



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
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CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TLINGIT & HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA
Eighty-Seventh Annual Tribal Assembly
April 20-22, 2022
Juneau, Alaska

Resolution TA 22-10

Title: Mandating Annual Culturally Safe Trainings For All State Of Alaska School Educators

By: Ketchikan Delegate Keenan Sanderson

WHEREAS, the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a federally recognized tribe with more than 34,000 citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Tlingit & Haida Youth Commission is a working body for Tlingit & Haida, with representatives from all 21 Tlingit & Haida communities, with the intent of serving as a resource and collective youth voice to tribal leaders, the Executive Council, and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Native and Indigenous students live with intergenerational and unconscious grief, due to forced relocation, land dispossession, and loss of spiritual practices, language and culture, historically, Indigenous languages were made illegal and banned within the school system, and as a result of colonialism, Indigenous people have been forced to attend boarding schools that promote a dominant language, values, knowledge, and beliefs, and those who managed to uplift Indigenous knowledge systems find themselves in a harsh reality where educational systems and the society at large are not adequately supporting them in this endeavor; and

WHEREAS, over the course of the last 30 years, research has shown that Community Protective Factors based on Cultural Continuity help to protect Indigenous youth against suicide and high-risk behaviors, and of these protective factors, the inclusion of local culture and language in schools to strengthen cultural identity is the leading protective factor for Indigenous youth; and

WHEREAS, teachers often come in from outside of Alaska and are not familiar with Alaska Native history and culture, and according to a study at University of Alaska Fairbanks, rates provided by Alaska Teacher Placement from 2008 to 2012, districts hired an average of 985 teachers each year, about 626 (64%) of whom were from outside Alaska, almost 90% of teachers in Alaska are non-Native, and Alaska Natives and American Indians continue to make up only about 5% of the teacher workforce; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Alaska Native Educators, in partnership with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, the National Science Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, Alaska Federation of Natives and the University of Alaska, developed a set of standards for education, entitled Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools, and within these guidelines, there are standards for the students, educators, curriculum, schools, and communities; and

WHEREAS, it is important to acknowledge that Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized tribes; each having distinct languages, traditional values, and cultural practices, and it can be difficult for non-Native educators to learn how to work with them, and this can be the case for why it can be hard for Alaska Native students to express their problems to a counselor or educator who does not have the same experiences or common background, especially when teachers are not always prepared for the differences between their culture and that of the communities in which they teach, and that may directly or indirectly affect the success rate of Alaska Native K-12 students; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 14.1 states: Indigenous Peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Native Ways of knowing and learning, ways of being, and value systems, are parallel and equal to any other, and should be honored and Alaska Native ways of knowing add to the incredible diversity and richness of our state;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Eighty-Seventh Tribal Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska delegation convened April 20-22, 2022, honoring the work of the Youth Commission, hereby calls upon Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development, Association of Alaska School Boards, and Alaska Superintendents Association to mandate culturally safe workshops for all State of Alaska school educators in collaboration with respected tribes within each region as a solution to address systemic racism, the decline of student success rates, and inadequate implementation of community wellness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Tlingit & Haida calls upon the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Association of Alaska School Boards, and Alaska Superintendents Association to consider and approve this resolution.


ADOPTED this 20th day of April, 2022, by the Eighty-Seventh Tribal Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

CERTIFY



President Richard J. Peterson

ATTEST



Tribal Secretary Jacqueline L. Pata