

SAC & FOX NEWS



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Chief's Address To The Nation

Greetings:
I address two topics this month, Education and Cobell Settlement.



Chief George Thurman

Education. Our Education Director, Debbie Hicks, and I recently attended a Tribal Leader Education Roundtable in Norman, OK where critical discussions were conducted on a nation-to-nation basis. The U.S. Department of Education / Office of Indian Education Director Joyce Silverthorne; U.S. Department of the Interior / Bureau of Indian Education Director Keith Moore; White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education Director William Mendoza discussed and listened to elected tribal leaders and educators on important topics including:

*How and where should Indian education be housed in the future to guarantee our students the best possible education?

*The development of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Departments of Education and Interior.

*How to formalize the role of tribal leaders as education stakeholders in the Department of Education.

We are at a turning point in the education of our citizens, and tribal leaders must be engaged in the decision-making process. These critical decisions cannot and should not take place only among Washington policymakers and Administration officials. The voice of Indian Country and our input is essential to securing a better future for our youth and communities.

Indian education is in nothing less than a state of emergency. Our children experience large disparities in academic achievement and educational attainment: our reading and math scores are substantially lower than other groups - gaps that are even worse for our students in Bureau of Indian Education schools - and we face some of the lowest high school graduation rates in the country. Even fewer of our students enroll in and graduate from college.

Quality education is the primary driver of improved social mobility, personal and community welfare, and economic prosperity. Equally important, education prepares the next generation of tribal leadership. As the current leaders of our tribal nations, we must demand better for our students. Our very future as Native peoples depends on it.

The following information is meant to provide a quick snapshot of student and school demographics for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Please note much of the data is several years old as Native students are rarely oversampled.

*There are approximately 644,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students in the U.S. K-12 system, representing 1.2 percent of public school students nationally.

*99 percent attend regular, public school.

*8 percent attend schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). States where Native students compose the largest proportions of the total student populations include: Alaska (27 percent); Oklahoma (19 percent); Montana (11 percent); New Mexico (11 percent); and South Dakota (11 percent). In the 2007-08 school year, 28 percent of Native students attended a high-poverty public elementary school, compared to only 5 percent of white students.

*In 2009, 68 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native fourth graders and 61 percent of eighth graders were eligible for free-or reduced-price lunch.

*Reading and math scores of Native students were lower if they were eligible for free school lunch programs. American Indian and Alaska Native students

reading and math scores continue to fall behind their peers.

*70 percent of BIE-administered school failed to satisfy Adequate Yearly Progress requirements in 2005.

*Students attending BIE schools had, on average, lower math and reading scores.

*In reading, the percentages of Native students performing at or above the *Basic* level were 50 percent at grade 4 and 62 percent at grade 8 in 2009.

*In math, the percentage of Native students performing at or above the *Basic* level were 66 percent at grade 4 and 56 percent at grade 8 in 2009.

*74 percent of Native twelfth graders read below grade level, compared to 57% of white twelfth graders. American Indian and Alaska Native students are less likely to graduate high school or continue to college.

*In 2009, 13 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native 16-24 year olds were not enrolled in high school and have not earned a high school credential, compared to 8 percent of the total population.

*The national graduation rate for American Indian high school students was 50.6 percent in the 2004-05 school year, compared to 77.6 percent for white students.

*In fall 2009, approximately 189,000 Native students were enrolled as undergraduates at a degree-granting institution, comprising 1 percent of the total undergraduate population.

Per a state of Oklahoma Department of Education report: Within the Sac and Fox Nation jurisdiction there were 52 high school dropouts and 2 middle school dropouts for a total of 54. Of those 54 dropouts, 25 (or 46.3%) were Native American.

Cobell Settlement. I received the following information from the Intertribal Monitoring Association (ITMA) Executive Director Mary Zuni and now relay it to our IIM account holders.

From: askelouise to: Mary Zuni
Subject: Ask Elouise Letter
January 20, 2012

Dear Indian Country:
Following the passing of our leader and friend, Elouise Cobell, Class Counsel is responding to your continuing questions and concerns regarding the settlement of the *Cobell* lawsuit.

