

Nevada Indian Commission
Indian Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2015

Main Site: Western Nevada College, 2201 West College Parkway, Carson City, NV
Videoconference Sites: Fallon, NV; Owyhee, NV; Las Vegas, NV; McDermitt, NV; Reno, NV

Present: Sherry L. Rupert, Executive Director, Nevada Indian Commission; Denise M. Becker, Administrative Assistant III, Nevada Indian Commission; Lynn John, Chairwoman, Indian Education Advisory Committee; Fredina Drye-Romero, Education Programs Professional – Indian Education, Nevada Department of Education; Jillian Fillmore, Indian Education Specialist, Washoe County School District; Patrick Naranjo, University of Las Vegas (UNLV), Assistant to Ombudsman and Assistant to Vice President Diversity Initiatives; Mary Williams, Education Director, Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe; Jonathan Lowery, Indian Education Advisor, Nevada Urban Indians; Chris Hicks, National Science Foundation, UNLV

- I. Invocation
 - A. The invocation was given by Fredina Drye-Romero.

- II. Welcome and Introductions
 - A. Lynn John called the meeting to order at 9:43am.

- III. Initial Public Comment
 - A. There was no initial public comment.

- IV. Approval of March 2, 2015 Meeting Minutes
 - A. Lynn said she did not receive the minutes so she was unable to review them. Approval of these minutes will be tabled until the next meeting.

- V. Approval of Stewart Advisory Committee Appointment of Representative
 - A. One Appointment of Representative form for Rob Borges was submitted for approval. Mr. Borges is the Education Coordinator for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. Mary made a motion to approve and Fredina seconded. Motion carried.

- VI. Presentation on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)
 - A. Chris Hicks, Graduate Student at UNLV gave a presentation on STEM and the Nevada Solar Nexus Project. Through science, computer infrastructure, water and solar, the Solar Nexus Project aims to broaden participation in STEM research. Chris, along with the project's diversity team, is reaching out to all Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions, state college and community colleges, to bridge the pipeline for candidates to enter two- or four-year graduate programs. The diversity team is also reaching out to Nevada high school students with the goal of engaging "first-generation students" – those who never previously thought a career in STEM disciplines was an option available to them. Chris said that he is looking for Native student participation in this program. Patrick Naranjo commented that he signed up as a mentor because he is attached to this effort and likes this new implementation of diversity at UNLV. Both Sherry and Lynn asked Chris to submit a one-page summarization of the program and to identify what exactly he is seeking. This one-page summary could then be used to promote the program to the tribes.

VII. Nevada Indian Education Strategic Plan Revision Update

- A. Sherry stated that there will be a meeting at the Nevada Indian Commission office on June 9, 2015. Lynn encouraged committee members to attend as it has been five years since the Indian Education Strategic Plan has been updated.

VIII. Committee Members Comments and Announcements

- A. Fredina commented that she will be traveling to Haskell University in Kansas this week.
- B. Sherry stated that she and Fredina will be traveling to Scottsdale, Arizona at the end of the month to attend the Southwest Pathways Conference. Sherry also said that she attended the UNR Native American Alumni reception and was the keynote speaker.
- C. Lynn reported that the Indian Education Summit in Boise, ID will be held on June 10, 2015.
- D. Sherry commented the gym at the former Stewart Indian School campus can be used by tribal entities as long as there is an opening on the schedule. Sherry can sign off on it and there wouldn't be any charge.

IX. Indian Education Updates

- A. Nevada Department of Education, Fredina Drye-Romero, Education Programs Professional for Indian Education
 - 1. Fredina said that over 200 people registered for the American Indian/Alaska Native Education Summit in March of this year. She reported that the Mobile Workshop was well attended and that Ben Rupert was the tour guide as the motor coach traversed the Lake Tahoe area. Next year's Summit will take place March 21-22, 2016.
 - 2. The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Convention will be held October 14-17, 2015 in Portland, OR and she is on the planning committee once again. All workshop proposals are due on May 15, 2015. Fredina stated that any nominations for awards would be appreciated.
 - 3. On April 29, 2015, Fredina sent out an email showcasing that the U.S. Department of Education announced that \$4 million will be available to help Native American youth become college and career ready. These grants will support President Obama's Generation Indigenous "Gen-I" initiative launched last year to help Native American youth.
 - 4. Fredina attended the Paiute Language Bowl as well as the youth conference in Clark County.
 - 5. She is working on the Lesson Plan Writing Retreat at UNLV, scheduled for July 29-31, 2015.
- B. Tribal Education Program
 - 1. Mary Williams, Education Director for the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, stated she is preparing for the end of the school year and graduation ceremony. She is planning a social powwow to honor the students' successes on June 6, 2015. Mary said she would like to do a youth track at the NIEA convention in Reno next year. Fredina responded that the NIEA is excited to come to Nevada and will share Mary's suggestion of having a youth track at the NIEA Convention planning meeting in July.
- C. County School District Programs
 - 1. Jillian Fillmore, Indian Education Specialist, Washoe County School District, reported that the Paiute Language Bowl was held on April 30, 2015. She wants to make changes to the speaking component as the students were nervous about using the microphones. She reported that in March, the Board of Trustees had a meeting at Natchez Elementary School in Wadsworth, NV. She commented that her program had a surplus of funds left over and will spend it out by purchasing backpacks and school supplies for the youth.

