

American Indian Native Alaska Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee Committee Meeting Meeting Minutes

Approved by PAC on 8/19/2026

Meeting Details:

Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Location: Board Room, SJUSD District Office

Start Time: 6:25 p.m.

End Time: 9:17 p.m.

Staff Present:

Harvey Oaxaca, Assistant Superintendent Educational Services

Genoveva Mendoza Navarrete, Program Manager EL & Multicultural Education Dept.

Takoa Stathem-Raney, Secondary Program Specialist, EL & Multicultural Department

Ashley Brady, AIEP School Community Worker

Members Present:

Buck Ellingson, Chair (year 1 of 2)

Amber Butler, Secretary/Treasurer (year 1 of 2)

Calvin Hedrick, Member-At-Large (year 1 of 2) (arrived approximately 8 p.m.)

Kelly Bencken, Member-At-Large and Teacher Representative (year 1 of 1)

Donna Madsen, Member-At-Large, Elder (year 1 of 1)

Eva Ellingson, Serving As Delegate for Hattie Coleman

Members Absent:

Albert Tillman, Member-At-Large (year 1 of 1)

Chrystal Bernasconi, Member-At-Large (year 1 of 1)

Hattie Coleman, Member-At-Large (year 2 of 2)

Lena Morales, Vice Chair (year 2 of 2)

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Meeting began when quorum was present. The meeting was opened with participant introductions. Members shared roles, affiliations, and connections to the Native community. Representation included program staff, PAC members, and district leadership.

No public comments or outside visitors were present.

Discussion Highlights

- Emphasis on community representation and cultural connections
- Acknowledgment of both Native and non-Native allies participating in PAC work

Summary

- **Decision:** Proceed with meeting; no public input
 - **Next Steps:** None
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2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes from the prior meeting were reviewed.

Discussion Highlights

Final Action

- Motion made, seconded, and unanimously approved

Summary

- **Decision:** Previous minutes approved
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3. Minutes Development Process

- New results of using copilot to create meeting minutes was discussed
- Multiple members expressed concern that the minutes lacked sufficient detail
- Feedback emphasized:
 - Absent PAC members, parents or community members reviewing minutes would not understand discussions
 - Missing context around key agenda items
- Recognition that previous and current process is time-intensive (transcription + AI summarization)

Staff explained the technical and time challenges of producing minutes:

- Long recordings (4–5 hours) generate extremely large transcripts
- Transcripts (~500 pages) must be manually processed in segments

Discussion Highlights

- Consideration of alternative approaches (speech-to-text, directing copilot to create more detailed summarization of meeting minutes)
- Agreement that current output is too minimal for stakeholders
- Need to define expectations for level of detail

Summary

- **Decision:** Improve quality and usability of minutes
- **Next Steps:**
 - Instruct copilot to create more detailed meeting minutes when inputting transcripts

4. 2025/2026 Approximate Budget Allocation

Financial Status

Approximate amounts were discussed and reviewed for budget.

- Estimated remaining funds ranged between:
 - ~\$11,300 (earlier estimate)
 - ~\$3,000 (refined working estimate pending reconciliation)

Key Financial Updates

- **Books:**
 - Budgeted: \$4,086
 - Actual: \$3,250.97

- Difference due to availability limits on certain titles
- **Senior Celebration:**
 - Budgeted: \$2,400
 - Accounted:
 - Dancers: \$1,000
 - Drummers: \$500
 - Speakers: \$400
 - Remaining discrepancy (~\$600) tied to pending decoration costs
- **Supplies:**
 - Cardstock: under budget

Challenge

- Potential vendor for clapper stick workshop may not be able to complete required service agreement

Options Discussed

- Presenter agreement (less formal, may not meet current policy)
- Nonprofit intermediary to contract on behalf of presenter
- Removing activity if compliance cannot be met

Alternative Plan

- Replace with **literacy-based event**:
 - Native elder or community member reading Native-authored books
 - Potential book distribution to participants
 - Virtual or hybrid format options

Final Allocation Proposal

Based on remaining funds, the following was proposed and approved:

- Drums: \$1,200
- Clapper sticks: \$800, if clapper service agreement is not attained in time, remaining funds for this area can be spent on Native books before June 30, 2026 with special permission from fiscal team to spend down grant funds
- Ribbon skirts (additional session): \$500
- Summer tutoring (June only): \$500

Motion

- Approved unanimously

Summary

- **Decision:** Final budget allocations approved
 - **Next Steps:**
 - Obtain finalized accounting from fiscal department
 - PAC will obtain service agreements for drum and clapper stick workshops
 - PAC member would like Secondary Program Specialist to reach out to Dr. Block to see what options are available for Elder/Author Native book night
 - Assistant Superintendent will inquire about alternative options to pay for workshop facilitators, such as presenter fees
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6. Senior Celebration Planning

