

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 427 904

RC 021 800

AUTHOR Tippeconnic, John W., III  
 TITLE Tribal Control of American Indian Education: Observations since the 1960s with Implications for the Future.  
 PUB DATE 1999-00-00  
 NOTE 21p.; Chapter 2 in: "Next Steps: Research and Practice To Advance Indian Education"; see RC 021 798.  
 PUB TYPE Historical Materials (060) -- Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)  
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS \*American Indian Education; Culturally Relevant Education; Educational History; Educational Needs; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Federal Indian Relationship; Federal Legislation; Higher Education; Tribal Sovereignty; \*Tribally Controlled Education

ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the history and nature of Indian control of Indian education since the 1960s and its implications for the future. Local or tribal control of education is a basic principle inherent in the sovereignty status of American Indian tribes, and is also essential to reclaim and strengthen Native languages and cultures that were long targeted for destruction by assimilative educational policies. Major steps in the development of contemporary Indian control included Great Society programs of the 1960s that focused on community development and action; establishment of Rough Rock Demonstration School and Navajo Community College--the first tribally controlled college; federal legislation of the 1970s-80s that supported tribal sovereignty and tribal control of education; and the growth and success of tribal schools and colleges in the 1990s. Several observations explain the meaning and significance of tribal control, differences between tribal control and Indian community control, the link between tribal control and self-determination, the recent nature of true tribal control, and developments across tribes. It is also important to understand that most Indian students attend public schools, and the federal government has major financial responsibility for Indian education, but Indian education is often not a priority at any level of the school system. Indian-controlled schools are successful, but challenges remain in the areas of funding, student performance, Indian cultures and languages in the curriculum, parental and tribal involvement, school facilities, Indian leadership and staffing, and accreditation. Contains 33 references and notes. (SV)

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
 \* from the original document. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

## CHAPTER 2



# Tribal Control of American Indian Education Observations Since the 1960s with Implications for the Future

JOHN W. TIPPECONNIC III<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of educational reform and improvement across the United States, a movement toward self-determination is taking place among American Indians and Alaska Natives.<sup>2</sup> This movement toward Indian control of Indian education actually started in the 1960s, secured legislation in the 1970s, survived the 1980s, picked up momentum in the 1990s, and promises to gain even greater significance beyond 2000. A system of education controlled by Indian tribes is developing. It includes every level of education—from early childhood to graduate school. Increasingly, American Indian students will have choices and alternatives to traditional public and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and to mainstream colleges and universities. In tribal educational settings, American Indian languages and cultures will form the foundation on which all knowledge is built. Mainstream schools interested in exploring alternative ways of teaching and learning will have new opportunities to establish mutually beneficial connections with tribally controlled schools that emphasize Indigenous knowledge and “Native ways of knowing.”

This chapter discusses the history and nature of Indian control of Indian education since the 1960s and its implications for the future.

Numerous studies and reports have concluded that tribal/local control of formal education in schools is absolutely necessary if education for American Indians is to improve significantly. Local control of public education is a right and responsibility of the states, implied by the U.S. Constitution's lack of mention of any federal role. Local or tribal control is also a basic principle inherent in the sovereignty status of American Indian tribes. The current federal policy of tribal self-determination, supported by legislation, provides the administrative mechanism for tribes to assume greater control over their own affairs, including education.

Tribal control is also essential for another reason. Historically, the United States has used education to change and assimilate American Indians, or put another way, to eliminate the Indians by the systematic destruction of tribal languages and cultures in schools. This cultural genocide of tribal people is a tragedy and an irony in a country that supposedly values diversity. Assimilation has not worked, but its impact is reflected in education statistics and in the poor quality of schooling received by many American Indian students today. Formal education has placed too many Indian students at risk of failing in both Native and mainstream American societies. Tribal control is necessary not only to achieve tribal and individual self-sufficiency but to reclaim and strengthen the use of Native languages and cultures in schools and communities, thus ensuring a strong future for all Indian people.

### Brief History<sup>3</sup>

Indian control of education is not new. The Cherokee and Choctaw tribes operated successful school systems in which they taught in their Native languages and English during the nineteenth century. The quality of education in the Cherokee and Choctaw schools, including written English, was superior to that of the White people around them. The federal government, favoring an assimilation approach to education, did away with these successful tribal schools.<sup>4</sup>

Today's Indian control movement is based on these early tribal education success stories. It is viewed as a way to address the adverse

affects the assimilation policy had on Indian education, including limited student success, lack of tribal control, and limited parental involvement.

