

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH  
TRIBAL LEADER CONGRESS ON EDUCATION**

**SUMMARY OF POLICY ISSUE /STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (SBE) STRATEGIC PLAN  
GOALS**

The Board was asked formally, through a Memorandum of Agreement with the Tribal Leader Congress on Education (TLC), to reach a decision on including Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement by December 1, 2007. In November 2007, the Board extended the deadline to December 2008 in order to allow sufficient time for the Board to develop a comprehensive graduation requirements policy framework. That deadline was extended again to allow the Board and TLC an opportunity to meet and confer over a proposed resolution.

**BACKGROUND**

The inclusion of Native American tribal culture, history, and government in the education of K-12 students has been the focus of several initiatives undertaken by the Legislature, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and the State Board of Education (SBE) in the last five years.

**Legislative and SBE action:** In 2005, the Legislature introduced SHB 1495<sup>1</sup> on tribal culture, history, and government that amended a statute<sup>2</sup> pertaining to the SBE's authority. The new language (*in italics*) read:

- (a) Any course in Washington State history and government used to fulfill high school graduation requirements ***shall consider including*** information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

That language is now incorporated in the SBE's high school graduation requirement rules.<sup>3</sup>

**OSPI social studies standards:** Washington has four learning goals that serve as the foundation for the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs)—what all students should know and be able to do. The EALRs (also known as standards) focus on big concepts and ideas. Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) provide details on what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. Together, the EALRs and GLEs define what students should learn in designated grades.

---

<sup>1</sup> The language formerly read: Any course in Washington state history and government used to fulfill high school graduation requirements is encouraged to include information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

<sup>2</sup> RCW 28A.230.090

<sup>3</sup> WAC 180-51-061 and 180-51-066

Goal Two of the Washington State Learning Goals identifies the subjects students will study:

Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; **civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government**; geography; arts; and health and fitness.

Civics and history are part of the social studies standards (EALRs), revised in 2008 by OSPI. The new social studies standards focus on big concepts and ideas that apply universally; that said Tribes are referenced explicitly, in large part due to their unique status as sovereign entities. See Appendix A for specific social studies EALRs and GLEs that reference Native American tribal issues.

**OSPI sovereignty curriculum:** OSPI has invested in the development of a sovereignty curriculum that would help students understand sovereignty—the right to rule and govern your own people and territory—from the perspective of native peoples. A 15-member sovereignty curriculum advisory committee, including Tribal leaders, guided the initiative. The curriculum is aligned with state social studies standards and grade level expectations (GLEs) and is designed to be infused into existing content and delivered at all three levels of school: social studies (elementary), Washington State History (middle), and US History (high). Units of the curriculum are being pilot-tested by teachers in eleven schools in the 2008-2009 school year.<sup>4</sup> Teachers from the pilot sites will convene in April and June 2009 to share their experiences. OSPI has sufficient funding to support four trainings on the curriculum—two each in eastern and western Washington—in summer 2009. The curriculum should be available online in fall 2009 for districts and teachers interested in using it.

**SBE Memorandum of Agreement:** A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Tribal Leader Congress on Education (TLC) and SBE, OSPI, and the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA), was signed in 2006. The SBE agreed to:

- initiate the process to formally consider the inclusion of Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement by December 1, 2006;
- begin meetings and active consultation with the TLC on Education and the WSSDA on the inclusion of Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement; and
- reach a decision to include Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement by December 1, 2007.

Board members met with Tribal representatives in 2006 to initiate discussion. When the Board decided to review and revise high school graduation requirements, a decision on whether to include Tribal history, culture, and government was folded into that comprehensive review. In November, 2007, the Board extended the deadline for reaching a decision on including Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement to December 2008. The Meaningful High School Diploma (MHSD) work was in process and additional time was needed to develop the graduation requirements policy framework. That deadline was extended one more time in order to provide sufficient time for Board members to consult with the TLC.

---

<sup>4</sup> The eleven schools that are piloting the sovereignty curriculum units in the 2008-2009 school year are: **Hood Canal Elementary**—Skokomish Tribe, **Lincoln Elementary**/Olympia S.D., **Fife High School** – Puyallup Tribe, **Heritage High School**/Marysville S.D. – Tulalip Tribes, **Kingston Middle School**/North Kitsap S.D. – Pt. Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, **Neah Bay High School**/Cape Flattery S.D. – Makah Tribe, **Enumclaw H.S. & Thunder Mt. M.S.**/Enumclaw S.D. – Muckleshoot Tribe, **Ridgeline Middle School**/Yelm S.D. – Nisqually Tribe, **Port Angeles High School** – Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, **Suquamish High School (“XeZusede”)**/Suquamish Tribe

The Board's subcommittee, led by Bernal Baca and including Steve Dal Porto and Linda Lamb, crafted several draft resolutions in response to the Memorandum of Agreement. Chair Mary Jean Ryan and staff member Kathe Taylor discussed a draft of the most recent proposed resolution with the TLC on February 24, 2009. The resolution was modified after the meeting to reflect changes suggested by the TLC and is included in this packet.

