialization and leadership skills. How readily they are able to overcome low economic status, resolve value conflicts, or rise above others' prejudices also greatly affects their perception of themselves.

Research has indicated that American Indian/Alaska Native youth generally enter school exhibiting a very positive self-concept and demonstrate much eagerness to learn and willingness to interact with others. However, at about the second or third grade, they become cognizant of others' frequently negative opinions of them, their community, and American Indians/Alaska Natives in general. They are old enough to recognize the low academic expectations of them held by teachers.

When an American Indian/Alaska Native student's image of him- or herself is different from that of influential others, confusion and disorientation usually result. After a series of such experiences in predominantly non-Indian public schools, American Indian/Alaska Native student apprehension grows and self-confidence wanes.

Since schools pay a key role in either improving or hindering student levels of confidence and self-esteem, it is important to review what steps can be taken and which techniques can be incorporated which specifically address the need for American Indian Alaska Native youth to experience comfort and success in a variety of ways in the classroom.

Classroom Environment

Students entering a classroom which teaches a culture different from their own need to know that their own culture will not be demeaned. Most American Indian/Alaska Native youths can understand the need to learn about the dominant culture, but neither they nor their parents would agree it should be taught to the exclusion of all others.

In school settings, it is reassuring for American Indian/Alaska Native students to see books about their culture among the reading material in the classroom or library. Bulletin boards depicting positive aspects of native cultures could be maintained with periodic changes. During open houses or multicultural affairs, signs containing words of welcome or greeting posted at the school or classroom entrance could be translated into several different languages, including two or three local tribal languages.

An open classroom environment as opposed to a more structured traditional classroom setting seems to match best the needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students. Because their traditional cultures were cooperative societies, the tendency remains strong for these youth to work in groups. Their knowledge will make itself apparent more rapidly in small group work sessions than in situations requiring individual responses.

Most traditional American Indian/Alaska Native groups shared freely with one another. In open education classrooms, Indian students easily adapt to their teacher and to the concept of sharing materials, equipment, and ideas. More flexible time schedules are also generally allowed, which correlates well with the less rigid view of time held by most American Indians/Alaska Natives.

In open education classrooms, students are made more accountable for their individual assignments, while they are allowed to work at their own pace. This aspect also seems to match the learning styles of American Indians/Alaska Natives.

American Indian/Alaska Native students also prefer an emphasis on one-to-one interaction with the teacher on problem areas, rather than demonstrating or admitting to a lack of knowledge on a particular topic in front of the whole class. Native students experience extreme embarrassment when singled out before their peers for either positive or negative reinforcement.

An Integrated Curriculum

It should be apparent to most instructors that if American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters see and hear positive, factual, and current information about their people, their own self-perception will improve. They will realize that the ongoing value of their culture has been recognized. Integrating Indian-specific content into as many subject areas as possible is an exemplary way to demonstrate respect for American Indian/Alaska Native cultures. Such action would go far in increasing students' sense of worth and their level of interest in topics to which they otherwise have difficulty relating.

Emphasizing Language Arts

Most American Indian/Alaska Native youth are raised to be quiet and observant. The majority are not strongly verbal. In the early grades, daily conversational practice is needed. Since American Indian/Alaska Native students are reluctant to stand out before their peers, choral recitations are highly recommended. For younger children, practice can be obtained through the use of puppets or other means to speak through a third person. Gradually, they acquire the ability to express their personal opinions.

Although most Indian students are not bilingual, the majority have been diagnosed as being Limited English Proficient (LEP). Even if the children do not speak their native language, the influence of the traditional language, as spoken by the parents or relatives, on the children's use of English is great.

To ensure understanding of directions by LEP students, it is advisable to give clear instructions to students. If a series of directions are needed, state them one at a time. The reluctance to speak can be diminished once students feel accepted by the group, including the teacher, and are assured they will not be openly humiliated if their use of English is imperfect.

Additional time may be necessary for bilingual American Indian/Alaska Native youths to translate lessons and discussions mentally before being able to respond. They may also need time to learn and understand English idioms. Especially in schools on or near reservations, efforts should be made to build pride among youngsters who are bilingual. Where one or two native languages predominate in a community, objects in the classroom can be translated into the tribal languages. Young children can learn to count both in English and a language native to the community.

Learning to read is often a difficult hurdle for American Indian/Alaska Native students, as well as other bilingual students. If culturally relevant language and reading aids were developed and other Indian specific books, journals, and newspapers were available, American Indian/Alaska Native youths would feel more motivated to read while learning about their culture and less inclined to view reading as a chore. Good reading skills and habits naturally influence learning later in life.

Other Classroom Techniques

Whenever possible, in-class projects which relate to the perceptive skills of American Indian/Alaska Native youngsters should be developed. When new skills are being learned, it is generally best if the students are allowed first to observe carefully, later attempting the skill or exercise on their own. Acute embarrassment ensues when young pupils are placed before a chalkboard to work a new problem or record a correct response when they have not first had the opportunity to practice the skill alone. It is likewise best to use concrete, not abstract, experiences or examples when teaching American Indian/Alaska Native students. The teacher must also become aware of the extent of life experiences of the Indian student population. Particularly in rural and

reservation communities, many will lack experiences considered common to Anglo students. Using examples that they can relate to from their cultural background ensures a more thorough understanding of a new topic. If Indian students seem bored, it too may be due to the lack of experiential background to gain and hold their interest in the subject matter.

Teachers may find it necessary to ask American Indian/Alaska Native students if they understand the material or concepts being presented. Some will not tell the teacher if they do not. Since great deference is shown adults, most American Indian/Alaska Native students will be reluctant to advise the instructor that they did not understand the instructions or lecture. Also, it is often considered disrespectful of youths to question adults or request clarification. Thus, follow-up questions should be asked by the instructor to gauge understanding of content. A helpful technique with American Indian/Alaska Native students is to ask them to write out anonymously questions which are to be picked up and answered by the teacher.

It is equally important to continue to call on American Indian/Alaska Native students in classroom discussions; do not give up on or ignore them because they fail to respond as assertively as others. There are strong feelings against promoting oneself over others in the group. Teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native students have experienced occasions when those pupils who knew the answer to a question or problem would not speak in order to spare the feelings of those who did not know.

Once American Indian/Alaska Native students are more comfortable with answering individually and do so correctly, overt and profuse praise should be withheld. Again, this is in deference to those students who did not give the correct response. American Indian/Alaska Native students are reluctant to be singled out and are embarrassed by public recognition. Frequent encouragement and praise help increase their self-confidence but must be given quietly and privately.

Due to the concern for others' feelings, it is generally best for the elementary teacher to select team members for classroom projects or playground activities rather than allow students to do the selection, a process which may cause embarrassment to some. Impartial selection by assigned numbers or colors works best.

Lastly, in recent years, research has been conducted which alters our view of how the brain works. We are told that some students learn best using the brain's left hemisphere which emphasizes linear thinking while others function from the brain's right hemisphere, which controls artistic and creative endeavors. Teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native students may want to gather additional information about right hemispheric teaching activities, since research indicates that the students tend to be right-brain learners.

Teacher-Student Interaction Patterns

Most American Indian/Alaska Native students tend to be very sensitive to others' opinions of them. As educators, we have the opportunity to provide a

group of students with much-needed support and encouragement in the school environment.

Due to fear of how they will be accepted and the hesitancy to bring attention to themselves, most American Indian/Alaska Native youths are reluctant to talk about themselves. Educators and support staff should understand the underlying self-doubt of American Indians/Alaska Natives and not misconstrue their reserved behavior as haughtiness or prejudice.

Some teachers may have difficulty relating to American Indian/Alaska Native students, who are frequently older for their grade than are other pupils. This may be a result of late school entrance, uneven school attendance, or retention in earlier grades. Efforts may be necessary to make the older students feel comfortable in such instances.

School staffs need to recognize that even today some American Indian/Alaska Native groups dress very distinctively. It would be wise to become familiar with local clothing styles and understand that the students and adults view special clothing as an example of their rich heritage. Teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native students must learn to accept differences in appearance. Such cultural differences enforce the students' sense of identity and do no harm to authority or to the school environment.

Due to their high degree of sensitivity, American Indian/Alaska Native students may react strongly to harsh criticism or disciplinary action by school authorities. Self-hatred, rebellion, and emotional or physical withdrawal may result.

Administrators, counselors, and teachers are all in a position to improve cultural relations and counter the still pervasive mistrust of Anglos. If promises are made to students, they should be kept. Educators can demonstrate their confidence in American Indian/Alaska Native students, which naturally increases the students' level of confidence. It is also best to maintain high expectations of them rather than feel sorry for them.

A final behavior trait to be highlighted is the tendency of American Indian/Alaska Native students to avoid looking at others, particularly adults, directly in the eye. It is considered disrespectful behavior. Among some tribes prolonged eye-to-eye contact is associated with anger. Not knowing this, educators frequently admonish the students to look at them while they are speaking; all the while, the student has been looking down or away out of respect. Particularly in emotional moments, American Indians/Alaska Natives tend to look away rather than possibly causing embarrassment to the individual who is angry or upset. This behavior pattern is frequently misunderstood by non-Indians.

Overall, teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native students are asked to seek classroom techniques and solutions to behavioral concerns which take into account the distinct cultural heritage of the students. Preferential treatment is not expected or requested, only understanding.

Educators must realize their role as cultural brokers and assist students' adjustment whenever needed. It is important to acknowledge that demonstrating understanding to other cultures is not the same as being soft or easy. If our primary goal is to educate the youth of America to be the best they can be, we must recognize the validity of using the most culturally appropriate means possible to achieve the desired results.

What Can NEA Members Do?

1. Build self-confidence and a positive self-image in all students.
2. Provide opportunities for American Indian/Alaska Native students to experience success in academic subjects.
3. Encourage student participation in extracurricular activities for which students show talent.
4. Provide leadership experiences for American Indian/Alaska Native students.
5. Teach mutual understanding and tolerance for differences in cultural values and behaviors.
6. Show mutual respect at all times.
7. Teach the best in all cultures.
8. Incorporate an open classroom environment where possible.
9. Never imply that a student's native language is not good or valid.
10. Emphasize language arts skills with American Indian/Alaska Native students.
11. Recognize the influence of traditional American Indian/Alaska Native values on student behavior in the classroom.
12. Neither ignore the native students nor show them favoritism.
13. Be firm but fair.
14. Incorporate a variety of teaching styles and methodologies that coincide with American Indian/Alaska Native students' background.