Contemporary Indian control is rooted in efforts to involve parents and other tribal members in the education of their children. The Meriam Report called for a new attitude and approach to educating Indian students: "The most fundamental need in Indian education is a change in the point of view."<sup>5</sup> It also called for the use of Indian language and culture in Indian education. Further, the Meriam Report recommended the following:

The whole task of community participation, so important for the Indian, has to be consciously worked at; for example, the Indians should be serving on school committees in the day school as a means of enlisting their general interest in all that involves the child's education and development, and also as a gradual preparation for service on boards of education.<sup>6</sup>

The Great Society programs of the 1960s focused on local community development and action in education. The change in federal Indian policy from cultural termination to tribal self-determination called for more Indian involvement and Indian control in education. In 1968 President Johnson demanded the establishment of Indian school boards at federal Indian schools. By May 1969, 174 of the BIA's 222 schools had advisory boards. The number of Indians on public school boards also increased during the late 1960s.<sup>7</sup>

The Kennedy Report recommended "that Indian parental and community involvement be increased . . . that state and local communities facilitate and encourage Indian community and parental involvement in the development and operation of public education programs for Indian students . . . that there be a national policy committing . . . to maximum participation and control by Indians in establishing Indian education programs." Further, the Kennedy Report recommended support for successful schools under Indian control, such as Rough Rock Demonstration School and community colleges like Navajo Community College (now known as Diné College).<sup>8</sup>

In 1966 Rough Rock Demonstration School was established on the Navajo Reservation. It marked the first time an elected school board, comprising all Indians, had complete control of a school. An

early Rough Rock Demonstration School publication offers a glimpse of the board's philosophy and expectations of Indian control:

Rough Rock Demonstration School will show whether or not so called uneducated and unsophisticated Indians can assume leadership and control over the total education of their community. In the past the "father knows best" attitude was most frequently practiced and the level of local community involvement was minimal.

The philosophy underlying and permeating the Rough Rock Demonstration School is that the Navajo people have the right and ability to direct and provide leadership in the education of their community. Rough Rock is funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Economic Opportunity but it BELONGS to the Navajo people. The true "bosses" of the school are not the BIA, OEO, or even the school officials but rather the Navajo people and Rough Rock Community itself. This is the challenge and the opportunity awaiting this school at this community.<sup>9</sup>

Parents and other community members at Rough Rock were welcomed to participate in all school activities. The curriculum and teaching methods integrated the Navajo culture and language.<sup>10</sup> The American Indian Policy Review Commission found that

Indian community controlled schools are the most significant education system for Indians today. They are restoring the self-image and interest in learning among Indian young people. They are lowering the drop-out rate and restoring responsibility and discipline among our young people. They are graduating young people who have solid basic skills and a good feeling about themselves and their heritage.<sup>11</sup>

In 1968 Navajo Community College became the first institution of higher education controlled by an Indian tribe. Navajo Community College's philosophy and academic program were based on the "Navajo way" with institutional governance by an all-Navajo board of regents. In 1971 Congress passed the *Navajo Community College Act*, which provided federal financial support to the college.<sup>12</sup>

The 1972 *Indian Education Act* appropriated funds to public

schools to meet the culturally related academic needs of Indian students. Parent involvement was encouraged through mandated parent committees. The Act also directed discretionary funds to Indian institutions, organizations, tribes, and individuals for educational services that ranged from early childhood to graduate school.

In 1975 the *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act* (Public Law 93-638) authorized the federal government to enter into "638" contracts with Indian tribes and tribal organizations for tribal operation of BIA and Indian Health Service programs. The Johnson O'Malley program was amended to allow for more Indian control of contracts to public schools. In 1978 the *Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act* provided financial support to tribal colleges.<sup>13</sup>

The *Education Amendments* of 1978 (Public Law 95-561) declared, "It shall be the policy of the BIA in carrying out the functions of the Bureau, to facilitate Indian control of Indian affairs in all matters relating to education." Among other things, Public Law 95-561 recognized the lack of Indian involvement and participation in education and stressed local involvement and control. In 1988 Congress passed the *Tribally Controlled School Act* (Public Law 100-297), which allowed for the direct granting (as opposed to contracting) of funds to school boards to operate schools. Public Law 100-297 also authorized the BIA to fund tribal departments of education, none of which have ever been funded.<sup>14</sup>

This congressional legislation did not happen because of the goodwill of Congress or presidential administrations. Rather, it was because of the political wisdom and persistence of Indian educators, Indian institutions, Indian organizations, tribes, and other driving forces behind legislative and executive branch actions. The Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards (CICSB), National Indian Education Association (NIEA), National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), National Indian School Boards Association (NISBA), Native American Rights Fund (NARF), Navajo Area School Boards Association (NASBA), and the Association of Community Tribal Schools (ACTS) are just some of the organizations that played key roles with the White House and Congress in advancing Indian education.

