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# American Indian Education Aid Application

School Year (SY) 2023–24 | Fiscal Year (FY) 2024

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This section asks for pertinent information including the name and number of the district, charter school, or Tribal contract school, the name and contact information for applicable staff, and the name and contact information for the AIPAC chairperson.

## Section 2: The Program Plan

This affords applicants with the opportunity to provide a thorough narrative on the operations and goals of the American Indian Education program within the district, charter, or Tribal contract school. This section is governed by six areas of focus found within [Minnesota Statutes 124D.74, subdivision 1](#):

1. Support postsecondary preparation for pupils;
2. Support the academic achievement of American Indian students;
3. Make curriculum relevant to the needs, interests, and cultural heritage of American Indian pupils;
4. Provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of American Indian pupils;
5. Develop intercultural awareness among pupils, parents, and staff; and,
6. Supplement (not supplant) state and federal educational and co-curricular programs.

The six areas of focus must contain the details of the program(s) that are to be implemented. The bulk of the budget may not be funneled into just one of the areas of focus. The program details must align to [Minnesota Statutes 124D.81, subdivision 2](#), and must specifically address each of the following:

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated, and monitored; and,
- f. Project expenditures for programs under sections 124D.71 to 124D.82 (see required supplements below).

## Section 3: The Certification Statement

This section is a signed declaration, affirming that all parties have reviewed the Office of American Indian Education's resources pertaining to AIEA, the program plan was created collaboratively and in full consultation with the AIPAC, and the AIPAC is afforded the opportunity to make suggestions, review data, and collaborate with staff on the goals, initiatives, and expenditures outlined within the application narrative. It requires the hand-written signatures of the superintendent or charter/tribal school director, the primary American Indian Education staff person, and the AIPAC chair.

**New:** Through the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session, any district, charter school, or Tribal contract school that has 100 or more state-identified American Indian students must have a dedicated American Indian Education coordinator and provide American Indian culture and language classes. If this is applicable to your district,

charter school, or Tribal contract school, please ensure it is filled out completely. For any additional questions, please email: [MDE.AIEA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.AIEA@state.mn.us).

## Required Supplements

In addition to this application, participants are required to fill out and submit a budget worksheet and an AIPAC roster. Both items are available as separate downloads on the [American Indian Education Aid webpage](#). Applications that are submitted without both of these required items will not be accepted.

### The Program Budget Worksheet

The budget worksheet is a downloadable excel workbook that must accompany the AIEA application at the time of submission, and it must align to the AIEA award estimate. It is formatted for ease of use. Budget worksheets must detail the projected expenditures that will support the activities and initiatives outlined within the program plan narrative, and it supports adherence to item “f” above.

Applicants that propose using 50% or more of AIEA on staff salaries must also fill out the Budget Supplement tab. See the Salaries section of the program guidance document for more information.

### The AIPAC Roster

The AIPAC roster is a downloadable supplement that must accompany the AIEA application at the time of submission.

## The Application Deadline

In order to afford participants more flexibility to collaborate with their AIPACs and write their program plans, the American Indian Education Aid Program uses a submission window.

All applications must be submitted September 25–November 30. Extensions beyond November 30 will not be granted.

### Submit

Submit your completed application, your budget worksheet, and your AIPAC roster to: [MDE.AIEA@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.AIEA@state.mn.us).

## **Applicant Information**

### **District, Charter, or Tribal Contract School Information**

District/Charter/Tribal Contract School Name: Little Falls Community Schools

District/Charter/Tribal Contract School Number: 482

### **Superintendent, Charter School, or Tribal Contract School Director**

Name: Greg Johnson

Email: gjohnson@lfalls.k12.mn.us

Telephone: (320)632-2001

### **American Indian Education Staff**

Primary Staff Name: Kris Mitberg

Email: kmitberg@lfalls.k12.mn.us

Telephone: (320) 616-6233

Secondary Staff Name: Kara Schilling

Email: kschilling@lfalls.k12.mn.us

Telephone: (320) 616-2313

### **American Indian Parent Advisory Committee Chairperson**

Name: Michelle Dahlberg

Email: mldahlberg@charter.net

Telephone: (320) 360-0183

# The SY23-24 American Indian Education Program Plan

## Area 1: Support Postsecondary Preparation for American Indian Pupils

Provide a program narrative for how the district will support postsecondary preparation for American Indian pupils. This narrative must address items a–e, and is limited to 350 words.

