**Minutes for November 9, 2020 Native American** **Education Committee Meeting**

The committee met via Zoom at 5:30 pm on November 9, 2020. Dr. Penny Hill asked all members present to introduce themselves. Those attending were as follows: Dr. Hill, Jamie Calvert, Robin McClelland, Amanda Cumberland, Misty Simmons, Wheatley Harrison, Leslee Long, Angela Hundley, Nicole White, Angela Boatner, Shane York and Mary Harrison.

Dr. Hill reiterated the purposes of the committee, which are as follows:

* Provide open lines of communication
* Give examples of what the school district can offer to Native American (NA) students
* Offer a forum for thoughts and concerns for parents of NA students

She explained the two grants that the NCSD receives:

* The Title Six grant which runs through Federal Programs. These monies are only for NA students and currently pay the salaries of three NA tutors and the materials they need to serve their students.
* The Impact Aide Grant is offered to school districts that have federal land in the district as a means to offset the loss of tax revenues on these lands. The Native American Education Committee satisfies one of the requirements for this grant. These monies can be spent on all students, regardless of ethnicity. In the past, this money has been used for roads, cafeteria, physical plant, etc.

Dr. Hill discussed the district demographics and noted that district enrollment has decreased by approximately 200 students, with decreases proportional across all ethnicities. NA student numbers decreased from 424 last year to 375 this year.

The NA high school graduation rate at NCHS is 92%, which is higher than that of other ethnicities.

Regarding educational policy, the school district verifies residency via “source check” with the tribal housing authority.

The committee discussed the number of NA students in each sport, as reported in the spring.

SB 2595 Tribal Regalia Bill was discussed. This bill, passed by the MS Legislature, allows NA students to wear tribal regalia at events such as high school graduation.

The questions and comments aspect of the agenda included the following topics:

* Will parents be notified about SB 2595 prior to graduation? A high school teacher will discuss this with the graduation committee.
* Do all schools have a NA tutor? There are two tutors at the elementary and one at the middle school. The elementary tutor who was present during the meeting stated that she has 52 students that she works with during their activity time. Only students who need remediation are offered services.
* How was the last Impact Aide money spent? Dr. Hill will ask for specific expenditures.

The group agreed to meet again in February.

The information below was sent via email to the committee on November 11, 2020.

**Graduation**

Mr. Gentry, high school principal, said caps and gowns normally arrive a week or so before graduation. This year, students will get to keep their caps AND gowns. Mr. Gentry was told the gowns will be of a lighter material so that it will not be so costly for the students to keep them. (I'm **assuming**the company made this decision because of COVID, but I do not know for sure.)

The graduation packet that students receive will include information on wearing traditional tribal regalia or objects of cultural significance.

**IMPACT AID Funds**

As I stated in our meeting, the funding the district receives from the Impact Aid grant varies as to how much (due to enrollment and/or government formula) and when the district receives the funds. We normally let this funding accumulate so that we can use it toward projects. This past year, the following Impact Aid funds were used:

$632,224.00 - high school cafeteria (total project was approximately 2.2 million).

$400,000.00 - road project behind the schools

We have not received a final payment for FY20 (2019-2020 school year), and we have not received any funding for FY21 (2020-2021 school year). The amount of funding per FY application normally ranges from $500,000 - $600,000. This year may be different because of Covid-19. Enrollment and average daily attendance is part of the formula for calculating the amount of funding.

I will begin working on the FY22 in December. The grant application is due January 31, 2021.

Again, thank you for serving on this committee. Have a great day!