



TNEC
Tribal Nations Education Committee

TRIBAL NATIONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE (TNEC)

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 11, 2024 | **Time:** 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM | **Location:** Zoom | **Facilitator:** Chair Harper

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members	Tribal Nation, Community, or Area of Representation	Present	Absent
Vondalee Carr	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	X	
<i>*Leanne Hoffman</i>		X	
Tara Dupuis	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	X	
<i>*Jennifer Murray</i>		X	
Maria Burnett	Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	X	
Laurie Harper, Chair	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	X	
<i>*Dorothy Robinson</i>			X
Jesse Kodet	Lower Sioux Indian Community	X	
<i>*Jackie Probst</i>			X
Niiyo Gonzales	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe		X
<i>*Raina Killspotted</i>		X	
Billie Annette, Secretary	Minnesota Chippewa Tribe	X	
Melanie Urich, Interim	Prairie Island Indian Community	X	
Glenda Martin	Red Lake Nation		X
<i>*Annamarie Hill</i>			X
Carrissa Pickit	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community		X
<i>*Dan Morgan</i>		X	
Carrie Trutna	Upper Sioux Indian Community		X
<i>*Roberta Bjerkeset</i>			X
Dana Goodwin	White Earth Nation	X	
<i>*Trista Ayers</i>			X
VACANT	Greater Minnesota		
Beth Tepper, Vice-Chair	Twin Cities Metropolitan Area		X

*Alternate

PUBLIC ATTENDEES

Name	Area/Organization
Dr. Harstad	Office of American Indian Education, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)
Karen Baumgaertner	Global Minnesota
Brandon Alkire	Legislative Director, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC)
Graham Hartley	Student Access & Opportunity Programs, MDE
Leslie Harper	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Anita Fineday	Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)
Natalie Giese	Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan #196
Scott Parker	Department of Human Services (DHS)
Joshua Quigley	DHS
Kate Bigg	DHS
Stacia Rosas	DHS
Alyssa Dotson	DHS

MEETING

Time	Item	Owner
10:03 AM	<p>Meeting Called to Order</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p>Committee Rollcall: Quorum met.</p> <p>Approval of Agenda Motion to approve agenda. Seconded. Motion carried.</p>	Chair Harper
10:15	<p>Global Minnesota</p> <p>An overview was provided of the Global Minnesota organization and recent collaborative efforts with Native American and Indigenous groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They report keen interest from their global partners in Indigenous people, language, and culture, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indigenous Artist Exchanges ○ Indigenous Language ○ Land Stewardship Practices ○ Human Rights ○ Culturally Responsive Substance Use Treatment ○ Restorative Justice Practices • They have programs aimed at K-12 students that bring people from different nations into the classroom, with a goal of promoting international awareness and understanding. 	Karen Baumgaertner, Professional Exchanges Manager