In the 1990s the policy of self-determination coincided with efforts to downsize and redesign the federal government. The results

were an increased push for tribal control and flexibility of BIA resources through tribal self-governance and a revision of the budget process to include funding to tribes through Tribal Priority Allocations.<sup>15</sup> However, a concern associated with this push for tribal control of resources is the limited existing funds, with little new money to enhance tribal control.

It is clear that tribal control and Indian control of education are being realized within the federal system, especially by those programs and schools supported by the BIA. During the 1994-95 school year, for the first time in history, there were more tribally controlled schools (93) than BIA-operated schools (92) at the elementary and secondary levels. Today more than 114 tribally controlled schools educate more than 50,000 students. The numbers will continue to increase as long as funds and opportunities are available to support tribal control of education.

Tribal colleges are probably the most successful examples of Indian control of education. Today more than 25,000 students attend 31 tribal colleges in the United States and Canada. This success is demonstrated by the colleges' designation in 1994 as land-grant institutions (Public Law 103-382) and by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's Native American Higher Education Initiative to strengthen and improve tribal colleges and other higher education institutions.

Public education has felt the presence of Indian involvement rather than tribal control. It is safe to assume parents, tribal community members, and tribes are more involved in public school education today. However, we cannot say that tribal control exists at the public school level because states have authority for public education.

### **Observations about Tribal Control of Education**

Several observations can be made about tribal control of education, based on a review of the literature. These observations fall into five thematic groups: the meaning and significance of tribal control; players, roles, and responsibilities; successes and potential; challenges; and research findings and needs.

#### **The Meaning and Significance of Tribal Control.**

A 1997 statement issued by the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Education Association

asserts that the education of American Indians

takes place in complex and often confusing environments given the roles and expectations of parents, local schools, communities, tribes, states, and the federal government. This complexity of the inter-governmental arena in which Indian learners are provided schooling requires a focused federal Indian education policy which recognizes the authority of tribal governments, the federal-tribal government relationship and the history of federal involvement in the education of American Indians in federal, tribal, and state schools. The political/legal status of tribal governments includes as one aspect of sovereignty a primacy authority in the education of tribal members.<sup>16</sup>

Outside of Indian country, few people realize that Indian tribes do not fall under the jurisdiction of states but are recognized as sovereign bodies by the federal government. As such, tribal governments have the legal right to make decisions about how to educate tribal members.

**Indian control of education is different from tribal control.** The terms *Indian parent involvement*, *community control*, *local control*, and *tribal control* are often used interchangeably to denote aspects of Indian control of education. But these terms do not necessarily mean the same thing. The most significant difference is between tribal control and local or community control, with tribal control meaning that the actual tribal government is in control and local or community control usually meaning that school boards comprise community members. Parent involvement does not mean tribal control. Tribally controlled schools can mean tribal control if schools are sanctioned or chartered by tribal governments.

Loretta DeLong, in defining Indian control, makes a distinction between organizational and infrastructure levels. An organizational level of Indian control is exhibited in schools that are controlled and primarily staffed by tribal members. Indian control at the infrastructure level is exhibited when the school curriculum reflects the culture, language, teachings, and values of the tribe. She contends the focus has been on the organizational level rather than the infrastructure level.<sup>17</sup>

**Tribal control is essential to self-determination.** Tribal control is in keeping with the government-to-government relationship and the policy of tribal self-determination. Tribal control is a basic principle inherent in the sovereignty status of American Indian tribes. Its premise is that the education of American Indians will be most effective when controlled directly by tribal governments. Tribal control is essential to achieve self-sufficiency and to strengthen the use of Native languages and cultures in schools.<sup>18</sup>

**True tribal control is a recent development.** The establishment of Rough Rock Demonstration School in 1966 was the first time since the Cherokee and Choctaw schools, 120 years earlier, that an Indian community had been allowed to have some control over educating its children. Today's tribal schools are "young and experimental" and growing.<sup>19</sup> Although the developing tribally controlled system includes early childhood education through graduate study, gaining the involvement of the communities will take a sustained effort over time. Roger Bordeaux explains, "Once communities assume control of the educational process they must deal with the vestiges of an education system that tried to stamp out all remnants of Indian culture and values." There is a long history of exclusion of Indian parents and tribes in schools that promoted assimilation.<sup>20</sup>