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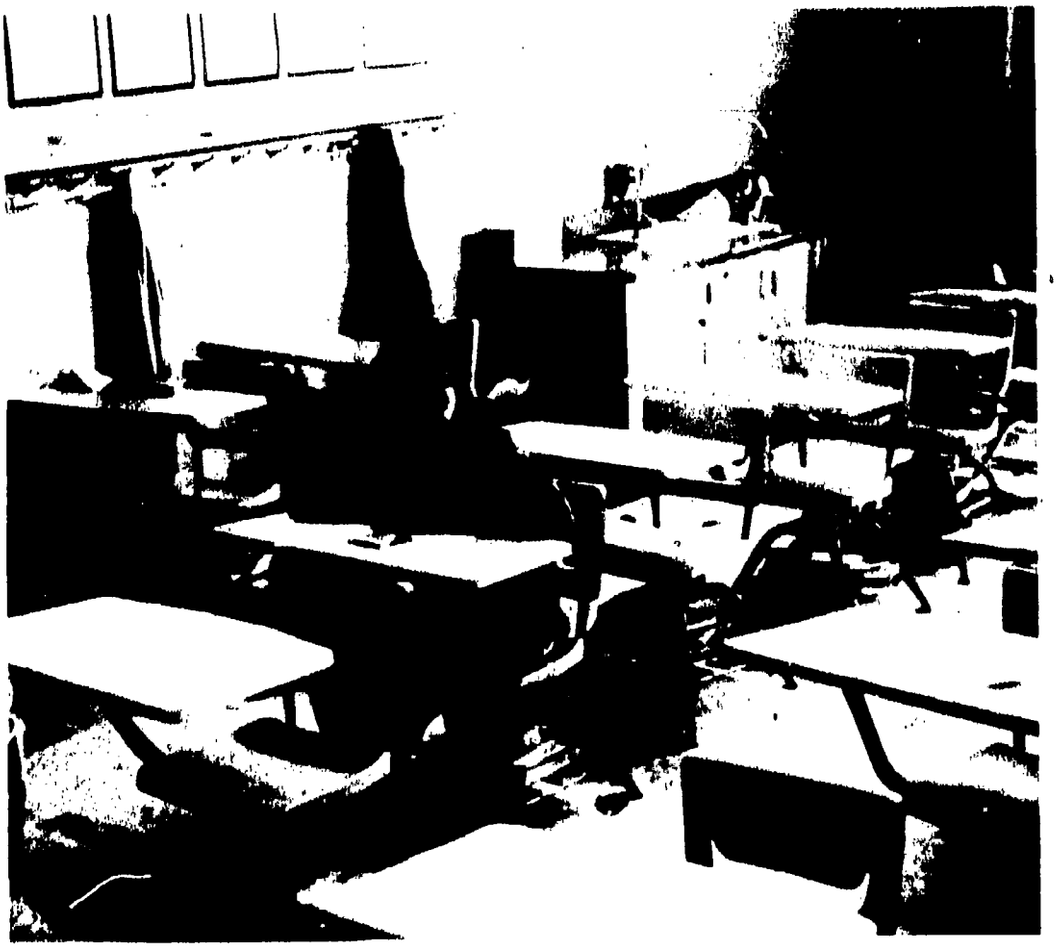
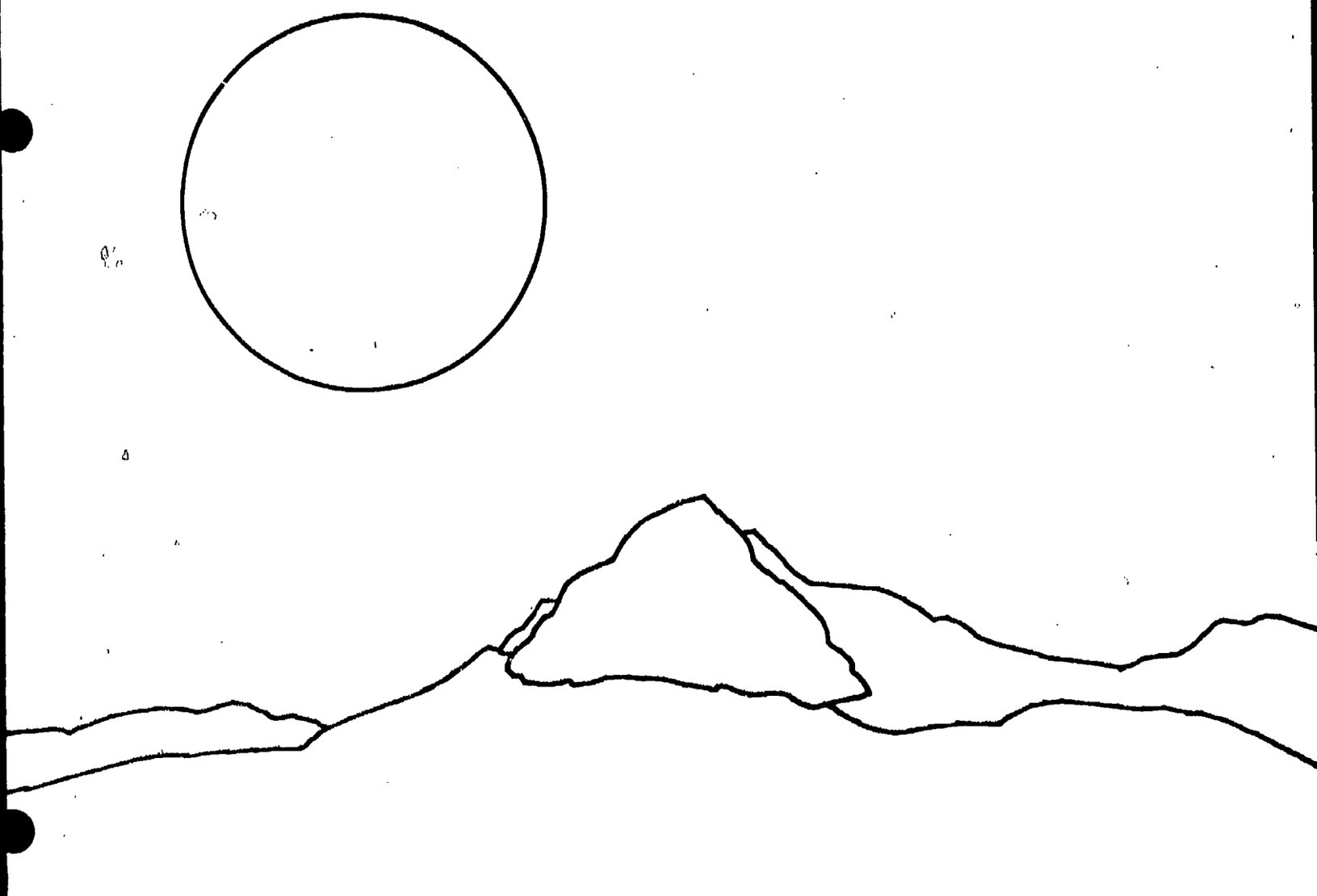


Looking to the Future for American Indian/Alaska Native Students



Looking to the Future for American Indian/Alaska Native Students

A Backward Glance

The U.S. government first formalized its agreement to provide education assistance to American Indians/Alaska Natives in a December 2, 1794, treaty with the combined tribes of the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge. In most succeeding treaties made, until the treaty period ending in 1871, a provision for education was included. During the ensuing 189 years, education has assumed an important and changing role in the lives of American Indian/Alaska Native community members.

The original intent of providing education to the indigenous citizenry was to civilize and Christianize them. This rationale had changed little over the years. A later stated intent was to educate in order to assimilate. The 1973 *Report of the Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education* best summed up the original intent.

> *Education was the means whereby we emancipated the Indian child from his home, his parent, his extended family, and his cultural heritage. It was in effect an attempt to wash the "savage habits" and "tribal ethic" out of the child's mind and substitute a white middle-class value system in its place.*

Only in recent years has a change of attitude occurred, one precipitated by American Indian/Alaska Native people themselves. The current view of education is that it is a vehicle to empower American Indian/Alaska Native individuals and groups. It is seen as a mechanism enabling Indian people to control their own destiny. In the early days, American Indian/Alaska Native parents were fearful of education because it meant educating their children to a way of life alien to their own. It also usually meant losing them for most of the year to a boarding school at some distance from the reservation. As early as 1838, there were sixteen manual schools and eighty-seven boarding schools attended by Indian students around the country.

After the passage of the 1924 Citizenship Act, American Indian/Alaska Native students could attend public schools for the first time. During the termination era of the 1950s, many of the boarding schools were closed, thereby again increasing the number of Indian students in public or nearby day schools.

Like most parents, American Indian/Alaska Natives prefer keeping their children near them and not breaking up the family unit. Thus, they were pleased at not always having to send their children away to become educated. However, concern over the quality and relevancy of a curriculum emphasizing an alien way of life did not abate.

The non-Indian public voiced similar concerns about curriculum content for Indian students. As early as 1928 the need for a curriculum adapted to the students' background was noted and recorded by the Brookings Institution and published in *The Problem of Indian Administration*, more commonly known as the Meriam Report.

This study was highly critical of federal American Indian/Alaska Native policies and the administration of American Indian/Alaska Native programs.

The Meriam Report highlighted the deprivation experienced by Indian students attending government-run schools. A brief period of reform followed, during which additional financial support was provided to all schools educating these youths.

During the 1950s—the termination era—the tide reversed itself. The aim of the federal government became one of the terminating American Indians/Alaska Natives as governmental entities and eliminating funding for programs benefitting them. The education of Indian youth suffered.

Contemporary Trends

In the mid-1960s a new trend toward self-determination began for American Indians/Alaska Natives. For the first time American Indian/Alaska Native parents and other Indian citizens were given the opportunity to determine the quality of education for their children. Newly implemented laws and projects mandated community input; e.g., the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the National Indian Education Advisory Committee established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and begun in 1967.

In the space of two decades American Indians/Alaska Natives have moved from a position where their educational rights were doubtful at best to one where they can take the rightful lead in determining their future. From having their education predetermined for them, American Indian/Alaska Native people have made the transition into a new era in which they are directing the course of education for the children of future generations. To their great credit, the leaders of American Indians/Alaska Natives have accelerated their learning and have greatly narrowed the gap between themselves and the dominant society. Yet there remains much work to be done.

Great strides have been made in these past fifteen to twenty years. Today there are many more American Indians/Alaska Natives working in education. Some work in the classroom; others are administrators in public schools or are directing education projects; a few are counselors; and an even smaller number are curriculum developers. Many more are needed. Those in the education field are often overworked and spread very thin trying to represent

American Indian/Alaska Native interests on various district committees, state task forces, national commissions, and boards of Indian community organizations.

Because the attitude toward the rights of Indian people to be self-directing is a recent phenomenon, most efforts have been geared to meeting immediate needs, which were and continue to be plentiful. However, the time is past due for long range planning. What direction should American Indian/Alaska Native education take in upcoming decades?

Forecasting Future Directions

To plan for the future one must begin by defining what one means by the term "Indian education." Generally when that term was used in the past, it meant the education *of* American Indian/Alaska Native students. Or, it meant education *about* American Indian/Alaska Native culture, taught both to native and non-native students. Rarely did it define a style of education which could be termed Indian education. The models used, even in (BIA) boarding schools were invariably Anglo-American educational models.

It would be valuable for all students of all cultures to have available to them new teaching strategies based on traditional American Indian/Alaska Native educational philosophies and techniques.

