



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

NIEA Resolution 2019 - #1

TITLE: In Support of Tribal Nations that Pursue the Development of a State Education Agency

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 Native 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 Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Native nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources 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, Congress has authorized appropriations for Tribal Education Departments and Agencies (TEDs) through U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) since 1988 and U.S. Department of Education (ED) since 1994; and

WHEREAS, in these authorizations, Congress granted TEDs the ability to facilitate tribal control over education, coordinate education programs, develop and enforce tribal education codes, policies, and standards, and provide support services and technical assistance to schools and programs; and

WHEREAS, the current model of education management and execution has created a school system that is ineffective and lacking in success that matches the potential of our Native students; and

WHEREAS, for too long education has been dictated by bureaucrats from outside Native communities and without giving voice to our students, families, and schools most effected by the success of the education system; and

WHEREAS, the tribal nations and Native communities have taken steps address systematic failures for Native students by establishing a State Education Agency (SEA) to control, manage and operate all education programs within its nation; and

WHEREAS, the tribal nations and Native communities also have authorized and operate educational programs from pre-kindergarten to higher education, including scholarship programs, JOM programs, rehabilitation residential programs, and tribal colleges; and

WHEREAS, tribes and Native communities have been utilizing State-Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) grants since 2010 to take on the responsibilities of SEAs;

WHEREAS, NIEA supports the exercise of educational sovereignty by tribal nations and Native communities, and acknowledges the research that supports such efforts to improve educational outcomes and identity; and

WHEREAS, all tribal nations and Native communities have an inherent right to pursue the education goals and aspiration of its people and government, including the pursuit of establishing and implementing an agency with the same rights, resources, and authority of a State Education Agency without relinquishing any tribal sovereign immunity.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) supports all tribal nations and Native communities, that take steps to establish and implement an agency with the same rights, resources, and authority as a State Education Agency and its contracting of management level functions at the national and tribal district level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that establishing such an agency does not relinquish any tribal sovereign immunity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NIEA urges Congress and ED, as part of the United States Government, to fulfill the federal trust and treaty responsibility to provide full and adequate funding for such endeavors and to not seek to block the exercise of education sovereignty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if a tribe or Native community chooses to establish an agency equivalent to an SEA, NIEA urges Congress and ED to transfer all recent expansion of positions through the Bureau of Indian Education reorganization and to assure that all additional funding associated with such new positions transfers to such tribal nations; and

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 12, 2019 at which a quorum of the membership was present.



Robin Butterfield
President