

Native American Education Program Updates & Public Hearing

Monday, April 27, 2026 5:00 pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 821 1584 0327

Meeting Notes

Quick recap

The meeting focused on planning for Twin Rivers Unified School District's Native American Education Program, with participants discussing ideas for upcoming activities and events. The group, including Heriberto, Jessica, Ryan, Samantha, Mike, and others, explored various programming options including tutoring services, cultural activities like drum making and culinary experiences, field trips to cultural events, and the possibility of implementing land acknowledgments in the district. Participants shared experiences from working with similar programs in other districts and discussed ways to engage families, including rotating events across different school locations and incorporating community partners. The group agreed to meet again on May 11th to further develop plans for the upcoming school year, with particular focus on how to utilize the approximately \$23,000-24,000 budget allocated for Native American programming.

Next steps

- Send calendar hold and details for May 11th 6pm in-person planning meeting at district office (or to be determined), inviting all current NAPAC/parent committee members and interested participants
- Share meeting notes and recording link with all participants after the meeting
- Reach out to board members to discuss land acknowledgement implementation
- Explore grant opportunities from Red Hawk, SNAC, and other organizations for program supplies and materials

Collaboration

- All interested participants: Attend May 11th planning meeting to develop detailed budget and programming plan for 2023-24 school year
- Send official board communication inviting board members and Dr. Martinez to the Spring Gathering
- Heriberto/Team: Consider implementing rotating meeting locations at different school sites for better access
- Heriberto/Team: Plan for May 14th Spring Gathering event, including coordination of materials and potential potluck
- Send student count information to Samantha for necklace preparation
- Consider creating a Doodle poll or scheduling survey for future regular meeting dates
- Investigate possibility of using Native Dads Network's nonprofit status for grant applications
- Consider tabling at district food distribution events to recruit Native American families and students

- Plan for summer programming, including potential cultural theme for district-wide enrichment
- Explore development of official TRUSD Native American program logo/branding
- Plan back-to-school kickoff event for 2023-24 school year focused on Native American community
- Follow up on potential mural project funding and implementation
- Plan regular (monthly) meetings for ongoing program coordination
- Create and distribute survey (Google form/QR code) at Spring Gathering to collect community input on programming and locations
- Research and plan for field trips to Big Time at Indian Grinding Rock and Honor Elders Day at State Indian Museum
- Coordinate with district leadership to include Spring Gathering announcement in Dr. Martinez's Friday update
- Plan for and implement land acknowledgement process with board and community input
- Research and plan for potential dedicated Native American program space within district
- Coordinate with Walmart and other organizations for potential backpack donations for students
- Plan and implement regular rotating events at different school sites throughout district
- Coordinate with Native Alliance and other partners for potential after-school programming for junior high/high school students
- Plan and implement suicide prevention, cultural bullying, and other awareness programming for students
- Plan and implement book club and literacy programming for younger students
- Plan and implement drumming, skirt making, and other cultural programming for students
- Plan and implement tutoring continuation and expansion for students
- Plan and implement culinary programming (fry bread, smoked salmon, etc.) for students and families

Summary

Native American Education Program Overview

The meeting focused on discussing the Native American Education Program in Twin Rivers School District. Heriberto Soto led the discussion, providing an overview of the program's history, current status, and goals. The program has been running for about 5 years with a budget of around \$24,000-\$25,000, primarily funding field trips, consumables, and enrichment activities for Native American and Alaskan Native students. The current student population stands at 83 students, with 4 seniors preparing to graduate. The team is currently in the process of applying for a Title VI grant and seeking input from families on program needs and priorities for the upcoming year.

Indigenous Education Program Planning

The meeting focused on discussing programming ideas for an Indigenous education program. Jessica proposed continuing tutoring services and implementing new activities including ribbon skirt and shirt making, drumming, and Indigenous cuisine. Ryan expressed support for these initiatives, particularly emphasizing the importance of tutoring for student needs. Samantha shared extensive experience from previous programs, suggesting activities like smoked salmon making, fry bread, drum making, and cultural field trips, while Michelle emphasized the need for younger student-focused activities including art and crafts. The group discussed potentially planning a back-to-school celebration and explored the possibility of developing a summer program, with Travis noting that summer program planning typically begins in October.

Summer Enrichment Program Planning

Travis proposed developing a summer enrichment program with a Native history or Indigenous themes, incorporating activities like art, culinary, and land use education. Heriberto discussed the need to determine meeting frequency and focus areas for family engagement programs, referencing the work done with Woodland Joint as a model. Samantha shared positive feedback about tutoring services and suggested expanding programs to include disaster preparedness, cultural education, suicide prevention, and Narcan training for students.

Native Student Programming Initiatives

The group discussed ideas for programming that addresses deeper issues facing students, including topics like suicide prevention and cultural education. Samantha shared personal experiences about bullying and suggested involving Native dads and community partners like Native Alliance to provide cultural education. Heriberto mentioned they have approximately \$23,000 in funds available for use with consumables, field trips, cultural competency training, and staff activities, including a recent MOU with the Native Dads Network. Jessica suggested exploring field trips to college campuses and cultural events as potential engagement activities, and proposed developing a TRUSD Native logo for branding and swag.

Parent Committee Outreach Improvements

Michael shared suggestions for improving the parent committee's outreach efforts, including creating a new logo for \$350-400 through a trusted graphic designer and purchasing a canopy, table, and tablecloth for tabling events. He emphasized the importance of establishing a dedicated space for students and families to feel at home, combining educational programming with activities like beading or pottery. Jessica expressed interest in the idea of creating a sacred space or mobile unit that could be used across different school locations, though she acknowledged space constraints in schools.

In-Person Meeting Planning Discussion

The team discussed plans for an in-person meeting to discuss program development and planning for next year. Heriberto and Jessica suggested meeting in June, preferably before mid-June, to brainstorm ideas and prepare for the upcoming school year. Samantha shared information about a potential field trip to Celeste Indian Grinding Rock in September for Native

American students to experience traditional cultural events. The group expressed interest in organizing this field trip as a valuable learning opportunity for students.

Native American Programming Plans

The group discussed plans for Native American student programming and community events. They explored ideas including rotating events across different schools to improve accessibility, implementing land acknowledgments in district meetings and events, and organizing community gatherings with food sharing from different tribes. The team agreed to reach out to board members about implementing land acknowledgments and to plan a back-to-school kickoff event with food and cultural activities before the fall gathering in November.

Native American Programming Budget Planning

The meeting focused on planning for Native American programming and budget allocation for the 2026-27 school year. Heriberto explained they have approximately \$23,000-24,000 in native programming funds and discussed how these could be used for summer programming, materials for upcoming events, and initiatives for the next school year. The group agreed to meet on May 11th at 6pm in person to further plan programming details and discuss budget allocation. Samantha suggested exploring additional funding opportunities through grants from organizations like Red Hawk Shingle Springs and Wilton Rancheria, and proposed setting up tables at food distribution events to reach more families. The group also discussed the upcoming spring gathering on May 14th and ways to increase community engagement and participation in events.

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