

## OKLAHOMA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION

### QUARTERLY MEETING

FEBRUARY 24, 2011

#### 1. Call to order and roll call – Chairperson

At 10:35 a.m. the regular meeting of the Oklahoma Advisory Council for Indian Education was called to order and a quorum declared by the chairperson. Present for the meeting were: Gregory Anderson, Tom Crimmins, Dr. Houston Davis, Lori Hamilton, Lucyann Harjo, Dr. James King, Paul Pinkerton, Mary McCormick, Jim Parrish, Raymond Rogers, Lisa John, and Nancy Fields represented Gena Timberman. Absent were: Dr. Henrietta Man, Esther Bell, Ann Brower, Corey Bunch, Dr. Sharon Lease, Dr. Joe Robinson. Guest included Sydna Yellowfish and Star Yellowfish. The pledge of allegiance was led by Lucyann Harjo.

#### 2. Minutes

The minutes from the December 9, 2010 meeting were reviewed. Upon motion made by Mary McCormick and seconded by Lori Hamilton; the minutes of December 9, 2010 were approved. Motion passed unanimously.

#### 3. Discussion of chair position

Lisa John explained she may not be fulfilling the role of the chair as expected by the council. Since the initial meeting there may be higher expectations from the group about her role. Lisa has been learning her role as the chairperson and has learned that the State department operates in a manner in which she is not familiar. There may be time delays in getting answers because of the approval process at the state. As far as checking into personal mileage or reimbursement for board members, it may be best if the individual council member contacts the state because it is a personal issue and the state seems hesitant to provide personal information to Lisa. The process for agendas is the chairperson drafts the agenda and forwards them to Dr. Lease. Review and edits are made to the draft agenda then sent to the Superintendent for approval. At that point staff must follow certain guidelines in order to post and announce the meeting. In regards to the minutes, they are sent to the chairperson in draft form. Once the minutes are reviewed or revised the chairperson contacts Dr. Leases' office. The minutes are sent through Superintendent Barresi.

Comments from Dr. Davis, Mary McCormick, Tom Crimmins and Jim Parrish were made. Since the council is learning the process together, Lisa was asked to retain the position for a while longer. After a few months if she is overwhelmed or decides it is best for her to step down, she can readdress the issue with the council for selection of a new chairperson.

Dr. Davis explained there needs to be a meeting between the officers of the council, Superintendent Barresi's staff, himself and Dr. Robinson to get a clear idea of who is responsible for certain items and

how this council will operate. In the near future chairperson Lisa John will contact the parties mentioned by Dr. Davis to get a clear definition of how this council will operate.

Mary McCormick explained due to the amount of work of the chairperson the council should elect a secretary to help with minutes. This will take some burden from the chairperson. The council agreed and asked for the election of a secretary for the next meeting agenda.

4. Confirmation of Officers

Tabled.

5. Discussion and action of the following items:

a) Number of Native American students participating in Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP). Dr. Davis handed out five tables with information related to numbers of Native American students enrolled in public versus private higher education institutions. His office continues to work on the data to create tables that will provide more information that is useful for the group. The data base has a large volume of information stored, he will need to know specifically what the Council needs. Too much information will not be relevant unless it is utilized for specific reports.

Dr. Davis specifically spoke about the data from Fall 2009.

Mr. Jim Parish asked Dr. Davis when did Oklahoma Promise began? Dr. Davis explain OK Promise used to be called OHLAP. Now OK Promise is a program that assists students whose families make \$50k or lower beginning at 8<sup>th</sup> grade through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Students must have good behavior too. Currently the funding is not in jeopardy due to budget cuts. It has a dedicated source of funding which comes off the top of the education budget. The cost of the program is \$54 million.

Ms. Mary McCormick stated there may need to be some negotiation with the state regarding education funding. Discussion needs to focus on the amount of money the state spends on convicted felons. She explained we need to spend that money on students.

Mr. Tom Crimmins asked if money can be applied at any college in Oklahoma.

Dr. Davis suggested we invite Mr. Bryce Fair from OK Promise to come to a future meeting to make a presentation on the OK Promise program.

The state regents of higher education currently work with high schools to communicate the college process. Chairperson Lisa John suggested to expand the relationship to tribes who may have a better relationship with the Native students. Dr. Davis stated this may be something that could be done.

Mr. Raymond Rogers asked if Dr. Davis could relate the numbers from high school graduating seniors to those who are in college or as an option relate the 9-12 grades to number of native students in college. Can this relation help provide data on the retention rate?

Dr. Davis explained they are still picking those numbers and would possibly need to follow a cohort.

Mr. Raymond Rogers stated the data is available but how to use it and disseminate it is hard. He asked if there is a way to look at non-traditional students.

Dr. Davis stated we can break down the number of students by age groups. The age cut line is usually 25 years old.

