

Minutes
Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee
March 24, 2021

Present

Anna Armstrong
Buddy Bear
Sally Brownfield
Jarrod Da
Cindy Kelly
Jennifer LeBret
Dorothy Apple
Joseph Martin
Sara Marie Ortiz
Jeremy Rouse
Zoe Higheagle Strong
Elese Washines
Patricia Whitefoot

Not Present

Joseph Martin (provided notice)
David Littleton
Joel Boyd
Thomas Strong

Other participants:

Veronica Gallardo
Laura Lynn
Shandy Abrahamson
Joan Banker
Jon Claymore
Chris Reykdal
Parker Teed

Dialogue with State Superintendent Chris Reykdal

Superintendent Reykdal shared that this Thursday and Friday budgets will be released from the legislature, and we have simultaneously received a governor proclamation calling for all families who have not yet had the opportunity to ask for their students to get in person learning time (roughly two days a week), be given that opportunity. Also, the governor put some prescription around that two days a week: it can be part days, half days, or full days with a roughly 30% instructional time opportunity in our buildings. Currently, about 60% of elementary students are getting an in person experience at some point during the week. About 45% of middle school students and about 40% of high school students are getting some in person time, but there are 14 districts or so that are not finished getting agreements for their middle and high school systems. Families will be given the opportunity shortly to do some more return to in person learning or not, but it will be it will be their choice.

It has been really challenging because our legislature required a March 1 reopening plan but there was not a lot of detail around what those should look like. We have approved more than 200 to 250 of those plans. Then, after that, the governor released his proclamation which includes a requirement for 30% in person instruction time.

We do have \$2.5 billion in new federal dollars coming and we will have roughly 30 months to spend it. 90% of those funds are very prescribed in terms of how the money gets to districts. Charter and STECs are all eligible.

We are sending out a youth health survey to assure we are getting the student voice; where they tell us the impact they have experienced academically, socially emotionally, etc. We are hoping compact schools and charters participate and we get a good, comprehensive response.

He expressed concern about the amount of time spent on assessments and the value of standardized assessment testing. There are other ways to identify areas of disproportional impacts that involve less pressure and less stigmatization of students and that are more culturally responsive than formal standardized summative assessments. Tests should reflect what students are learning in their classrooms as opposed to one size fits all. We are proposing to the federal government that we not assess the traditional number of students required, but instead we go with the sampling methodology. Working with researchers at the University of Washington's School of Education to design a really robust stratified sample representative by geography by student groups. It would save instructional hours if we can do this, but it is completely up to the US Department of Education to approve that or not. It would be good to have student voice on how they've experienced this and be more efficient about understanding the academic impacts, especially in math and science.

House Bill 1368 recently passed requiring school districts to submit a June 1 recovery acceleration. This is a chance for districts to pull all this together and say how this has impacted student groups. Districts will have to describe for us what the next 30 months really looks like for that's how long these federal dollars can last with the possibility of an additional year of extension. We expect to see plans that focus on student mental health and recovery

- Jennifer suggested the Committee take time to discuss what some of their questions are and prepare a follow up letter to Supt. Reykdal. She shared that it has been concerning that if there is sampling, you may miss out on some of the most vulnerable students that are not showing up for the platforms of learning that are available for them. Supt. Reykdal replied that he is really confident that the sampling method will give us the opportunity to get an effective representation of students. He would like support in this because it is totally unacceptable to have staff in Washington DC telling our state how to assess student learning and student well being.

