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### NIEA RESOLUTION 08-03

**TITLE: INCREASE ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FUNDS FOR THE ESTHER MARTINEZ ACT**

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 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 Natives 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 established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, in Native communities across the country, Native languages are in rapid decline and it is estimated that only twenty indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, the key to stemming the loss of Native American languages is by significantly increasing support for Native American language immersion programs and programs designed to build towards language immersion. It is well proven that language immersion programs are one of the few effective ways to create fluent speakers in Native languages; and

**WHEREAS**, data shows that Native students who go through an immersion program perform substantially better academically than Native students who have not gone through such a program; and

**WHEREAS**, enacted in 1990, the Native American Languages Act (NALA) reversed the federal government's previous policy of eliminating Native American languages and instead, established a federal policy to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedoms of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1992, the Congress amended the Native American Programs Act to create a Native American languages grant program within the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 14, 2006, President Bush signed the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 into law (Public Law 109-394, H.R. 4766). The bill is named in honor of Ms. Esther Martinez, the great Tewa story teller of Ohkay Owingeh, and amends the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to allow the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services, to award grants to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs, including language nests, language survival schools, and language restoration programs.

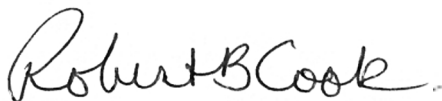
**WHEREAS**, the only federal agency that provides grants for Native American language immersion programs is ANA and funding through ANA has typically been less than \$400,000.00 a year to support language immersion programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed budget for ANA is \$46 million and the allocation for language grants under the Esther Martinez Act is \$2 million for FY 2009.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NIEA does hereby request an \$8 million increase to ANA over the FY 2009 proposed amount of \$46 million and that this \$8 million along with the \$2 million allocated in the President's FY 2009 budget be used for Native language immersion and restoration programs under the Esther Martinez Act.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 26, 2008 at which a quorum of the membership was present.



Robert B. Cook (2008-2009)  
President  
National Indian Education Association