



# *Native American Education*

*By Melody Staebner, Native American Education Coordinator*

## **Indian Education is Now Called the Native American Education Program**

Boozhoo, this is Melody Staebner, I am the Fargo and West Fargo Native American Education Coordinator. Yes, we are now the Native American Education Program!

We are excited for another great year with Fargo Public Schools and serving our Native American students and families. Our program went through a name change process and is now known as the **Native American Education Program**. We were known for many years as the Indian Education Program because the name was tied to federal funding.

The name change will take a little time to get used to it, however as we work to create belonging for our Native American students and families, it is an appropriate time to move forward with this change.

Below is a summary of the process that was completed for the name change that included consultation with our student, families, and parent committee. I submitted the name change request to FPS Superintendent Dr. Rupak Gandhi who then informed the Fargo Board of Education of this name change.

### **Indian Education Program Name Change Process**

The Fargo/West Fargo Public Schools Indian Education began a program name change process in May of 2021 because it has been brought to the forefront in recent times. The process has been carefully and strategically moved forward over the last two years.

Intentional consultation was critical and began with conversation with the U.S Department Office of Indian Education, Indian Education Parent Committee, Native American students, and families. All were unanimously in favor changing the name of our program.

Early surveys conducted showed an overwhelming vote to change the program name with two potential names coming out on top: Native American Education Program and Indigenous Education Program.

A final survey was conducted in March 2023 and Native American Education was the most popular choice.



## *Native American Education, cont.*

On June 13, 2023, the Fargo/West Fargo Public Schools Indian Education Parent Committee unanimously voted to proceed with a recommendation to Fargo Public Schools and West Fargo Public Schools to adopt a name change to Native American Education Program.

