FOSTERING CULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Pendleton School District & The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

2015 Fall Special Education Administration COSA Conference

WHERE WE STARTED
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Pendleton 16-R School District

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and the Pendleton 16-R School District (District) shall work together to address the educational needs, issues and problems of Native American students in order to increase their academic achievement and success. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will also support appropriate educational services and opportunities for all students, educators and members of the CTUIR. This agreement is not legally binding on either party mentioned nor is it a contract. Each party named shall follow the intent of this MOU as far as reasonably possible, and to the extent consistent with applicable State, Tribal and Federal constitutions, laws, statutes, educational acts, and treaties.

This MOU has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Pendleton 16-R School Board of the Pendleton School District. The CTUIR and the District agree to work collaboratively through this MOU in the following areas:

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

• Established regular meetings between CTUIR Education Department and PSD Cabinet
• Putting the students at the center of our collaboration
• Breaking down cultural barriers
• Breaking down communication barriers

We don’t know what we don’t know
OPPORTUNITIES
• To learn about CTUIR culture
• To ask Questions without Fear
• To make mistakes and learn from them

EXAMPLES OF GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES
Assumptions vs. Reality

Saying the wrong thing
EDUCATION COLLABORATION

• Building Relationships
• Breaking Down Barriers
• Increasing Cultural Competence as leaders
• Considering All Viewpoints
• Capitalizing on Multiple Areas of Expertise

AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING, LEARNING & PEDAGOGY GRANT OPPORTUNITY

• A catalyst to propel the work forward
• An opportunity to put talk into action
• Increase in collaborators from the district and CTUIR
AI/AN GRANT TEAM

- Tricia Mooney-Assistant Superintendent, PSD
- Ramona Halcomb-Director of Education, CTUIR
- Julie Smith-Director of Special Programs, PSD
- Lloyd Commander-Program Manager Youth Services and Recreation
- Laura Miltenberger-Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Coordinator, PSD
- Brent Spencer-Lead Education Coordinator, CTUIR
- Linda Sampson-Program Manager After School Program, CTUIR
- Modesta Minthom-Linguist

CULTURAL COMPETENCE TRAINING FOR STAFF

- Purposely started with someone who was not Native American
- Opening the door to discuss cultural competence with staff in a “safe” way
- Cultural competence isn’t just about Native American students
BRINGING IN CULTURAL EDUCATION FOR ALL

- Shopping in our community
- Stories, Music, Art, Poetry, Literature
- Umatilla Language Dictionaries
- CTUIR Flags in every school
- Heritage Language Program at Kindergarten
- Mini Pow-Wows at each school
- Dual Credit Classes

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

- CTUIR language immersion program 3-5 year olds
- 15-16 School Year
  - One certified teacher dedicated to developing language program
  - Kindergarten Walk-to-Language program
  - CTUIR language teachers teaching Umatilla to all PSD Kindergarten students
COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOPING CURRICULUM

Fourth Grade
Initially targeted Westward Expansion Unit
Two stories of first contact need to be represented
Teachers decided they wanted to address CTUIR culture history throughout the year, not just one unit

Fifth Grade
Pendleton History Unit
Adapted to include greater history of CTUIR
Important contributions of CTUIR members to our community

Sixth Grade
Units of instruction adapting and embedding the Indians in Oregon Today curriculum
Utilized primary and secondary sources
Greater emphasis on CTUIR

TEACHER RECRUITMENT

• What are the barriers with our current teaching staff?
• How can we overcome those barriers?
• How is collaboration part of our solution?
NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION

“It was great! Best in-service yet!”

“Thank you for organizing the tour of TCI today. I’ve been there a few times before, but with our guide, Randall Melton, I learned SO much more!”

“Wow! I can’t believe I have lived this close and never been here.”

“This has given me a lot to think about.”

COLLABORATING WITH TITLE VII

- Identify students in designated schools whose reading and/or math performance, as measured by test scores and grades, is/are below grade level benchmarks. Identify students not on course for graduation.
- Collaborate with schools to develop and implement plans to supplement reading/math tutorials in targeted schools for students in academic need.
- Provide support services to identified students including tutorial and referrals to school counselors, tribal counselors or tribal court as needed.
- Continuously monitor student progress, maintain current student records of class standing and adjust services to make continuous progress to meet reading and math benchmarks.
- Work collaboratively with school staff to plan and implement ongoing cultural education activities.
- Serve as a liaison and advocate between parents/guardians and schools in order to facilitate communication.
- Assist parents in developing skills to more effectively advocate for their students and access district and community resources to enhance student achievement.
- In cooperation with school counselors/administrators, promote parental involvement in school and prevention activities.
"OUR STUDENTS"

• Yours
• Mine
• OURS

The education of every student is the responsibility of our community.
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Where do we go from here?