# American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) Bylaws

# Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709

## Article I: Name

The name of the committee shall be the Duluth Public Schools American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC).

## Article II: Purpose

**The purpose of the AIPAC is to**

1. Ensure the educational rights of American Indian students are met within Duluth Public Schools.
2. Advocate for culturally relevant programs and practices that support the educational success of American Indian students.
3. Serve as an advisory body to the school board, administration, and staff on matters related to American Indian education.
4. Review and approve the Duluth Public Schools's American Indian Education Program plan and provide input to ensure alignment with the needs of American Indian students.
5. Comply with Minnesota Statute 124D.78, which requires the committee to provide input on educational programs and services specifically designed to meet the needs of American Indian students.

## Article III: Composition

### Section I: Eligibility for AIPAC Participation

AIPAC welcomes the broad participation of the caregivers, community members, and educators who are committed to the success and wellbeing of American Indian students and a thriving American Indian education program.

According to Minnesota Statute 124D.78 Subd.3, the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee must be composed of:

- parents or guardians of American Indian children eligible to be enrolled in American Indian education programs;
- American Indian secondary students;
- American Indian family members of students eligible to be enrolled in American Indian education programs;
- American Indian language and culture education teachers and paraprofessionals;

- American Indian teachers;
- American Indian district employees;
- American Indian counselors;
- adult American Indian people enrolled in educational programs;
- and American Indian community members.

The majority of each committee must be the parents or guardians of the American Indian children enrolled or eligible to be enrolled in the programs.

### Section II: Membership

- Persons eligible for AIPAC participation under Article III, Section I are considered AIPAC members when they attend an AIPAC meeting and sign in to the meeting.
- Persons participating in an AIPAC meeting in their official as a Duluth Public Schools district employee are not considered AIPAC members and must sign in to the meeting accordingly.

### Section III: Voting membership

- All persons signing in to a AIPAC meeting are considered voting members, excluding persons participating in an AIPAC meeting in their official as a Duluth Public Schools district employee.
- The AIPAC Chair (or the officer presiding over the meeting in place of the Chair) will abstain from voting, except in the case when that vote is needed to break a tie.

## Article IV: Officers

### Section I: Officers

The officers of the AIPAC shall be elected from the voting membership and consist of the following positions:

1. Chairperson or Co-chairperson's
2. Vice-Chairperson
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

Voting members with caregiver experience of students in the district are encouraged to serve as officers. The intent of the AIPAC is to provide for the maximum involvement of parents of American Indian children enrolled in American Indian education programs.

### Section II: Election of Officers

Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the voting membership at the final meeting of the school year. Officers shall serve a term of one (1) year and may be re-elected.

Prior to the election, prospective Officers will share background about their experience with the District and/or as a caregiver with the membership.

In the event officers are not elected at the final meeting of the school year, the previous officers shall be retained as interim until an election meeting is established at the start of the new school year.

### Section III: Duties of Officers

1. Chairperson(s): Presides over all meetings, develops the meeting agenda in consultation with the Duluth Public Schools' Indian Education Coordinator or representative, and represents the AIPAC in front of the school board for Annual Compliance, events that are planned by the AIPAC, or other public forums as necessary.
2. Vice-Chairperson: Assists the Chairperson(s) with developing meeting agendas and assumes their duties in their absence.
3. Secretary: Maintains meeting minutes, attendance records, and committee correspondence. May preside over meetings if the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson cannot attend.
4. Treasurer: Maintains records of fundraising funds generated, utilized, and reports those records to the committee quarterly. May preside over meetings if the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson cannot attend.

All officers will work to create a respectful committee environment that upholds the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

## Article V: Meetings

### Section I: Open Meeting Law

It is the understanding of AIPAC that the committee is subject to Open Meeting Law under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13.D. The rationale for this understanding includes:

- School districts with 10 or more American Indian students are required by law to establish an AIPAC.
- AIPAC has decision making authority regarding American Indian Education Aid funds and the annual compliance determination.
- AIPAC may have significant influence on district programming and the experience of students and families in the district.

Additional information about Open Meeting Law can be found at the Minnesota Data Practices Office.

