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Indian Education Plan for Washington Youth

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PROPOSED

STANDARDS

FOR

CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE

SCHOOLS

***INDIAN EDUCATION PLAN
FOR
WASHINGTON STATE***

**Prepared through the
Indian Education/Title I/Community Outreach Office**

**Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
October, 2000**

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- ◆ Alaska Native Educators who wrote the “Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Schools” which was adopted in February 1998, and used as a guide for the work herein.

- ◆ Members of the Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

- ◆ Members of the Native American Think Tank

- ◆ Dr. Don Woodcock, Jr., Associate Professor/Supervisor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Central Washington University

- ◆ Members of the Washington State Indian Education Association

- ◆ Participants of the Washington State Indian Education Policy Summit

Preface

In 1975, Washington State's Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Frank B. Brouillet, and Washington State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the Washington State Indian Education Policy Statement, which included seven major issues pertaining to American Indian/Alaska Native students. This policy statement was expanded to 14 topics in the 1980s and adopted by Judith Billings, who succeeded Dr. Brouillet, and once again by the SBE. In light of school reform and new learning requirements, it became evident that simply revising or expanding the previous Indian Education policy statement would not suffice, and that an entirely new document should be developed. A core group of Indian educators was formed last year to begin this task, looking at Alaska's Standards for Culturally-Responsible Schools as a model. The Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee and Native American Think Tank would like to recognize the excellent work accomplished by Alaska Native educators in writing their standards. It was an important guide for our work in developing cultural standards in our state.

The following standards have been developed and are offered for your recommendations as a way for schools and communities to examine the extent to which they are attending to the educational and cultural well being of the students in their care. These "cultural standards" are predicated on the belief that a firm grounding in the heritage, language and culture indigenous to a particular place is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of culturally-healthy students and communities associated with that place, and thus is an essential ingredient for identifying the appropriate qualities and practices associated with culturally responsive educators, curriculum and schools.

For several years, Washington has been developing "content standards" to define what students should know and be able to do as they go through school. To the extent that these state standards are written for general use throughout our state, they do not always address some of the special issues that are of critical importance to the success of Native students in our school system.

Standards have been developed in six areas including those for students, educators, curriculum, schools, communities, and institutions of higher education. These "cultural standards" are aligned with the state education goals and Education Goals 2000, and they provide guidelines or touchstones against which schools and communities can examine what they are doing to attend to the cultural well-being of the young people they are responsible for nurturing into adulthood. The standards included here serve as a complement to those adopted by Washington State. While the state standards stipulate what students should know and be able to do, the cultural standards are oriented more toward providing guidance on how to get them there in such a way that they become responsible, capable and whole human beings in the process. The emphasis is on fostering a strong connection between what students experience in

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school and their lives out of school by providing opportunities for students to engage in in-depth experiential learning in real-world contexts. By shifting the focus in the curriculum from teaching/learning about cultural heritage as separate subject to teaching/learning through the local culture as a foundation for all education, it is intended that all forms of knowledge, ways of knowing and world views be recognized as equally valid, adaptable and complementary to one another in a mutually beneficial way.

The cultural standards drafted in this document are not intended to be inclusive, exclusive or conclusive, and thus should be reviewed and adapted to fit local needs. Each school, community and related organization should consider which of these standards are appropriate and which are not, and when necessary, develop additional cultural standards to accommodate local circumstances. Terms should be interpreted to fit local conventions, especially with reference to meanings associated with the definition of Elder, tradition, spirituality, or anything relating to the use of the local language. Where differences of interpretation exist, they should be respected and accommodated to the maximum extent possible. The cultural standards are not intended to produce standardization, but rather to encourage schools to nurture and build upon the rich and varied cultural traditions that continue to be practiced in Washington State's numerous and varied Native communities today.