- Cindy asked if it would be beneficial for Native people who have relationships with Senator Patti Murray to reach out to her and explain how this testing is not beneficial to our Native American populations.
- Patricia appreciated the Superintendent sharing budget information and issues with WSNAEAC but expressed concern about Native parents who don't receive this kind of communication particularly in remote and rural communities. When parents do try to ask these questions, they get pretty much shut down and so that's very disheartening. This is one of the reasons parent engagement is prioritized within the pilot project with the Department of Education. The Supt. agreed that districts have a powerful responsibility to communicate directly with families through multiple channels, so we should keep trying to build a framework of expectation around that although the effort can definitely fall short in places.
- Sally discussed her concern about the amount of learning that has been lost as a result of closed schools, distance learning, limited teacher to student learning, etc. How can we expect our kids to enter school in the Fall achieving at grade level? How do we identify where our kids are academically and impress on educators that learning needs to begin where they are and not where they are expected to be? The Supt. shares this concern and said that Federal language even uses the phrase "learning loss" which is just pretty amazing to us as they have tried to make this turn into a conversation about acceleration. When he thinks about recovery acceleration, he emphasizes student mental health on one end and then acceleration.
- Jennifer mentioned that the Supt. requested the Committee's help in identifying what assessments work and to help develop frameworks, pathways and assessments that address the needs of Native learners. He responded that he would like us to think about assessments that meet federal requirements, but are not one size fits all. Suggested a pre-post test approach to see where students are. He said we also need to keep working with the Legislature to actually transform educational pathways for students individually. This was actively being discussed a few years ago but the pace seems to have slowed down. They are capturing some of it in mastery-based learning but we need to figure out how to operationalize that and inform parents.

Testimony in support of House Bill 1356

Ivy Pete, a junior at North Central High School in Spokane, and Emma Brown, a junior at Lewis and Clark High School and a member of WA World Fellows (a global leadership program), had testified to the Legislature in support of HB 1356 calling for the elimination of mascots depicting Native people, symbols, etc. They shared their testimony with Superintendent Reykdal and WSNAEAC members.

WSNAEAC members thanked Superintendent Reykdal for this opportunity to meet with him.

Parker Teed, Basic Education Manager, Washington State Board of Education (SBE)

Parker Teed (parker.teed@k12.wa.us) provided information on the emergency waiver from credit-based graduation requirements and this years graduation pathways (<https://www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work/emergency-waiver-program>). SBE approved emergency rules on March 11 that allow flexibility and local-approval following extensive education disruptions due to the COVID-19 outbreak to help assure that students in the graduating class of 2020, class of 2021, and other applicable graduating classes are not negatively impacted by disruptions in their education resulting from COVID-19 (EHB 1121). This rule covers the classes of 2020 and 2021 and SBE is now considering a waiver to address the educational interruption of the graduating classes of 2022 and 2023. This would affect graduation pathway options and credit requirements. Tribal compact schools are eligible to apply for the waiver which is more structured than the one last year which was more like a blanket waiver for the class of 2020.

Facts on Emergency Waiver Program: https://sbe.wa.gov/faqs/emergency_graduation_rules
Video of a webinar on the emergency waiver of certain graduation requirements:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pw7CVS4rEs>

- Healthy Youth Survey
 - Discussed Health Youth Survey and wondered if the results can be shared. Would be interested in the Native response.
- Native Student Data
 - Discussed issues surrounding the identification of Native students through the OSPI CEDARS student information program.
 - Proposed asking to review Native student data prior to it being released to the public.
 - Discussed current three categories of Native students in CEDARS (Native-non Hispanic, Native-Hispanic and Native-2 or more races)
 - How do we recommend a more comprehensive definition of American Indian/Alaska Native for CEDARS purposes?
 - Major effort should be to correct the CEDARS enrollment system because how it currently requests Native student data is negatively impacting our Native communities.
 - Impact of Federal reporting requirements for American Indian/Alaska Native students and the need to work on this issue at the Federal level.
 - Trends at the higher education level for students who identify as Native non Hispanic as opposed to multi-race.
 - Using the Tribal consultation process to promote accurate Native student identification.
 - WSNEAC Data Sub-Committee will continue this discussion and ONE will coordinate a meeting between the sub-committee and OSPI's Student Information Office.
 - ONE will monitor the OSPI data dashboard and work on improvements.