**This is an active time in the tribal control movement.** Although tribal control is a national movement, this does not mean there is a single national tribal system or that national education standards apply to all schools. Rather, the movement is at the tribal level, with increasing numbers of tribes gaining greater control of the schools serving their members. With more than 560 tribes, different approaches to tribal control are to be expected. Tribally controlled education systems have developed especially well in Indian communities with tribal colleges. For example, in collaboration with the teacher education program at Sinte Gleska University, the Rosebud Tribal Department of Education is developing an education code that will influence the schooling of its tribal members for years to come.<sup>21</sup>

Across the United States, K-12, higher education, and other tribally controlled education programs have developed networks and organizations to enhance collaboration. They often partner with professional organizations such as NIEA, NCAI, AIHEC, and ACTS

to improve Indian education and advance local and tribal control. Despite all this activity, the movement toward tribal control of Indian education is not well known outside Indian country, which could pose a problem in gaining funding. Funding is needed, in accordance with Public Law 100-297, to develop further and maintain tribal departments of education. The general public needs to become more knowledgeable and supportive of this effort to improve educational outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives.<sup>22</sup>

### Players, Roles, and Responsibilities

**Most students attend public schools, which are controlled by the states.** The majority (approximately 90 percent) of American Indian students at the K-12 level attend public schools. States differ in their overall relationships with tribes. Issues that influence tribal-state relations include sovereignty of tribes, economic development, environmental protection, public safety, taxes, child welfare, gaming, and education. Noneducation issues often overshadow Indian education issues and make education less of a priority for legislators.<sup>23</sup>

History tells us states have not always been responsive to the needs of Indian students in public schools, nor have they typically included parents and tribes in decision making about public education. Growing numbers realize that tribal-state relations must improve if a high-quality educational experience is to be offered to American Indians in public schools. Various groups have called for increased partnerships; better communication; the education of state representatives about sovereignty, tribal governments, and Indian perspectives; and the education of tribal members about state governments and their effect on tribes. In the meantime, some tribes—like the Rosebud Sioux—have taken the initiative in developing their own education codes to govern education on their reservations, regardless of school type.<sup>24</sup>

**The federal government has major financial responsibility for the education of American Indians.** Tribal sovereignty and treaties form the legal basis for the government-to-government relationship, trust, federal legislation, executive decisions, court decisions, and the policy of tribal self-determination. Tribal sover-

eignty needs to be understood better by the general public and government entities.<sup>25</sup>

Long-term difficulties schools and tribes have experienced in working with the federal bureaucracy have included threats to terminate the recognition of particular tribal nations; resistance from the president, BIA, and other federal employees; and difficulty in arranging contracts with the federal government. In 1988 some of these difficulties were alleviated by Public Law 100-297, which authorized grants to schools. Today, most Indian-controlled schools operate under grants from the BIA.<sup>26</sup>

**More often than not, Indian education is not a priority at state, federal, tribal, and local school system levels.** The education of American Indians appears to be forgotten and considered insignificant at times. At the national level, awareness and concern about Indian education seems to fluctuate according to political, economic, and social issues of the day. Congressional appropriation committees continue to give Indian education little priority and actually impede the growth of tribal control by including budget language that limits the growth of tribal schools. Often, tribal governments pay little attention to education issues, focusing instead on economic, natural resource, and political issues.<sup>27</sup>

### Successes and Potential

There is increasing evidence that when tribes control education, American Indian students do better. For example, the American Indian Policy Review Commission reported that drop-out rates were down at Indian-controlled schools. A study by Bordeaux indicates high school completion rates increased from 20-30 percent in 1970 to 65-80 percent in 1996. However, earlier in the decade, Melody L. McCoy contended that "inroads have been made, but tribal control is still indirect, uncoordinated, or too limited. Legislation is needed that confirms and supports direct tribal control over all education systems that serve tribal children." Bordeaux predicts that over the next five years, Indian-controlled schools will show "major improvements in academic achievement, tribal language preservation, success in postsecondary education, and relevant employment."<sup>28</sup>

## Challenges

Many challenges lie ahead for those tribes already in control of their schools and for those tribes currently seeking control. The challenges described here relate to obtaining adequate funding, improving academic performance, increasing the presence of Native cultures and languages, increasing parental and tribal involvement, upgrading school facilities, developing Indian leadership and staffing, and obtaining accreditation.