What is the current status of the settlement? Unfortunately, notwithstanding the hopes and wishes of 500,000 individual Indians and despite Class
(Continued On Page 3)



Employees of the Year: Sharlyn Kennon, Exercise Specialist, Merle Boyd Center and Ken Johnson, Editor Sac and Fox News.

Maintenance More Than Just Maintenance

Department completes frame project
By Sandra Massey NAGPRA

Permanently on exhibit in the Social Services building is the framed portrait of Kai-Pol-E-Qua, "White Nosed Fox", a Sauk chief painted by Charles Bird King in 1838. The American Indian Cultural Center at Van Meter State Park in Missouri donated the 6 ft. by 4 ft. painting from its collection to the Sac and Fox Nation in July 2010. Kai-pok-e-qua's portrait stood in wait in the Historic Preservation Office until it could be properly and elegantly displayed.

The tribal Maintenance Department conceived every aspect of the framing project's design.

"Robby Barrett was the lead on this particular job," said J. Paul Wilson, Acting Maintenance Director, "but all of the Maintenance crew helped on it at one time or another. It was a project for which everyone wanted to lend a hand."

Wilson said when the project was presented to the Maintenance department they had an open discussion about how to make the frame. The size and weight of the portrait required careful consideration. It had to be safely anchored to prevent a fall that could injure someone and also in a way that prevented damage to the wall. It had to have plexiglass to protect its surface from sunlight and fingerprints.

"Then by taking pieces here and there the design came into focus," Wilson said. "As with most of our projects we take time to have discussions and make the most reasonable decision on the matter."

The finished frame actually consists of two frames. The outer frame is Alder, and the inner frame is Tiger Striped Maple donated by Barrett, who also measured the portrait more than once to be sure of its dimensions. Maintenance

selected mahogany and golden oak shades of stain that bring out the natural wood grain.

"One thing that everybody wanted was to give it the appearance of being wet all the time," Wilson said. "To give it that shine and look like it needed time to dry. This was simple to do by applying layers of polyurethane to the wood after it was stained to the right color."

Wilson also gives credit to the Sac and Fox Nation for allocating needed funds to the Maintenance Department.

"With the help from tribal funding we have been able to purchase certain things that help make this type of work easier to accomplish. We now have better miter saws and table saws that make more precise cuts as well as a wood planer to smooth up the surface and take out some imperfections of the wood. Nail guns and brad nailers make the projects look a lot cleaner. We have always had tools but after years of wear and tear it was time to purchase new ones.

"And seeing that more and more projects were being handed to us, mainly because of budgets, we wanted to get quality tools to make the projects look more appealing for the Nation."

The frame is attached to the wall but its weight rests on a carved base. Its construction took approximately two weeks because the Maintenance Department had other jobs at the same time and also had to wait for the plexiglass to come in.

The frame is also evidence that the Maintenance Department works every day on more than the grass cutting at different properties for the Nation from Cushing to Shawnee or furniture moving or similar jobs that are the obvious ones because they are done out in
(Continued On Page 11)

Upcoming Events

Elders Activities

Planned

Saturday,

February 4, 2012

Gourd Dance /
Stomp Dance
Sac and Fox
Community Building
2pm - ?

Wednesday

February 8, 2012

Elders Meeting

10am

Shawnee

Tuesday

February 14, 2012

Sac & Fox Nation
Veterans' Meeting
5pm

Elders Bldg Stroud

Saturday

February 18, 2012

Regular EAB Mtg.
Stroud 10am

Saturday, March 3

Honor Dance

Monika Honeyestewa

Saturday, March 24

Honor Dance

Shayla Miller

For information contact
Gloria Ellis EAB
Chairperson @
405-878-8534

or Stella Wilson Sac and
Fox Elders Bldg. (Stroud @
918-968-2583 Tues-Thurs.
8:00am - 4:30pm



Maintenance Department: (L to R) Jeff Wilson, Technician; Jerry Brown, Technician; Charlene Murphy, Custodian; Robby Barrett, Technician; Quinton Saylor, Lead Technician; Connie Rhodd, Custodian; Joe Estes, Technician; Christie Dunsmore, Custodian; Tim Quarry, Technician; J. Paul Wilson, Acting Maintenance Director and Kim Boone, Administrative Assistant. *Showing off new uniforms (staff photo)*