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Believe, Belong, Build and Become.

Progress Report on the 2025 American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) Recommendations

February 12, 2026

Isis Buchanan, director of educational equity

Key Areas of Focus

- Student Data & Cultural Proficiency
- Recognition of Indigenous Events
- Program Funding & Staffing
- Cultural Spaces & Resources
- Facility Name Changes



Recommendation 1

Recommendation:

Review disciplinary actions and review data of middle school American Indian students

- In-depth American Indian cultural proficiency training for teaching staff across the district

District Response:

- **Data Monitoring:** Implemented "data walls" in Educlimber. The data wall supports the monitoring of attendance, academic performance, and disciplinary trends of Indigenous students
- **Staff Support:** American Indian Education Program (AIEP) staff utilize real-time notifications for K-12 Indigenous students, facilitating immediate awareness of needs and enhancing the district's capacity for timely, targeted student support. This allows the staff members to be part of the intervention teams.
- **Professional Development:** Facilitated wide breadth and depth of cultural proficiency training for staff geared towards all levels of learners. This includes Dream Catcher learning that has expanded to site support teams to ensure culture is included as part of the discussion when meeting to support Indigenous learners.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation:

More recognition by/from the individual buildings of Indigenous Peoples Day and other observances of American Indian Cultural Heritage

- More active engagement by non-Native staff, sharing of 191 American Indian Education Program (AIEP) events with the American Indian students and families

District Response:

- **Curriculum:** Revised instructional materials; all sites taught lessons during the week of Oct 6–10, 2025.
- **Communication:** Weekly updates sent to site leaders for newsletters.
- **Events:** Hosted Orange Shirt Day, Indigenous Ally Day, Native American Heritage Night and monthly Drum and Dance and craft nights.



Recommendation 3

Recommendation:

Salaries of American Indian Education Program Staff need to come out of the General Education fund

- Reserving program funding resources for its intended purpose, American Indian Students. Many districts such as Osseo, 196, and Cottage Grove pay their Indian Ed staff directly from General Education Funding

District Response:

- **Funding Strategy:** Utilized "Achievement and Integration" funding in the FY26 budget.
- **Staffing Support:** This funding supports 1.0 FTE for the American Indian Cultural Specialist and 0.3 FTE for the Indigenous Cultural Liaison

Recommendation 4

Recommendation:

Provide cultural space and staffing for smudging space in each building

- Section 1.[121.A.08] Minnesota Statutes

District Response:

- **Policy Revision:** Revised **Policy 419** (Tobacco-Free Environment) to include Minnesota Statute language protecting smudging practices.
- **Protocols:** Created the "One91 American Indian Education Program Smudging Protocols Document" to ensure common knowledge and proper procedures
 - Each school site has cultural items and smudge kits
 - Smudging can take place in any classroom or office space under the supervision of a staff member who is supporting the student would like to smudge
- **Cultural Spaces:** Burnsville High School, Eagle Ridge Middle School, and Nicollet Middle school have spaces that are used for Indian Education programming
 - Sites without a dedicated space have cultural items and smudge kits that can be used in various spaces that are used during American Indian Education program sessions
 - The culture trunk project will be an additional way that Indigenous history, culture and language will be shared at each school site

Recommendation 5

Recommendation:

Provide cultural trunks for each school for staff to use

- Need to expand the collection of AIPAC-approved cultural trunks, which currently feature Ojibwe, Dakota, and Powwow resources. While there is presently only one trunk available for district-wide checkout, high demand for use in classrooms makes it beneficial for students to have their own dedicated trunks to support teaching the American Indian state standards.

District Response:

- **Implementation:** Project launched with grant funding from the MN Humanities Center
 - Timeline:
 - June 2025 launched the culture trunk project
 - August 2025 through June 2026 we will gather information, resources, cultural items, develop learning materials, identify books, and create a website that will include additional digital learning resources
 - September 2026 launch the use of the culture trunks at each school site
- **Collaboration:** Lesson plans are being co-written with the Elementary/Secondary Coordinator and approved by AIPAC
- **Community:** Elders invited to share knowledge; resources include Ojibwe, Dakota, and story telling around cultural items

Name Change Process Update

Current Status

- The name change process is now included as part of the district's long-term Facilities Planning Project
 - Incorporating the *Name Change* process with long term facilities planning allows the district to be fiscally responsible, efficient, and aligned to ensure we include our community in the process
 - The board will provide direction that is aligned through the facilities planning process



L *Full report and outcomes can be found in
the Board of Education agenda and
meeting materials posted online.* **J**
- *Thank you*