Event Overview

- **Date:** May 27, 2026
 - **Time:** 6:00–8:00 PM
 - **Location:** El Camino High School, Small Gym
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Decorations & Communication Breakdown

Issues Identified

- Multiple communication breakdowns
- Delayed approvals for purchases
- Confusion over funding sources:
 - Grant funds vs PAC donation funds

Impact

- Committee member frustration
- Reduced participation from committee members

Leadership Response

- Acknowledged:
 - Coordination, timing and communication struggles

Recommendations

- Formal requisition system
- Clear approval chain
- Defined roles and decision-making authority
- Earlier planning cycle

Summary

- **Decision:** Recognize issues and improve systems
 - **Next Steps:**
 - Establish clear purchasing process
 - Improve communication protocols
 - Start planning earlier next year
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Program Flow (Finalized)

1. Opening & welcome
 2. Opening prayer
 3. Traditional dancers (~20 min)
 4. Speaker 1 (Nizhoni, ARC)
 5. Dinner service begins (~6:45 PM)
 6. Speaker 2 (Dr. Reed, Sac State)
 7. Senior stole & blanket ceremony
 8. Honoring song (with drumming)
 9. Round dance (closing activity)
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Participation

- 6 seniors confirmed
 - Estimated attendance: ~75–100 total
 - School Community Worker will obtain final count from PAC members and staff by sending a google form
 - One family flying in elder to attend (significant cultural engagement)
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Logistics

- Setup begins:
 - Early access: ~1:30 PM

- Main setup: 2:00–4:00 PM
 - Volunteers assigned for:
 - Table setup (round tables)
 - Decorations
 - Sign-in and coordination
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Catering

- Native caterer secured (\$25/plate)
- Service includes:
 - Buffet-style meal
 - On-site staff
 - Table linens
- **\$5,000 donation received** (covers all celebration costs)

Additional Requirements:

- Food allergen labeling
 - School Community Worker will ask PAC member coordinating the caterer to request labels for food
 - Vegetarian options included
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Additional Components

- Details on program outlined and confirmed, Secondary Program Specialist will update program
 - Slideshow:
 - School community worker has collected student photos + bios, some students' families will be sending in photos later this week
 - Cake:
 - Options discussed, including sheet cake
 - Assigned to PAC chair for purchase (allergy considerations: no nuts)
 - Photography:
 - Secondary Program Specialist requested that District communications come take photos at the event
 - Cultural items:
 - 18 sage bundles donated
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Summary

- **Next Steps:**
 - SCW will:
 - Finalize RSVP count
 - Confirm food details and labeling
 - Complete slideshow
 - PAC will:
 - Purchase cake
 - Coordinate setup and volunteers
 - Secondary Program Specialist will:
 - Follow up about availability of photographer
 - Update program
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8. Annual Calendar Planning (2026–2027)

Draft Event Timeline

- **August:** Elections PAC Meeting
 - **Sept:** NAD parade at Capitol
 - **Oct:** Second Ribbon Wares workshop with Elder, Acorn Harvesting
 - **November:** Drum making and Parade Participation
 - **December:** Winter Gathering
 - **January:** Financial Aid Night
 - **March:** Public Forum and Literacy Night
 - **April:** Clapper sticks or literacy event, UC Davis Powwow
 - **May:** MMIP, Senior celebration
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Discussion Highlights

- Importance of spacing events appropriately
 - Avoid school calendar conflicts (breaks, testing, etc.)
 - Increase outreach to improve participation
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Summary

- **Decision:** Tentative calendar established
- **Next Steps:**
 - Finalize and circulate calendar
 - Align with school/district schedule

- Gather additional PAC input
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9. Artifact Preservation Project

Progress

- ~210 artifacts documented
 - District now responsible as artifact holder and is considered a museum
 - Cogstone informed district staff that San Juan is the first school district to begin this process and should be really proud for taking this step
 - PAC member expressed concerns about decomposition of items, Preservation upgrades completed by district staff:
 - Acid-free boxes
 - Repackaging
 - Digital old school film, cassettes, dvds, vhs - in process of requesting tech department to digitize these items and families can check out these items
 - PAC chair commended district for taking leadership for this project, finding the money to make it happen, treat it with care and respect, move in opposite direction of where we started and how it is meaningful for school district to do this for the PAC and the community
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Tribal Consultation (Next Phase)

- District staff will need to make 3 attempts of contact tribe: certified mail, email, phone
- Tribes decide:
 - Repatriation
 - Further review
 - If tribes decline items, the district can donate to larger school/district like American River College or can choose to display them

