

Meeting Minutes – Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission (INAIAC)

Education Subcommittee

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

10:00am EDT

The Education Subcommittee meeting was called to order at 10:10am.

Commissioners Present: Erin Oliver, Sarah Ancel, Shannon-Marie Turner

Commissioners Not Present: Sen. Randy Head, Pete Magnant, Tracy Locke

Staff Present: Kerry Steiner

Agenda Item: Native American Scholarships

Kerry Steiner began the meeting by discussing her findings that the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) could house a scholarship but that it would need to be a line item in the state budget. Sen. Randy Head's office reported that it would be unprecedented for CHE to provide oversight on a scholarship without it being a line item.

Sarah Ancel said it might be simpler for INAIAC to provide the oversight since CHE would have to create new paperwork and revise their IT system, and that CHE would be able to provide assistance with the application process. Erin Oliver asked how many students receive scholarships per year in Indiana; Sarah Ancel responded that it's about 85,000 students and that CHE disburses over \$3M per year in scholarship funds and that scholarships vary between merit-based and need-based. She added that even if full tuition is covered the student still needs books, etc., and that there are funding gaps.

Erin Oliver stated that colleges determine the family's contribution rates and that a student cannot always utilize all funding opportunities at a private institution because of the family contribution portion, and suggested INAIAC administer approximately \$15,000 per year in scholarships.

Kerry Steiner added that the American Indian Center of Indiana also offers education assistance for tuition and books and that students do not always know about this resource.

Sarah Ancel mentioned that there is a gap for summer school financial assistance.

Kerry Steiner mentioned that the scholarship that currently exists at IUPUI has become self-sustaining and wondered if that was a viable option for INAIAC and Sarah Ancel responded that it's usually not done that way at state institutions. Shannon Turner added that this option might work if the money was invested right now and Sarah Ancel added that we could consider investing a bulk of the license plate money to help expedite the interest generated from the investment; if \$300K was invested now it would generate about \$15K per year.

Erin Oliver offered that maybe we designate a percentage of the license plate money's income toward funding one or more scholarships and asked if we wanted to allow one person to receive a scholarship over multiple school years; Shannon Turner and Kerry Steiner replied they believe the scholarships should be available to anyone who applies. Erin Oliver added that students seem to need money more during their third and fourth year of school.

Sarah Ancel reiterated the gap in summer school funding and said maybe we could consider offering a graduation bonus based on merit and an essay; a cash payment, possibly. Shannon Turner added that maybe we create a condition such that a student must give back to the Commission in some way. Erin Oliver supported that and stated we should put something on the application asking what the person is doing to better the community.

Kerry Steiner asked if we wanted to consider offering a stipend for an intern to work at INAIAC and Sarah Ancel added that an intern can apply through the Earn Indiana program on the CHE website. Sarah agreed to put together outlines of what a summer school fund might look like, a merit-based graduation bonus and an intern stipend.

Erin Oliver added that some of the most promising students aren't taking summer classes and therefore are not eligible for those monies, while students who are taking summer classes get done faster.

Sarah Ancel said the advantage of an intern stipend is it helps both students and the Commission, and Shannon Turner suggested we have them write an essay on how their internship would benefit Indiana. Erin Oliver added that the essay could address how the internship or scholarship would impact the Native population in Indiana – try to sell INAIAC on how they're helping people.

Kerry Steiner asked if we wanted to consider offering a bonus to students who graduate and remain employed in Indiana for one year and Erin Oliver suggested we propose that during an Employment Subcommittee meeting.

Sarah Ancel said that if we recap what we've discussed, it comes down to: What are we trying to accomplish? Erin Oliver responded that we are supporting our students and providing an opportunity and incentive for them to graduate and that we could look at doing one summer school scholarship and five school year scholarships. Sarah Ancel added that most students take up to three classes during the summer so a \$1,000 scholarship might be a solution. Erin Oliver asked how that would be verified and Sarah Ancel responded that perhaps we apply that money toward tuition and books and that we could put people on a waiting list.

The meeting ended at 11:17am.