

FORT PECK TRIBES

Assiniboine & Sioux
Testimonial Support for Senate Bill NO. 374

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 5

DATE 3/15/13

BILL NO. SB 374

The Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes Language and Culture Department supports Senate Bill 374 "a Public Charter Schools Act."

This Act has the opportunity to strongly support the Fort Peck Tribes departmental vision statement: *"to increase the language revitalization and cultural restoration with our Nakona and Dakota communities as the first steps to planning and developing a Tribal Immersion School (aka Charter School). This vision foretells our youth being embraced daily with our cultural ways of knowing, speaking our language, hearing our elder stories, hearing our creation stories, understanding and perpetuating our history, singing our traditional songs, sharing our ways of dance, living and perpetuating our seven sacred rites of Pte San Win (White Buffalo Calf Woman). Our respectful approach addresses the historical accuracy of our people's education past and present, community-based curriculum development, language revitalization, cultural restoration, and learning strategies for the sake of our children and future generations."*

With this legislative bill, it is with motivation and inspiration the Fort Peck Tribes continue to stand up and set a cultural standard for the younger generations. The standardized tests our youth endure only targets core areas. The cultural integrity of Native Students educational journeys is overlooked when their attention is on core standards rather than language and culture. Our strong support for this bill comes in a manner that gives opportunity to begin steps toward a futuristic goal of a Tribal Immersion School aka Tribal Charter School on the Fort Peck Assiniboine/Sioux homeland (reservation).

We live life and want to bring into education, a philosophy of generosity that reflects the making and giving away of a star quilt. For our communities, a star quilt is one of the highest honors to be given or received. We believe each piece of the quilt represents our youth and as Tribal people our responsibility is to piece together successful outcomes of our youth and future generations. Thus, our students will have the tools to endure and thrive in both the Western and Indigenous ideologies as they become learners and leaders!

Pidamayaye,

Ramey L. Growing Thunder

Ramey L. Growing Thunder
PO BOX 1027
Poplar, MT 59255
Rgrowingthunder@gmail.com
406.768.2435