Timeline: up to 10 years

- PAC member expressed concern about needing access to the room that the artifacts are being stored in. The principal of the school would like the campus to be a place that the PAC and community can use the room, so he is in the process of obtaining an internal closet with a key to store the artifacts
- VP on special assignment will share the room during work hours
- PAC member asked if the items can be displayed in the waiting time - the items must be in a secure place

Key Issues Discussed

- Handling fragile/damaged items
 - Mold and storage concerns
 - Cultural sensitivity in handling artifacts
 - Only Native individuals handling artifacts
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Future Plans

- Relocate to secure storage
 - Potential digital archive (film, audio, media)
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Summary

- **Decision:** Continue consultation process and secure storage
 - **Next Steps:**
 - Send letters and track responses
 - Move artifacts to secure location
 - Explore digitization
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10. Library Initiative

Status

- 276 new books
 - 26 approved legacy books
 - System: Follett (district-approved platform)
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Implementation

- Follett account in progress

- Barcode and cataloging in progress
 - Volunteer support confirmed
 - Outreach to librarians and staff planned
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New Decision

- Gift duplicate books to schools during outreach, hold back 1 of the 3 copies and wait to decide what PAC would like to do with them next year
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Summary

- **Decision:** Proceed with library + outreach gifting strategy
 - **Next Steps:**
 - Complete cataloging
 - Hold 1 of multiple copies of book
 - Create outreach labels and messaging
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11. Summer Tutoring

Details

- \$500 allocated
- Covers June only
- Summer Tutoring - timecards are due middle of June, any time cards submitted after middle of June will fall into next year's budget
- July tutoring would be covered by next fiscal year

Summary

- **Decision:** Fund June tutoring though mid June
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12. Chairperson's Comments/Committee Business

- Reflected that the year had a difficult beginning and challenging place for multiple reasons
- Acknowledged that significant growth has occurred over time

- Noted that relationships and communication have improved between District staff and PAC Members:
 - Approaching one another with more kindness
 - Demonstrating shared passion and purpose
 - Maintaining focus on creating a positive impact for students
- Highlighted progress in the relationship between the District and PAC:
 - Initial disconnection has improved
 - Greater alignment and collaboration now in place
 - Early efforts (e.g., planning events) felt difficult or slow, but capacity and confidence have increased
- Recognized that many ideas and initiatives are now:
 - Moving forward more smoothly
 - Positioned to come to fruition in the upcoming year
- Referenced the Cogstone/artifact project:
 - Began in an uncomfortable and uncertain space
 - Evolved into work that is respectful and aligned with doing what is right for the community
 - Demonstrates the committee's growth and commitment
- Acknowledged that side conversations and deeper discussions revealed:
 - The complexity of Native American identity
 - The importance of understanding generational experiences and healing
 - Responsibility to support students and future generations
- Reflected overall :
 - The work has been a significant journey
 - There is a strong sense of progress and confidence moving forward

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- Looking ahead:
 - The committee has built a strong foundation
 - There will be less time spent on early-stage planning
 - Future discussions can be more focused, efficient, and action-oriented
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13. Board Member

- Not present

14. Cabinet Member

- Shared that the district is currently working on key goals, including:
 - Literacy
 - Math
 - Increasing student connectedness and belonging
- Emphasized a focused effort on the Native American student population:
 - Intentionally identifying students
 - Ensuring staff know students by name
 - Increasing awareness and visibility at school sites
- Noted the importance of:
 - Clearly defining official district goals
 - Aligning those goals with PAC priorities and work
- Highlighted ongoing planning to:
 - Strengthen collaboration with the Social Studies Department
 - Connect curriculum work with cultural humility training
- Overall message included:
 - A growing effort to integrate culturally responsive practices
 - Strong alignment between district initiatives and PAC work
 - Optimism and excitement about continued progress and future opportunities

15. School Community Worker

- Family outreach and support
 - 506 form assistance
 - Cultural competency training completed:
 - Cultural Humility Training
 - Seeds of Native Knowledge
 - Indian Country 101
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Key Insights on Seeds of Knowledge Cultural Humility Training:

- Secondary Program Specialist shared emphasis on:
 - Student identity
 - Belonging
 - Generational trauma awareness

- Need to reinforce that Native students “belong” regardless of identity experience
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15. Next Meeting

- Tentative: **August 19, 2026**
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16. Adjournment

- Motion passed

Summary

- **Decision:** Meeting adjourned
 - **Next Steps:** None
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Overall Meeting Summary

- Strong progress in organization and planning
 - Major improvements in program structure and cultural integration
 - Continued challenges with communication and processes
 - Clear direction for next year with established calendar and priorities
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