Previous issue papers highlighted styles of learning and teaching methodologies which seem to work best with American Indian/Alaska Native student populations. The research has been done only with a few tribes, however. And the experiences of teachers and all-Indian student populations are not always presented in formal papers. An effort to consolidate information and conduct additional research on native educational models is needed.

Students of all ethnic backgrounds who need to be prepared to live and work in a society expected to experience further advances in high technology in all fields must receive the proper education and training to interest and sustain them. It is important for teachers, counselors, and vocational specialists to become knowledgeable about career options that may be possible in the future, even though such jobs may not exist today.

It is vital to American Indian/Alaska Native youths also to have available to them information about possible job fields that will become available on reservations in future years. We can no longer train American Indian/Alaska Native youths for the standard careers known to us in the 1980s. Efforts must be made to foresee the effects of high technology on tribal groups and envision how and where Indian youths might fit in. Serious consideration must be given to what job fields are anticipated to be most in demand by tribes and American Indian/Alaska Native organizations in the 1990s and beyond.

A national study has yet to be conducted to assess the current number and variety of American Indian/Alaska Native professionals as well as the numbers needed in future years in various fields. With such data in hand, tribes, American Indian/Alaska Native organizations, and universities could better

plan and develop programs to match the needs.

In recent years, interest has been renewed in mathematics and science. While the trend began in the public schools, its influence has spread even to BIA schools. Several universities have implemented special summer programs for American Indian/Alaska Native youths who are interested in mathematics and science, who have talents in those subject areas, and who need encouragement to continue their studies. More such programs are warranted. Often American Indian/Alaska Native students do not recognize the connection between learning mathematics and science concepts today and helping their people in the future. Yet, tribal groups are sorely in need of their own doctors, scientists, computer specialists, and other highly skilled technicians.

A number of tribes, although not the majority, have mineral and other natural resources located on tribal lands. To determine the best way to make use of their resources, American Indians/Alaska Natives need geologists, engineers, and other technical experts to assist them with critical decision-making. Individuals with scientific expertise who are likewise sensitive to tribal concerns (e.g., taking too much from the earth) continue to be in great demand.

Once tribes, American Indian/Alaska Native educators, and teachers of Indian students know the economic trends coming in the late 1980s and 1990s, additional efforts can be made to establish needed training programs and academies for blue collar positions to be held by women and men. With the increase of industry on many reservations, trained employees are needed. Some form of postsecondary training will continue to be required but that need not imply college training for all American Indian/Alaska Native youth.

As tribes become more economically self-sufficient and as more industry relocates to American Indian/Alaska Native communities, there will be an increased need for business managers and administrators. Too often American Indian/Alaska Native students and adults are not seen as potential leaders; hence, they have been given fewer opportunities to demonstrate or improve their organizational talents. With over 500 tribes still in existence today, there will continue to exist a need for planners, business managers, and others with administrative skills. Given sufficient motivation and encouragement to pursue an education beyond high school, Indian students will be able to fill current and future vacancies.

Many of the Indian children who could admirably serve their people are often overlooked or ignored. Many leaders of tomorrow are the gifted American Indian/Alaska Native students of today. Yet because there is little emphasis placed on locating or encouraging gifted American Indian/Alaska Native students, their talents lie dormant and their creativity is frustrated. Efforts must be increased in the future to seek out gifted and talented Indian youths and provide them with encouragement and inspiration to be the best they can be—for themselves and for tribal groups which need their talents.

American Indians/Alaska Natives have come a long way from the days when education was feared and avoided. Their viewpoint about education has

improved steadily and naturally as they have increased their involvement in and input to the direction their education is to take.

As indicated, many more career avenues are open to American Indian/Alaska Native students today. Education will prove to be the key to preparing them for current and future employment opportunities and improving the quality of life for themselves and their tribe or native community.

Because educators play such an influential role in the lives of American Indian and Alaska Native students, the NEA has provided its members with six issue papers containing background information designed to increase their understanding of and empathy for these students in their classrooms.

Through specific suggestions, it has been demonstrated that American Indian/Alaska Native students can be assisted to remain in school longer and become productive citizens. This can be done by gaining information on the students' tribal background and cultural values, improving the curriculum by inserting culture specific facts to maintain student interests, recognizing student needs and concerns, improving relationships between the American Indian/Alaska Native community and the school, and learning new teaching strategies recommended by experienced educators of American Indian/Alaska Native youths.

All of the ideas presented are offered with one thought in mind: American Indian/Alaska Native students must begin to feel better about themselves. With an improved self-image they will be able to envision themselves as successful contributors to their people and can recognize the unlimited opportunities ahead of them.

What Can NEA Members Do?

1. Support the concept and practice of self-determination for American Indians/Alaska Natives.

2. Encourage American Indian/Alaska Native people to take a more active role in determining the direction the education of their children should take.

3. Recruit more American Indians/Alaska Natives into the field of education.

4. Encourage leadership skills in American Indian/Alaska Native youths and adults.

5. Work with American Indian/Alaska Native tribes and groups to develop long-range educational plans.

6. Implement culture-based teaching techniques.

7. Become aware of socio-economic trends affecting the dominant society and American Indian/Alaska Native communities.

8. Learn about career opportunities in the 1990s and beyond.

9. Gather data on which career fields are underrepresented by American Indians/Alaska Natives.

10. Motivate more American Indian/Alaska Native students to pursue math and science courses and careers.

11. Endorse other postsecondary courses and programs which provide the type of training needed to support reservation industries.

12. Promote organizational skills in students and encourage additional study in the field of business administration.

13. Actively seek out and identify gifted American Indian/Alaska Native students.

14. Begin student- and teacher-centered groups to research and disseminate information on future trends in education in general and in the education of American Indian/Alaska Native youths in particular.

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The Quest for Quality Education

The Quest for Quality Education was published by the NEA in 1982. It is included in this publication for its brief history of American Indian/Alaska Native education, its synopsis of federal programs, and its summary of NEA's American Indian/Alaska Native programs. This information will help in understanding the unique situation of American Indians/Alaska Natives.

"If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian, he can live in peace. There need be no trouble. Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it . . . . Let me be a free man—free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to think and talk and act for myself—and I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty."

Chief Joseph
1879

Introduction

The complex, continually evolving relationship between American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and the United States government is an outgrowth of white territorial expansion and mutual recognition of the original sovereignty of the tribes. It is also a product of Indian emigration from the reservations to the urban areas.

American Indian Alaska Native tribes and individuals occupy a special position in American law, although that position has not always been beneficial. American Indian Alaska Native tribes and individuals claim federal services based upon a complex of treaty rights, Constitutional provisions, and legislation. The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 granted U. S. citizenship to the American Indian/Alaska Native people, who assert their rights to all federal services available to the general public. On the positive side, the special position of the American Indian Alaska Native people assures some Congressional support through both general and specific programs. On the negative side, their special position makes a fiction out of any assertions of self-government since Congress may veto tribal laws and the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to regulate programs and resources on reservations.

The National Education Association—4,000 of whose 1.7 million members identify themselves as American Indian and Alaska Native—has prepared this pamphlet to raise the awareness of its general membership and staff about the unique situation of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The brief history of American Indian and Alaska Native education, the synopsis of federal programs, and the summary of NEA's American Indian/Alaska Native programs and future thrust that are contained in this pamphlet are designed to help Association members and staff work with American Indian and Alaska Native members and with the nearly 460,000 youngsters who constitute the American Indian/Alaska Native student population.

American Indian/Alaska Native Education—A Brief Synopsis

Residing on a fraction of their original land, American Indians and Alaska Natives live like conquered people, dependent upon the federal government, in what was once their own country. Not only have they consistently been at the mercy of the racism and greed of the later Americans, but the life of American Indians and Alaska Natives has also been affected by shifting federal relationships with the tribes. The United States government has been unaccountable for violations of treaties made with the tribes—there are hundreds of broken treaties—and the federal government has been free to reduce the size of the reservations to which it consigned the people after having taken away their land.

What is called Indian education is a mirror of the shifting federal-tribal relationship. Begun in the nineteenth century, Indian education was seen as a device for forcing the assimilation of Indian children into the majority's social system. It was also a means of changing Indian adults from hunters to farmers on small land plots set aside by the federal government, thus providing greater areas for the influx of non-Indians moving westward. The original mission schools, supported by European companies, philanthropists, religious groups, and the federal government were later joined by a network of industrial boarding schools whose purpose was to separate children from their cultural background and force them into America's mainstream. The schools provided scant rudiments of the majority culture's education, focusing primarily on agrarian training.

In 1928, a study by the Brookings Institution of public and Bureau of Indian Affairs (government) schools brought to the attention of the federal government the deprivation and abuse of Indian children attending those schools. The study, which came to be called the Meriam Report, had a significant impact upon governmental policy. Resulting in the authorization of programs for improving the education of Indians, it brought about a period of change known as the Indian New Deal. Federal financial aid was provided to local districts, reservation day schools, and public schools which had been established on Indian trust lands.

The period of termination, which came a brief twenty years after the Indian New Deal, resulted in the termination of the federal relationship with many tribes. Many schools previously supported by federal funds were closed. American Indian and Alaska Native children as well as adults suffered yet another downward swing. Education and culture once again suffered.

Following the civil rights movement and a decade of Indian activism, Indian education in the 1970s became the beneficiary of a national interest in ethnicity and an expanded funding of various educational programs. Unfortunately, under the Reagan Administration, the duration of this latest period of reform is nearing its demise.

Summary of Federal Education Programs Affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives

Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Education

School Assistance in Federally Affected Areas—Maintenance and Operation (Impact Aid)

PL 81-874, as amended by PL 93-380

This is a program to provide financial assistance to local education agencies upon which financial burdens are placed due to federal acquisition of real property, increases in school attendance as a result of federal activity, children whose parents are employed on federal property, and other similar conditions.

Agencies serving American Indian/Alaska Native children who reside on federal reservation territories are eligible for assistance under this act.

School Assistance in Federally Affected Areas—Construction (Impact/Disaster Aid)

PL 81-815, as amended by PL 93-380

This program provides assistance for the construction of urgently needed minimum school facilities in school districts which have had substantial increases in school membership as a result of new or increased federal activities, or where reconstruction of facilities is necessary because of major disaster.

The greater proportionate share of funds are for providing assistance for American Indian/Alaska Native school construction.

Educationally Deprived Children

PL 89-10, as amended by PL 93-380

Part A of the program expands and improves educational services to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged children in low-income areas enrolled in public or private elementary and secondary schools.

Funds are specifically set-aside for the Secretary of the Interior to make payments to local education agencies with respect to out-of-state American Indian/Alaska Native children and to meet the special educational needs of the educationally deprived children on reservations serviced by elementary and secondary schools operated by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

School Library Resources, Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials; Supplementary Educational Centers and Services, Guidance, Counseling, and Testing; Libraries and Learning Resources

PL 89-10 and amended by PL 93-380

This program combines within a single authorization the program authorized by Title II and much of Title III related to testing, counseling, and guidance. Although funding is combined, uses must meet the specific criteria of the various titles.

Title II is a program to improve the quality of instruction by providing funds to states to acquire school library resources, textbooks, and other printed and published instructional materials for use of children and teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools.