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and,
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated and monitored.

### Narrative:

The Little Falls Community Schools' American Indian Educations (AIE) designated staff member (with assistance of the AIPAC) will organize and facilitate opportunities for American Indian students around career and college readiness. The district will utilize knowledge around career options by working with the Career Force Center located in Little Falls, MN. American Indian Aid will be used to offer stipends to those participating and leading this work to support our American Indian population, including the cost of transportation to events, and a meal for those in attendance (budget worksheet). Attendance and participation for any events will be taken and retained.

We want there to be no barriers to post secondary education for those American Indian students wishing to pursue it; the district will use its American Indian aid to cover fees for college placement exams and college application fees. The aid will be used to fund college visits for interested American Indian students to colleges within Minnesota. The American Indian education staff member will maintain records of fund usage. The guidance counselor will inform American Indian students of Minnesota colleges that are for free or reduced tuition to American Indian students. A record of these planning meetings with American Indian students will be retained. A review of the participation percentages of eligible students in each of these efforts will provide a measure of success. Feedback from students will be solicited and reviewed to gauge the impact of these efforts on participating students post-secondary decision making.

Selected Little Falls Community Middle and High School students participate in the AVID program in grades 6-12 (Advancement via Individual Determination). Because AVID focuses on academic success and post-secondary preparation for traditionally under-represented student groups, including American Indians, participation of American Indian students in AVID will be monitored and encouraged. AVID rosters will be reviewed and documented to measure progress towards the goal of inclusion of American Indian students in this program that will support academic success and post-secondary preparation.

American Indian student enrollment in advanced coursework, College-in-the-Schools, PSEO, and Co-articulated and certificate bearing courses will be encouraged, facilitated, and monitored annually by the American Indian Education staff member. Class rosters for these courses will be reviewed and documented to measure progress towards the goal of inclusion of American Indian students in rigorous and relevant post-secondary courses.

## Area 2: Support the Academic Achievement of American Indian Pupils

Provide a program narrative for how the district will support the academic achievement of American Indian students. This narrative must address items a–e, and is limited to 350 words.

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and,
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated and monitored.

### Narrative:

To better support the academic achievement of American Indian Students, the American Indian staff member will begin monitoring the academic progress of identified American Indian students in the district. Direct communication to the families of the students identified in our district, and the students themselves, will be the starting point of our work, and 100% contact is our goal. A communication log will be maintained and monitored for progress toward our goal. Permission to support students in the following ways will be obtained before proceeding: outreach to students' teachers will be made for those students who appear to be struggling in one or more academic areas. The AIE staff member and student service support will communicate with students and families to assure awareness of existing supports at the relevant building and grade level. The goal will be to have 90% of our American Indian students engaging with relevant additional academic support. These include, for example, intervention time and school-wide family nights at our elementary schools, Flyer Time (intervention and academic support) staffed by district teachers for academic-focused session at the middle school, and Academic Boosters (after school homework help two days per week), and Flyer Time (academic support) at the high school, also staffed by district teachers. The district will offer one-on-one tutoring sessions for American Indian students who need additional support outside of school around academic achievement (see budget worksheet). The district will work to eliminate any barriers to access (transportation to be provided for after school academic boosters and family nights for example) on a case-by-case basis. American Indian Aid may be utilized for transportation, as no other district sponsored transportation is offered for after-school supports (see budget worksheets). Rosters of student attendees are maintained for these programs. The AIE staff member will monitor these rosters and document participation of any American Indian students (and families) as a way of monitoring progress toward our goal.

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### **Area 3: Make Curriculum Relevant to the Needs, Interests, and Cultural Heritage of American Indian Pupils**

Provide a program narrative for making curriculum relevant to the needs, interests, and cultural heritage of American Indian pupils. This narrative must address items a–e, and is limited to 350 words.

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and,
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated and monitored.

