

Nevada Indian Commission  
November 7, 2016  
Education Advisory Committee for Native American and Alaska Natives Meeting Minutes  
Western Nevada College, Carson City, Nevada

Committee Member	Seat Filled	Present	Absent
Lynn John	Owyhee Combined School		✓
Lori Pasqua	Washoe Tribe of NV & CA	✓	
Fredina Drye-Romero	NV Department of Education	✓	
Rob Borges	Douglas County School District		✓
San San Tin	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony		✓
Patrick Naranjo	University of Nevada, Las Vegas	✓	
Rita Imus	Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada		✓
Theresa Rowe	Washoe Tribe of NV & CA Head Start	✓	

NIC Staff Present: Sherry L. Rupert, Executive Director, Denise M. Becker, Administrative Assistant III, Nevada Indian Commission

Others Present: Miguel Martinez, College Recruitment Coordinator of Underrepresented Populations, Truckee Meadows Community College; Kari Emm, Transfer Recruitment Coordinator, University of Nevada, Reno; Tiffany Young, Equity and Diversity Coordinator, Washoe County School District; Jennie Bills, Equity and Diversity, Washoe County School District; Chelsey Solemsaas, Equity and Diversity Specialist, Washoe County School District; Tanya Hernandez, Education Department at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony; Della Frank, Indian Education Program, Clark County School District; Diana Croci, Student Success Advocate, Clark County School District; Sandra Mitrovich, Outreach and Retention Coordinator, Inter-Tribal Higher Education Program, University of Nevada, Reno

- I. Invocation
  - A. Sherry Rupert gave the invocation.
  
- II. Welcome and Introductions
  - A. Lori called the meeting to order at 9:43am and asked everyone to introduce themselves.
  
- III. Initial Public Comment
  - A. There were no initial public comments made at the meeting.
  
- IV. Approval of September 26, 2016 Meeting Minutes
  - A. **Theresa made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 26, 2016 and Patrick seconded. Motion carried.**
  
- V. Approval of Education Advisory Committee for American Indian and Alaska Native Appointment of Representative Forms
  - A. Sherry reported that she received an Appointment of Representative form from Warren Cartright, Social Worker for Nevada Urban Indians. Sherry is pleased that there will be representation from this organization again. **Fredina made a motion to approve the**

**Appointment of Representative form by Warren Cartright and Theresa seconded.  
Motion carried.**

- B. Sandra asked whether the Washoe County School District (WCSD) will need to have a new representative appointed since Rhonda Knight is no longer employed there. Sherry responded that the WCSD will indeed need to resubmit a form for someone to represent them on this Committee.
  - C. Kari asked whether there can be two representatives from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). She and Sandra both work at UNR, but have two completely different jobs. Sherry said she believes it is one representative per institution, but would review the Committee's by-laws and clarify this at the next meeting.
- VI. Approval of Revisions to the Education Advisory Committee for American Indian and Alaska Native By-Laws to include Provisions to Address Early Childhood Education
- A. Sherry reported that she went through each of the by-laws for the Tribal Early Childhood Advisory Committee (TECAC) and the Indian Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) that were recently combined to make one comprehensive committee. Sherry stated that while there is a draft document, meeting together as a group is essential to determining the changes that need to be made to the by-laws. Sherry requested that the item be tabled for approval until the next meeting.
- VII. Report on Participation at the 2016 National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Convention, October 5-8, 2016, Reno, NV
- A. Sherry reported that overall, she felt participation was very successful. She spoke of Cultural Night, which took place the Wednesday evening before the conference started. The NIEA representatives were surprised to see so many people attend. It was noted that there were 160 workshop presentations, 100 vendors and was the best-attended Convention in the last five years. She thanked the planning committee for their contributions to a great convention. Sherry said now that Fredina has been voted on to the NIEA Board of Directors, Nevada will have great representation nationally.
  - B. Lori shared that 70 people attended the Elders' Lounge. During one session they had a talking circle. Lori and the elders talked about college and how some of them are getting their Masters degrees at eighty years old. She asked them why they started so late in life and she found out it was because they didn't want to leave their communities. They didn't start going to school for their advanced degrees until they felt it was right for them. Lori commented that she and her colleague, Constance Barnes, gave a Washoe Tribe Higher Education presentation which was so well attended, there were people standing outside the door. Lori said thank you to the elders that toughed it out during the long hours of the Elders' Lounge – Elizabeth Hicks, Joanne Nevers, and Melba Rakow.
  - C. Sandra thanked Lori and said it was one of the best Elders' Lounges that she had been to during an NIEA convention. Sandra reported that College Showcase Day had about 75 participants, including some people from Sacramento. After being in the Convention Hall, it was great for them to be outside and gave them the opportunity to interact with other students. Many of the college vendors told Sandra they appreciated having that as an option. Sandra commented that over 50 percent of students were from rural schools and she was excited about that. Several SIT (Students in Transition) Students visited

