



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NIEA Resolution 2017- #6

TITLE: IN SUPPORT OF TRIBAL SCHOOL CHOICE

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, tribal governments have a solemn responsibility for the welfare of their citizens, which includes their children and students; and

WHEREAS, tribes, Native communities, and parents have the inherent right to determine an educational system that will best meet the needs of their children; and

WHEREAS, providing a cultural based, high-quality education is the most critical investment tribal nations can make for our future; and

WHEREAS, Native students have few options for culturally relevant education based on the current educational reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, schools in Native communities face an ongoing shortage of qualified and culturally knowledgeable teachers due to a rural location, lack of housing, low salaries, lack of professional development opportunities, and poor working conditions; and

WHEREAS, despite these barriers, tribal governments and Native communities are innovating to create Native education programs that fulfill the unique needs of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations, states, and localities have begun to implement policies that strengthen tribal sovereignty and self-determination over their education, such as the 2015 Oklahoma Charter Schools Act, which

expanded the definition of charter school authorizers to allow tribes to open and manage their own unique schools through the charter school system; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations and Native communities in states such as Florida, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Michigan, and Hawaii have innovated to create exceptional schools that integrate Native languages, culture, and history into the classroom; and

WHEREAS, since its founding, NIEA has supported tribal sovereignty and self-determination in the education of their children, as reflected in NIEA Resolution #1990-05: *Federal Policy and Legislation that Supports Direct Tribal Government Control of State Public School Systems on Indian Reservations and in Other Indian Country, and Provides Direct Federal Funding of Such Tribal Government Control* and NIEA Resolution #1993-01: *Tribal Control in the Education of Tribal Children*.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association shall support tribal choice in the education of Native students in the era of school choice under the new Administration.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NIEA until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 7, 2017 at which a quorum of the membership was present.



Yatibaey Evans
President