**EXPECTED ACTION**

The Board will adopt the resolution.

## Tribal History and Government DRAFT Resolution – February 25, 2009

### *A Response to the Memorandum of Agreement with the Tribal Leaders Congress on Education*

WHEREAS, in the spirit of enhancing government-to-government relationships, the State Board of Education (SBE) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Tribal Leaders Congress on Education to reach a decision on including Tribal history, culture, and government as a graduation requirement, building upon the work of then-SHB 1495 (now RCW 28A.230.090); and,

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has consulted with representatives of the Tribal Leaders Congress on Education to determine ways the State Board of Education can most effectively support the teaching and learning of tribal history and government; and,

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has reviewed the state law that encourages the inclusion of information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples, and the state's social studies education standards (essential academic learning requirements and grade level expectations) that specify that students should understand tribal treaties, treaty-making, government, territories, sovereignty, and growth prior to, and after, encounter; and,

WHEREAS, State Board of Education graduation rules currently encourage the inclusion of information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples in Washington state history and government courses used to fulfill graduation requirements; and,

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has reviewed the sovereignty curriculum being developed by the Office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and members of the Tribal Leaders Congress on Education;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education will join with the Tribal Leaders Congress on Education in advocating that the legislature provide funding to support the broad implementation of the sovereignty curriculum that would include, for districts interested in implementing the curriculum, funding for materials, professional development on the curriculum, and evaluation; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the State Board of Education encourages OSPI to build upon the current social studies essential academic learning requirements and grade level expectations to include tribal sovereignty, and take positive steps to ensure that schools are assessing students' opportunities to learn tribal sovereignty; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the State Board of Education commits to work with the Professional Educator Standards Board and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to encourage teacher education preparation programs to introduce pre-service teachers to the sovereignty curriculum.

Adopted: (date)

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Jean Ryan, Chair

## Social Studies Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) Pertaining to Native Americans

**Social Studies EALR 4: HISTORY:** "The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes of local, Washington State, **tribal**, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future."

### Social Studies Grade Level Expectations

The history of Native Americans is introduced in the third grade, as per this description<sup>5</sup> of the third grade learner:

"In third grade, students begin to explore more complex concepts and ideas from civics, economics, geography, and history as they study the varied backgrounds of people living in Washington and the rest of the United States. Emphasis is on cultures in the United States, **including the study of American Indians**. Students examine these cultures from the past and in the present and the impact they have had in shaping our contemporary society. They begin to look at issues and events from more than one perspective."

The fourth grade is when study begins to deepen in civics and history:

4th Grade CIVICS GLE 1.2.1 - Understands that governments are organized into local, state, **tribal**, and national levels.

4th Grade CIVICS GLE 1.2.2 - Understands how and why state and **tribal** governments make, interpret, and carry out policies, rules, and laws.

4th Grade HISTORY GLE 4.1.2 - Understands how the following themes and developments help to define eras in Washington State history from time immemorial to 1889:

- **Growth of northwest coastal and plateau tribes prior to treaties (time immemorial to 1854).**
- Maritime and overland exploration, **encounter**, and trade (1774-1849).
- Immigration and settlement (1811-1889).
- **Territory and treaty-making (1854-1889).**

Study is revisited in seventh grade civics and history:

7th Grade CIVICS GLE 1.1.1 - Understands how key ideals set forth in fundamental documents, including the Washington State Constitution and **tribal treaties**, define the goals of our state.

7th Grade CIVICS GLE 1.2.1 - Understands and analyzes the structure, organization, and powers of government at the local, state, and **tribal levels** including the concept of tribal sovereignty.

7th Grade HISTORY GLE 4.1.2 - Understands how the following themes and developments help to define eras in Washington State history from 1854 to the present:

- **Territory and treaty-making (1854-1889).**

---

<sup>5</sup> *Social Studies Essential Academic Learning Requirements: A Recommended Grade-by-Grade Level Sequence for Grade Level Expectations—Grades K-12.* Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. June 2008.

- Railroads, reform, immigration, and labor (1889-1930).
- The Great Depression and World War II (1930-1945).
- New technologies and industries (1945-1980).
- Contemporary Washington State (1980-present).

Study is revisited in twelfth grade civics:

12th Grade CIVICS GLE 1.2.3 - Analyzes and evaluates the structures of state, **tribal**, and federal forms of governments by comparing them to those of other governments.