**Obtaining adequate funding.** Funding continues to be a challenge. Adequate funding has been a major concern since the 1928 Meriam Report:

[Indian education] will cost more money than the present program. The real choice before the government is between doing a mediocre job thereby piling up for the future serious problems in poverty, disease, and crime, and spending more for an acceptable social and educational program. . . . Cheapness in education is expensive.<sup>29</sup>

Today there continues to be a lack of adequate funding for tribal schools, and the funding that *is* available is inconsistent and lacks stability. Funding is also inadequate for tribal colleges and for "training centers, for teachers and administrators, and for research and development of new educational techniques and procedures."<sup>30</sup>

The Department of Interior appropriation committees in Congress play the most important role in funding BIA-supported education and schools. A major challenge is to educate and convince Congress about the importance of tribal control of education and its potential for improving the overall development of American Indian communities. Most recently, the appropriation committees placed a moratorium on the number of BIA-supported schools and restricted school grade expansions. Congress may also limit the number of tribal grant schools because the administrative expenses allocated to tribal schools would increase.<sup>31</sup>

Gaming has directly helped education, often at tribally controlled institutions. Most tribes with gaming profits invest funds in education, often improving or building new school facilities and providing higher education scholarships.

**Improving the academic performance of American Indian students.** Many American Indian students do well on academic achievement tests, but most score below national norms. Research by Donna Deyhle and Karen Swisher shows American Indians and White students in the United States have similar capabilities for learning, but many Indians struggle with ongoing “attitudes and beliefs of inferiority.”<sup>32</sup>

In some cases, measurement problems make it difficult to tell how well American Indian students are actually performing. Bordeaux reports some criticisms of standardized, nationally normed tests and discusses possible benefits of alternative performance-based assessment tools. Tribal schools, aware of the student-testing situation, are exploring alternative means of assessment.<sup>33</sup>

**Increasing the infusion of Indian cultures and languages into the curriculum.** One major benefit of Indian involvement in and tribal control of education is the increasing presence of American Indian languages and cultures in education, including the practice of bilingual-bicultural education. The importance of language and culture in meeting the needs of American Indian students is recognized in new mathematics, science, and technology guidelines developed for schools and communities.<sup>34</sup>

An example of groundbreaking work in the area of culturally responsive schools is Gregory Cajete’s book *Look to the Mountains*, which presents an Indigenous education framework including a curriculum mandala for science. Another example is the work of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, which is making significant contributions by developing and integrating Alaska Native knowledge and ways of knowing into state standards and classrooms across the state.<sup>35</sup>

Despite these exemplary efforts, the overall effort to integrate American Indian culture and language into school curricula is piecemeal and has realized marginal degrees of success. Tribal schools generally have more potential and are more successful in cultural integration than public schools, where control of school philosophy and curriculum is located in the state departments of education and local school boards.

**Increasing parental and tribal involvement.** Contemporary parental and Indian involvement in formal schooling is rela-

tively new; tribal control of education is even newer. Meaningful involvement and control began in the 1960s but really took hold when it was mandated by the *Indian Education Act* of 1972 through program advisory parent committees. Still, the relatively low level of parent involvement continues to be an issue today, requiring educators to seek new ways to involve parents beyond serving on committees and participating in special school activities. Parents need to be involved in their children's education on a daily basis and to promote use of their tribal languages.<sup>36</sup>

Achieving high levels of parent involvement is not easy to do. Neither is the task of obtaining local and tribal control. Many barriers impede progress, drain resources, and divert attention away from improving teaching and learning. There has been an ongoing need for technical assistance since the 1970s. Gaining Indian control happens more readily in federally controlled BIA schools than public schools because of federal responsibility in Indian education, the national policy of tribal self-determination, and existing federal legislation. Indian control is more difficult to achieve in public schools because of states' authority over education.<sup>37</sup>

Parental involvement and tribal control connect communities to schools. This is true at both the college and K-12 levels. When community involvement is high, the school becomes a focal point and is involved in the reconstitution of community life.<sup>38</sup>

**Upgrading school facilities.** School facilities serving Indian communities at the K-12 level are often obsolete, ill designed, or even condemned. There is a strong need for facilities construction at tribal colleges. Studies from the 1970s identified a shortage of school construction funds as the most immediate financial problem in Indian education for schools eligible for Public Law 815 (*Federally Impacted Areas Aid Act*) funds.<sup>39</sup> The situation has not improved. New school construction, renovations, and repair of existing facilities are major problems in BIA-supported schools. There exists a backlog of at least \$700 million in needed renovations and repairs alone.<sup>40</sup>