Title III is a program to help provide needed educational services and to support local projects designed to demonstrate innovative and exemplary models of state and local programs of guidance, counseling, and testing.

There is a specific set-aside of funds for the Secretary of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, for use in BIA operated schools.

Higher Education—Strengthening Developing Institutions

PL 89-329 as amended by PL 93-380

This program assists developing colleges, qualifying within the definition of the Act, to strengthen their academic, administrative, and student services programs so that they may participate adequately in the higher education community.

Vocational Education

PL 90-576

This program assists in conducting vocational programs for persons of all ages in all communities who desire and need education and training for career vocations.

Education of the Handicapped

PL 91-230, as amended by PL 94-142

This is a program to provide grants to states to assist them in the initiation, improvement, and expansion of educational and related services for handicapped children at the preschool, elementary, and secondary school levels. Formula grants are made to states to assure that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special educational and related services designed to meet their unique needs, to assure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents or guardians are protected, to assist states and localities in providing for the education of all handicapped children, and to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate handicapped children.

Indian Education

PL 92-318

This is a three-part program for American Indian/Alaska Native education.

Part A of the program provides financial assistance to local education agencies to develop and implement elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet the special educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children.

Grants are made to Indian organizations, tribes, and institutions of higher education for special educational training programs for teachers and administrators dealing with American Indian/Alaska Native children.

Part B of the Act provides grants to plan, develop and implement programs for the improvement of educational opportunities for Indian children.

Part C of the Act provides grants to plan, develop and implement programs for the improvement of educational opportunities for Indian adults.

Emergency School Aid—Bilingual Education Projects

PL 92-318, as amended by PL 93-380

This is a program to assist in the process of eliminating, reducing, or preventing minority group isolation and of aiding school children in overcoming the educational disadvantages of minority group isolation.

Bilingual Education

PL 93-380

This program develops and carries out elementary and secondary school programs, including activities at the preschool level, to meet the educational needs of children of limited English-speaking ability, and to demonstrate effective ways of providing such children instruction designed to enable them, while using their native language, to achieve competence in English.

Part B of the Act stipulates that programs be provided for American Indian Alaska Native children in state and local districts, federally supported schools, and Indian tribes and organizations.

National Reading Improvement Program (Right to Read)

PL 93-380

This program provides training for local Right to Read administrators and seeks to solve the literacy problem of the states through a coordinated and cooperative effort of their educational agencies. It develops and implements innovative reading programs for preschool and elementary children and compares the effectiveness of reading specialists and classroom teachers providing reading instruction.

Headstart and Follow-Through

PL 93-644

This program sustains and augments, in the primary grades, the gains that children from low-income families make in Headstart and other quality pre-school programs. Follow-Through provides special programs of instruction as well as health, nutrition, and other education-related services which will aid in the continued development of children to their full potential. Active participation of parents is stressed.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education

PL 93-1422

This is a program to authorize alcohol and drug abuse education demonstration projects in schools, communities, and institutions of higher education including validation and dissemination throughout the country and leadership training for educational personnel, community personnel, and parents. The Act is designed to alleviate the alcohol and drug abuse crises among youth by promoting awareness and understanding of the nature of the problem and by developing and dis-

seminating prevention and early intervention strategies aimed at attacking the causes of alcohol and drug abuse rather than merely treating its symptoms.

Programs Administered by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Snyder Act Programs

PL 67-85

The Snyder Act authorizes the Bureau of Indian Affairs, under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, to direct, supervise, and expend such moneys as Congress may appropriate for the benefit, care, and assistance of American Indians/Alaska Natives. It provides authority for the Bureau of Indian Affairs to organize and support American Indian/Alaska Native programs, including education. Educational programs supported under this Act include: (1) Adult Education, a program to provide general instruction for American Indian/Alaska Native adults in literacy and high school equivalency, and other adult needs. It is generally limited to persons 18 years or older residing on trust land who are one-quarter or more Indian blood. (2) Federal schools under the direct administration of the Bureau. This provides educational opportunities for eligible American Indian/Alaska Native children who do not have public education opportunities to meet their needs. (3) Indian colleges and universities established to encourage students to continue their education and training beyond high school. Grants and loan funds may be used for tuition, required fees, textbooks, and miscellaneous expenses directly related to attendance at college. Funds are intended to assist students in pursuing regular accredited college courses necessary to achieve a college degree. (4) Facility school construction, planning, and equipping. This provides school facilities for American Indian/Alaska Native children not now in school, and builds public schools for children in federally affected areas and schools that are tribally operated.

Johnson-O'Malley (JOM) Programs

PL 73-167, as amended by PL 93-638

This program assures adequate educational opportunities for American Indian/Alaska Native children attending public schools and tribally operated, previously private schools. It authorizes direct payments to public school districts and previously private schools which have eligible American Indian/Alaska Native children in attendance and which provide educational services meeting established state standards. To receive JOM aid, districts must establish Indian Education Committees to approve the operations of programs beneficial to American Indians/Alaska Natives. Funds may be used for programs to meet the special educationally related needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students, and may also be used, in exceptional circumstances, for costs of operating basic school programs.

Navajo Community College Act

PL 92-189

This program helps the Navajo Tribe to provide education to the members of the tribe and other qualified applicants through a community college established by the tribe. Grants are made for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the Navajo Community College.

Indian Self-Determination Act Programs

PL 93-638

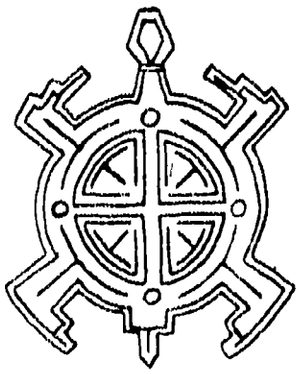
This Act authorizes assistance to American Indian/Alaska Native citizens to achieve maximum participation and control in tribal government and education. It provides for full participation by the tribes in the programs and services for American Indians/Alaska Natives conducted by the federal government, and it encourages the development of the human resources of the Indian people.

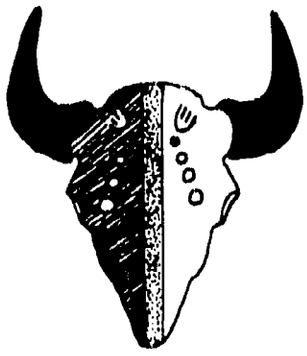
Programs Administered by the Department of Labor

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA)

PL 93-203

CETA programs provide job training and employment opportunities to economically disadvantaged, unemployed, and underemployed persons. They assure that training and other services lead to maximum employment opportunities and enhance self-sufficiency by establishing a flexible and decentralized system of federal, state, and local programs.





NEA Support for American Indian/Alaska Native Education

The National Education Association is committed to the support and improvement of American Indian/Alaska Native education.

While NEA provided for a Department of Indian Education in its 1907 charter, it did not become actively involved in American Indian/Alaska Native education until the late 1960s.

NEA established the National Council of Bureau of Indian Affairs Educators (NCBIAE) in 1966, appointed an American Indian to its newly established Human Relations Committee in 1968, held a conference on "Equal Educational Opportunity for Native American Children" in 1969, and hired a coordinator for Indian Programs and passed its first resolution pertaining to American Indian/Alaska Native education in 1970.* (See page 21 for current resolutions and new business items.) The Indo-Hispanic Task Force, appointed in 1971 to deal with the concerns and demands of American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic members, presented to the NEA Executive Committee "An Affirmative Action Program for NEA in Indo-Hispanic Education" that resulted in the beginning of an NEA program in American Indian/Alaska Native education and in the further organization of American Indian/Alaska Native members.

NEA's current program in American Indian/Alaska Native education is rooted in the First American Task Force. In existence from 1971-75, it analyzed problems in American Indian/Alaska Native education and recommended programs that would enable the Association to solve the problems identified. The work of the Task Force resulted in the formation of the First American Caucus (renamed the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus in 1978); recruitment and employment of American Indian/Alaska Native staff; and the adoption of Resolution B-5, "American Indian/Alaska Native Education," that has been in continuous existence since 1976, and new business item, "American Indian Education," that has been in effect since 1977.

NEA's activities since 1969 in the field of American Indian/Alaska Native education are classified as follows:

Communications

- Prepared and distributed the "AI/AN Fact Sheet," a bimonthly informational packet featuring legislative and other items of interest to the American Indian/Alaska Native community.
- Produced and distributed a film entitled, *My Country T'is of Thy People are Dying*, in which Buffy Sainte-Marie sings about Indian concerns.
- Disseminated, in cooperation with American Indian/Alaska Native organizations, information about federal legislation.

* Resolution 70-15, "American Indian Education," was replaced in 1976 by Resolution B-5, "American Indian/Alaska Native Education." Resolution 70-15 directed NEA to develop an "adequate and equal program in Indian education," to urge the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to improve instruction for American Indian Alaska Native children and working conditions and salaries for BIA teachers, and to insist that "federal funding for Indian education be continued until such time as Indian groups are able to meet their specific needs."

Education

- Sponsored a conference on Equal Educational Opportunity for Native American Children.
- Held a conference—attended by Indian educators, traditional leaders, and American Indian/Alaska Native leaders of national American Indian/Alaska Native organizations—to develop a philosophy of Indian education. Recommendations made at that meeting were adopted by the NEA Executive Committee and presented to the American Indian Policy Review Commission in 1976. See page 23 for the recommendations.
- Held one national and five regional conferences about American Indian/Alaska Native legislative concerns.
- Hosted a National Tribal Governments Conference at NEA.
- Worked to increase participation by American Indian/Alaska Native members in NEA conferences and leadership training programs.

Legislation

- Provided testimony by NEA elected leaders and American Indian/Alaska Native committee members about key issues affecting education—financial assistance to local education agencies serving American Indian/Alaska Native children, appropriations, and the place of American Indian/Alaska Native education in the U.S. Department of Education.
- Shared with Members of Congress NEA's recommendations to the American Indian Policy Review Commission.

Organizational Development

- Passed resolutions and new business items to set directions for NEA programs in American Indian/Alaska Native education.
- Supported the National Council of BIA Educators.
- Supported the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus and its predecessor organizations.
- Provided for equal American Indian/Alaska Native representation on the NEA Minority Affairs Committee.
- Established the annual Leo Reano Memorial Award for leadership in solving problems in American Indian/Alaska Native education. (Leo Reano, Santo Domingo Pueblo, was a charter member of the NEA Human Relations Committee.)
- Provided grants, materials, and assistance to six state affiliates to help them analyze American Indian/Alaska Native issues, work with the American Indian/Alaska Native community on those issues, and improve the education of American Indian/Alaska Na-

tive students. The grants have been used for meetings for American Indians and Alaska Natives to establish goals related to their needs within their respective states; meetings with state officers and staff to integrate American Indian/Alaska Native goals with state association goals; development of a communications system for the purpose of increasing American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in state and local associations; and development of strategies to address problems experienced by American Indian/Alaska Native members in their respective states.