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have professional exchange programs, and Minnesota is a top destination. • They is international interest in the Dakota language and Native language revitalization efforts. • There are Indigenous language revitalization efforts happening all over the world. • Request: They would like advisement from the committee on the best way to respectfully partner with Native people and communities in Minnesota in the most holistic fashion. <p>Committee Questions, Comments, Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general and brief discussion is had about education being a human right, colonialism and the western viewpoint in K-12 education settings, language reclamation, stewardship of land and place, and cultural responsiveness. • There is a need for culturally responsive training and programming in schools. • Restorative justice practices need to be addressed in educational settings. • It's important that there is an accurate understanding of American Indian people in Minnesota. • The committee suggested reaching out to individual Nations via the committee website to further learning, conversations, and partnerships. 	
<p>10:35 AM</p> <p>Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC)</p> <p>Brandon is in attendance in lieu of the Executive Director and/or the Communications Director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is new to his role at MIAC and provided a brief on his personal and professional history. • In reference to the previous day's meeting, the committee inquired about resolutions at MIAC related to Native languages in Minnesota, specifically Dakota and Ojibwe being formally proclaimed as the official Native languages of the state. • Kristen (Executive Assistant) offered that she had reached out to MIAC's Executive Director with questions and was connected to Brandon for follow-up. • Brandon offered that he was looking through their archived information as well as meeting with the Communications Director and would follow-up with the committee. • Q: Regarding the Education Omnibus bill, is MIAC aware of the mascot extension? A: They are aware and tracking that along with several other items in the legislature. • Brandon is developing a tracking system and means of communicating legislation and other updates to both the committee and Tribal Nations. • He is meeting with Michelle (Communications Director) to plan for these communications, which currently includes updating the MIAC website to a new communications and legislative activities sections. • Q: Are you aware of what the TNEC is? A: Yes. • Laurie provides clarification, citing that the the majority of TNEC is comprised of tribally appointed representatives and they are the consultative body for all things education related. <p>Committee Comments, Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked if MIAC was aware of the mascot extension, you indicated yes, but the committee is concerned because the committee and the Tribal Nations were not aware. 	<p>Brandon Alkire, Legislative Director</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee expressed concern about the lack of communication from MIAC to the committee and the Tribes. • The committee must be alerted of anything education related at all times, but especially during legislative session. • Some tribal lobbyists were not made aware either. • MIAC needs to do better. • Guest Response: Agreed. This feedback is both welcome and needed. He will ensure that the lines of communication are open and transparent to both the committee and the Tribal leaders. It was noted that his position was new. • Committee Comments: A general discussion was had about the history of the legislative director position at MIAC, with a committee member noting that it was not new. • Guest Action: Share the list of legislation and policies currently being tracked by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council with TNEC members. Send to the committee gmail. 	
<p>10:52 AM Office of American Indian Education (OAIE)</p> <p>MIEA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The office is preparing for MIEA and is hoping to provide more targeted and in-depth information to attendees than in the past. • They have created 200 binders for distribution, which contain information on American Indian education programs, statutes, guidance, etc. <p>The READ Act and District 196, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner Jett received a letter from Superintendent Krieger regarding the READ Act and two curricular resources that were approved for use by MDE. • Districts can choose one of these two resources and they will be reimbursed, but if they choose a different resource other than those two they will NOT be reimbursed. • Neither resource had good, culturally responsive reading. • Neither had American Indian authored books. • A teacher from the school district notified the committee and reached out to the OAIE, sharing a PowerPoint as well as a new article on the topic. • This teacher has concerns about the literature options and referenced the use of Peter Pan. • The OAIE was not part of the process that led to the reading choices, nor were they included in any conversations. • This process was overseen by Bobbie Burnham and others from MDE as well as CARIE, which is the educational research team at the UMD. • Q: In reference to information found on the MDE website related to using resources that are not on the recommendations list, why are the reimbursable curricular options not required to do the same thing as those that are NOT reimbursable? A: Unknow, but it's a good question. If the OAIE had more information on the READ Act they could provide clarity, but they do not. • A general discussion was had about how to proceed with the information provided by the teacher, the lack of information about the READ Act from MDE prior to implementation, and how resources were vetted and selected. • Bobbie Burnham is offered up as the best resource for the committee's questions and concerns. • Concern is expressed by some committee members about placing districts in an unfair and unequitable situation when they are forced to select a resource that is bad that they can be reimbursed for, or a resource that is good that is not eligible for reimbursement. 	