

Assembly

Committee on Education

April 18, 1973 165

Members present: Schofield, McNeel, Broadbent and Barengo

Members absent: Vergiels, Foote, Lowman

Guests present: Ross Morris  
Joe Braswell - Inter Tribal Council  
Ray D. Lowell - ITC of Nevada  
Mary L. Stevens - Ed. Com Council - Yer. Nev.  
Charlotte Cornbread - ITC  
Raymond Heferer - Pres., NSIYC  
Francis Same (Councilman) Walker River Reservation  
Gayline Evans - Ed. Com Reno  
Syble Askene

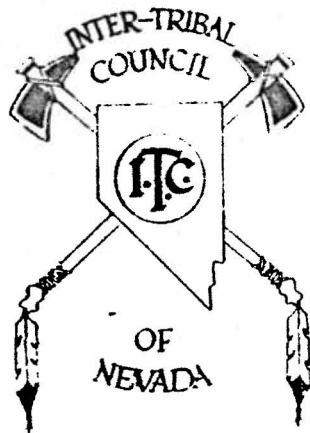
Meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 5:00 P.M.

Mr. Joe Braswell who represented the Inter-tribal Council gave a presentation on why they wanted these measures, SB 503 and SB 509. See Addendum I.

After a brief discussion by the Committee Mr. Barengo moved to do pass SB 503 and SB 509

Motion seconded by Dr. Broadbent.

Motion carried unanimously.



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# INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL OF NEVADA

SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM

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TELEPHONE (702) 882-6663

April 18, 1973

TO: The Honorable Jack Schofield, Chairman, and Members  
of the Assembly Committee on Education

RE: S.B. 503 and S.B. 509

This testimony is presented in support of both S.B. 503 and S.B. 509, as I believe the same set of facts document the validity and necessity for both measures.

Fact number 1, American Indian students have the highest drop out rate of any ethnic minority group at all levels in the educational system, on a national level.

Factual data indicates that this is as true for Nevada as for other parts of the country. In FY-72 the ITCN Social Services Program served a total of 1167 persons in 443 assistance cases. Data was compiled on approximately 20% of the cases opened during 1972. In 42.6% of these cases the head of the household was under 35 years of age. There were 68.5% of these Indian young adults who had not completed high school, 33.3% of them had no high school at all. Many of the clients over 35 years of age had not even completed the 8th grade. This indicates that we are serving a relatively young Indian population with limited educational achievement. The existing educational system in Nevada has failed to meet their educational needs in the past.

In the Fall of 1971 there were 75 Indian students enrolled in the University of Nevada at Reno, by the end of the school year 20 students, or 26.6% had dropped out for various reasons. In the Fall of 1972 there were 65 Indian students enrolled at University of Nevada, Reno, as of this date 14 have already dropped out, a 21.5% drop out rate. Part of the drop out rate at the university level can be attributed to inadequate educational programs at the elementary and secondary level.

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Fact number 2, American Indians have the highest unemployment rate of any ethnic minority group in the nation. It is my professional opinion, based on over 21 years experience in social work in four different states, that a lack of education or poor education contributes to a lack of marketable job skills and a high unemployment rate among any group of people, regardless of their race or ethnic origin. To show the situation among Nevada Indians I cite a report from the Nevada Agency of the BIA for the Fall of 1972. They report an overall unemployment rate of 32% for Nevada Indians. Of all the reservations and colonies covered in the report, one-half of them had an unemployment rate of 40% or more. Because of so many of our Indians being employed in seasonal agricultural work, the unemployment rate may reach as high as 90% during the Winter on some of our reservations.

Fact number 3, there are fewer professionally trained Indians in this country than for any ethnic minority. To my knowledge there is only one Indian dentist, and he works for the federal government at the national level. There are fewer than 100 professionally trained social workers who are American Indians. The number of American Indian M.D.s and lawyers is also relatively small, although I do not have specific statistics. Without adequate educational programs at the elementary and secondary school levels, we will never be able to develop these professional skills among our Indian people.

Fact number 4, the place of the American Indian, in the history of the development of this country, is either ignored or distorted in most curricula and school text books in use today. This distorted image is further amplified by the mass media of television and the motion picture industry, and I might add comic books. This poses a real problem for some Indian children in the development of a positive self-image, self-esteem, and pride in their rich cultural heritage. This hinders their educational development.

Fact number 5, in FY-71-72 there were \$139,543. from Johnson-O'Malley authorized funds granted to the schools of Nevada. There will be something over \$100,000 distributed during the current fiscal year. These are all federal funds, designated to meet the special educational needs of Indian children. There has been very little real meaningful Indian input into

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the development and administration of these programs. Too often the Indian people feel they have been forced to rubber-stamp programs someone else devised for them or to have no programs at all. This is not a situation unique to Nevada. A report published by the U.S. Senate a few years ago cited two pertinent facts, lack of Indian participation and poor accountability of funds expended.

These are only a few of the facts which indicate there is need for a change in direction, focus and methods relative to Indian education in Nevada. A doctoral dissertation could be developed on this subject without too much difficulty, but time limitations preclude a long and detailed presentation at this time. I do not believe the facts I have presented are refutable. But I do believe that passage of these two measures will be a step in the right direction toward correction of the problems. This is also an opportunity for Nevada to move to the forefront among all states in the development of meaningful and effective programs in Indian education.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Braswell, MSW  
Director, ITCN Social Services  
Program

3/31/73 Gazette

## Professor wants meaningful Indian education

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A concerted effort to make public school programs more meaningful to Indian children should be launched, says a University of Nevada-Las Vegas professor.

Thomas Cassese told the Nevada Commission on Indian Affairs Friday that the Indian child comes to the first grade with a healthy attitude toward learning, and scores highest of all groups on scholastic tests in the first grade. However, the Indian child receives the lowest grade of all groups on scholastic tests at the 12th grade level, he said.

"We've never attempted to educate an Indian child," said Cassese, chairman of the Department of Education Foundations and Counseling at the university.

"We've tried to make them white," he added.

Cassese talked about a proposed summer school program for Indians which would teach basic skills in reading and arithmetic using the Indian culture and legend. The five-week summer program would be taught at the Moapa Indian Reservation and Clear Creek Job Corps camp.

ASSEMBLYAGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONDate 4/18/73 Time 5:00 P.M. Room 336

<u>Bills or Resolutions to be considered</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Counsel requested*</u>
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SB 509	which creates Nevada Indian Adivsory Committee for Indian Education	
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\*Please do not ask for counsel unless necessary.