**Developing Indian leadership and staffing.** There is a need to prepare more Indian people for leadership roles including staff, teacher, administrator, and school board roles. The same need exists for faculty development programs at tribal colleges. Indian involve-

ment and control can be achieved only when leadership is provided by Indian people, tribes, educators, organizations, and institutions.<sup>41</sup>

**Obtaining accreditation.** Institutional accreditation and the certification of staff are concerns because of the creative, innovative, and unusual approaches to education that are grounded in tribal languages and cultures. Mainstream accrediting institutions may not recognize these approaches. Tribally controlled institutions, on the other hand, value staff that know Native languages and cultures, and can recognize this knowledge in accreditation and certification efforts.<sup>42</sup>

### Research Findings and Needs

There is greater knowledge about what works in Indian education than existed in previous eras. Deyhle and Swisher conclude that research has made a difference in Indian education. They report we know more about cultural differences, student learning styles, why students leave school before graduation, the difference caring teachers can make, the role a strong grounding in culture and language can play in enhancing achievement, and the impact on schooling of local knowledge combined with Native language. Finding additional knowledge about what works in tribal schools is very likely, given their educational philosophies and tribal approaches to education.

American Indians are becoming more involved in and gaining control of research—including educational research.<sup>43</sup> Most tribes and tribal schools have policies and procedures that control research, ensure Indian involvement, and ensure that research findings are put to good use.<sup>44</sup> Tribes and schools are increasingly engaged in conducting their own research, and the number of American Indian research scholars has increased. The *Journal of American Indian Education*, *Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education*, and *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* are publications that disseminate Indian education research.

There is a need to study virtually every aspect of tribal control including the policy of tribal self-determination. Research must determine not only how well students are doing academically but also explore how Native languages, cultures, and ways of knowing influence the teaching-learning process in local and tribally controlled

education settings. Tribal schools need to be compared with public schools to ensure parity and equity in resources and budgets.

### Conclusions

The Indian control movement in education gained momentum in the 1990s; indications are that tribal control will become even more established and prominent during the twenty-first century. Indian control of Indian education has been difficult to achieve, slow to develop, fragmented in its approach, and besieged with numerous obstacles and problems. At times, survival has been the main concern. Yet, the movement has persisted, gathered strength, become more focused, and is increasingly successful. Support and leadership from tribes, institutions, organizations, governments, and individuals have proven essential to the tribal control movement.

The developing tribal system of education will not only benefit students attending tribal schools, it has the potential to help Indian students who attend public schools and mainstream colleges and universities—especially in integrating Indian cultures and languages to enhance student learning. The development of relevant high-quality standards and assessment tools will benefit all Indian education. Ultimately, tribal control of education will help current and future Indian leadership achieve greater tribal self-sufficiency and help ensure cultural and language survival and growth in the future.

### Notes

1. John W. Tippeconnic III (Comanche) teaches Education Policy Studies and directs the American Indian Leadership Program at The Pennsylvania State University.

2. Throughout this chapter, the term *American Indian* is inclusive of Eskimos, Aleuts, and other Alaska Natives. At times, “Indian” or “Native” might be used to refer to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The BIA does not currently operate any schools in Alaska; the last was turned over to the state in 1986. The Johnson O’Malley (JOM) program provides the only BIA funds for elementary and secondary students in Alaska.

3. The intent here is to discuss briefly the history of Indian control of education. Detailed descriptive histories of Indian education can be found in the American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*; Senate Special Subcommittee, *Indian Education*; National Advisory Council, *Indian Education* (commonly known as the Kennedy Report); and

Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*. A history of tribally controlled colleges is found in Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges*.

4. See McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, *Who Should Control Indian Education?* and Senate Special Subcommittee, *Indian Education*.

5. Institute for Government Research, *Problem of Indian Administration*, 346 (hereafter cited as Meriam Report).

6. *Ibid.*, 414.

7. See Fuchs and Havinghurst, *To Live on This Earth*.

8. Senate Special Subcommittee, *Indian Education*, 119, 135, 106.

9. *Rough Rock Demonstration School*, 2.

10. See Johnson, *Navaho Education at Rough Rock*; McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, *Who Should Control Indian Education?*; and Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*.