with college representatives on the admission process, talked with different professionals, and received guidance on how to choose their direction and vision by attending a workshop taught by Constance Barnes. Sandra also said that UNR's student engagement organization, the Associated Students of the University of Nevada (ASUN) gained the opportunity to learn more about the school's Native students. Sandra thanked Sherry for the opportunity to be able to add the College Showcase Day to the NIEA conference and hopes the NIEA will continue to offer this during their future conventions. Sandra stated that New Mexico student leadership had a discussion with Sandra about how to set up a College Showcase Day at their college as a student project. Sherry asked Sandra if those New Mexico students came in for the NIEA Convention or just to attend the College Showcase only. Sandra said there was a free shuttle service taking students and college representatives from the Grand Sierra Resort to UNR and back again. Kari said that she and Miguel had only out of state students attend their workshop and was pleased to show them the UNR campus and discuss colleges in the area.

- D. Fredina reported that a lot of great fundraising was done for the NIEA Powwow that was held on Friday, October 7, 2016. She thanked the Education Department of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) as they donated two Pendleton blankets for the dance competition winners as well as donated items for the raffle. Tanya commented that it was nice to see so many local vendors show up, that not even tradeshow vendors were able to get spaces at the powwow.
- E. Kari asked when the next NIEA Convention will be held and Fredina said it will be on October 2, 2017 in Orlando, Florida. Fredina commented that the NIEA has Save-the-Date cards printed and she will request more of them so they can be distributed.
- F. Sherry commented that her husband, Ben Rupert brought in the cedar planks for the *galis dungal* and the Grand Sierra Resort complemented it by adding trees and lighting to make the display even more special. She said she often saw it being used as a photo op for attendees that night and it stayed in place during the powwow as well.
- G. Fredina said that the NIEA was really pleased with the attendance throughout the entire convention. She and Sandra want to meet with the new Convention Planning Committee (CPC) in Florida to help them get started in planning for next year. Sandra commented it's not going to be a traditional local planning committee as they will not have the volunteer base Nevada had. She said that the NIEA is inviting anyone that will be attending next year's convention to assist them with the planning. Sandra wants to coordinate the effort to make next year's convention a success. Sherry said Florida does not have an Indian Affairs office, but they do have a tribal organization that functions much like the Nevada Indian Commission and could possibly offer use of their resources to assist the NIEA in planning.
- H. Sherry said she wants to meet with Fredina about the finance portion of the Convention. She would like to view the costs associated with the cultural night as well as the powwow. It is important to know the finances as planning for the 2017 Indian Education Summit is underway.
- I. Fredina added that fundraising was challenging. Kari asked what the budget for the powwow was and Fredina said \$4,500.00. Sherry advised that the planning committee in Florida needs to be aware of how much their convention is going to cost, for example, the

catering expense was unexpectedly high. Lori remarked that they can provide ideas on how to save money too. Tanya said she volunteered with registration and attendees were irritated that the event programs weren't free. It would be better if the program was included in the registration fee instead of making people pay at the door. Fredina confirmed this topic was discussed at the NIEA board meeting. Fredina said the event was excellent and was impressed with the Elders' Lounge, Cultural Night, and thanked everyone that participated.

- J. Della Frank asked if the NIEA app worked well during the Convention and Lori responded by saying many people were from out of state and their phones weren't working. Fredina said that this was the first year the NIEA had used an app during the Convention.

