

**Saint Paul Public School Indian Education Title VI Parent Committee
2017-18 Resolution to the Saint Paul Public Schools Board of Education
January 10, 2018**

With this **Resolution of Concurrent**, the Saint Paul Public Schools Indian Education Parent Committee would like to express our notice and overwhelming concerns to ensure our American Indian students are provided culturally-relevant standard and supplementary services. The mission of the Indian Education Program is to assist American Indian students in graduating with a positive cultural identity.

With this Resolution, we are calling on the Saint Paul Public School Board, School District staff including Indian Education, and our whole community to make a major commitment to doing things differently. First and foremost, we want to be sure that each and every American Indian student and family in the district experiences a welcoming, safe, supportive, and encouraging environment. We want to co-create a new approach that:

- (explicitly) recognizes and addresses our past experiences and traditions, including the U.S. government's oppression of our people and our culture through forced assimilation in boarding schools, thus many of our families have a very reasonable and definite fear and mistrust of mainstream school systems;
- understands and responds to our current needs and cultural beliefs and practices, by offering culturally relevant programming and Indigenous language tracks that are accessible to ALL American Indian students and families in the district who are interested in these opportunities;
- provides ALL of our students and their families with an engaging, well-rounded PreK-12 experience, by ensuring that our Gifted & Talented students are recognized and challenged, meeting the needs of students and families who are involved with Special Education, EBD programs, CD programs, etc., and using Indian Education funding in the most effective ways possible by focusing on assessment/evaluation and continuous quality improvement
- prepares ALL of our students for successful futures
- instills a positive cultural identity in all American Indian students for a successful future

The SPSS Indian Education Parent Committee asserts our community's priorities, for the 2017-2018 school year, through three specific requests of the District. We enter into this Resolution with a spirit of working collaboratively with the District and Indian Education to continue to advance these goals, and are looking to the District to provide your expertise to help us develop an academically rigorous and culturally enriched PreK-12 experience for our children. This Parent Committee is engaged, motivated, and committed to moving these specific items forward. Please let us know how we can work with you to accomplish these goals.

This Resolution is part of the process that is required as a part of the Minnesota American Indian Education Act of 1988 (Minnesota Statute 124D.78, subd. 2). This Resolution will be presented to the Superintendent and representatives of the Board of Education for Saint Paul Public Schools on January 10, 2018. We ask the Superintendent and Board Representative to inform the Board of Education at the next Committee of the Board meeting and provide an administrative response within 60 days. Then, the final Resolution will be submitted with the District's administrative response to the Minnesota Department of Education.

This Resolution requests that Saint Paul Public Schools work with the Parent Committee and the Office of Indian Education on the following priorities:

#1 Ensure access for American Indian students and their families at the American Indian Magnet School

With the creation of the American Indian Magnet School (AIMS) in 1991, the Saint Paul Public School Board acknowledged the unique cultural and academic needs of American Indian students in the Saint Paul Public Schools. However, due to lack of a clear policy and poor placement practices, many of our American Indian families have not had access to AIMS. This has been a continual concern, and remains included in the resolution from last year.

We simply want the district to make every effort **to ensure that American Indian students have access to the American Indian programming** at AIMS for whom it was intended.

Administrative Response:

First and foremost, the District wishes to assure the Indian Education Parent Committee that your concern for American Indian students to have access to the American Indian Magnet School has been heard. As a result of the initial work with the American Indian Parent Enrollment Subcommittee, we will honor ALL requests for American Indian Magnet from Native American families grades K-8 within the limits of our class size agreements. When enrolling a student would exceed class size agreements, a class size meeting will be held. We anticipate the ability to continue to prioritize and honor Native American families requests for the American Indian Magnet School. We invite the members of the parent committee to join with the district in designing a strategy that will address this concern and ensure continued American Indian student access to AIMS.

We are requesting two items related to placement at AIMS: first, we want SPPS to create and implement a **student placement procedure that will ensure access for American Indian students and families to AIMS** during the regular enrollment schedule. The city-wide bussing that is available for American Indian students to attend AIMS is a very attractive benefit for all families, both Native and non-Native families, and often is the deciding factor to attend AIMS. **The Parent Committee would like to know how many students are utilizing the city-wide bussing to attend AIMS, and what percentage of those students are identified as American Indian.**

Administrative Response:

Currently 16.22% of the total student body at American Indian Magnet School is identified in Campus (our internal student information data collection system) as Native American. As a city-wide program, all students residing within the city (students within walking area are excluded) receive bussing. During the 2017-18 school year two middle school students were administratively transferred into AIMS and no students were administratively transferred out. Neither of the students transferred into AIMS were identified as Native. The District looks forward to examining and acting on this data in collaboration with the parent committee, the AIMS administration and their newly established AIMS Parent Advisory Council to increase Native student representation at American Indian Magnet School.

