



2020 Virtual Annual Convention

RESOLUTION #2020 – 44

“URGE A TRANSFORMATIVE PLAN OF ACTION TO ADDRESS THE PREK – 20 EDUCATION CRISIS CONFRONTING NATIVE STUDENTS”

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, including state and local resources, have a fiduciary responsibility to American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) PreK – 20 Native students in the provisions of their education, health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Trust Doctrine includes education as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 450a, *“Congress declares that a major national goal of the United States is to provide the quantity and quality of educational services and opportunities which will permit Indian children to compete and excel in the life areas of their choice.....; and*

WHEREAS, tribes, families and communities share responsibility for protecting the youth, teaching and guiding these next generations, providing services to families, and creating supportive environments where children can live and flourish; and

WHEREAS, the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has highlighted persistent education gaps and schools have been forced to create solutions that retrofit traditional curricula and lessons into a virtual format without sufficient fiscal resources, proper professional development, training, or tools for educators, students and families in the long-term; and

WHEREAS, in 2018-2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Washington Report Card reported that AI/AN students experienced the greatest push-out/drop-out rate at 24% with a state rate of 9%; the lowest proficiency in English Language Arts at 31% with a state rate of 60%; the lowest proficiency rate in Mathematics at 22% with a state rate of 49%; and the second lowest proficiency rate in Science at 24% with a state rate of 47%; and.

WHEREAS, technology and the internet have transformed the way students can learn with access to high-quality distance and virtual education options, which has the potential to support student growth, build culture-based options, connect Native language learners with fluent teachers and speakers, and expand educational environments where Native students can participate and thrive in education pathways to achieve their full potential; and

WHEREAS, the First Children’s 1st initiative was approved by the National Congress of American Indians, National Indian Education Association, National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Indian Health Board and the National Council on Urban Indian Health have collaborated to establish the First Children’s 1st initiative which creates a policy agenda to improve the social, emotional, mental, physical and economic health of Native students; and

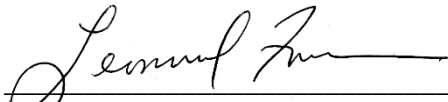
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI urges the federal, state, local and tribal governments to assess the PreK – 20 education needs and opportunities for Native students, with the majority attending public education institutions and the remainder in Bureau of Indian Education funded education institutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ATNI urges the federal, state, local and tribal governments to promote the vision of the First Children’s 1st initiative to improve children’s lives and outcomes for supportive environments, safe communities, healthy lifestyles and successful students to enhance vibrant, healthy communities; and


BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that ATNI urges the federal, state, local, tribes and multi-sector partners to collaborate in the transformation of tribal/community-centered approaches and principles in developing a collaborative PreK – 20 Plan of Action to address the education crisis.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2020 Virtual Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Portland, Oregon, on October 5 – 8, 2020, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary