

January 23, 2018 NAS Report

On January 12<sup>th</sup> we had William Big Bull come in and give professional development of the writing system. My personal assessment was that it went well. Class 7 instructors' comments ranged from excitement and readiness to aloof and reluctant. Some comments about other spelling systems were made, primarily using The Cuts Wood school as an example of how some of our instructors are spelling. For logistical purposes I have expanded the spread sheet I put together earlier this school year to include writing examples from *A Blackfoot Language Study* by Jack Holterman presented by the Piegan Institute, Don Frantz *Blackfoot Dictionary*, Marvin Weather wax materials from BCC archives and the *First Primer* dictionary put together by French Jesuits many years ago.

The reason is to, again, show how diverse spellings for our languages range. The major focus I want to point out is Holterman. Holterman compiled the dictionary for the Piegan Institute and is used on their web page. They spell the school as named *Nizi PuhWah Sin*. Holterman use the 'z' for the 'ts' sound and the 'x' for the 'ks' sound. I put this together to show that we are not spelling as Cuts Wood has officially spelled words. On that note, to be completely transparent, I find it important to state that I am the only person who has taught Blackfoot Language at University of Montana, Cuts Wood School, BCC, and, now, at BPS. I have a level of understanding at each institution and stand by the Big Bull writing system. It is the key.

I have put together a small word list I hope each board member attempts to read out during the board meeting at the end of this report. I have made the decision to not include words that have 'harsh' usages of the ks and ts sounds and words that have the guttural tone and aspirate tone for the sake of showcasing the writing system without conflict.

Further, this year BCC was awarded a \$100,000 grant for language preservation. When I worked at BCC last year I was a part of writing this grant. Upon talking to the person in charge of this grant, Sterling Schiltdt, I have made a deal that BPS will *instantly* have access to the materials created from this grant. However, some of this work includes traveling to our sister tribes in the north. I want to (and need to) be a part of these meetings with fluent speakers. I am a skilled linguist and a second language speaker of Blackfoot and my skill set is valuable in obtaining language output usable for novice and advanced speakers. The dates for the meetings have not yet been set. I hope the board gives me the necessary blessings to attend such meetings. Travel and per diem would come from the grant. If any questions on the subject remain please contact me. We are in survival mode for our language and I am trying to figure out how to best use my time to get more and more language materials for our school and larger community. Further discussion on this is necessary and I would be happy to field any questions on the project

On that note, I have been talking to the BTBC and they are interested in investing into my radio program. I will consult with more people at the tribe in figuring how much money to ask for and use that money to get audio for our students and staff.

Note: I included another attachment from Piegan Board of Education. They just scheduled me for an event without contacting me (because they are *piiikūni*). If the board wants to give me leave for that date I would take it, but I am not requesting nor way travel nor per diem.

## Words lists

Example: īyō•kää. First we see the symbol [īy] and we look at the alphabet example that says they [īy] correlates with the vowel in the words 'cry'. So with that we know the first sound is [īy] (like 'eye'). Next vowel is [ō], which is the same vowel found in 'row'. ,last vowel is [ää] and we see it's the same vowel as the vowel in 'dawn'. With that information we can read this word correctly.

## Words:

kūnnūttsoōmitaiks  
ääpiikīyiiks  
ääpääwūpsspīi  
sikkai•pisstsii  
stāmikiitsiikini  
kääp•pō'ksiiniimään  
äwoōtään  
ääpinūko'i sippisstö  
īī•nūkspo'pii  
ääpyoōmitää  
ääpoōtsskinää  
miikūmiiipo'yisääm  
kätō'yiss  
āinīyoōsiyyiww  
ääkiiþüsskään  
niipaittūþiisin  
ääpääpaitsiittūþiiks  
kīyīis