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**American Indian Parent Advisory Committee**

Duluth Public Schools  
709 Portia Johnson Drive  
Duluth, Minnesota 55811

29th February 2024

**ISD 709 SCHOOL BOARD**

Duluth Public Schools  
709 Portia Johnson Drive  
Duluth, Minnesota 55811

This letter of support is intended to accompany the vote and resolution of non-concurrence that will be presented to the ISD 709 School Board on February 29, 2024.

Graduation rate is arguably the most objective and comprehensive metric to evaluate if the educational needs of students are being met. The most recent 4-year graduation rate for American Indian students as reported by Duluth Public Schools is 43.58\*. This graduate rate follows the flat graduation rate trend recorded by MDE in the Minnesota Report Card. Utilizing data-based decision making and a rudimentary risk assessment, **it is not likely** that an American Indian student entering 9th grade in the Duluth Public School District will graduate on time. Therefore, this AIPAC cannot concur that the educational needs of our American Indian students are being met.

This AIPAC is sensitive to the fact that there has been a significant change in leadership within the Duluth Public School District American Indian Education Department and we are motivated to support the district in meeting the unique educational and cultural needs of its American Indian students. We have convened, as a committee, to discuss the vote, the resolution statement, and formulate recommendations for improvement. Many of these recommendations may be currently in process but have been included as they are not easily identifiable.

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1. We recommend providing the opportunity for AIPAC committee members to tour all sites where we currently have American Indian Liaisons. We recommend inviting school board members to attend the tour alongside the advisory board. We recommend inviting other interested parties, i.e. the Duluth Indigenous Commission, to attend the tour.
  2. We recommend identifying transportation supports or a transportation alternative for American Indian students.
  3. We recommend PD for all staff w/ respect to American Indian history/culture/contributions.
  4. We recommend the HR Department create an action plan for recruitment/retention specific to American Indian teachers, administration and staff.
  5. We recommend trialing a pilot school w/i a school program to foster internal support and community for American Indian students.
  6. We recommend ensuring a manageable case-load ratio for American Indian Liaisons based on the most accurate count of American Indian students being served by the district.
  7. We recommend identifying a support person whose role it would be to collect and disseminate information re: opportunities for scholarships/career training and other opportunities for American Indian students who are both enrolled & descendants
  8. We recommend reserving dedicated space for the American Indian Education Program in Duluth Public Schools.
  9. We recommend dedicating district resources to directly support American Indian students' attendance and academics and utilizing American Indian Education funds to supplement the district plan goals.
  10. We recommend district funding to create two American Indian Curriculum, Academic and Integration Specialists to provide educational and cultural support.
  11. We recommend providing the AIPAC with regular updates, at least biannual updates, on growth and movement of goals that target American Indian students.
  12. We recommend that the district collaborate with its AIPAC to share and review data pertaining to American Indian students.

\*Source document - 2023 World's Best Workforce