Jillian sent out a student survey using Survey Monkey and received 73 out of 900. The results of the survey show that students and families want more cultural activities in school, as well as more tutoring in math and reading. Lynn commented that it was great to see technology being used at the Paiute Language Bowl, showing connections between the past and the present.

2. Lynn John, Principal, Owyhee Combined School, Elko County School District, reported that she had attended the Title VII meeting that takes place in Elko. She said that of the 600 students in the Elko County School District, 250 of them come from Owyhee. She stated that Wells also has a number of Native students. With the Title VII grant, Elko County will have a full time teacher that works with the schools that have a higher Native student enrollment. Owyhee has a part time aide position that will assist teachers and will help students that are struggling. Wells Combined School has an after-school tutoring program that will transition to the Wells Indian Colony in 2016. Lynn mentioned that she is working with Fredina on planning a Lesson Plan Writing Retreat in Elko County. Lynn also said that she is very busy in Owyhee and is grateful for the partnerships with the Idaho institutions that she has. This Friday, she will be taking 45 students and 5 teachers to the College of Southern Idaho and on May 15, 2015, the Idaho National Guard will allow 10 students from Owyhee and Elko County, Lynn and a teacher to not only refuel the jets in the air, but also fly over the reservation canyon lands. Lynn mentioned that former astronaut, John Harrington, wrote his PhD dissertation on the students of Owyhee and will be making a presentation at the school in August. Lynn commented that she will be presenting at the Idaho Indian Education Summit in Boise.

D. University and Community Colleges Updates

1. Chris Hicks commented that UNLV is looking for students to also participate in military applications, as there has been some difficulty in stimulating interest.
2. Sherry mentioned that she received an email from Kari Emm, Transfer Recruitment Advisor of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). It was regarding a letter that was sent from the President of the University of Oregon to the Chairman of the Walker River Paiute Tribe (WRPT). The letter states that all enrolled members of the WRPT are eligible for in-state tuition at the University. This will save students approximately \$20,000 per year. Sherry said that there was a policy like this at one time, but it never came to fruition. She also stated that it would be beneficial for the tribes to have the same opportunity, especially at Nevada's universities. Sherry reported that she is on the Chancellor's Diversity Committee at UNR and that she can bring this issue up at their next meeting. Lynn added that any tribe that has aboriginal homelands would qualify for this program.

E. Other Indian Education Programs

Jonathan Lowery, Indian Education Advisor, Nevada Urban Indians, said that he has been meeting with students and graduating seniors to find out whether they are interested in attending college or entering the workforce. He wants to develop more resources for the students, such as information on tribal colleges or universities of interest. Jonathan said he has been networking with the Intertribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) Native Workforce Development Program. He said that their funding is open to Natives in general, not just Nevada tribes. He mentioned the ITCN's youth conference that will be held at Lake Tahoe August 2-5, 2015. He also shared that he wants to develop a three month program to keep the students fresh over the summer. Lynn thanked Jonathan for reaching out to the urban students in the Reno area.

- X. Agenda Items for Next Meeting
 - A. Two sets of meeting minutes
 - B. Update on the Strategic Plan
 - C. 2016 NIEA Planning Meeting

- XI. Scheduling and Location of Next Indian Education Advisory Committee Meeting
 - A. The next meeting will be held on September 21, 2015.

- XII. Final Public Comment
 - A. Jonathan said that he can promote the STEM program with Washoe County. He said that he will identify which research group would interest the students. He said that he will contact Chris and go from there.
 - B. Sherry commented that the Stewart Father's Day Powwow will be held the weekend of June 19-21, 2015 and that all Committee members are invited to attend. She went on to share a brief update on the Nevada legislative session and how it impacted the Nevada Indian Commission (NIC). The NIC was successful in obtaining planning funds for the Stewart Indian School Living Legacy Initiative. The first phase involves establishing a Cultural Center as well as a Welcome and Information Center at the former Stewart Indian School. This funding will allow for two new positions, a Museum Director and Curator to begin in fiscal year 2017. Senate Bill 63 designates the NIC as the coordinating agency for the Stewart Indian School and has passed both houses. This bill is important to the Commission because it puts into statute that the tribes will have some input in what the future of the Stewart Indian School will be. Sherry also mentioned that there is a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) requesting funding for the design and development of the Welcome and Information Center as well as funding for a Master Plan for the entire facility. The NIC is also receiving a \$20,000 grant from the NV 150 Foundation to complete 15 oral histories of Stewart alumni.

- XIII. Adjournment
 - A. Fredina made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mary seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:08 am.