## VIII. Indian Education Updates

- A. Fredina Drye-Romero, Nevada Department of Education (NDE) shared that both she and Saundra are involved with the Indian Education Advisory Board through West Ed Comprehensive Center. They have been attending meetings continuously and the last meeting was in June; met on best practices to develop tribal consultation in regard to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The ESSA is an elementary and secondary bill passed by the Senate and signed by President Obama this past December 2015. She sent out an email to the IEAC listserv and to tribal leaders which outlined the tribal consultation process through the ESSA. She informed the Committee that the changes to Indian Education involve the ESSA versus the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The NCLB had no provisions on timely and meaningful tribal consultation. Saundra went on to say that we must remember how important it is before setting plans in motion. For example, what does it look like for our state? Who are the partners that are involved? Look at liaisons in the community that can follow up with the consultation. How are we going to deliver ESSA's message? How is it meaningful to the communities? How are we going to move forward after the consultation? Lori suggested using the IEAC Strategic Plan to implement the ESSA. Fredina reported that the Indian Education Program Grant is now called Title VI whereas previously it was referred to as Title VII. If the district receives \$40,000 of Title money that goes specifically to American Indian students or there are 50 percent American Indian Students in their district, then tribal consultation must be done. Fredina sent a letter to Churchill, Clark, Elko, and Washoe County school districts to inform them of her desire to discuss consultation, Title VI requirements, and how the districts will be utilizing this funding. She reported to the Committee that she has been working on a Tribal-State Consultation Guide draft. This includes the introduction, then Chapter 1- Our Story; Chapter 2 – Supporting Native Students through ESSA; Chapter 3 – Using Successful Engagement Practices; and then a conclusion. Fredina suggests that the Committee review the IEAC Strategic Plan, some outcomes and benchmarks are needed. She said that there are still high dropout rates and low graduation rates. Sherry and Kari agree that the Committee needs to focus on redoing the strategic plan to include success rates and real benchmarks. Fredina said she is starting small and will be looking at the Washoe Tribe, in addition to smaller districts to see how many American Indian students are graduating and how many are dropping out.

## B. Tribal Education Programs

1. Lori Pasqua, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California Higher Education Program, reported that she has begun teaching College 101, FAFSA 101, and the Talking Circle. She feels that the talking circle helps give information to the parents, such as how to register their students, what to look for, how to find a liaison, and other topics of interest. Lori shared that the Talking Circle went really well last year and their concerns were mostly fears of releasing their child from home. Lori shared that vocational scholarships are ongoing and are being received from people ages 25 – 75 years old. Lori said both the Incentive Scholarship and the Higher Education Scholarships are due in January and are for tribal members only. Lori also shared that she is excited to have three students that want to sign up for early enrollment at UNR.
2. Tanya Hernandez, Education Department, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC), said Hungry Valley has 50 students they service and there are 12 students at the Reno site. She currently works at the Reno location and is looking at changing a few things on how to be more involved with parents and talk to them about sending their children to the after- school programs. Tanya mentioned the successful higher education workshop in September and that it was combined with their Meet and Greet with all RSIC students from Elementary up to High School. They also had an Infinite Campus night to help parents with the app and how to log on and check their students' grades, absences, etc. Attendance was low, but it turned out well overall. Tanya shared that graduate students can get funding of \$10,000 per semester provided by the RSIC.

## C. Early Childhood Education Programs

1. Theresa Rowe, Washoe Tribe Head Start, said her office is in charge of authorizing Head Start performance standards and they are currently revising them as well as rewriting their school readiness goals. Theresa also commented that she has been reviewing tribal childcare centers about the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) standards. The QRIS is a five star system based on certain criteria for early childcare programs including health and safety issues, staff qualifications, and other categories. The QRIS standards are not mandatory, but tribes use them as a framework to make sure they have quality programs. Sherry commented that a guide was written by members of the Tribal Early Childhood Education Committee (TECAC) so that tribal childcare centers can move toward the QRIS system and get better qualified.

## D. County School District Programs

1. Della Frank, Program Facilitator of Indian Education, Clark County School District, reported that Indian Education no longer falls under the Equity and Diversity Program. She informed the Committee that there are now two professionals working in Indian Education; herself and Diana Croci, the Student Success Advocate. Della reports that they have been getting their data current. Out of their 791 students, 491 are Johnson O'Malley (JOM) students and their records must be accurate. Della

informed the Committee that their tutoring program has 70 students and 35 teachers. Della said that when she goes to Moapa, there are 22 students being tutored by five teachers that help Della with the students. In October and March, they work with the counseling department to assist students with college readiness workshops and learn about tribal colleges. Superintendents will be going to meet with the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe. Writer and poet, Tanaya Winder has been invited to speak during professional development days for teachers and Della is hopeful she will be available to offer training to parents as well. Infinite Campus has all their events listed and is able to track which tribes are being represented.