Some of the multiple uses to which these cultural standards may be used include:

1. They may be used as a basis for reviewing school or district-level goals, policies and practices with regard to the curriculum and teaching being implemented in each community or cultural area.
2. They may be used by a local community to examine the kind of home/family environment and parenting support systems that are provided for the upbringing of its children.
3. They may be used to devise locally appropriate ways to review student and teacher performance as it relates to nurturing and practicing culturally healthy behavior.
4. They may be used to strengthen the commitment to revitalizing the local language and culture and fostering the involvement of Elders as an educational resource.
5. They may be used to help teachers to identify teaching practices that are adaptable to the cultural context in which they are teaching.
6. They may be used to guide the preparation and orientation of teachers in ways that help them attend to the cultural well-being of their students.
7. They may serve as criteria against which to evaluate educational programs intended to address the cultural needs of students.

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8. They may be used to guide the formation of state-level policies and regulations and the allocation of resources in support of equal educational opportunities for all children in Washington State.

In August 1998, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13096 with regard to American Indian and Alaska Native Education. This order recognized and affirmed the unique political and legal relationship of the Federal Government with tribal governments as well as the unique educational and culturally-related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students. These proposed standards document the specific commitment of our state's American Indian and Alaska Native people to quality and appropriate education for Native students of all ages and are an important link to the Executive Order.

Cultural Standards for Students (As Lifelong Leaders)

Purpose: To assist students in acquiring new skills to live in a changing world that will enable them to maintain their own social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual well-being. This purpose will be accomplished by the ongoing awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.

Students who are grounded in their cultural knowledge and traditions are able to:

- A. Build on knowledge and skills of local community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success.
 - 1. Identify and utilize appropriate sources of cultural knowledge and practices to find solutions to daily needs.
 - 2. Recognize how and why cultures change over time.
 - 3. Anticipate the changes that occur when different cultural systems come in contact with one another.
 - 4. Integrate and balance technology with building, nurturing, and preserving knowledge and relationships.

- B. Live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.
 - 1. Interact with elders in a loving and respectful way that demonstrates an appreciation of their role as culture-bearers and educators in the community.
 - 2. Perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate to local cultural traditions.
 - 3. To emerge as leaders by making constructive contributions to the well-being of the community.

- C. Develop heritage language acquisition skills.
 - 1. Engage in a culturally-linguistic environment.
 - 2. Utilize elder and native language speakers as consultants.
 - 3. Interact both formally and informally with tribal elders.

- D. Recount their own genealogy and family history.
 - 1. Acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with elders.
 - 2. Gather oral and written history information from the local community and provide an appropriate interpretation of its cultural meaning and significance.

Cultural Standards for Educators

- A. Educators who have been properly trained are responsive to and incorporate local Native ways of knowing, learning and teaching in their work. Educators who meet these standards:
1. Use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.
 2. Participate in community events and activities in an appropriate and supportive way.
 3. Work closely with parents to achieve a high level of complementary educational expectations between home and school.
 4. Recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for them to achieve that potential.
 5. Participate in postsecondary training that prepares educators to be culturally-responsive and meets the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) multicultural requirements.
 6. Those who teach Native/indigenous language and literacy to Natives are trained in the areas of indigenous language and culture.
 7. Adapt instruction to the culturally contextual learning & cognitive styles, and needs of their American Indian students.

Cultural Standards for Curriculum

- A. Standards must be in response to the needs of Native culture in terms of reinforcing the integrity of the cultural knowledge in Native communities. A curriculum that meets this standard is culturally-responsive and
1. Reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that Native students bring with them.
 2. Recognizes traditional culture as a part of a living and constantly adapting system within Native communities that is grounded in the past and evolves in the present and into the future.
 3. Uses Native language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the curriculum.
 4. Fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
 5. Situates local Native knowledge and actions in a global context.