- Discussed the onerous process of requesting student data through OSPI's Student Information Office and often weeks long response time.
- Cindy discussed the new WSSDA Model District-Tribe Data Sharing Agreement Policy and draft document.
- WSNAEAC Sub-Committees
 - Cindy Kelly made a motion to add a curriculum and assessment sub-committee. Patricia seconded. Motion passed.
 - Sub-Committees agreed to meet outside the scheduled WSNAEAC meetings.
 - Carve out time in each WSNAEAC meeting for sub-committee reports.
- Circles of Reflection
 - 3 Circles of Reflection gatherings have taken place plus 3 Share our Voices/Hear our Stories gatherings. The SOV/HOS gatherings are being co-facilitated by Region 16 Comprehensive Center and are designed to reach out to Native students, parents, families, and elders for their input and to share what they identify as priority needs or concerns.
 - There are two sub-groups established through COR: Trauma/Social Emotional Learning (Laura Lynn, facilitator, and Cultural Awareness and Understanding, Shandy Abrahamson, facilitator).
 - The next COR meeting is March 31, 1-3:00
 - COR group is currently identifying short and long-term goals. It was agreed that government to government tribal consultation needs to be a piece of the long-term goal.
 - Focus on resiliency through a Native lens.
 - Announced ONE tribal consultation contract work.
 - Foresee the SOV/HOS work will evolve into a statewide Native parent committee.
- Since Time Immemorial Webinars/Trainings—Laura Lynn
 - ONE STI trainings have moved to an online platform; and since May of 2020, about 4,000 people have attended. Several of these webinars were tribal specific and invitations were sent to school districts within those tribe's lands.
 - Discussed the "Ready to Go" introductory webinars and the "Teacher to Teacher" grade specific webinars.
 - About 125 librarians took part in the STI Librarian Focused webinar. Librarians are the ambassadors of this work and looking forward to establishing a Librarian/STI work group across the state.
 - Thanked Elese for her leadership with the Yakama Nation to lift up and collaborate with Educational Service District 105 and the Mount Adams School District bringing together tribal leaders, language and cultural specialists with classroom teachers to continue their STI work while providing tribal specific resources.
 - Discussed the Tribal Writers Group facilitated by Mary Jane Topash, Burke Museum, to support tribes that are working toward developing a tribal specific curriculum

- Announced that several of the early learning/elementary STI lessons are being translated into Spanish. This honors our continuing work with bilingual educators across the state. Dual Language instructors have been asking for resources to support the STI work.
- Seal of Biliteracy
 - Information on the Seal of Biliteracy has been shared with district superintendents, high school principals, registrars, and counselors with technical guidance. It is about ensuring that our students who have earned the Seal are receiving that recognition as part of their transcript.
 - Seeing some really strong work around First People, First Language
- Career Technical Education Update – Shandy Abrahamson
 - One of the asks from the Washington Administrators of Career Technical Education (WACTE) is help and guidance with establishing partnerships with tribal communities.
 - Chief Leschi Tribal School has done some great work in creating CTE programs and involving/collaborating with their community, students and families.
 - Important to identify tribal economic development priorities and develop CTE programs to meet those job needs.
 - Part of her job requirements include working with all State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools to help develop and implement CTE pathways programs.
 - Discussed the statewide maritime program.
 - Sara Marie and Joseph serve on the new maritime high school that is being built with the Port of Seattle. This will be a great job training resource for Native students.
 - Sally shared that in Shelton School District’s high school, some of their academics includes aquaculture including underwater welding. The students think it is awesome.
 - Jon related his collaboration with the College Spark organization to acquire funding for fish incubators through Redd Zone for identified STEC schools as well as districts with high Native student populations. This would be part of a salmon recovery curriculum and Shandy is charged with overseeing the implementation. Shelton School District currently has one of these incubators.
 - Sally said they are also incubating clams and maybe even oysters as well as fish.
- WSNAEAC Membership
 - Need to fill parent vacancies as soon as possible
 - Schedule WSNAEAC Executive Committee elections at the first WSNAEAC meeting after July 1, 2021
 - Joel Boyd and Tom Strong will be removed from WSNAEAC membership for non-participation. Pam Austin will be removed because has retired from the Spokane School District. Letters will be mailed to them.

Else Washines made a motion to adjourn. Sally seconded. Motion carried.