



**CANKDESKA CIKANA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
Spirit Lake Tribe

Steven L. Smith, Ed.D
President

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Senate Appropriations
Education and Environment Division
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505

RE: Support for an increase in non-beneficiary funding in SB 2003

Introduction:

Good afternoon, Chair Sorvaag and members of the Appropriations Education and Environment Committee. My name is Steven L. Smith, and I am President of Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC), a proud member of the North Dakota Tribal College System (NDTCS). Thank you for the invitation to address the committee regarding the vital role our institution plays in supporting Native American students and communities across North Dakota, more specifically the Devils Lake Basin Communities. Non-beneficiary funding is crucial to the high-quality educational opportunities CCCC provides to all students, including our neighbors in local communities outside our reservation boundaries. I strongly support and urge you to strongly support increasing non-beneficiary funding for Tribal Colleges, so that we may continue the great work ahead.

Institution Overview:

At CCCC, our stated mission is “CCCC provides opportunities that lead to student independence and self-sufficiency through academic achievement and continuation of the Spirit Lake Dakota language and culture.” CCCC is an accredited, public, and Land Grant institution that provides associate degrees, certificates, and continuing education opportunities. The College focuses on a strong and viable two-year program with transfer partnerships with the State’s other tribal colleges and state higher education institutions. Our institution offers a variety of programs tailored to meet the unique needs of our students, ranging from vocational training and certificate programs to associate degrees in key fields such as education, business, and environmental sciences.

Impact on Students and Communities:

Our college has a vibrant set of programs that have an ongoing impact on the local community – our CDL Program has produced many qualified drivers for a variety of local driving careers including, bus, semi-truck, and construction. CCCC’s Early Childhood Education Program educates and trains students for that vital community function. Many students remain and work at Cankdeska Cikana Community College Head Start and the local community. The Social Work Program has produced many professionals through our 2+2 collaboration with the University of

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CCCC is an EO/AA college.

North Dakota. Perhaps one of the greatest local impacts was a project initiated by a social work student who organized food truck deliveries that distributed tons of food locally to those in need. Beyond that, there is a need locally for professionals who can deal with the unique issues that arise in tribal communities. The college's emphasis on promoting and preserving Dakota culture ensures that culturally sensitive graduates can best serve the tribal community, including beneficiary and non-beneficiary students.

Funding and Support Needs:

The financial support provided by the state is essential for our continued success. Currently, state appropriation funding helps fund CCCC's Student Services Department. Student Services employs 5 positions: Dean of Students, Registrar, Admissions Officer, Outreach Coordinator, and Financial Aid Director. Under this department's prevue is also the Bookstore, Student Billing, and oversight of the Wellness Center. The Bookstore and Student billing functions as "other duties" to keep costs down. With an increase in appropriations, CCCC would be able to fully staff the Student Services Department.

Challenges and Solutions:

As an open enrollment institution, CCCC accepts all students for admission. Challenges inherent in community college operations are compounded by the fact that CCCC's funding consists mainly of federal funding and grants. Limited funding contributes to challenges around infrastructure, technology, facilities, and attracting and retaining quality faculty. However, with increased state support, we can implement solutions that ensure our students are well-prepared for the workforce and leadership roles within their communities.

Closing Statement:

In closing, I would like to thank you for providing me with this opportunity to address you on behalf of the North Dakota Tribal College System, and speak to the specific needs of my institution, and how increased non-beneficiary funding is essential to our mission of providing students with opportunities that lead to independence, self-sufficiency, and continuation of the spirit like culture and language. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our funding request and your ongoing support.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



Steven L. Smith, Ed.D,
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