Liaison Activities

- Participated in regular meetings with a coalition of federal agencies and Washington-based national American Indian/Alaska Native organizations.
- Maintained continuing relationships with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards, National Advisory Council on Indian Education, National Congress of American Indians, National Indian Education Association, and National Tribal Chairman's Association.

NEA Position Paper on American Indian/Alaska Native Education Legislation

Presented to the NEA Committee on Legislative and Financial Support for Public Education, February 1982.

The NEA Position on Education Legislation

The National Education Association is constitutionally committed to advancing the cause of education for all individuals and to the goal of promoting and protecting human and civil rights.

In the pursuit of serving as the national voice for education issues, NEA bases its program thrust upon the following basic tenets:

The Scope of Education
Educational opportunity should be afforded to all from early childhood through adulthood.

The Character of Education
Education should be suited to the need of the individual.

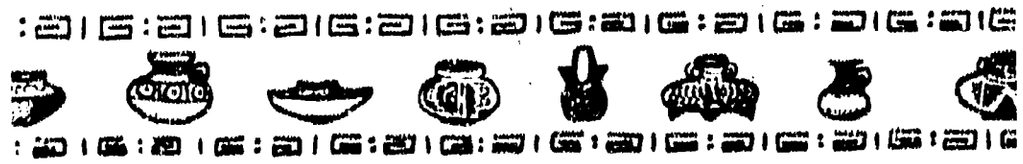
The Funding of Education
Education should be offered at public expense from public tax sources.

NEA seeks to achieve federal legislation consistent with NEA policies with particular emphasis on improvement of the professional status, welfare, and personal financial security of educators, as well as legislation that extends and guarantees human and civil rights for all.

Funding of education is pursued on the basis of firmly held Association beliefs that:

- The federal share of the cost of public education must be at least one-third.
- The amount of federal aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
- It is imperative that all education legislation provide adequate funds for full implementation including funds for teacher training.
- Teaching materials should be provided for both new and exising educational programs mandated by legislation. Materials for new programs should be available before new programs are implemented.

Reflecting its mission to guarantee human and civil rights for all, NEA's legislative efforts focus on ensuring accountability and equity by striving



toward the requirement that advisory committees for federally funded programs reflect the ethnic makeup of local communities and include parents, students, educators, and citizens.

The NEA Position on American Indian/Alaska Native Legislation

The NEA position on legislation affecting American Indian/Alaska Native education has two major focuses: funding and rights.

It is the belief of the NEA that federal funding for American Indian/Alaska Native education is not adequate. Therefore, NEA will consistently and continuously assert that—

- Federal funding for American Indian/Native education is in critical need of expansion to effect improvements. Under no circumstance should funding be reduced.
- Higher education opportunities must be provided for all American Indian/Alaska Native students through direct governmental assistance in both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Federal support for American Indians and Alaska Natives must not be terminated either as a direct or indirect result of efforts to extend self-determination.

NEA is committed to equal rights for all and in this context—

1) supports legislation that assures the involvement of parents, community members, and educators in the control of the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives; and
2) supports a change in BIA policies to provide BIA teachers the rights accorded other educators.

NEA will monitor the implementation of—

- *The Johnson O'Malley Act of 1934* which vests with the Secretary of the Interior broad authority to contract with individual states and local agencies for the education of American Indian/Alaska Native children;
- *PL 81-815 (the School Facilities Construction Act of 1950)* which was enacted to aid local education agencies (LEAs) in building urgently needed, minimum school facilities in districts of substantially increased enrollment resulting from new or increased federal activities, amended in 1953 and 1967 to extend federal aid to LEAs where (1) the total number of children residing on American Indian/Alaska Native lands and receiving public education represents a substantial percentage of those served by the LEA or (2) the immunity of American Indian/Alaska Native lands to local taxation has created a substantial and continuing impairment to financing school facilities;
- *PL 81-874 (Impact Aid Act of 1950)* which provides funds for school districts impacted by federal activities, amended in 1953 to include American Indian/Alaska Native children residing with parents living or working on American Indian/Alaska Native lands and later amended to include all children who reside on American Indian/Alaska Native land regardless of heritage or parental employment site.
- *PL 92-318—the Indian Education Act of 1972* (Title IV of the

Education Amendments of 1972) which covers all American Indian/Alaska Native children in public schools regardless of tribal affiliation, Part A of which provides new funds to local institutions and education agencies for pilot programs and projects designed to meet special educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children; Part B (amending Title VIII ESEA) of which provides for special grants to tribes and American Indian/Alaska Native organizations; Part C (amending Title III, ESEA) of which provides funding to tribes and American Indian/Alaska Native organizations for adult education; and Part D of which established the Office of Indian Education (DHEW) and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, and Part E of which established a fellowship awards program.

- *ESEA Title I (Educationally Deprived Children PL 89-10,* as amended by PL 93-380) which authorized funding providing special opportunities for disadvantaged children and was extended to American Indian/Alaska Native children by treating BIA as the fifty-first (51st) state for purposes of receiving funds;
- *PL 93-638 (The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975)* which was designed to strengthen tribal governments and to increase American Indian/Alaska Native participation in the education of their children.
- *PL 95-561 (Indian Basic Education Act)* (Title XI, Education Amendments Act of 1978), which provides for the development of standards for the basic education of children attending tribally controlled or BIA-controlled schools and for tribal participation in impact aid program planning; and
- *PL 95-471 (Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978) which provides* grants for the operation and improvement of tribally controlled community colleges.

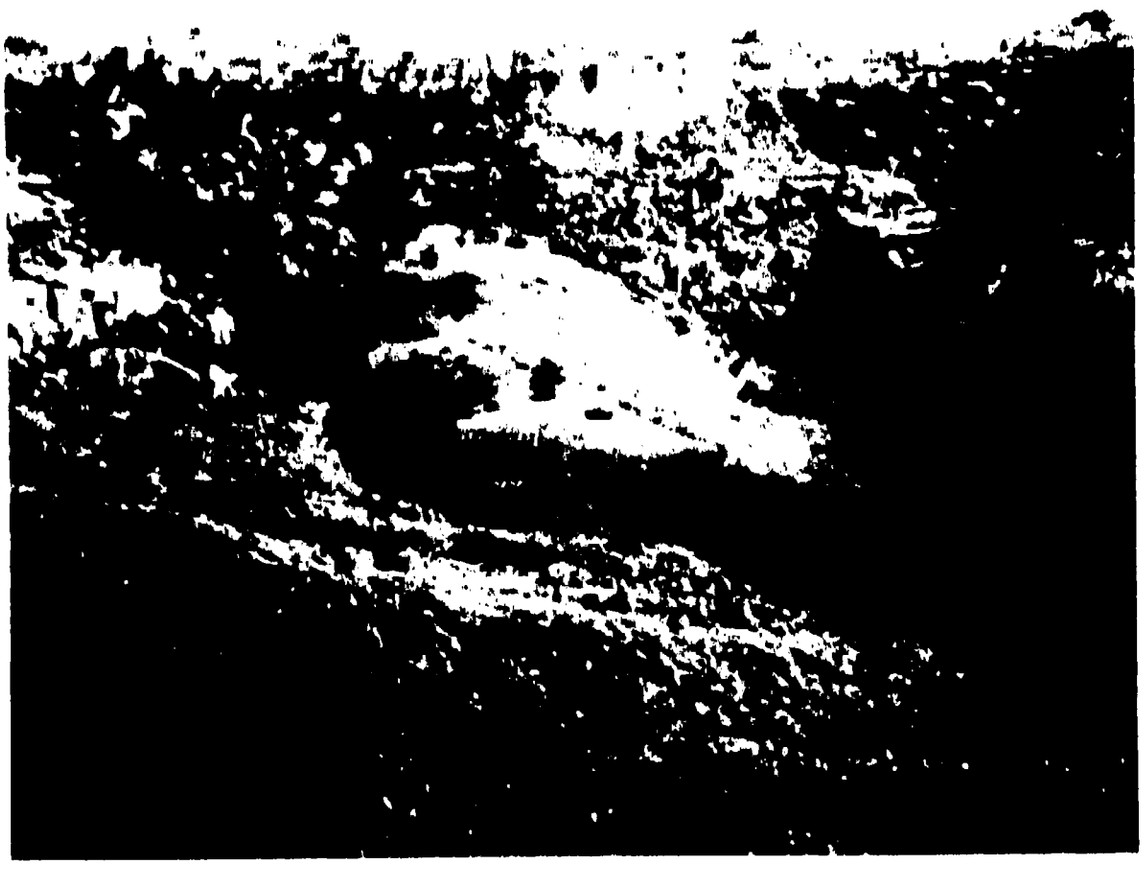
NEA concurs with those who have interpreted PL 92-318 and PL 95-561 as a Federal fiscal commitment to American Indian/Alaska Native education.

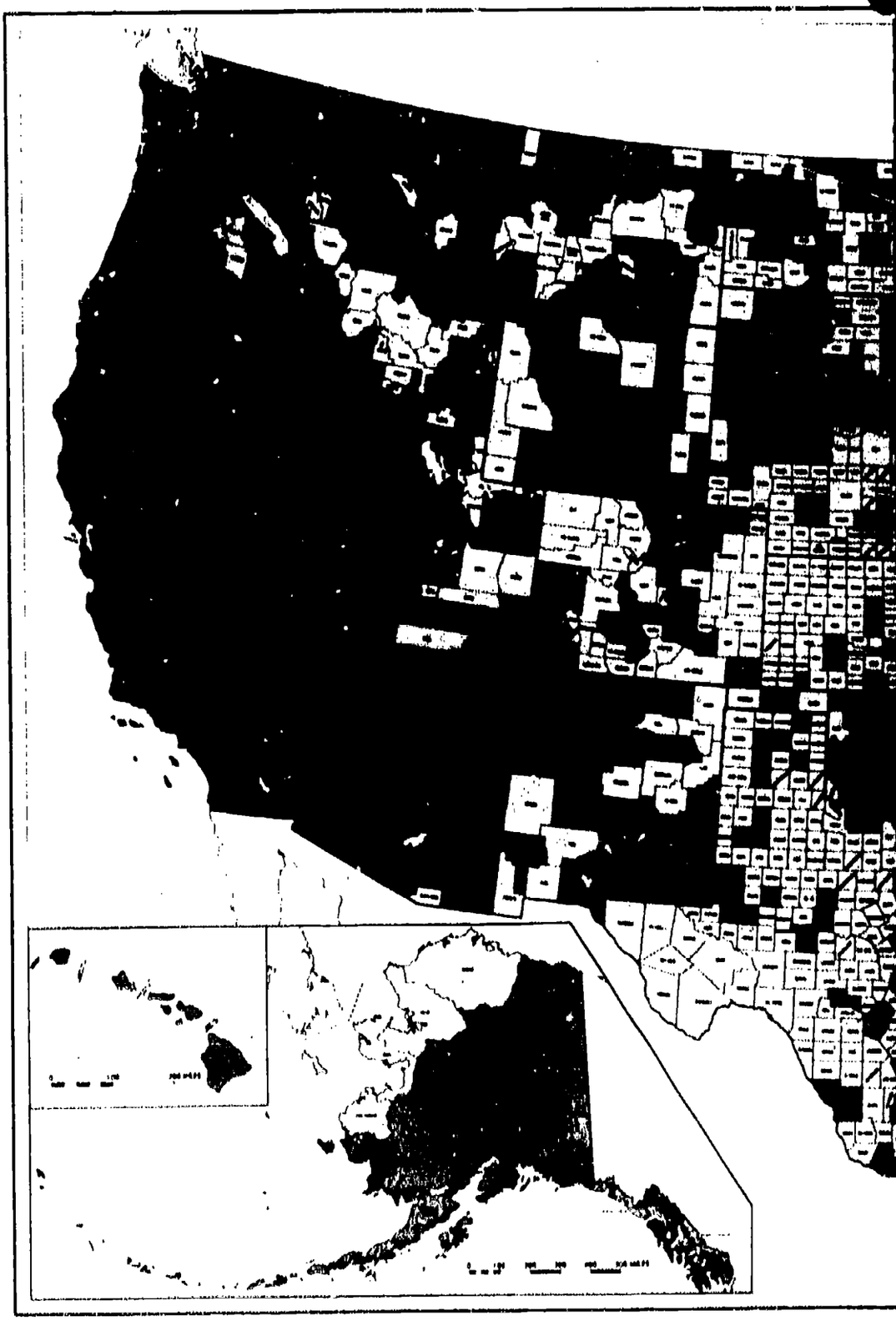
The obligation of the United States to respond to the strong expression of American Indian/Alaska Native people for self-determination is clearly stated in the declaration of policy in PL 93-638 which calls for "assuring maximum Indian participation in the direction of education and other Federal Services to Indian communities so as to render such services more responsive to the needs and desires of those communities."

