

**Resolution Recommending Funding to Assist School District Compliance With Act 31**

Whereas Act 31 is the required state law mandating instruction on history, culture and tribal sovereignty of the eleven (11) federally-recognized Indigenous tribes in Wisconsin at least twice in elementary years and once in secondary years; and

Whereas Act 31 originated from the misunderstanding surrounding tribal treaty rights, history, culture, tribal sovereignty and political status and from the social unrest surrounding the 1983 Voigt decision; and

Whereas state and tribal leaders sought to provide students with accurate, academically appropriate education to combat societal misunderstanding and social unrest with Act 31 legislation; and

Whereas a lack of Act 31 compliance exists today; and Whereas the lack of compliance with Act 31 contributes to a continued misunderstanding of Indigenous history, treaty rights, culture, sovereignty, political status and the enduring existence of the eleven (11) federally-recognized Wisconsin tribes today; and

Whereas this misunderstanding impacts human relations; and Whereas the Wisconsin Code of Ethics for public officials declares that high moral and ethical standards among public officials are essential; and

Whereas school boards have a legal and ethical obligation to ensure district compliance with the law; and

Whereas some school districts may struggle to meet the educational requirements of Act 31 due to a lack of resources and materials;

Whereas the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (hereinafter, "WASB") supports the principle that the primary objective for student assessment is to improve student achievement and that districts should measure competency through performance assessment measures;

Now, therefore BE IT RESOLVED that:

- 1) The WASB calls upon its member boards to recognize their responsibilities and fulfill the requirements of Act 31; and
- 2) the WASB supports initiatives that promote increased student academic competency regarding Act 31; and
- 3) the WASB supports legislation that would provide funding to better enable Wisconsin public school districts meet this mandate;
- 4) the WASB urges Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to develop an audit process to ensure Act 31 requirements are met.

## Rationale:

Failure to comply with Act 31 leads to ongoing misunderstandings regarding First Nations people in Wisconsin and their continued existence and rights in society. These misunderstandings contribute to cross-cultural conflict. Menomonie Area School District has students transfer from districts throughout the state and must ensure that our students have the necessary understanding required by Act 31.

## References

§118.01(2)(c)(7.and 8.), Wis Stats., Educational Goals and Expectations.

§19.41, Wis. Stats., Code of Ethics for Public Officials.

§121.02, Wis. Stats., School District Standards.

Leary, J.P. (2018). The story of Act 31: How Native history came to Wisconsin classrooms. Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

Wisconsin Association of School Boards Resolution 3.10

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.). Fact Sheet for Wisconsin American Indian Studies. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/amind/fact-sheet>

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Wisconsin Association of School Board. (2018, August). From Treaty Rights to Cultural Sensitivity. Retrieved from [https://www.wasb.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/07/american\\_indian\\_education\\_Aug18.pdf](https://www.wasb.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/07/american_indian_education_Aug18.pdf)

Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction. (2010, Oct. 8). American Indian Studies and Act 31. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/dpi-connected/american-indian-studies-and-act-31>

WJFW Newswatch 12. (2020, May 18). “Lac du Flambeau Tribal members shot at while spearfishing on Gunlock Lake.” Retrieved from <https://www.wjfw.com/stories.html?sku=20190525163736&status=viewfull>