

TRIBAL AND STATE RELATIONS COMMITTEE**September 26, 2011****Robert V. Marthaller, Assistant Superintendent****701-328-2267****Department of Public Instruction**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee and Members of the North Dakota Tribal Governments' Task Force.

My name is Bob Marthaller and I am an Assistant Superintendent with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to provide information concerning Indian education issues.

Many of the concerns regarding North Dakota Indian students have been well documented and reported and so I do not intend this report to include all the available data. We know that we have about 11,000 Indian students attending schools in North Dakota and certainly, many do very well and successfully reach high levels of proficiency.

We also know that many struggle to learn career and college-ready skills. For example, in 2009-10, the graduation rate for Indian students was about 55% as compared to 89% for all white students and 85% for all combined subgroups. Percentages of Indian students scoring at high proficiency levels in Math, Science and Reading also lag behind other subgroups. (North Dakota State Profile, 2009-

2010). In general we all understand there is a problem; what we don't have is a solution.

Some of you may be aware, that a planned and in depth study of Indian education issues, along with a request for funding, was one of the initiatives the Department, with support from the North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council (NDIEAC), proposed during the 62nd Legislative Session (Attachment 1). As a result, HB 1049 was passed and the bill requires the Department to conduct a study and, then to develop criteria for grants to low-performing schools.

Specifically the bill requires an examination of:

- the extent to which governance and collaborative models have on improving student achievement;
- whether success models are available and what makes these models effective; and
- whether federal, state and local barriers exist that prevent schools and students from performing at high rates of achievement.

In order to meet the requirements of the study, the Department is working collaboratively with the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) to develop a framework relative to Indian student achievement that will increase state capacity to develop solutions to address the needs of Indian students and the needs of schools at which they attend. This framework will be based on research and evidence-based

best practices. It is the Department's goal that the study will provide increased capacity to address improvement needs of schools serving Indian student populations. The Department will also work in partnership with the NDIEAC in the conduct of this study.

In addition to the study, the Department will continue to work with the NDIEAC on other issues impacting Indian students in North Dakota. The NDIEAC was authorized two sessions ago with the stated purpose (Attachment 2) of advising the Department and State Superintendent on Indian education issues. The NDIEAC met many times over the past 18 months and during the last session, the NDIEAC along with the Department supported and proposed legislation to add an FTE to the Department in order to employ a Director of Indian Education whose job would be to focus on Indian issues. We were unsuccessful with that initiative but I suspect a similar plan may be developed for the next legislative session. We plan to hold our first Council meeting in the very near future.

That concludes my presentation and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Attachment 1

Planning Grant Proposal

Basic premise:

- There are approximately 10,650 American Indian students attending schools in the State of North Dakota.
- American Indian students generally rank lower by percentage of students at or above the proficient level on the National Assessment of Education Progress in Math, Reading and Science.
- Many school districts that are consistently low performing schools and do not make AYP serve large populations of American Indian students.
- It is desirable to determine 1) "What Makes a Successful School" and 2) "What Makes a Successful Student."

Indian Education issues to be researched and examined, to determine

1. Factors that define effective "parental involvement" and the extent and influence that effective parental involvement has on improving student achievement.
2. The extent to which "school structure" and "extended learning time," including extended school day, extended school year, year-round school, summer school, after school programs, student and staff support systems, have on improving student achievement.
3. The extent to which governance and "collaborative models" including agreements with Tribal Governments, Bureau of Indian Education, and States have on improving student achievement.
4. What "success models" are available and what makes these models effective?
5. The extent that poverty negatively effects student achievement.
6. What federal, state and local barriers exist that prevent schools and students from performing at high rates of student achievement?
7. The extent that lack of funding and/or clearly established funding priorities prevent or inhibit efforts toward higher proficiency levels.
8. What level of professional development is necessary and what components are missing?

Attachment 2

North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council

The North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council was established by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction to act in an advisory role to the Department in matters affecting the education of Indian students in North Dakota.

The North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council shall advocate for greater cooperation among tribal, state and federal organizations, institutions, groups and agencies for the express purpose of promoting high-quality education and equal educational opportunity for North Dakota's Indian students.

Purpose

The purpose of the North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council shall be to:

1. Advise the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the Superintendent of Public Instruction in educational matters affecting the education of Indian students;
2. Promote equal educational opportunity and improve the quality of education provided American Indian students throughout the State of North Dakota.

Goals

The Goals of North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council are:

1. Communication

Facilitate communication about Indian education among all stakeholders in North Dakota to advocate for Indian student and adult education needs.

The North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council will develop strategies of communication to allow their respective constituents to provide input on their needs and issues and the North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council members will be responsible for bringing these matters to the North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council's attention for discussion and action.

2. Success in Schools:

Develop and promote culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for Indian students and adults. Identify and disseminate research-based measurable criteria, both behavioral and academic, that indicate successful education for North Dakota's Indian children.

Promote the incorporation and use of culturally-responsive teaching strategies and materials that validate the cultural and linguistic identity of Indian students and adults.

3. Evaluation:

The Advisory Council will advise the Department in development of evaluation instructions to determine its effectiveness in meeting the needs of North Dakota's Indian students and appropriate recommendations made to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction based on this evaluation process.

4. Data Analysis

The Advisory Council will assist in the analysis of education data related the Indian students in North Dakota schools and make appropriate recommendations to the State Superintendent.

5. Leadership

Encourage and promote the active participation of Indian people, tribes and tribal organizations in the education process.

Support pre-service and in-service for teachers and administrators in order to promote greater understanding of culturally and linguistically pedagogical needs of Indian learners.

Encourage and promote participation of Indian educational leadership in decision-making.

6. Budget and Legislative Review and Monitoring

Advise the Department on budgetary matters that affect the Indian Ed Program and promote North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council's goals and purposes.

North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council members are charged with the responsibility to monitor and advocate legislation which potentially affects its constituency and keep its constituents apprised of issues and concerns to make appropriate recommendations.