Chairperson Lisa John asked if they could break down the numbers by tribe?

Dr. Davis was not sure.

Ms. Lori Hamilton asked Dr. Davis if the data is available on a web site for us to access.

Dr. Davis said they have a large amount of data that may not be meaningful to the group but he could send the information in handouts electronically and can get more reports if the Council requests additional data.

B) Graduation Data for Native American students from College – Dr. Davis explained the data is still being reviewed. The information on graduation data was discussed with section A.

c) Graduation data for Native American students in Career Technology – Dr. Joe Robinson  
Tabled.

d) Number of Native American teachers in public school – Dr. Sharon Lease

e) Enrollment data for Native American students in OK – Dr. Sharon Lease

The Council reviewed a packet of information containing an update on Oklahoma Indian education from Valeria Littlecreek, Director of Tribal Affairs.

Mr. Raymond Rogers asked does the multicultural designation on the census affect how Native American's are counted in the OK DOE numbers. He also asked how many total teachers are there in the state and of that number what is the total number of Native American teachers.

Ms. Mary McCormick asked for the definition of certification. How many certified teachers are in the classroom versus how many are support staff?

Dr. Davis inquired what is an average graduating class for Native American's? What is the ratio of students graduating from high school? Is there a better breakdown of the data to show the groups?

Mr. Raymond Rogers said he thinks the numbers are skewed and suggests we may not be seeing the real numbers. He said it appears dropouts aren't reflecting true numbers in the information. In public school, students have a unique tracking number so they can be tracked for retention purposes. This process needs to be done at the State Department of Education.

Mr. Tom Crimmins asked what is the true dropout rate for Oklahoma and how do we track the migrant student population.

Ms. Nancy Fields made a suggestion to look at alternative methods of how students can graduate, high school, or obtain a GED or job corp.

**OTHER :**

- a) Deadline for submission of annual report per 700.S. Section 3-173.

Tabled.

- b) What colleges/universities have programs for Native American students -

Dr. James King briefly explained the College of Muscogee Creek Nation has four degree programs. The college population is 88% Muscogee Creek, 10% non-Creek and 2% non-native.

Chairperson Lisa John explained in her notes we had asked a few questions about university and college programs: which colleges have Native American administrator certification programs? Do colleges have professional development to include cultural competency? How is native teacher recruitment done at colleges? Is cultural sensitivity a part of teacher certification? Are Academic programs geared toward Native American students?

Dr. Davis stated his office can poll the 25 colleges and universities to see what innovative initiatives there are in these areas.

Mr. Raymond Rogers asked how do we get more Native teachers into the classroom and how are they recruited to the colleges.

Dr. Davis explained the idea mentioned earlier to expand our work on recruitment to work with the tribes is something we can do.

Ms. Mary McCormick stated cultural competency is a two headed monster from her experience and the Council should be careful about how we use the word "competency." She said the term "cultural sensitivity" may be the better term to use.

Chairperson Lisa John said the Council needs to know which term is used for professional development because terms and key words change over time and we need to know which is the keyword now. Is the term cultural sensitivity? Is it cultural competency? Is the term multicultural?

Mr. Tom Crimmins informed the group that all schools have a cultural portion of professional development but it is left up to the school to determine what is addressed in professional development. He reminded us there are so many new regulations that schools focus a lot on testing.

Chairperson Lisa John stated we need to find the correct avenue to get cultural sensitivity into teacher certification- for instance require it in college teaching programs.

Ms. Nancy Fields explained that during an education training session held at the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum there was a survey completed by teachers. It asks how does cultural sensitivity relate to today? How does it fit into the big picture? Many of the teachers say cultural

sensitivity is not relevant because tribes are not like they were in the past. Teachers polled stated they have trouble with continuity and relevancy of past history with students in their classrooms today.

Mr. Raymond Rogers stated in the future there is an opportunity to host a conference on Indian Education to help educate teachers and others about cultural sensitivity.

Dr. Davis suggested polling colleges and universities to identify some best practices of cultural sensitivity programs that are geared toward serving Tribes or Native American students specifically.

#### 6. Discussion of Issues Identified in Previous Meeting Concerning Cultural Competency Professional Development and Introduction to Sovereignty – Chairperson Lisa John

The items in this section were discussed in our previous meeting and it was put on the agenda in case Council wants to add comments. But since Council members were asked to submit their priority list for Indian Education we can move on to the priorities.

#### 7. Discussion and possible action Development of Goal or Mission of the committee – Chairperson Lisa John

The purpose of putting this into the agenda is to make sure the Council established some goals or a mission for the year. Indian Education needs are broad and we could be overwhelmed if we do not focus our attention to key areas.

Ms. Mary McCormick reminded the Council our goal and purpose is reflected in of act and asks that the minutes reflect the purpose as written.