Cultural Standards for Schools

- A. A culturally-responsive school fosters the ongoing participation of tribal leaders and parents in all aspects of the schooling process. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Schools need to offer and develop specific programs and curriculum that serve the needs of the local tribe(s) and community. The standards of academic performance shall be in alignment with the state's academic standards. Schools need to look at programs that are working and incorporate those ideas into their schools.
 2. Schools need to focus on greater parent participation, developing real relationships of partnership between parents, teachers, administrators, and students.
 3. Schools need to offer relevant staff development for teachers, classified staff, and administrators on topics such as learning styles, reading (and how to teach it at all levels), diversity, and best practices for working with all people. School personnel need to accept and be responsible for Native students in the schools.
 4. Elders, cultural specialists, community members should be encouraged to come into the classroom, feel welcome and respected.
 5. All schools need to adopt Native-approved materials/information that will be incorporated into the general curriculum of the school.
 6. Schools need to have a system in place that recognizes and accepts the Native students as members of Native sovereign nations.
- B. A culturally responsive school provides multiple avenues for students to access the learning that is offered, as well as multiple forms of assessment for students to demonstrate what they have learned. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Utilizes a broad range of culturally-appropriate performance standards to assess student knowledge and skills.
 2. Encourages and supports experientially oriented approaches to education that makes extensive use of community-based resources and expertise.
 3. Provides cultural and language immersion programs in which students acquire in-depth understanding of the culture of which they are members or if the student is non-Native, then the local Native culture.
 4. Helps students develop the capacity to assess their own strengths and weaknesses and make appropriate decisions based on such a self-assessment.

- C. A culturally responsive provides opportunities for students to learn in and/or about their heritage language. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Provides language immersion opportunities for students who wish to learn in their heritage language
 2. Offers courses that acquaint all students with the heritage language of the local community.
 3. Makes available reading materials and courses through which students can acquire literacy in the heritage language.
 4. Provides opportunities for teachers and students to gain familiarity with the heritage language of the students they teach through summer immersion experiences under culturally appropriate setting.
- D. A culturally-responsive school has a high level of involvement of professional staff who are of the same cultural background as the students with whom they are working. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Encourages and supports the professional development of local personnel to assume teaching and administrative roles in the school.
 2. Recruits and hires teachers whose backgrounds are similar to that of the students they will be teaching.
 3. Provides a cultural orientation camp and mentoring program for new teachers to learn about and adjust to the cultural expectations and practices of the community and school. Host families could be developed to help introduce teachers/administrators to Native American people outside of the school environment (i.e., cultural centers, pow wows, recreation departments, etc.)
 4. Continuing efforts should be made at the district level to recruit and retain highly qualified/certified Native American teachers. Identification and mentoring of potential Indian students to enter the field of education which may include visits to college campuses, information about scholarships, etc.
 5. Attracting qualified staff to work with special needs students (i.e., physical/occupational/speech & language therapists/specialists, special education teachers, counselors). Identify effective practices to work with Native students in special education. Collaborate more with Indian tribes and open up communication regarding resources and services available.
 6. Fosters and supports opportunities for teachers to participate in professional activities and associations that help them expand their repertoire of cultural knowledge and teaching skills as well as respect the pride we have for our cultural heritage.

- E. A culturally-responsive school consists of facilities that are compatible with the community environment in which they are situated. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Provides a physical environment that makes students feel welcome and invited, and it makes use of facilities throughout the community to demonstrate that education is a community-wide process involving everyone as teachers.
 2. Creates an environment that is “open” and that makes parents feel welcome and needed.
- F. A culturally-responsive school fosters extensive on-going participation, communication and interaction between school and community personnel. A school that meets this cultural standard:
1. Will sponsor ongoing activities in the school and community that celebrate and provide opportunities for students to put into practice and display their knowledge of local cultural traditions through formal and informal events and opportunities for local and board decisions on policy and personnel issues with support from community organizations.
 2. Will be sensitive and receptive to particular issues such as grieving. Schools must understand and honor the absence of students who are following cultural process.
- G. A culturally-responsive school, on or near tribal reservations, use Tribally Certified teachers and staff in the provision of tribal specific culture and language instruction.