#### **Narrative:**

An inventory and review of media center and classroom library materials will be organized and conducted by the media specialist staff member. The goal of this work is to assure full and proper representation of American Indians in the materials throughout the district. We want our American Indian students to see themselves in the literature they read. We need all students to see factual and positive depictions of American Indians in their reading.

A survey was designed by the AIE staff member and distributed to classroom teachers and media center personnel. A review of the results was conducted, and with reference to the Native Authored Book Collection, American Indian Library Association, American Indians in Children’s Literature, and other resources made available on the Teaching and Learning page of the American Indian page, list of areas of need was prepared and prioritized, and a list of suggested purchases will be made, in consultation with member of the AIPAC. Surveys and lists will be retained.

Consideration will also be given to media center habits based on age group, so that money is being spent where students are most likely to encounter literature. Current usage information indicates a reduced check out of materials from our high school media center, so spending dollars there may or may not be as effective as putting more dollars into the teachers’ resources and classroom libraries. Purchases will be made and logged as to where the books are being placed. Standard check out data will be monitored from the media centers, and a system will be devised to monitor use in classroom libraries.

Year one included a review of elementary materials, and year two will include a review of secondary materials, as Focus Area 1 time effort and funding is primarily dedicated to secondary students in our district, this work can begin at the elementary. This work also supports areas four and five.



#### **Area 4: Provide Positive Reinforcement of the Self-Image of American Indian Pupils**

Provide a program narrative for how the district will provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of American Indian pupils. This narrative must address items a-e, and is limited to 350 words.

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and,
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated and monitored.

#### **Narrative:**

The district, under guidance from the AIPAC, will promote opportunities for American Indian students to participate in activities aimed at the goal of positive reinforcement of self-image for Indigenous people.

The communication outreach marketing and recruitment will need to be thoughtful, persistent, and individualized. The AIE staff member will reach out to families of identified American Indian students informing them of this plan and inviting their participation in advance of activities that support this and other focus areas.

Given the small number of our American Indian students across the district, let alone in any one building, the work in this area will be largely individualized and will likely be delivered in individual or small group settings by AIE staff members (see budget worksheet). The AIE aid will be used to purchase age appropriate materials related to American Indian culture (see budget sheet). The AIE staff will visit each school, utilizing time that is least disruptive to the student schedules, meet with interested students to complete culturally relevant and affirming activities. AIE funding will be used towards a small percentage of the staff member's salary (see budget sheet), as well as locally identified AI adults who wish to serve as mentors to these children may also be sought and utilized for these purposes.

The media specialists will seek an author visit to the elementary and middle school schools to provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of a Native American pupils (see budget worksheet). These efforts will be documented from planning to participation with the goal of providing positive reinforcement of self-image for American Indian students. The responsibility, coordination and monitoring of these efforts will reside with a designated American Indian Education staff member, with participation always welcome from the AIPAC and identified students. Follow-up surveys and conversations with participants will gather information for the program improvement. The district will seek culturally relevant field trips throughout the school year for American Indian students to attend. Transportation will be provided for these trips and families are invited as well. Members of the AIPAC will assist the AI staff member in chaperoning and stipends will be provided for their time. The cost of the trip, transportation, and meals as well as stipends for the AIPAC chaperones - will be paid for out of American Indian Education Aid (see budget worksheet).

## **Area 5: Develop Intercultural Awareness Among Pupils, Parents, and Staff**

Please provide a program narrative explaining how the district will develop intercultural awareness among pupils, parents, and staff. This narrative must address items a–e, and is limited to 350 words.

- a. Identify the measures that will be used to meet the requirements of sections 124D.71 to 124D.82;
- b. Identify the activities, methods and programs that will be implemented to meet the educational needs of American Indian students;
- c. Describe the district goals and objectives, and how those objectives will be achieved;
- d. Demonstrate that courses do not have a discriminatory effect within the meaning of section 124D.74, subdivision 5; and,
- e. Describe how the program will be organized, staffed, coordinated and monitored.

### **Narrative:**

Much work can be done in the area of developing intercultural awareness among students, parents and staff. American Indian community members and the AIPAC members with specific skills will be approached to offer sessions around language and culture, and their stipends and related expenses (travel, meal with American Indian student participants, etc. will be paid for with American Indian Aid (see budget worksheets). Additionally, professional development around American Indian culture and heritage for staff members will be actively sought out by the AIE staff member with the goal of developing intercultural awareness among the staff.