11. American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*, 265.

12. See Szasz, *Education and the American Indian* and Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges*.

13. See Ernest L. Boyer, *Tribal Colleges*.

14. Bordeaux, *Our Children*, 7.

15. For more information on tribal colleges, see Tippeconnic, "Editorial."

16. National Congress of American Indians, *Comprehensive Federal Indian Education*, 2.

17. DeLong, "Indian Controlled Schools," 13-14.

18. See McCoy, *Role of Tribal Governments*.

19. See Huff, *To Live Heroically*.

20. Bordeaux, *Our Children*, 3. See also McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, *Who Should Control Indian Education?* and Senate Special Subcommittee, *Indian Education*.

21. See McCoy, *Role of Tribal Governments*.

22. See White House Conference on Indian Education, *Final Report*.

23. See Reed and Zelio, *States and Tribes*.

24. See Senate Special Subcommittee, *Indian Education*; Education Commission of the States, *Indian Education*; Indian Nations At Risk Task Force, *Indian Nations At Risk* (hereafter cited as *Indian Nations At Risk*); Reed and Zelio, *States and Tribes*; and McCoy, *Role of Tribal Governments*.

25. See *Indian Nations At Risk*; Tippeconnic, "Education of American Indians"; and Pavel, Swisher, and Ward, "Special Focus."

26. See American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*; Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*; Bordeaux, *Our Children*; and Dupris, *American Indian Community Controlled Education*.

27. See Tippeconnic, "Education of American Indians" and Tippeconnic, "Editorial."

28. McCoy, *Role of Tribal Governments*, 10; Bordeaux, *Our Children*, 4.
29. Meriam Report, 347-348.
30. Dupris, *American Indian Community Controlled Education*, 22. See also Bordeaux, *Our Children*; American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*; Ernest L. Boyer, *Tribal Colleges*; and Paul Boyer, *Native American Colleges*.
31. See Tippeconnic, "Editorial."
32. See Tippeconnic and Swisher, "American Indian Education" and Deyhle and Swisher, "Research in American Indian and Alaska Native Education."
33. See Bordeaux, *Assessment for American Indian and Alaska Native Learners*.
34. See Johnson, *Navaho Education*; American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*; and American Indian Science & Engineering Society, *Educating*.
35. See Alaska Native Knowledge Network, <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/NPE.html> (25 November 1998).
36. See *Indian Nations At Risk*.
37. See Huff, *To Live Heroically* and American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*.
38. See Paul Boyer, *Native American Colleges*; Dupris, *American Indian Community Controlled Education*; and American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*.
39. P.L. 815, the *Federally Impacted Areas Aid Act*, was passed in 1950 to assist school districts in the education of students who lived on federal lands, including reservations. The act is not solely for Indians but for any student who lives on federal land, including children who live on military bases. There are two impacted aid laws, 815 and 874. P.L. 815 provides funds for school construction in federally impacted areas. Initially these funds were not applied to Indian students, but the law was amended in 1953 to include Indians.
40. Tippeconnic, "Editorial," 4. See also Bordeaux, *Our Children*; Ernest L. Boyer, *Tribal Colleges*; Paul Boyer, *Native American Colleges*; and Rosenfelt, "Toward a More Coherent Policy."
41. See American Indian Policy Review Commission, *Report on Indian Education*; Huff, *To Live Heroically*; Ernest L. Boyer, *Tribal Colleges*; and Paul Boyer, *Native American Colleges*.
42. See Ernest L. Boyer, *Tribal Colleges*.
43. See Deyhle and Swisher, "Research in American Indian and Alaska Native Education"; Swisher, "Why Indian People"; Tippeconnic and Swisher, "American Indian Education"; and Robbins and Tippeconnic, *Research in American Indian Education*.
44. See Tippeconnic and Swisher, "American Indian Education."