Cultural Standards for Communities

- A. A culturally-supportive community incorporates the practice of local cultural traditions in its everyday affairs. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Organizes and encourages participation of members from all ages in regular community-wide, family oriented events.
 2. Incorporates and reinforces traditional cultural values and beliefs in all formal and informal community functions.
 3. Encourage local representation from local school boards, citizens, parents, and committees at schools.
 4. Has a system in place to address issues of racism and bigotry.
- B. A culturally-supportive community nurtures the use of the local heritage language. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Recognizes the role that language plays in conveying the deeper aspects of cultural knowledge and traditions.
- C. A culturally-supportive community takes an active role in the education of all its members. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Encourages broad-based participation of parents in all aspects of their children's education, both in and out of school.
 2. Engages in subsistence activities, sponsors cultural camps and hosts community events that provide an opportunity for children to actively participate in and learn appropriate cultural values and behavior.
- D. A culturally-supportive community nurtures family responsibility, sense of belonging and cultural identity. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Creates a supportive environment for youth to participate in local affairs and acquire the skills necessary to be contributing members of the community.
- E. A culturally-supportive community assists teachers in learning and utilizing local cultural traditions and practices. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Sponsors a cultural orientation camp and community-mentoring program for new teachers to learn about and adjust to the cultural expectations and practices of the community.
 2. Attempts to articulate the cultural knowledge, values, and beliefs that it wishes teachers to incorporate into the school curriculum.

3. Establishes a program to ensure the availability of elders' expertise in all aspects of the educational program in the school.
- F. A culturally-supportive community contributes to all aspects of curriculum design and implementation in the local school. A community that meets this cultural standard:
1. Takes an active part in the development of the mission, goals, and content of the local educational program.
 2. Facilitates teacher involvement in community activities and encourages the use of the local environment as a curricular resource.
 3. Promotes parental involvement in all aspects of their children's educational experience. Policies and procedures are developed with information that parents need to know (i.e., regulations, discipline programs, how to set up conferences with teachers, a list of "key" people at the school and in the district, etc.).
 4. Supports open and honest discussion on topics such as diversity, bigotry, and racism.

Cultural Standards for Institutions of Higher Education

- A. To contribute toward the success of Native students at the post-secondary level, each institution of higher education (two- and four-year colleges/universities):
1. Acknowledges and supports tribal sovereignty.
 2. Recognizes and supports American Indian self-determination.
 3. Has an Indian-friendly, proactive executive administrator and management team that acknowledges the government-to-government relationship.
 4. Works cooperatively with tribal and other Native leaders placing them on governance, advisory or oversight boards of academic institutions, departments, centers, and programs created to address American Indian needs and develop American Indian professionals.
 5. Creates professional partnership programs with tribal governments, tribal schools and colleges, urban Indian centers and/or other agencies and institutions designed to serve American Indians or with high American Indian populations.
 6. Devotes substantial financial resources, independent of soft money, to program establishment, development, and maintenance.
 7. Establishes high profile Indian identifiable academic departments or programs on their campus.
 8. Establishes a physical presence and academic centers on or near tribal reservations, American Indian communities, and/or urban Indian centers.
 9. Honors the academic validity of departments and programs designed to serve the American Indian population, including non-traditional formats.
 10. Actively recruits American Indian administrators, faculty, and staff and provides a support system for them.
 11. Actively recruits American Indian students and provides an Indian identifiable, affective support system for them once enrolled.
 12. Adapts curricula to address American Indian identified goals and needs.
 13. Adapts instruction to the contextual learning, cognitive styles, aspirations, and needs of its American Indian students.
 14. Provides opportunities for field-based professional application to its American Indian students.
 15. Conducts ongoing assessment and evaluation of its effectiveness in working with the American Indian population.
- B. Teacher education and administration programs must be developed and administered in a manner that is responsive to the Native communities they serve.