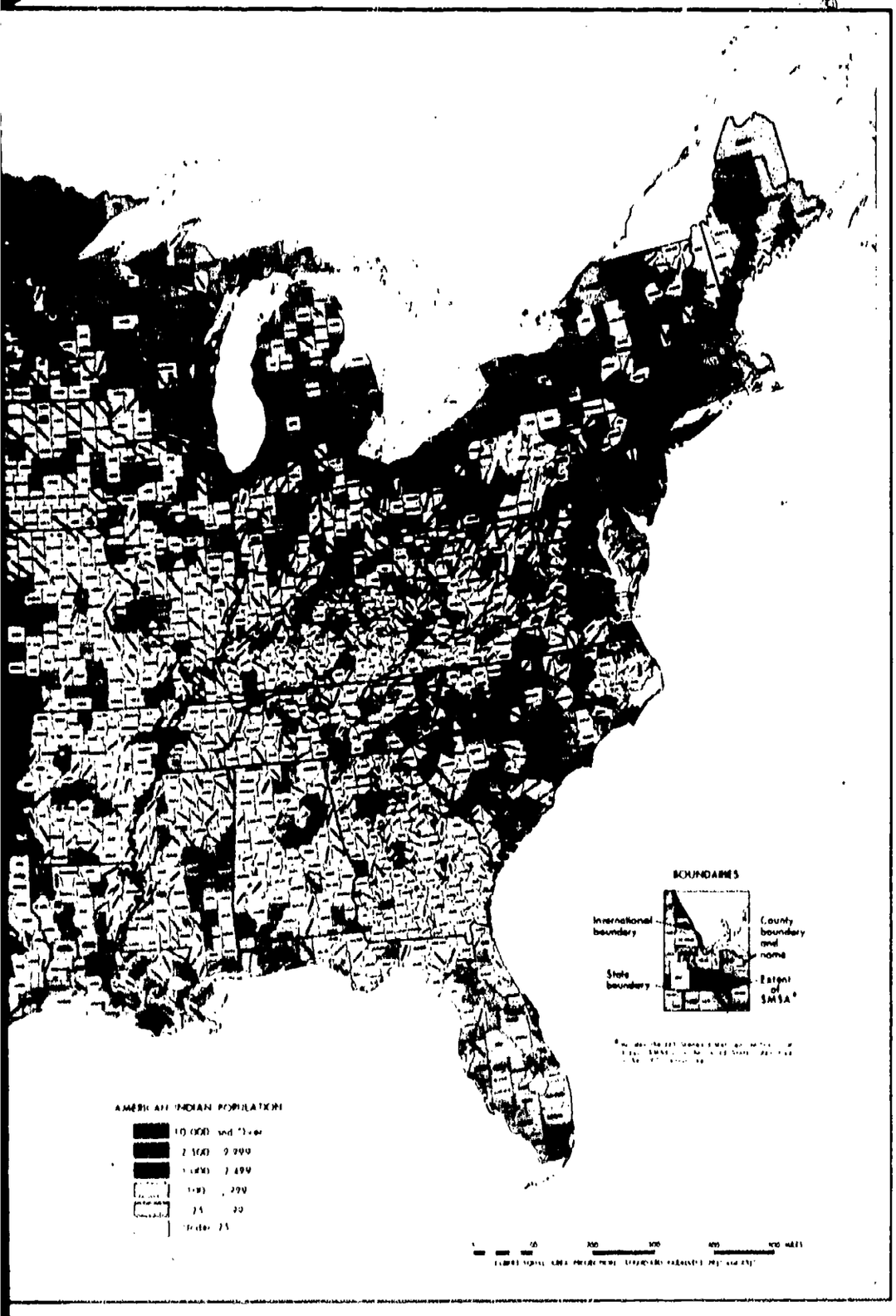
Any attempt to subvert the intent of any legislation which provides equal opportunity for the American Indian/Alaska Native peoples will be actively resisted by NEA.

NEA is unalterably opposed to program consolidation which results in a diminution of services to the disadvantaged.

The public schools and the American Indian/Alaska Native students within them must be safeguarded from the actions of any branch of the government which could result in funding below the current inadequate levels, resulting in many cases in their exclusion from education.






BOUNDARIES
International boundary
State boundary
County boundary and name
Extent of SMSA*
AMERICAN INDIAN POPULATION

Responsibility for Indian Education

The American people can no longer afford to transmit the curse of unrealized potential to coming generations of American Indian and Alaska Native children.

The American Indian/Alaska Native student population consists of 459,196 youngsters of whom 413,561 attend public schools, 40,635 attend Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and about 5,000 attend private (parochial and Indian-controlled) schools. How many of those students will have their horizons limited to the boundaries history has drawn around a conquered people? How many will soar beyond those boundaries to set their own horizons and help redefine those of their people and the nation?

The failure of educational institutions to educate American Indian/Alaska Native children needs to be addressed. The symptoms of institutional failure include—

- American Indian/Alaska Native school dropout rates that are twice the national average;
- American Indian/Alaska Native student achievement levels that are significantly below those of their white counterparts;
- Low self-esteem among American Indian/Alaska Native students;
- Assumptions by educators that American Indian/Alaska Native children have below-average intelligence; and
- Unemployment on reservations that has reached 31 percent.

Who is responsible for educating American Indian and Alaska Native children for success? Their parents? The tribes? Federal and state governments? Education associations? Certainly, each parent is responsible for educating his or her children and for trying to secure the best formal education for them. Each community must also see that their most prized resources—children—receive quality education despite past federal and state policies and practices which have excluded Indian involvement in education. The federal government, through treaties and laws, is obligated to support American Indian/Alaska Native education. State governments must educate citizens within the state's boundaries.

State education associations must work with and for American Indian/Alaska Native educators and for teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native children to improve the evolving system of American Indian/Alaska Native control of their children's education. They can no longer leave such involvement to self-education, but must reach out to those who have been left out of the mainstream.

Suggested Plan for a State Education Association American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Program

Goals

Membership growth
Leadership development
Political action

Objectives

Identify NEA members and potential members among the state's AI/AN population.
Involve AI/AN members in association leadership and activities.
Help AI/AN members improve the education and opportunities of American Indian and Alaska Native children.

Components

- Structure

  An AI/AN Task Force Committee should be established to implement the association's AI/AN program.

- Staff

  AI/AN staff members should be hired, some to coordinate AI/AN program activities and some to serve in other program areas.

- Program/Activities

  Identify AI/AN members.

  Sponsor an annual conference for AI/AN members.

  Hold Minority Involvement Program (MIP) seminars for AI/AN members; sponsor Level I cadre training sessions.

  Conduct a needs survey; share the results with AI/AN members.

Review textbooks for their treatment of AI/AN history.

Support AI/AN observances; hold AI/AN observances (meeting, film, speaker, panel, luncheon) in the association's headquarters building.

Invite AI/AN leaders to speak to association governing bodies.

Support AI/AN participation in NEA conferences, seminars, and preconvention minority activities.

Support the appointment of AI/AN members and leaders to state department of education offices.

Support AI/AN candidates for political office.

Question all political candidates about their concern for AI/AN issues.

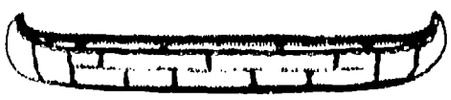
Appoint AI/AN members to association committees.

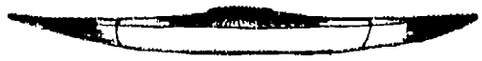
Hire AI/AN staff.

Make AI/AN education a state legislative priority.

Work with the state office of education and AI/AN organizations in defining AI/AN concerns and solving the programs identified.

Share information with national AI/AN organizations and with tribal leaders.





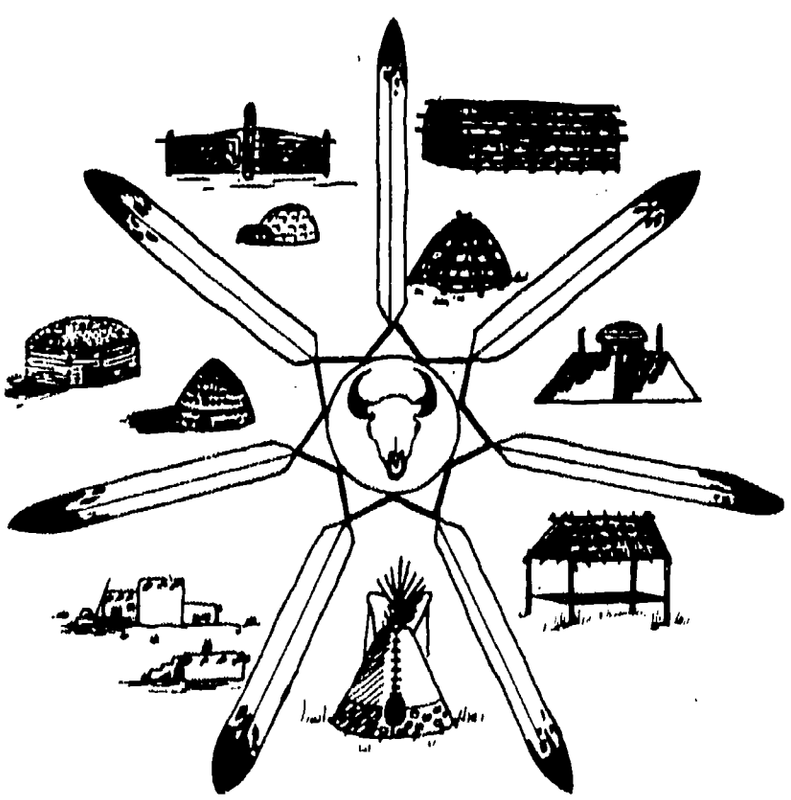
Every NEA affiliate in a state having AI/AN populations is urged to reach out to American Indian/Alaska Native educators — to understand them, to help them learn about the system and its operation, and to make it worth their while to become involved in association programs and leadership.