Second, we want SPPS to create and implementation a **procedure at the Placement Office to provide information about AIMS and the American Indian Studies program for any family who has a student that is identified as American Indian. Signage and fliers about AIMS, AIS, and Indian Education could also be prominently placed in the Placement Office for families to see when they come in.** Furthermore, we want to ensure that **American Indian students be accepted anytime for enrollment at AIMS** so long as the class size remains within limits of the teachers' union contract.

Administrative Response:

The District agrees that while steps have been made to inform American Indian families of the services specifically designed for American Indian students, additional efforts must be made. Simultaneously, the District will provide information about AIMS and American Indian Studies programming for any student identified American Indian. SPPS will also provide signage and fliers about AIMS, AIS and Indian education within the Student Placement Center. We ask for the support of the Parent Committee to identify any families being denied access by bringing those families to

the attention of the District through the Indian Education Program. We will address each situation on a case-by-case basis and in a timely fashion.

We understand that not all families with American Indian students will want their students to attend AIMS or participate in AIS or Indian Education. That is fine if they decline these options *once they are aware of them*. However, we know of many instances where families from our community did not know about any of these programs. Similarly, we know of many families who have been denied access to AIMS (they were told it was full when they asked to enroll their student), when we also know that there are other students who are not American Indian at AIMS who have no interest in the cultural programming provided. Some of these other students even complain about or distract the other students from these activities. **The Parent Committee would like to know how many students have been transferred to AIMS during the school year, and what percentage of those students are identified as American Indian.**

Administrative Response:

For 2017/18, of the 14 requests from parent/guardians to transfer to AIM, eleven (79%) of the requests were for Native American students. The District looks forward to examining and acting on this data in collaboration with the parent committee, the AIMS administration and their newly established AIMS Parent Advisory Council to expand Native student representation at American Indian Magnet School.

We hope that SPPS can see how *intentionally and proactively* providing access to our students and families to the one school in the district that is specifically designed to meet their cultural and academic needs would be a strong and decisive action toward correcting the wrongs of the past in which the U.S. educational system was at the source of our people's trauma and loss of our traditions and languages.

#2 Support for a Lead Resource Teacher position with the Indian Education Program

Beginning December 2014, the Indian Education Program has been operating without the position of Lead Resource Teacher. The Lead Teacher Position was created in the late 1990s to support the Program Supervisor and the program staff. In December 2014, the then current Lead Teacher vacated that position to accept a new role as Program Supervisor, and due to budget constraints, that position was never replaced. Although the work of Indian Education Program has continued to provide quality service, the Parent Committee recognizes the additional strain placed on the Program Supervisor and program staff. The Parent Committee believes that the Lead Resource Teacher position will strengthen the Indian Education program and provide the needed support to the Program Supervisor and the program staff. **The Parent Committee requests district support to provide a Lead Resource Teacher position to the Indian Education Program.**

Administrative Response:

The District agrees to support the Indian Education program by providing a 1.0 fte lead resource teacher. The job description for this position has been developed in consultation with the Indian Education Parent Committee, and will be posted for immediate hiring. The District invites the participation of the parent committee throughout the hiring process.

#3 Increase or maintain the district provided grant matches

The Parent Committee recognizes and appreciates the support the district has shown for the Indian Education Program through the financial support of grant matches. These grant matches were originally provided in the late 1990s, and have been essential to the continued service of our American Indian students and their families. Since that time, the amount of these grant matches have remained constant.

The Parent Committee requests **an increase in the amount of each grant match, or at least maintain the same level and not decreased, to be utilized in support of the Indian Education Program in a manner best determined by the program.**

Administrative Response:

The District will increase the level of funding for each grant match to account for an inflationary amount. The additional funding is to be utilized to support the Indian Education Program and in a manner determined by the program's leadership. The District further agrees to explore providing annual inflationary increases for each grant match.

Vote: 8 votes for Concurrent – 1 vote to Abstain – 1 vote not received

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| Alicia Garcia | Title VI Chair - Parent |
| Priscilla Greenleaf | Title VI Vice Chair - Parent |
| David Cournoyer | Title VI Committee Member - Parent |
| Tonya Long | Title VI Committee Member - Parent |
| Dewie Sweetwater | Title VI Committee Member - Parent |
| Sheila Whiteface | Title VI Committee Member – Parent |
| Donna Stein | Title VI Committee Member – Grandparent |
| Robert Pilot | Title VI Committee Member – Teacher |
| Crystal Norcross | Title VI Committee Member – Community |
| Nolan Berglund | Title VI Committee Member - Student |