



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

## **NIEA Resolution 2023 - #E001**

### **TITLE: URGING AMENDMENTS FOR INDIAN HEAD START ELIGIBILITY TO THE HEAD START ACT**

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

**WHEREAS**, NIEA as the largest national Native organization of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

**WHEREAS**, through its unique relationship with Native nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Head Start Directors Association (NIHSDA), which has been the voice of American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs for over 35 years, reports that Indian Head Start programs are experiencing a growing number of program eligibility problems including, most notably, American Indian and Alaska Native students becoming ineligible as a result of outdated federal income limit requirements or losing their places in Indian Head Start programs to non-Indian income eligible children; and

**WHEREAS**, the idea of an eligibility fix has been approved and requested by numerous tribal leaders; and

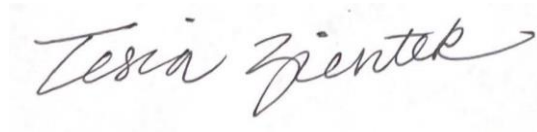
**WHEREAS**, the Secretary of Health & Human Services (HHS) has previously clarified that HHS does not currently have the regulatory authority to address this problem.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Indian Education Association urges an amendment to the Head Start Act to empower Tribal Nations to set their own eligibility criteria and improve enrollment of American Indian and Alaska Native children in Indian Head Start Programs; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NIEA until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was duly considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on October 21, 2023 at which a quorum of the membership was present.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tesia Zientek". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Tesia Zientek  
President