## Section II: Schedule

1. The AIPAC shall meet at least four (4) times per school year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. Monthly or weekly meetings are recommended by the Office of American Indian Education at MDE.
2. Meeting dates, times, and locations shall be established at the beginning of each school year and shared with all members and stakeholders.
    a. Public Posting on the American Indian Education Webpage
    b. Public Posting on the Duluth Public Schools District Calendar
    c. In addition, communication may be shared via:
        i. Public Posting on Duluth Public Schools' Social Media
        ii. Parent Square Notification
        iii. Monthly or Quarterly Newsletter
3. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the chairperson(s) with at least 5 days notice.
4. Special meetings may be called by a majority of the voting membership from the most recent meeting provided that:
    a. Notice is provided at least 5 days in advance
    b. Notice must include date, time, location and specify all business to be included in the meeting

    A quorum must be present to conduct official business. Special meeting topics will be limited to items of business listed in the meeting notice.

## Section III: Quorum

A quorum for conducting official AIPAC business shall consist of the Chair (or presiding officer) plus four additional voting members. At least three of the members present must be caregivers to achieve quorum.

## Section IV: Meeting Decorum

- Members are expected to practice the Seven Grandfather Teachings (Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom) throughout AIPAC meetings.
- All AIPAC members and attendees will work together to create a safe and welcoming forum that lifts up the best of the community.
- The Chair is responsible for running the meeting. Members and attendees are expected to respect the leadership of the Chair (or presiding officer).
- The Chair may offer reminders to the group or to specific individuals to return to the Seven Grandfather Teachings during the meeting.

- If after a third reminder, one or more members cannot regain their sense of balance and their ability to participate productively in the meeting, the Chair will ask them to leave the meeting.
- The following behaviors are strictly prohibited. The Chair will ask members and attendees to leave the meeting if they:
    - Exhibit intimidating or harassing behaviors or make threats of violence
    - Attend the meeting under the influence of drugs or alcohol

## Section V: Decision Making

1. Decisions of the AIPAC shall be made by a majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting, provided there is a quorum.
    a. All voting members must sign in on the AIPAC roster the day the vote occurs
    b. The AIPAC Chair (or presiding officer) will abstain from voting, except in the case when that vote is needed to break a tie.
2. To allow for maximum transparency of the American Indian Community, email votes are not permissible.
3. The certification page of the American Indian Education State Aid application can only be signed after the full and complete application is presented at an AIPAC Meeting and a vote to approve has occurred
    a. By physically signing, the Chair certifies that the American Indian Education Aid application components have been developed in full collaboration with the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.78, and
    b. Attests that:
        i. All parties are aware of Minnesota statutes pertaining to American Indian Education Aid as laid forth in the Indian Education Act of 1988.
        ii. All parties have reviewed the Office of American Indian Education's resources and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) indicator data pertaining to American Indian Education Aid
        iii. All goals, narratives, and budgets were discussed in detail and agreed upon by all parties
        iv. All programming initiatives supplement, and do not supplant any state or federal educational or cocurricular programs.

### Section VI: Committees

The AIPAC may form subcommittees as necessary to accomplish specific tasks or goals. These subcommittees will not serve as decision making bodies and shall report their findings or recommendations to the full committee for action.

- If a subcommittee is expected to have a quorum of members (as defined in Article V, Section II), the date, time, and location of the meeting will be posted on Duluth Public School American Indian webpage in a timely manner.
- If posting the meeting in a timely manner is not possible, officers will not attend the meeting (thus ensuring the subcommittee does not reach quorum).

Teams of volunteers for event planning and set up that are not addressing business items are not considered subcommittees.

## Article VI: AIPAC conflict resolution process

Article VI applies to conflict among AIPAC members.

The American Indian Parent Advisory Committee values respectful relationships, open communication, and shared responsibility. The purpose of a conflict resolution process is to support a fair, respectful, and culturally appropriate resolution to issues that arise within AIPAC. All conflict resolution processes shall be handled in a manner that upholds the Seven Grandfather Teachings and furthers the purpose of the AIPAC as listed under Article II.