## Bibliography

- Alaska Native Knowledge Network. (1998, November 3) *Native Pathways to Education*. Available at <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/NPE.html> (25 November 1998).
- American Indian Policy Review Commission. *Report on Indian Education*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.
- American Indian Science & Engineering Society. *Educating American Indian/Alaska Native Elementary and Secondary Students: Guidelines for Mathematics, Science and Technology Programs*. Boulder, CO: American Indian Science & Engineering Society, 1995. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385 404.
- Association of Community Tribal Schools. *Our Children, Our Schools, Our Tribes: Thirty Years of Local Control of Indian Education 1966-1996*. Sisseton, SD: Association of Community Tribal Schools, 1996. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 395 740.
- Bordeaux, Roger. *Assessment for American Indian and Alaska Native Learners*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1995. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385 424.
- Boyer, Ernest L. Foreword to *Tribal Colleges: Shaping the Future of Native America*, by Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989.
- Boyer, Paul. *Native American Colleges: Progress and Prospects*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 409 037.
- Cajete, Gregory. *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. Durango, CO: Kivaki Press, 1994.
- DeLong, Loretta. "Indian Controlled Schools: The Unrealized Potential." *Tribal College Journal* 9(4): 13-14 (1998).
- Deyhle, Donna, and Karen Swisher. "Research in American Indian and Alaska Native Education: From Assimilation to Self-Determination." In *Review of Research in Education*, vol. 22, edited by Michael W. Apple. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 1997.
- Dupris, Joseph C. *American Indian Community Controlled Education: "Determination for Today, Direction for Tomorrow."* Las Cruces, NM: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 187 502.
- Education Commission of the States. *Indian Education: Final Project Report*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, 1980.
- Fuchs, Estelle, and Robert J. Havinghurst. *To Live on This Earth: American Indian Education*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972. Reprint with new introduction, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983.

- Huff, Doeores J. *To Live Heroically: Institutional Racism and American Indian Education*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- Indian Nations At Risk Task Force. *Indian Nations At Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action: Final Report of the Indian Nations At Risk Task Force*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1991. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 343 753.
- Institute for Government Research. *The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey Made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him, February 21, 1928*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928. Reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint, 1971.
- Johnson, Broderick H. *Navaho Education at Rough Rock*. Rough Rock, AZ: Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1968.
- McCoy, Melody L. *The Role of Tribal Governments in Education Policy: A Concept Paper*. Boulder, CO: Native American Rights Fund, 1991.
- McKinley, Francis, Stephen Bayne, and Glen Nimnicht. *Who Should Control Indian Education? A History, Three Case Studies, Recommendations*. Berkeley, CA: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1970. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 042 538.
- National Advisory Council on Indian Education. *Indian Education: A Federal Entitlement: 19th Annual Report to the U.S. Congress for Fiscal Year 1992*. Washington, DC: National Advisory Council on Indian Education, 1993. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 361 157.
- National Congress of American Indians and National Indian Education Association. *Comprehensive Federal Indian Education: Policy Statement: A Proposal from Indian Country to the White House*. Washington, DC: National Congress of American Indians and National Indian Education Association, 1997. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 408 137.
- Pavel, Michael, Karen Swisher, and Marlene Ward. "Special Focus: American Indian and Alaska Native Demographic and Educational Trends." In *Status Report on Minorities in Higher Education: 1994 Thirteenth Annual Status Report*, edited by Deborah J. Carter and Reginald Wilson. Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1995. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 407 891.
- Reed, James B., and Judy A. Zelio, eds. *States and Tribes: Building New Traditions*. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures, 1997. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 396 876.
- Robbins, Rebecca, and John Tippeconnic III. *Research in American Indian Education*. Tempe, AZ: Center for Indian Education, 1985.
- Rough Rock Demonstration School*. Chinle, AZ: Rough Rock Demonstration School, n.d.
- Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education. *Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge*. 91st Congress, 1st sess., 1969. S. Rept. 91-501.
- Stein, Wayne J. *Tribally Controlled Colleges: Making Good Medicine*. New York: Peter Lang, 1992.

- Swisher, Karen Gayton. "Why Indian People Should Be the Ones to Write about Indian Education." *American Indian Quarterly* 20(1): 83-90 (1996).
- Szasz, Margaret C. *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928*. 2d ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977.
- Tippeconnic, John W., III. "Editorial . . . On BIA Education." *Journal of American Indian Education* 35(1): 1-5 (1995).
- . "The Education of American Indians: Policy, Practice, and Future Direction." In *American Indians: Social Justice and Public Policy*, edited by Donald E. Green and Thomas V. Tonnesen. Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin System, 1991. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 351 158.
- Tippeconnic, John W., and Karen Swisher. "American Indian Education." In *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, 6th ed., edited by Marvin C. Alkin. New York: Macmillan, 1992.
- White House Conference on Indian Education. *Final Report of the White House Conference on Indian Education*. Washington, DC: White House Conference on Indian Education, 1992. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 353 124.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



**U.S. Department of Education**  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)  
National Library of Education (NLE)  
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



## NOTICE

### REPRODUCTION BASIS



This document is covered by a signed “Reproduction Release (Blanket) form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a “Specific Document” Release form.



This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either “Specific Document” or “Blanket”).