For further information, contact:

Human and Civil Rights
National Education Association
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

John Cox, Director
(202) 822-7703

Ron Houston, Human and Civil Rights Specialist (202) 822-7710



NEA Resolutions and New Business Items

The NEA Indian Education program is predicated upon the concepts and principles enunciated in the following resolutions and new business items:

Resolutions

B-5. American Indian/Alaska Native Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complexity and diversity of needs of the American Indian/Alaska Native children require the direct involvement of their parents, American Indian/Alaska Native teachers, tribal leaders, and other American Indian/Alaska Native groups in developing adequate and equal educational programs which preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association insists that federal funding for American Indian/Alaska Native education be expanded to effect necessary improvements. The Association supports the movement toward self-determination by American Indians/Alaska Natives and insists that such programs be voluntary. The Association opposes termination of federal support for American Indians/Alaska Natives either as a direct or indirect result of efforts to extend their self-determination.

The Association supports programs that provide for—

a. Legislation that assures the involvement and control of the education of American Indians/Alaska Natives by their parents, communities, and educators
b. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in teacher training programs dealing with cultural pluralism and the teaching of American Indian/Alaska Native values, heritage, culture, and language
c. Assistance to local and state associations in meeting the educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students
d. Substantial participation by American Indians/Alaska Natives in NEA conferences and leadership training programs
e. Coordination with existing American Indian/Alaska Native organizations and concerned agencies and aid in the dissemination of information and programs that include values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the American Indian/Alaska Native people
f. Higher education opportunities for all American Indian/Alaska Native students through direct governmental assistance in graduate and undergraduate programs
g. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in developing multicultural learning centers at higher education institutions
h. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C. (76, 80)

E-22. Education in the Bureau of Indian Affairs

The National Education Association supports the efforts of the National Council of Bureau of Indian Affairs Educators to achieve quality education for Indian children. The Association urges and will support a change in BIA policies to provide BIA teachers the rights accorded other educators. (71, 75)

New Business

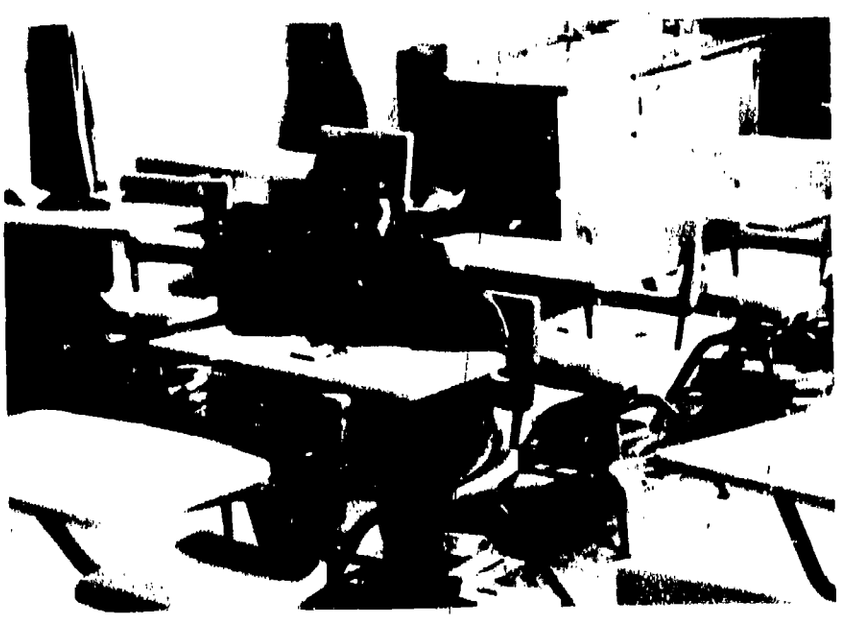
American Indian Education

The Association directs that programs be developed that provide for—

a. Involvement of Indian parents and communities with the public schools in developing programs for the improvement of the education of Indian children
b. Indian control of schools attended solely by Indian children and participation in the governance of schools attended by Indian students
c. Ethnic studies in colleges of teacher education
d. In-service education dealing with cultural pluralism and the teaching of American Indian heritage and culture
e. Assistance to local and state associations in meeting the educational needs of Indian students.
f. Substantial participation by Indians in NEA conferences and leadership training programs
g. Coordination with existing Indian organizations and concerned agencies, and aid in the dissemination of information and programs relating to the cultural background and history of the American people
h. Promotion of teaching as a career among Indian youth
i. Higher education opportunities for all Indian students
j. The direct American Indian involvement in lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C.

Funding of Indian Education Programs

The NEA shall actively pursue consistent annual funding of Title IV Indian education programs no later than July 1 each year. (1980-42)



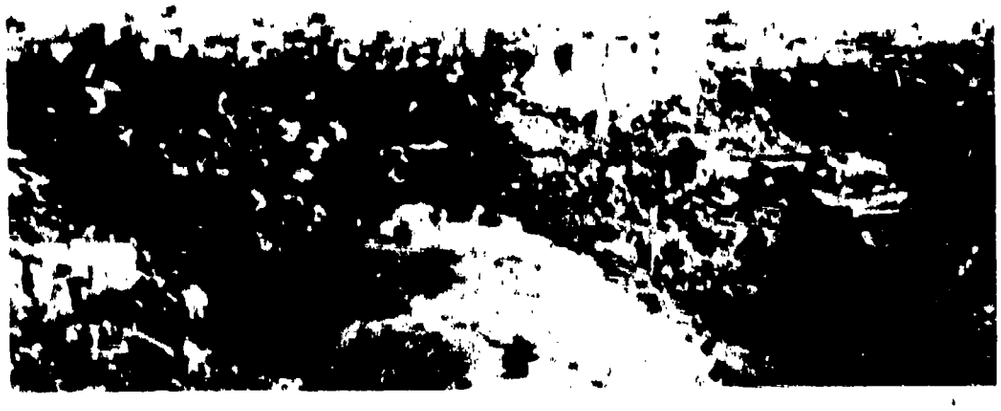
American Indian/Alaska Native Recommendations (1976)

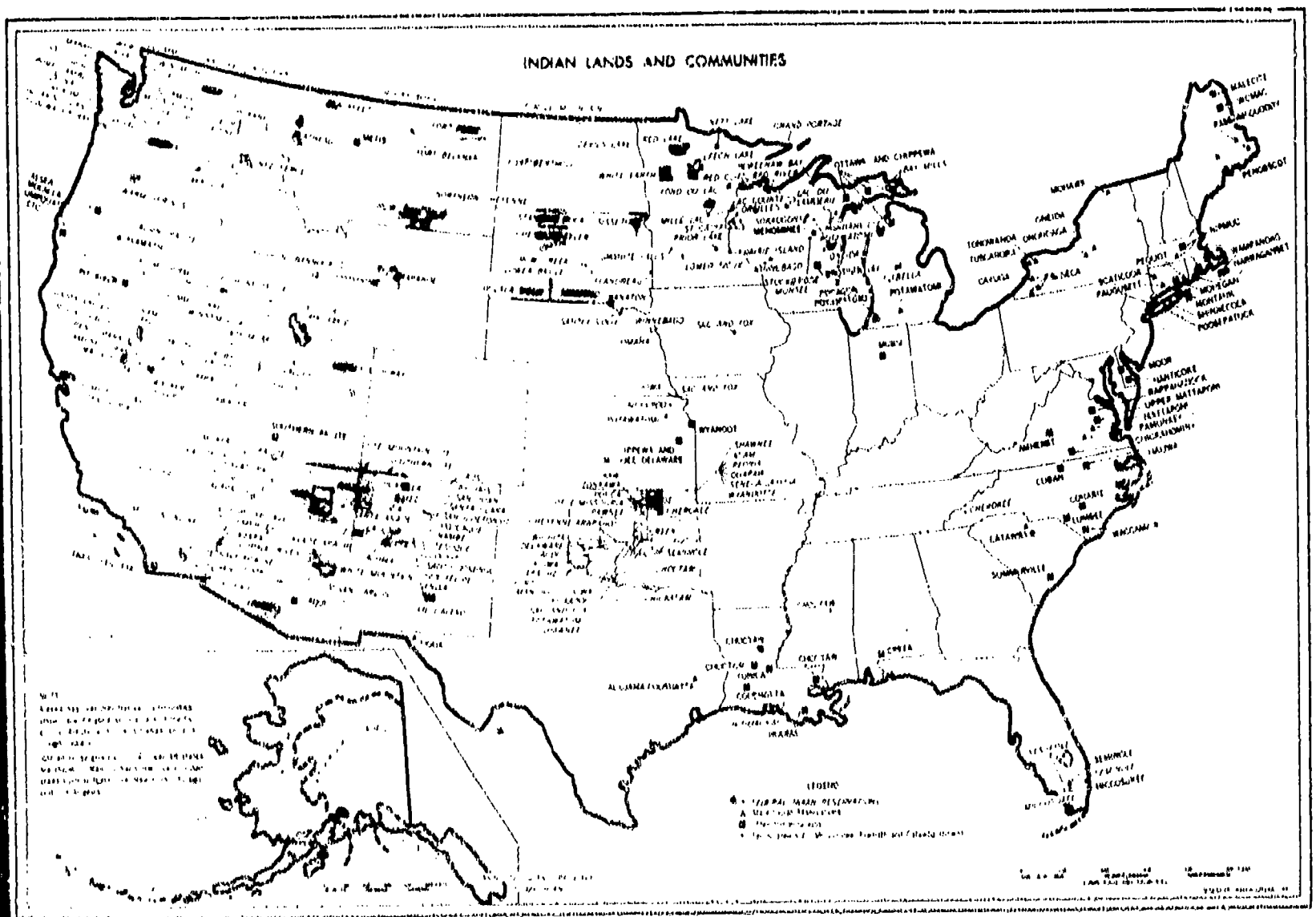
- Adopted by the NEA Executive Committee
- Presented to the American Indian Policy Review Commission

1. That legislation involving American Indian education provide for grass-roots input from groups that are representative of reservation, urban, and rural Indians. And further, that this input come from the total Indian World and not from a select few who are called on over and over. This input must come from groups who represent traditional views and those who are familiar with current educational practices. Both parents and educators should make significant input.
2. That the current legislation related to Indian education be funded at a level that will allow all worthwhile programs to be put into effect and that an adequate level of funding be maintained until legislation that is more reflective of the needs of the Indian World is enacted. Adequate funding should be made available for newly developed programs.
3. That the definition of terminology be so defined that it reflects the needs of the Indian World and that it not lessen the impact of educational opportunity for Indian children. i.e., Indian community, parents of Indian children.
4. There should be established a means of allowing Indian controlled schools to be designated as local education agencies.
5. There must be adequate funding for bilingual/bicultural programs as well as other tribal educational systems over a period to allow for complete planning. This funding should extend to include higher education programs.
6. Certification processes should be researched and evaluated to determine which are helpful and which are harmful.
7. It is vital to Indian youth that their education be intimately related to their cultural heritage. Therefore, there should be some standard established for the employment of Indian "wise men" who possess the knowledge and experience in this cultural heritage. Such persons should receive pay equal to that of other teachers. Their employment should be a requirement in federally funded Indian education programs.
8. Develop model programs that will help non-Indian teachers become aware of the unique needs and abilities of Indian children. In addition, there must be some means established to encourage the teachers of Indian children to avail themselves of this awareness.
9. Indian children must be allowed to participate in Indian religious holidays that do not coincide with school holidays without being penalized for absence.
10. Establish summer programs to provide Indian teachers who are expert in their fields an opportunity to teach courses to other teachers, both Indian and non-Indian, so that there can be in-

creased awareness of Indian uniqueness as well as the improvement of teaching.

