



Draft

PROPOSAL FOR PARTIAL IDAHO STATE FUNDING OF TRIBAL SCHOOLS

It is the consensus of the Shoshone-Bannock school and community that the legislature of Idaho should help to fund the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal School.

The reasons such funding is necessary and appropriate include:

1. All of our students are transfers from Idaho public schools.
2. All of our students qualify for either Title I or Special Education.
3. Our beginning 7th graders have a reading grade equivalency of 3.0.
4. Federal red tape that earmarks funds, makes it difficult to use federal money in our areas of greatest need: language arts curriculum (Advanced Learning Systems), computers for language arts curriculum, and a full time computer technologist.
5. All of our students are citizens of Idaho.
6. To guarantee that Shoshone-Bannock students become fully literate and productive citizens of the state of Idaho.
7. Non-Indian students have been educated in the school system without federal or state of Idaho compensation.
8. Idaho Code, title 67, Chapter 51, Section 5101 outlines the following areas over which the State assumed concurrent jurisdiction:
 - A. Compulsory school attendance
 - B. Juvenile delinquency and youth rehabilitation
 - C. Dependent, neglected and abused children
 - D. Insanities and mental illness
 - E. Public Assistance
 - F. Domestic Relations
 - G. Operation and management of motor vehicles upon highways and roads maintained by the county or state, or political subdivision thereof.



Rationale and Recommendations for Idaho Tribal Languages

By

Dr. Ben F. Irvin, Superintendent Shoshone-Bannock S.D. #512

I recommend that the Idaho State Department of Education generate a teacher certificate endorsement for the following native Idaho languages: Bannock, Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai, Nez Perce, Piaiute, and Shoshone. The procedures for obtaining such K-12 certificates in Idaho should be similar to that used in Montana and Wyoming. In those two states, individuals certificated by tribal cultural committees as proficient in an Indian language(s), are issued a teaching certificate by the state department of education with a K-12 endorsement in the language(s) they are qualified to teach (in Montana this is a Class 7 certificate). It should be noted that people certificated in an Indian language (by a cultural committee) are not required to hold a B.A. or A.A. degree. They can only teach in the Indian language(s) endorsed on the certificate. The tribal cultural committees solely determine the standards for qualification for such a certificate. In Montana's case, the certifications are good for five years and then may be renewed again by the cultural committee(s).

Such certifications are usually, but not always (some younger people have been certificated), given elder tribal members that have a very high proficiency in a Native American language(s). Such certification in Idaho would accomplish several worthwhile things. Certification would strengthen the declining use of Idaho's native languages. It would also increase involvement of tribal elders with the education of their children and grandchildren. The value of Idaho's native languages would be given additional status by certification. It is also desirable that Idaho takes measures that insure that the native languages of the state are preserved as a natural resource. Such an effort would demonstrate Idaho's commitment and respect for its American Indian cultures, traditions, and people.

It is also important that Idaho students that take Indian language classes in high school receive full credit for this upon admission to an Idaho state college or university. A student that has successfully completed Shoshone I and II should be given the same college considerations as a student that has completed two years of Spanish, French, German, etc. This credit would be dependent upon classes taught by a certified Indian language teacher in an accredited school.

Only students taught by certified Indian language educators would receive either high school or college credit (in lieu of Spanish, etc.). This Indian language certification has been used successfully for several years in Montana and Wyoming. In Montana, several hundred people have received American Indian language(s) official recognition (certification). The endorsements are used by several large non-reservation school systems (Great Falls, Missoula, and Billings) and by most reservation school systems. It should be noted that the Shoshone language, a language native to both Idaho and Wyoming, is an endorsed and certifiable language in our sister state. Both the Kootenai and Salish (Coeur d'Alene), languages native to both Idaho and Montana, have certification and credit standing in Montana.

The time has come for Idaho to take the necessary steps to accomplish this native language certification and credit goal.