A member of the APAC mentioned her registration of Ojibwe Rosetta Stone. Our plan will include the opportunity for each identified student and family to register for the Ojibwe Rosetta Stone program (see budget worksheet). This program can be learned at the learner's pace. Throughout the school year the APAC member will check and connect with those students who are learning the language! Additionally, opportunities for the learners to practice Ojibwe with native speakers as a group will be offered to the families (see budget worksheet).

A current course offered in our high school is Planning and Planting the School Garden. A knowledgeable American Indian speaker or speaker of the APAC will be invited to speak to the class about the history and benefits of the Three Sisters Planning. A member of the APAC suggested we look into the history and methods of seasonal traditional harvesting of various native plants and foods. This could also be a great addition to the Farm to Table course offered at our high school.

Each of these efforts will be documented from planning to participation, with the goal of bringing greater awareness and appreciation for American Indian culture. The responsibility of this coordination and monitoring will reside with the American Indian education staff member, with participation always welcome from the AIPAC and identified students.

### **Area 6: Supplement (not supplant) State and Federal Educational and Co-curricular Programs**

Please provide a program narrative for how the initiatives outlined in program areas 1–5 will supplement (not supplant) state and federal educational and co-curricular programs, specific to American Indian students. This narrative is limited to 350 words.

#### **Narrative:**

The activities planned and outlined above are new offerings, new learning, and new opportunities for American Indian students and families. Such as, the monitoring and funding for these functions can easily be kept separate and the district from other distinct programming.

## The Certification Statement

By physically signing below, you hereby certify that the American Indian Education Aid application components have been developed in **full collaboration with the district, charter school, or Tribal contract school's American Indian Parent Advisory Committee**, pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.78](#), and you attest that:

- All parties have reviewed the Office of American Indian Education's resources pertaining to American Indian Education Aid, and,
- All goals, narratives, and budgets were discussed in detail and agreed upon by all parties, and,
- All programming initiatives supplement, and do not supplant any state or federal educational or co-curricular programs, and,
- *If applicable*, your district, charter school, or Tribal contract school has a dedicated American Indian Education Coordinator and provides American Indian culture and language classes.

**New:** *Through the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session, districts, charter schools, or Tribal contract schools with 100 or more state-identified American Indian students are to have the following implemented during the 2023-2024 school year. If this is applicable to your district, charter school, or Tribal contract school, please check the boxes below:*

*Minnesota State Statutes 124D.76, Dedicated American Indian Education Coordinator*

- Yes, we have a dedicated American Indian Education Coordinator*
- No, we do not have a dedicated American Indian Education Coordinator*

*Minnesota State Statutes 124D.74, Subd. 7, American Indian culture and language classes*

- Yes, we provide American Indian culture and language classes*
- No, we do not provide American Indian culture and language classes*

Superintendent or Charter/Tribal Contract School Director:

Director of American Indian Education:

American Indian Parent Advisory Committee Chair:

## American Indian Education Aid

The American Indian Education Aid (AIEA) program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and provides per-pupil funding to districts, charter schools, and Tribal contract schools that report a state American Indian student count of 20 or more on the October 1 MARSS (Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System) reporting deadline. Twenty American Indian students generate a base award of \$40,000, and each American Indian student beyond that generates an additional \$500.

Districts, charter schools, and Tribal contract schools that meet the 20-student threshold are notified of their aid eligibility the spring prior to the school year in which they are eligible to receive the aid. This communication includes the state American Indian student count along with the maximum aid award that those students generate.

Please carefully review the American Indian Education Aid program guidance document located on the [American Indian Education Aid webpage](#) prior to completing this application. This document provides in-depth information about American Indian student counts, aid awards, aid distribution, and expenditures, as it will help to inform staff and American Indian Parent Advisory Committees (AIPACs) to collaborate on the required application narratives and budget.

## The Application Overview

This application is comprised of three required sections. Incomplete applications will be returned for revision.

### Section 1: Applicant Information