### Section I: Considerations

- Parties closest to the conflict will exercise self-determination in deciding how to approach the conflict and will develop mutually agreed upon next steps such as the options listed in Article VI, Sections II and III.
    - AIPAC Officers or peer members not party to the conflict may help facilitate decision making on which conflict resolution approach to utilize
    - If the Officers are party to the conflict and parties cannot decide on a next step, they can seek expertise listed in Section III to help move a conflict resolution process forward.
    - If parties to the conflict cannot come to a voluntary agreement on which conflict resolution approach to utilize, AIPAC members may vote to require a conflict resolution process among the parties.
- AIPAC will be mindful of compensating community members or elders for their assistance in resolving disputes. Free or low cost mediation or facilitation resources may also be used.
- If a dispute is not directly related to AIPAC agenda items or core purpose as stated in Article II, committee members are asked to reflect on if and how the dispute should be part of whole committee discussions, given that committee time is limited. AIPAC

members should strive to not let outside grievances and interpersonal matters interfere with AIPAC's purpose as stated in Article II. That said, AIPAC may be an appropriate place to work through outside challenges depending on the circumstances. The appropriate approach can be decided on a case-by-case basis.

- AIPAC members are advised to call law enforcement in the case of threats of violence or other personal or public safety concerns.

## Section II: Conflict Resolution Approaches

When disagreements or concerns arise among members related to the work of the AIPAC or affecting the work of AIPAC, parties will use one or more of the following approaches to attempt to resolve the dispute in a productive manner:

1) Have self-guided conversation. When possible, the parties involved can make a good-faith effort to resolve the issue together through respectful dialogue, mutual respect, and a commitment to building shared understanding.
2) Hold a community peacemaking circle or restorative circle with AIPAC members.
3) Engage in spiritual healing practices.
4) Have a one-on-one or small group facilitated conversation among parties.
5) Participate in conflict resolution training to increase capacity to resolve issues.
6) Institute a waiting period of one month to see if the dispute dissipates. If it still feels urgent after one month, proceed with other steps.
7) Other options as identified by AIPAC.

## Section III: Dispute Resolution Support Options

The AIPAC Chair or another officer may request facilitation, mediation, or restorative practice support from one or more sources available to them. The role of the support person or organization is not to fix the problem for the parties or make decisions on their behalf, but rather to hold space for the parties to have meaningful dialogue and work towards a mutually agreeable path forward. The resources list below must be willing and able to support the issue and must not have a conflict of interest:

1) A trusted community member or elder with relevant expertise.
2) A fellow member of AIPAC with relevant experience who can be impartial to the issue.
3) The Minnesota Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution (OCDR). Note that OCDR can also help connect AIPAC to other practitioners or offer general guidance on approaches.
4) Community Mediation Minnesota - a statewide network of certified nonprofit service providers with skilled mediators who offer low cost services.
5) A mediation or restorative practitioner on contract with the District.
6) The Coordinator of American Indian Education.

7) Other options as identified by AIPAC.

## Article VII

For conflict involving teachers, staff, or administrators, AIPAC will use one or more of the following approaches to attempt to resolve the dispute in a productive manger that serves the purposes of AIPAC as stated under Article II:

1) Engage in discussions at AIPAC meetings as needed to understand the issue and the concerns.
2) Submit a grievance to the District, using the District grievance procedure.
3) Use the collective voice of AIPAC to advocate for a resolution to the issue.
4) Consider adjustments to the American Indian Education Plan to address the concern.
5) Request that the district engage in a conflict resolution process.
6) Other options as identified by AIPAC.

## Article VIII: Compliance with Minnesota Statutes

The AIPAC will adhere to all requirements under Minnesota Statute 124D.78 and any other applicable state and federal laws pertaining to the education of American Indian students, including:

- Submitting an annual vote of concurrence or non-concurrence with Duluth Public Schools' educational offerings for American Indian students.
- Reviewing and recommending educational plans to meet the unique needs of American Indian students.
- Advising Duluth Public Schools on how to address any identified educational disparities or needs of American Indian students.

## Article IX: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the AIPAC by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present, provided that the proposed amendments have been posted to the American Indian Education Webpage along with notice of the date that the vote will occur, and there is an open public comment period prior to the vote