<p>Dr. Harstad, Director</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee expresses wanting more information about the implementation side of the work. • Guest Action: Request a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Burnham and TNEC. • Q: Are charter schools eligible for READ Act curriculum reimbursement? A: Dr. Harstad will find out and report back. <p>Native Language Revitalization Grant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE is looking for people to read and review the applications and she extended an offer to the full committee to participate in that process. • An evaluation tool will be provided to reviewers and there is funding available to compensate those who participate. <p>Guest Action: She will send an invitation to participate.</p> <p>Report to the Governor's Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Harstad was asked to write a report on the division activities for the last five years. • The report was submitted to MDE communications. • She received a copy of the report and found that the information was changed. She went on to offer that she was told that the report was not supposed to be on the OAIE activities, but on what the legislature has done to further American Indian education in the last five years. • Guest Action: Share the report if it's public. 	
<p>11:30 AM</p> <p>Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)</p> <p>The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is a new agency for children and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services that are geared towards children and families that have historically been housed throughout various state agencies are being united in this one new agency. • The agency's goal is to improve services, coordination, and equity. • Anita's role focuses on engagement with the American Indian community to ensure transparency. • The creation of this agency is a positive step towards addressing equity concerns and making services more accessible. • The agency's budget was approved in the state legislature last year and the work began last July, at the beginning of the state fiscal year. • The agency was born out of the need for the government to do a better job at responding to the needs of families, and the aim is to align outcomes and policy that will take the priorities and funding needs of children and families and use that to improve front door services. • There's a huge focus on family needs and creating family-centered governments. • A brief on the history that led to this agency's creation was provided, including the creation of the Children's Cabinet. • The speaker noted that there have been several *unnamed* groups throughout the years that have advocated for this type of state-level change. • Several programs will be moving to the DCYF, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early childhood ○ Childcare ○ Child safety and permanency ○ Economic support programs, such as food assistance ○ Childcare licensing and centers ○ Foster homes/families 	<p>Anita Fineday, Engagement Specialist</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bulk of the programs will transfer from their current agencies into the new DCYF in July of this year, followed by January 1 of 2025, and the final transfer of programs will be in July of 2025. • The speaker shared groups outside of TNEC that she engages with including St. Paul Indian’s in Action and tribal communities. • The bulk of the employees, around 1000, will be moving from the Department of Human Services to DCYF. • The DCYF, as it currently exists, had to submit a report to the state legislature on March 1 that summarizes their work. • Guest Action: Send the committee a copy of the DCYF implementation report submitted to the legislature on March 1. Submit to the committee email account. • A commissioner has not yet been appointed by the Governor, and agency positions continue to be posted and filled. • Guest Action: Share openings with the committee as available. 	
<p>1:00 PM</p> <p>Department of Human Services (DHS)</p> <p>DHS staff has started writing their 2025-27 plan for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) through the federal Office of Child Care.</p> <p>Child Care and Development Block Grant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They must write and submit this plan every three years. • The plan they are currently writing will begin on October 1, 2024 (FY25). • The plan covers funding and federal law for children receiving child care assistance as well as background studies. • Tribes submit these same plans, but their timeline is offset by one from the state’s timeline. • States are required to set aside 9% of the overall funds to improve child care quality, 3% to improve the quality of services for infants and toddlers, and another 1% goes towards addressing childcare quality issues. 12% total. • They are required to seek feedback from various communities and from Tribal Nations. • They have met with representatives from several Tribes and are here to formally consult with the committee. • Hosting two public hearings: April 23 from 9:00 AM – Noon and on April 25 from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM to allow for additional feedback and comments, and the live draft of their plan posted on their website. • The 12% childcare “quality set-aside” is used to protect the health and safety of children in childcare through regulation and monitoring. • Funds can be used in multiple ways, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professional development ○ Coaching and consulting services ○ Providing resources to help parents select childcare. ○ Provider training ○ Quality improvements in early learning and after-school programs. ○ Financial support of the early childhood workforce ○ Caregiver resources ○ The First Children’s Finance program supports the business side of provider work. <p><i>*refer to slide four</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have a mix of state and federal funds to support their work. • The 2023 Legislature directed DHS to use CCDF funds to start or grow child care programs through Child Care Wayfinder and to support the business side of child care programs and services. • Committee Comment: Vonda offered that she was the director of the CCDF for Bois Forte for many years and shared the ways they used funds. 	<p>Scott Parker</p> <p>Stacia Rosas</p> <p>Joshua Quigley</p> <p>Kate Bigg</p> <p>Alyssa Dotson</p>

