



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #DEN-18-015

### **TITLE: To Restore Bureau of Indian Education for Alaska Tribal Members**

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#### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

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**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**, several Alaska Native communities have successfully contracted Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) K-8<sup>th</sup> grade programs through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975; and

**WHEREAS**, with this funding several Alaska Native communities have revived numerous Native language and culture programs alongside rigorous English language arts, mathematics and science programing; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska Native communities previously had the authority to hire and fire its' educational staff, rather than providing suggestions to the Bureau of Indian Affairs staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Native communities established agreements with the state operated schools for student meals and gym use; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Indian Affairs ceased all school funding in Alaska after June 30, 1985; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Native communities objected to having the funding for Indigenous children cut from the State of Alaska, citing that the United States of America has a trust responsibility to educate American Indian and Alaska Native children; and

**WHEREAS**, several Alaska Native communities approached the State of Alaska to allow the separation from local school districts through the State of Alaska's legislative process. The State of Alaska allowed these communities to vote to create a consortium of communities in order to create their districts; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Alaska through legislative action provided funds for previous BIA schools in the communities to be renovated to meet the State of Alaska building codes; and

**WHEREAS**, available data shows that many enrolled students in Alaska Native and Native American communities obtain disproportionately low achievement scores, educational attainment levels, and graduation rate; and

**WHEREAS**, this educational deficit severely damages the communities and the public at large, socially, culturally, and economically; and

**WHEREAS**, since the defunding of BIE schools in 1985 in the state of Alaska, the control schools serving Native students are under the State of Alaska's authority, without any tribally led concurrent authority; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a great need for tribal nations to exercise their Sovereignty over education to improve teaching and learning for our indigenous students in our schools; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a great need for positive political relationships between federal, state, and tribal governments in Alaska and the United States to achieve success in our schools.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) calls on the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Education to restore funding for BIE schools in Alaska and other tribes to provide quality education in formal partnerships between the tribal, federal, and state governments; and

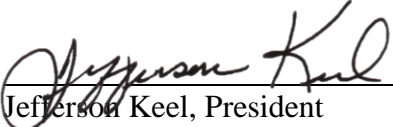
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCAI demands that the United States Congress, through a restoration act fulfill their trust obligation to adequately fund each school in Alaska to improve and to be effective once again to make sure each child succeeds in its educational endeavors; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution replaces NCAI Resolution ATL-14-001; 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 2018 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Hyatt Regency in Denver, Colorado October 21-26, 2018, with a quorum present.

  
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Jefferson Keel, President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary