



# GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

Mailing Address: US Post Office Box 988, Rapid City, SD 57709

## RESOLUTION

### GREAT PLAINS TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION, Inc. (GPTCA) CONTINUES TO FIRMLY OPPOSE THE APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S PROPOSED K-12 SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS OF AUGUST 15, 2022

#### **Resolution No. – 01-01-13-2023**

- WHEREAS,** The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc. (hereafter "GPTCA") is composed of the elected Chairs and Presidents of the federally recognized Sovereign Indian Tribes and Nations within North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska, forming the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and
- WHEREAS,** the Native Sovereign Nations of the GPTCA, engage in nation-to-nation treaty relations with America.
- WHEREAS,** The GPTCA is a federally chartered corporation under section 17 of the Indian Reorganization Act; and
- WHEREAS,** The GPTCA was formed to promote the common interests of the Sovereign Tribes and Nations who are members of the GPTCA; and
- WHEREAS,** The United States has obligated itself to ensure the well-being of sovereign Tribes and Nations of the Great Plains Region both through Treaties and federal statutes, including the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1976, and the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988; and
- WHEREAS,** The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act and the Tribally Controlled Schools Act build upon the treaty and trust responsibilities of the United States to provide for education and recognize the right of Native people to determine the manner and goals of that education.
- WHEREAS,** The State of South Dakota states: "The stability of a republican form of government depending on the morality and intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to establish and maintain a general and uniform system of public schools wherein tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all; and to adopt all suitable means to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education." and
- WHEREAS,** for several Tribal Nations, including the ones with the largest populations, up to 50% of their populations are under the age of 25, and for some, more than 50% of the population is under the age of 18, and numbers of children are increasing, which makes quality education for our youth of the utmost importance; and

**WHEREAS,** pursuant to South Dakota Codified Law 1-54-5 the State of South Dakota has a legal obligation to consult with the Tribes of South Dakota regarding revision of the K-12 Education curricula. and

**WHEREAS,** The GPTCA understands that the State of South Dakota, through its Department of Education, updates the State's educational standards on a six-year cycle and that in the summer of 2020, the Department of Education identified a 40-person work group of educators, historians, tribal members, and other experts to revise the existing Social Studies standards (from 2014) and which the group did produce and release a set of Standards on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021; and

**WHEREAS,** The GPTCA is aware that despite the tax dollars utilized to establish the original work group and the collaborative effort that the qualified educators from South Dakota put into the development of proposed Social Studies standards, the South Dakota Governor and her State Department of Education scrapped the proposed Standards (from July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021) and established a 15-person work group that was appointed by the Governor and given the task of rewriting the proposed Social Studies standards; and,

**WHEREAS,** The GPTCA is aware that the 15-person work group consisted of the Governor's Chief of Staff, four (4) people who have or had teaching certificates, with one of them currently teaching and a second who is an administrator in a South Dakota school, two (2) Republican lawmakers, the head of the South Dakota Catholic Conference, an alumnus of University of Sioux Falls, the State Historian, a director of a retirement community, a facilities manager from the US Military, the South Dakota Indian Education Director, a Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal member, and a Northern State University political science professor; and,

**WHEREAS,** The GPTCA is aware that in spite of the newly established 15-person work group, the State contracted with William Morrissey, a retired professor from the ultra-conservative Hillsdale College in Michigan, for \$200,000.00 to produce another set of Social Studies standards and to be the facilitator for the 15-person work group; and,

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Standards, released on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, from Mr. Morrissey, are outside the currently adopted standards format. Blooms Taxonomy was not used, Standards are not vertically nor horizontally aligned for progression and growth, and there are repeats from grade to grade. Further, the subtopics are merely tasks to be completed, with no mastery of the content. The standards are vague, the descriptors are low level, the volume is too great in the lower levels, rote memorization and indoctrination are everywhere. Additionally, the lower elementary subtopics are not developmentally appropriate; there are divisive subtopics, no critical thinking, no inquiry learning, no mastery of any concepts, and more; and,

**WHEREAS,** the inclusions in History and Civics should be free of political agendas and activism, but the proposed Standards include indoctrination and specific religious instruction, and,

**WHEREAS,** State and Church should be separate; and,

**WHEREAS,** The Social Studies standards in regards to the original inhabitants of South Dakota are missing for great spans of time as if Native Americans don't exist. Yet, direct descendants and other tribal member children of those same

omitted original inhabitants currently comprise nearly 11% of South Dakota's total public-school K-12 population.

**WHEREAS,** the lack and omission of historically relevant Native American history in the standards create an environment where Native students are made to feel embarrassed about the intended learning. Overall, the standards submit to the culturally inaccurate stereotypes, and thus make them **divisive**; and

**WHEREAS,** Throughout the standards, Native Americans are primarily portrayed as warlike, as if to purport an idea of instability or incivility. And even when the standards attempt to capture a significant event – it misses the opportunity to be fully educational and transparent. Some examples include:

- Native Americans' right to vote did not come simply by passing the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 – as the standards might have you believe. In fact, many states prohibited voting by Native people for many years after, including South Dakota, which didn't codify anti-Indian voting laws until 1951.
- Native American religion is not mentioned in the standards, nor is the passage of the Native American Religious Freedom Act of 1978.
- Smallpox is repeatedly mentioned as one of the only notable occurrences in Native history.
- Native American symbols are missing, including the Native American Flag song, Tribal Flags, and Native American Day, which South Dakota was one of the first states to recognize and adopt in 1990; and

**WHEREAS,** Some Native American standards appear to be thrown in at the end as an afterthought or only included when they add Black/African American content. The vague references to whole sections of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings lack specificity. Nine (9) sovereign nation tribes share borders with South Dakota, yet a high school student is only expected to name ONE tribe; and,

**WHEREAS,** The Geography portion is sadly lacking in standards and subtopics; they are low-level and primarily identification only; and,

**WHEREAS,** The Social Studies standards had **NO Tribal or Indian Educator Consultation** prior to release; and,

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Standards from conservative Morrisey, formerly of Hillsdale College, are poorly researched and written. Demonstrating an immense amount of unfamiliarity with the State of South Dakota; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed Social Studies standards recommended by the Department of Education are detrimental to the education of all the Citizens of South Dakota, especially the people of the Oceti Sakowin Lands.

**WHEREAS,** The GPTCA is aware that a member of the 15-person work group testified, in the first hearing on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at Aberdeen, SD, as an opponent to the proposed Morrisey, Hillsdale Social Studies standards because of the predetermined manner that the Standards were presented to the group. And

because the Standards are not reasonable for all grades based on the number of standards to be taught and/or the expected knowledge is not age appropriate, and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the GPTCA are of the first peoples of the Oceti Sakowin, treaty nations that are sovereign and deserve to have all such respect afforded to their citizens; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The GPTCA, with this resolution, insists that the references to Indigenous Native American Oyate (people) be reinstated into the Social Studies standards document as presented to the Department of Education by the original Standards Workgroup of 40 (from July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021); and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That GPTCA hereby rejects the proposed Social Studies standards document developed and facilitated by Mr. Morrissey (presented on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022) through a contract from Governor Noem and that did not go through the formal Tribal Consultation; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, That GPTCA recommends having the initial proposed Social Studies Standards, developed by the 40-person work group (from July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021) of South Dakota educators, parents, and Tribal representatives go through the State established public review process for comments, edits, as appropriate, and final approval.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** this resolution does **not** supplant or change the GPTCA position on education that impacts all tribal citizens-enrolled members of each tribal government.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be the policy of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc., unless and until withdrawn by subsequent resolution.

**Resolution No. - 01-01-13-2023**

**CERTIFICATION**

**This resolution was enacted at a duly called meeting of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc. held at Ft. Pierre, SD on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at which a quorum was established, 9 members voting in favor, 0 members opposed, 0 members abstaining, and 7 members not present.**

**Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023**



**Chairman Tony Reider, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe,  
Secretary, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc.**

**Attest:**



**President Frank Star Comes Out, Oglala Sioux Tribe  
Chairman, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, Inc.**