11. Establish a means of identifying Indian workers who are effecting changes in Indian education, then providing funds for them to meet in order to coordinate their efforts.
12. Provisions should be made for the interaction of various groups from the Indian World so that they can learn about the differences and similarities of problems faced. This would afford them an opportunity to seek solutions cooperatively.
13. Regional conferences should be established where Indian people can become aware of grievance procedures to follow when government programs do not meet the needs of local people. Funds should be provided for the investigation of charges made by local people with the assurance that appropriate penalties will be assessed when charges are verified.
14. Some adequate system should be established to monitor and communicate the report of the Indian Policy Review Commission to the Indian World, and to continue and extend this system to include all legislation related to Indian education. This system should include periodic reports from the Office of Education and also from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.




INDIAN LANDS AND COMMUNITIES

American Indian/Alaska Native-United States History: A Chronology*

Beginning		
	Self-determination	
1492		
	Colonial Period	Indians assist European colonists. Colonists exploit Indians through the extraction of resources and local products, forced labor, and importation of European life. Colonists use the treaties to acquire land and regulate transactions. Some treaties stipulate the employment of people to teach Indians. The Society of Jesus establishes a school in Cuba for the Indians of Florida (1568). Moore's Charity School (later Dartmouth College) is established as a training school for Indian and English youth (1617). William and Mary College opens a special house for Indian students (1723).
1776		
	Early U.S.-Indian Relations	The first treaty between the U.S. and an Indian nation is signed with the Delawares (1778). Indians are needed as allies in wars with Europe. The U.S. Constitution gives Congress "the power to regulate commerce . . . with the Indian Tribes" and excludes "Indians not taxed" from the process of apportioning representatives (1789). Indian land is exchanged for services from the U.S. government. A federal responsibility for Indian education is established. Congress authorizes funds "to promote civilization among the savages" (1802).

*Adapted from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *"Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival,"* Washington, D. C.: The Commission, June 1981; S. Lyman Tyler, *"A History of Indian Policy,"* Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1973; Kurt Blue Dog, *"A Legal Position Paper on Indian Education"* Native American Rights Fund, Boulder, Colorado, 1979; and Thompson, Thomas, editor: *"The Schooling of Native America."* Washington, D. C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and U. S. Office of Education, Teacher Corps., 1978.

		The Cherokees and Choctaws develop their own school systems (1802).
		The Bureau of Indian Trade is established (1806) and abolished (1822).
		Christianizing missions spread west of the Mississippi in a massive movement—aided by Congressional funding of a Civilization Fund (1819).
		The Bureau of Indian Affairs is created in the War Department (1824).
1830		
		Tribes living in the southeastern U.S. are coerced into moving west of the Mississippi River.
		The assimilationist movement begins.
	Removal Era	The Bureau of Indian Affairs is transferred to the Department of the Interior (1849).
		The number of federal Indian schools reaches 37.
1850		
		The Court of Claims is established (1855); broken treaty claims are excluded.
		The first boarding school is established on the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington (1860).
		The U.S. purchases Alaska from Russia (1867).
		Lands are set aside for occupancy by individual tribes and groups of tribes.
		White settlers expand into the West.
	Reservations and Wars	Treaties are negotiated which secure land for settlers and establish reservations and limited assistance programs for Indians.
		The Transcontinental Railroad is completed (1869).
		Congress authorizes funds to operate federal industrial schools for Indians (1870).
		The treaty making period ends (1871).
		Seventeen Indian students enroll in Hampton Normal and Industrial Institute in Hampton, Va. (1878). Indians attend the school until 1923.
		Carlisle Indian School is established in an abandoned Army barracks in Carlisle, Pa. (1879).

1880

The boarding school movement grows. The number of federal Indian schools reaches 106.

Abandoned military posts are used for educating Indians.

Haskell Indian School is established in Lawrence, Kansas (1882).

The Moravian mission school is established in Bethel, Alaska (1885).

The Lumbees establish their own school system in North Carolina and found Old Main Indian College in Pembroke, N.C. (1887).

The Allotment system is established under the General Allotment (Dawes) Act to allot reservation land to Indian families and individuals and to allow lands not allotted to be sold to the U.S. and opened for homesteading (1887).

Assimilation and Allotment

Rations are withheld from Indian parents who refuse to keep their children in school (1892).

Federal teachers and physicians are placed under the U. S. Civil Service (1892).

Parental consent is required for removing children to out-of-state boarding schools (1894).

BIA police forces and courts are placed on reservations.

The traditional Indian means of support and economic dependence on BIA grows.

Congress abolishes the Oklahoma Cherokee school system (1906).

A uniform course of study is introduced into all federal Indian schools (1916).

Federal educational services are limited to children of one-fourth or more Indian blood (1918).

Indian students in public schools, for the first time, outnumber those in federal schools (1920).

		The Snyder Act authorizes the Bureau of Indian Affairs to establish and fund educational programs that benefit Indians (1921).
		Congress grants citizenship to Indians (1924).
		The Meriam Report is issued by the Brookings Institution criticizing federal Indian policies (1928).
		Indian lawyers and activists move to protect reservations.
1930		
		The Indian Reorganization Act ends the allotment system, establishes an employment preference for Indians in BIA, and provides a mechanism for chartering and reorganizing tribal governments—reversing the trend of breaking up tribes (1934).
	Indian Reorganization Act	The Johnson-O'Malley Act authorizes contracts with states, territories, political subdivisions, and nonprofit agencies for the education, medical attention, agricultural assistance, and social welfare of Indians. It eases the impact of tax-free Indian lands on a state's ability to provide services (1934).
		The National Congress of American Indians is organized (1944).
1945		
		Pressure builds in Congress to transfer trust land to non-Indian ownership and to terminate tribes from federal protection, especially those having valuable resources.
	Termination Period	Two and one-half million acres are removed from protected status, and 12,000 Indians lose tribal affiliations and political relationships with the U.S. Statutes are enacted terminating over 100 tribes, including the Klamaths and Menominees (1954-1962).
		The Indian Claims Commission is created (1946).

	The BIA ends its operation of all Indian schools in Idaho, Michigan, Washington, and Wisconsin. California and Oregon assume full responsibility for Indian education. The boarding school system is expanded (1953).
Termination Period	Indian leaders begin to participate in curriculum revision in federal Indian schools (1955).
	Congress expands vocational education programs for Indian adults living on or near reservations (1956).
	Indians are included in PL 81-874 (Federally Impacted Areas Act of 1950) and PL 81-815 (School Facilities Construction Act of 1950) in 1958.
	United Scholarship Services is founded in Denver, Colorado, to help Indian undergraduates (1960).
	The Rocky Boys School is opened on a Montana reservation under an Indian Board of Education (1960).
	The Institute on American Indian Arts is founded in Santa Fe, New Mexico (1962).
	The American Indian Historical Society is founded in San Francisco, California, to correct the treatment of Indians in textbooks and to publish materials about Indian history (1964).
1965	
	The termination policy is rejected.
	Great Society programs are begun. The Economic Opportunity Act (1964) authorizes Head Start, Upward Bound, Job Corps, Vista, and the Indian Community Action Program. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides aid for disadvantaged youth (1965).
Self-Determination	There is increased tribal participation in local government.
	Indian Teacher Corps projects are begun in Niobrara, Macy, and Winnebago, Nebraska (1966).

The Rough Rock Demonstration School opens in Chinle, Arizona, under an elected Navajo Board of Education (1966).

The BIA establishes the National Indian Education Advisory Committee (1967).

All-Indian Teacher Corps projects are begun in Alaska, Arizona, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming (1968).

Navajo Community College is founded in Tsaile, Arizona (1968).

President Johnson directs the BIA to establish advisory school boards at all federal Indian schools (1968).

The Report of the Kennedy Subcommittee, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge,* recommends increased Indian control of education, the creation of an exemplary federal school system, and the establishment of a National Indian Board of Education (1969).

Self-Determination

The Alaska National Claims Settlement Act provides Alaska Natives title to surface lands and subsurface resources for 40 million acres and authorizes 12 Regional Corporations. Alaska Natives start to manage their own affairs and negotiate with the government and agencies for better services, including education (1971).

The National Tribal Chairman's Association is formed (1971).

The BIA implements Project TRIBE to yield considerable school control to Indian tribes and communities.

The National Indian Education Association is founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota (1970).

The Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards is formed in Boulder, Colorado (1971).

The Indian Education Act (Title IV of the Education Amendments of 1972) is enacted to meet the special needs of Indian students in public schools having ten or more Indian students; to establish a National Advisory Council on Indian Education, to train teachers of Indian children; to give priority funding to Indian tribes and organizations in the use of discretionary program money; and to begin work with Indian community colleges (1972; reauthorization in 1984).

Several higher education institutions are established: Lakota Higher Education Center for the Oglala Sioux (Pine Ridge, S.D.); Sinte Gleska College Center for the Rosebud Sioux (Rosebud, S. D.); Hehaka Sapa College at D-Q University in Davis, Ca.; Turtle Mountain Community College for the Montana Chippewa (Belcourt, N. D.); Standing Rock Community College for the Standing Rock Sioux (Fort Yates, N.D.); American Indian Satellite Community College for the Omaha, Winnebago, and Santee, Nebr.; Fort Berthold Community College Center for the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arickara (New Town, N. D.); and Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College for the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux (Sisseton, S. D.).

Self-Determination

Tribally authorized histories are published, including those of the Southern Utes, Navajos, Nez Perce, and Zuni (1973).

The Indian Self-Determination and Assistance Act promotes "maximum Indian participation in the government and education of the Indian people" (1975).

The Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act provides grants for the operation and improvement of such colleges (1978).

The education Amendments Act provides for standards for the basic education of Indian children in BIA schools (1978).