BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

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Native American Parent Advisory Council: Summary of November 5, 2026

District and School Board Updates

The council received several school board updates. The School Perceptions Survey was discussed, and election results are scheduled for certification on November 9, 2026. New board members Melissa Kinneman and Kendal Larson were recognized. Policy 505, regarding the distribution, posting, and display of materials on school district property, was placed on hold until December. Additional updates included ice arena rate approval, an update on the MSHSL amendment, and the passage of a constitutional amendment.

Andrew Hodges, Director of Teaching and Learning, invited input on topics committee members would like administrators and licensed staff to address during future presentations. Discussion centered on understanding what their work looks like, identifying challenges, exploring opportunities for partnership, increasing awareness of students' unique experiences and needs, and building meaningful relationships with Native American students and families.

Native American Student Achievement

A presentation titled *"Our Native American Students on the 2026 MCAs"* reviewed student achievement data and identified areas of concern. Approximately one in four Native American students met reading standards, while approximately one in five met math standards.

The achievement gap in math is smaller in grades 3–4 but widens significantly in grades 5–12. In reading, the opposite pattern appears, with a greater gap at the elementary level: 31 percentage points in grades 3–4 compared to 18 percentage points in grades 5–12. Additionally, 12 math scores and 19 reading scores were one proficiency level below meeting standards.

FastBridge results showed that 54% of Native American students in kindergarten and first grade are at some or high risk in early reading. In early math, three of eight Native American first graders are at some or high risk. Among Native American students in grades 2–8, two of three are at some or high risk in math.

During the group discussion, families reflected on whether the results aligned with what they see and hear from their children, what helps students feel connected and supported at school, and where the district should focus its efforts.

Suggestions included providing families access to the same learning resources students use at school, such as IXL; selecting curriculum that reflects students' lived experiences; and maintaining consistent use of adopted curriculum throughout its review cycle. Participants also encouraged the district to focus additional attention on students who are not making adequate progress and connect with districts where Native American students are outperforming district averages.

Another recommendation was to develop additional student support structures without pulling students from classes that may serve as important outlets, such as art, choir, and physical

education. Families also emphasized the importance of receiving regular updates on student progress, particularly when students participate in intervention services that require them to miss other classes.

Native American Education Liaison Updates

Cyan Peacock-Hale, Native American Education Liaison, shared updates on student programming, cultural learning, and community engagement. Native American flags are currently displayed at the middle school and Pinecrest, with plans for a potluck gathering to celebrate the flag installations.

Student connections continue through middle and high school programming, including opportunities for committee members to meet with student groups, high school students reading to elementary students, and middle school students participating in medicine bundle making. Additional efforts include expanding dreamcatcher education and increasing inclusion in students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

The Native American Education program is also collaborating with Teaching and Learning to provide professional development opportunities. Upcoming activities include water drum teachings on November 12 and a presentation to high school students by the DEI Coordinator from DCTC. Quilts will also be ordered for this year's graduates.

A recap of moccasin making was shared, along with professional development efforts focused on language learning, sharing cultural knowledge with student groups, and providing non-biased observations to support special education case managers.

Temira Butler provided an update on the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) grant, which will support the development of a maple tree grove and native plant pollinator gardens. These projects will create outdoor learning opportunities and encourage collaboration with Native communities.

NAPAC and Tribal Education Updates

Professional development sessions were held October 27–28 at Treasure Island, featuring presentations on program leadership and evaluation, the Native Language Revitalization Grant, Indigenous Education for All (IEFA), and collaboration between American Indian Parent Advisory Councils (AIPACs) and district personnel.

Spring consultations are scheduled for April 26–29 at Prairie Island.

Upcoming Events

- **December 3, 2026 – Flag Hanging Potluck Celebration and NAPAC Meeting:** Hastings Middle School. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m.
- **February 20–21, 2027 – Ribbon Shirt and Skirt Making:** Curriculum Center, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
- **March 24–26, 2027 – Minnesota Indian Education Association (MIEA) Conference:** Mystic Lake Center, Prior Lake, Minnesota.
- **May 4, 2027 – Graduation Ceremony:** Hastings High School Commons.