2. Tiffany Young, Equity and Diversity Coordinator, Washoe County School District (WCSD), reported that they are in the process of hiring a new Indian Education Specialist. This position will be paid through 20 percent of the general funds and 80 percent from the Equity and Diversity program. It also covers all ACT and Advanced Placement fees. She shared information on the backpack drive they had for students and intends on meeting with Jonathan Lowry, who recently was rehired at Nevada Urban Indians (NUI), because some students did not receive backpacks. Tiffany mentioned that cultural competency training for teachers at Natchez Elementary School is provided once per month until the end of the school year. They have two student graduation advocates which provide tutoring and mentoring to Title VI students. Tiffany also mentioned that she is working with the RSIC to fund a youth conference for \$3,000. The Board of Trustees annual meeting will be held at one of the schools with a high population of Title VI students. They are working with Parent University to help parents with programs that directly support families with the Title VI grant. Tiffany also shared that Reed, Spanish Springs and North Valleys High Schools were highlighted during the Board of Trustees annual meeting.

E. Universities and Community Colleges

1. Miguel Martinez, College Recruitment Coordinator, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) reported that he is in the process of assisting native students with forming a group because they are interested in meeting together periodically. Sherry asked Miguel if there had been a native student group on campus and he said that he doesn't know of any others that had existed before. Saundra added that TMCC once had a native club on campus, but never a group that met regularly with an advisor.
2. Saundra Mitrovich, Outreach and Retention Coordinator, University of Nevada, Reno stated that Kari had to leave, but that she will send out notes to the Committee regarding her recent activities as the Transfer Recruitment Coordinator. Saundra shared that she was getting ready for Native Heritage Month and all of the events and activities that are coming up. There will be an N7 UNR Women's Basketball game with special guest Bunky Echo Hawk on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2016. Saundra also reported that the Intertribal Higher Education Program (IHEP) is doing outreach with the various community colleges, especially TMCC. With Miguel's help, they are working on recruiting TMCC students to attend UNR by inviting TMCC students to UNR events. Saundra reported that her IHEP student

leader, Avery Wyatt has requested data on all of their current students enrolled and found 158 Native students. They will reach out to them to see where they stand as far as whether they are on track to graduate. They also requested data on any student that left UNR and have not returned. This data is important so Sandra and her team can figure out what is needed to support these students into coming back and obtaining their degree.

- F. Other Indian Education Programs
  - 1. None
  
- IX. Committee Member Comments and Announcements
  - A. Sherry reminded Committee members about the American Indian Achievement Awards Banquet and Silent Auction that will be held on November 19, 2016 at the Governor's Mansion. She will be announcing the awardees either later this afternoon or tomorrow morning.
  - B. Sherry commented that the Nevada Indian Commission is partnering with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas for their Alternative Spring Break program again this May.
  - C. Sherry stated she is currently working on helping to coordinate native veterans to fly to Washington, D.C. for the first ever All Native Honor Flight Nevada. Fifty native veterans will be attending the Veterans War Memorial and visiting the National Museum of the American Indian. She also said there will be a celebration at the airport welcoming the veterans back to Reno and invited the Committee to attend.
  - D. Fredina stated that the Indian Education Summit will be March 21-22, 2017. A Pendleton blanket raffle will be ongoing until March.
  
- X. Agenda Items for Next Meeting
  - A. Approval of November 7, 2016 meeting minutes.
  - B. Approval of Appointment of Representative Forms
  - C. By-laws
  - D. Report on the American Indian Achievement Awards Banquet, November 19, 2016
  - E. All-Native Nevada Honor Flight Celebration
  - F. Update on Planning for the 2017 Indian Education Summit
  
- XI. Scheduling and Location of Next Indian Education Advisory Committee Meeting
  - A. The next meeting has not been scheduled yet.
  
- XII. Final Public Comment
  - A. None
  
- XIII. Adjournment
  - A. **Fredina made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Theresa seconded.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:30am.