MN Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP):

- The state version of our subsidy program for CCDF funds.
- Serves about 20,000 children throughout the state.
- 69% of children served are children of color or American Indian, with roughly 1% being American Indian.
- 63% are 5 or younger.
- In October of 2023 the maximum rates that can be paid were increased in October and updated to the 75th percentile.
- They will be updated again in January to reflect new market rate data.
- In August of 2024 they will expand the family definition so that relative custodians and foster parents can receive CCAP.
 - Both groups will need to meet income and activity requirements.
- In April 2025 the state will take over registering child care providers, which is currently done at the county or Tribal level.
- They received more funding for sliding fee child care.
- Made updates to how income is counted.
- In the beginning stages of the Great Start Scholarships program.
 - Report due in July 2026, implementation by July 2028.
- Changes to federal rule:
 - Encouraging states to establish payment rates based on cost modeling.
 - Requiring providers to be paid prior to care instead of after.
 - Paying providers directly for services using grants.
 - Payment based on child's enrollment schedule.

Committee Comments, Questions:

- Laurie expressed concern about the entrance level limits.
- **Q: How does DHS identify American Indians?**
A: Identifying is optional on the application. There is a race/ethnicity question that uses American Indian/Alaskan Native, and the information comes from that.
- **Q: What if they have more than one ethnicity or race?**
A: There isn't an option to select multiple identifiers. There is an option to select mixed race.
- **Q: How many American Indian children are currently served?**
A: The 1% data referenced earlier reflects those who identified as American Indian, but does not reflect mixed races, and there may be families that choose not to identify at all
- **Q: Do the numbers include children that are receiving CCAP at the Tribal level?**
A: It includes CCAP, but does not include children that are being served through Tribal CCDF funds that are received through the federal government.
- Laurie inquired about Red Lake: When she spoke with them about their childcare assistance program they said that they didn't do childcare.
- **Guest Response:** They have the state CCAP. They definitely administer the program.
- **Q: Have they found a contractor to do payments?**
A: I think you're asking about scholarship payments- through the department of education. There were two recent RFPs seeking a contractor to do payments. I don't think they've chosen anyone yet.

Licensing:

- The CCDF plan must include requirements for inspections, monitoring, training and standards.
- There are 12 federal requirements for standards and training, including but not limited to:
 - Infectious disease control and prevention

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SIDS and safe sleep practices ○ Response to allergic reaction ○ Safe premises ○ Emergency prep, first aid, CPR <p>*refer to slide 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The systems transformation project supports the creation of a provider portal for license maintenance. ● The modernization project is very large and is the result of standards not being updated since the 1980's. It includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tiered violation systems ○ Indicators for inspections ○ Revised licensing standards. <p>Committee Comments, Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Q: Does Wayfinder include Tribally licensed childcare centers? A: It's separate from the Tribally licensed ones. In creating the hub there has been outreach and some interest from Tribes to use to be able to use it but we don't know where they're at with building that. If you want more information on the hub we can connect you to someone who is specifically working on that project. <p>Background Studies/Checks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CCDF plan requires that the department conduct background checks for all childcare staff members. ● Reference: Studies governed by MN Statutes 245C. ● Regulations do not allow for variability in studies. ● Must be completed every 5 years. ● Requires fingerprint. ● Currently using CCDF funds to cover the costs. ● Required in-state checks include Minnesota criminal history and record repository and Minnesota predatory Offender Registry and Minnesota has no frame of reference registry. ● Applies also to those under 18 who are working in childcare facilities. <p>All feedback collected will be incorporated into the public comment period. Comment, questions, concerns to: dhs.ccdfplan@state.mn.us.</p>	
<p>1:48 PM</p> <p>Other Business</p> <p>READ Act Concerns and Conversation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Natalie Giese brought curriculum concerns surrounding the updated READ Act, specifically two resources that were vetted and selected by MDE and that are approved for reimbursement. ● She expressed deep concern over the harmful and inaccurate reflection of American Indians within the resources. ● Guest Q: Was TNEC involved in the selection of materials/curriculum or in any facet of the READ Act work? ● A: No. ● The committee voiced concern about MDE's lack of communication with both the committee and the Tribal Nations. ● The committee offered that they have requested a meeting with MDE to discuss the information she shared about the READ Act and the department's lack of consultation. ● A general conversation was had about the importance of allies and consultation, and the importance of culturally appropriate materials for students. 	<p>Open Floor</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natalie offered that she and her colleagues felt compelled to go to the district with a full presentation to voice their concerns. • A general conversation was had about the materials and the publishers of the materials in question, as well as the lack of Native voices or perspective in the curriculum selection process. • The legislature is allocating more funds for READ Act 2.0, so districts have more money to buy the curriculum, and concern is voiced due to the materials having not been updated by the publishers yet. • One curriculum is referred to as being “completely whitewashed Eurocentric”. • The committee is concerned about the fund allocation, particularly because they were told by MDE that this is a policy year and funds for initiatives like IEFA were not possible. • \$70M is being requested for READ Act 2.0 • It’s suggested that perhaps letters are written to the sponsors of the bill to express their concern. • To augment the conversation, the legislative director from MIAC offered up information about the appropriation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$23 million for teacher training stipends and to pay substitute teachers while regular teachers are training; ○ 10 million for regional literacy networks to provide teachers evidence-based training on structured literacy; ○ \$5.2 million to contract with the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement to implement the READ Act and develop volunteer training; and ○ \$3 million to reimburse districts for supporting materials ○ Rep. Heather Edelson (DFL-Edina) sponsors HF3744 that, as amended, would provide \$100 million in fiscal year 2025 for the Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act. 	
<p>2:16 PM Adjournment Motion made to adjourn. Seconded. Motion Carried.</p>	<p>Chair Harper</p>