“The purpose of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act is to recognize the unique relationship that Oklahoma enjoys with the Indian tribes located within the state and how Native Americans and Indian tribes play a pivotal role in the educational system of the state in light of this special relationship. The further purpose of the act is to establish the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education. The purpose of creating the Council is to promote culturally relevant learning environments, educational opportunities and instructional material for Native American students enrolled in the public schools of the state. Because of the number of Native American students enrolled in public schools in the state, this objective will positively affect the educational success of all public school students and encourage further government-to-government cooperation between the State of Oklahoma and the sovereign Indian tribes located in Oklahoma.” HB 2929

#### 8. Discussion and possible action of Key Issues Related to Native American Education – Chairperson Lisa John

Priorities from Council members were dispersed. The Council needs time to review the priorities before action can be taken.

Chairperson Lisa John explained there is one pressing issue that has been discussed by several council members. The position Valeria Littlecreek assumed is the director of tribal affairs. An email was sent to

Dr. Sharon Lease expressing the Council's concern that the position may be lost due to budget cuts. There is no way to know what Superintendent Barresi will do with the position but it doesn't look promising.

Ms. Jim Parrish asked what is the process for letting the Superintendent know about the Council's concerns.

Mr. Tom Crimmins stated he believed one of the purposes of the Council is to advise the Superintendent of our concerns.

Chairperson Lisa John reported the act says the council shall "make recommendation to the State Board of Education for programs that will help achieve the purposes of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act."

Mr. Gregory Anderson explained as a Council we may not be able to act on behalf of the council but we can work at the grassroots level to move issues along.

Mr. Jim Parrish informed the Council that Valeria has presented staff development and her presentation helps the public schools since she is from the State Department of Education.

Mr. Crimmins added that Title 7 funds are administered by the state department and someone needs to oversee those funds. He also interjected parents don't always listen to the school but they listen to the tribal affairs director. We could be saying the same thing but if Valeria in her position says something they trust her word.

Mr. Tom Crimmins asked if we need make a motion to retain the Director of Tribal Affairs.

Ms. Ann Brower asked for Gena to be added to the email list. Gena has not been receiving email from the group.

Mr. Jim Parrish asked if it is appropriate to contact elected officials regarding our concerns.

Ms. Mary McCormick reminded the Council that we direct our reports to the state board of education.

Chairman Lisa John asked the group if they wanted to invite Superintendent Barresi to the next meeting. The general consensus from the Council was to invite Superintendent Barresi to a meeting in the future and allow her to determine a date and time. In the mean time the Council agreed that a letter of support for the Director of Tribal Affairs position should be sent to Superintendent Barresi on behalf of the council.

Dr. Houston Davis explained the Council needs to ask how does the Superintendent want us to operate to help her.

Chairperson Lisa John added the Council needs to let the Superintendent explain what are her priorities for Indian education are and let us know how we can help her achieve her goals.

Mr. Gregory Anderson asked if it would be good politics to offer a letter to the Superintendent about what we covered in the meeting and provide her a copy of the minutes.

Dr. Houston Davis explained that Superintendent Berresi should always have a designee to attend the council meeting in the same manner that President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the representative of the Speaker of the House should also have their representatives at the meeting.

Mr. Raymond Rogers asked what is transpiring about the board of education.

Mr. Tom Crimmins explained a bill came out of the senate to replace the board. The Governor will sign it. The new board will be an advisory board with the Governor, Lt. Governor, and secretary of state listed as advisory board members, or their designee. They will meet monthly.

Mr. Jim Parrish stated the school consolidation bill is a bad law for rural Oklahoma. We need to communicate that it is bad for rural schools and Indian students. We will watch the bill as it progresses and address it later if needed.

9) Discussion and possible action Review draft annual report – Chairperson Lisa John.

Since the annual report is not due until next February it was consensus to table the discussion.

10) Discussion and possible action for a future meeting date and location– Chairperson Lisa John

The Council agreed with consensus for Chairperson Lisa John to draft a letter requesting a meeting with State Superintendent Barresi asking for her to meet with us at her convenience.

Ms. Marcy McCormick offered to host a future Council meeting at Sac & Fox Nation.

Nancy Fields offered to host a Council meeting at the American Indian Cultural Center in Oklahoma City.

11) Announcements:

Mr. Raymond Rogers announced there is a March 4 meeting in Denver with the Department of Education. It is a tribal consultation session. For more information visit [www.edtribalconsultation.org](http://www.edtribalconsultation.org).

Adjourn – Chairperson

Mr. Raymond Rogers made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gregory Anderson seconded that motion. The motion to adjourn passed by consensus at 2:20 p.m.

Minutes were provided by Lori Hamilton for the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education on February 24, 2011, and approved on June 15, 2011.

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Lisa John, Chairperson

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Date