



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #AK-21-011

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### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

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### TITLE: Support for a Doctoral Program in the U.S. Department of Education Office of Indian Education Indian Professional Development Grant Program

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, through its unique relationship with Tribal Nations, the U.S. Federal Government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives, residing on and off their tribal homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, there continues to be a tremendous need for well-trained Native school administrators in tribal communities and for University professors or in state education offices all across the United States, including rural, urban, and reservation communities; and

**WHEREAS**, although significant progress has been made in preparing Native administrators at the master's level for school administration or university faculty positions, there is a need for preparing Native administrators at the doctoral level, primarily to serve in the role of superintendents of schools or as university faculties as well in other fields; and

**WHEREAS**, there are too many school superintendent positions in Indian-serving schools, university faculty, and state education offices in administrative positions that are filled by non-Indians who do not speak the language, do not know the values and traditions, and tend not to stay on the job for extended periods of time; and

**WHEREAS**, the turnover rate of superintendents in some of these schools is 60 percent, and over 50 percent of the individuals serving as superintendents are doing so with emergency or temporary certification; and

**WHEREAS**, tribes also critically need highly trained American Indians and Alaska Natives to serve as directors of their tribal education departments and agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a trust responsibility to tribal people, which includes supporting educational attainment and the need to provide educational services; and

**WHEREAS**, the underlying statute does not prohibit inclusion of any Doctoral program or other advanced degree program within the Indian Education Professional Development Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education has excluded doctoral students from participation in the Indian Education Professional Development Grant Program through the definition of a "Full-time student" in 20 CFR §263.3.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the NCAI urges the Department of Education to include and support any Doctoral program or other advanced degree program within the Office of Indian Education Professional Development Grant program; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the NCAI urges Congress to increase funding for the Office of Indian Education Professional Development Grant program to meet the tremendous need in Indian Country and to include a Doctoral Program; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

#### CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2021 Mid Year Conference of the National Congress of American Indians, held June 20, 2021 - June 24, 2021, with a quorum present.



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Fawn Sharp, President

**ATTEST:**



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Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary