



## **National Indian Education Association**

110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Suite 104

Washington, DC 20002

Ph: (202) 544-7290 / Fax: (202) 544-7293 / Email: resolutions@niea.org

### **NIEA RESOLUTION 11-014**

**TITLE:** Support for assessments conducted in Native American languages at schools or programs that teach through Native American languages.

**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 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**, past policy of prohibiting the use of Native American languages (American Indian, Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian) as the language of the school has resulted in reducing over 300 original Native American languages, spoken at initial European contact, to a present 175 languages presently used by Native peoples in the United States (with only 20 still spoken by children); and

**WHEREAS**, many of the Native American languages are predicted to become extinct by the 21st century unless current trends are reversed; and

**WHEREAS**, successful programs to reverse language loss have been through schools in which the Native American language is the medium of instruction and with strong family and community involvement; and

**WHEREAS**, Native American languages are recognized as official in some state and tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal government relies on state plans of accountability through student academic performance on a state standardized assessment in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the language of assessments must be the language of instruction; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Indian Education Association calls upon the United States Congress as it considers the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary

Education Act to include programs or schools taught through a Native American language, similar to provisions of the language of academic standards, assessment and accountability made for Puerto Rico in Title I, so that the language of assessment is in the Native American language of instruction; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the National Indian Education Association will send copies of this resolution to the President of the United States and to the members of the United States Congress.

Submitted by: David Beaulieu, *White Earth Chippewa* & Nāmaka Rawlins, *Native Hawaiian*