

BNAS report January 4, 2018

Biggest thing is that we received and have rights to use the Big Bull dictionary that contains the spelling system we are transitioning towards. It is important to mention that after going through it there are some minor spelling errors (anyone who has spent ample time studying our dictionaries will find that every single one of them has spelling errors, this is nothing to be concerned about, at least more than we already ought to be). However, this is easily alleviated by allowing and requesting the BNAS director to spell every word. Again, as I have been emphasizing with every report, consistency is vital and having words be spelled the same from K-12 (and beyond, BCC uses this writing system). This will not only help facilitate speaking events but will also help create *literacy*.

In a general council meeting (I apologize I cannot summon the date) in December I presented lists I have been working on. I showed the BTBC the examples of how we have been writing the language, why it is problematic, and why we must change. To illustrate the example I used the word for kit-fox which is spelled two different ways in the same classroom. See-no-paa and sin-o-paa. This is *not* phonetics, it is using English to represent a Blackfeet word. See and sin do not sound alike and have different vowels. Spelling the language this way is changing the language. Yes, language change over time, but it's a natural evolution through time and conversation, not a mutation created through unorganized literature.

Anyways, after the presentation the council suggested that I, Robert, write a proposal for the Blackfeet Tribe to officially adopt the writing system as the official writing system of the Blackfeet Nation. This is a major victory for our department, for my work, and for our language and students.

I am officially working on a curriculum that will belong to BPS. It is attached. After mapping out more lessons I will begin to record all input for the instructors.