

WISCONSIN EDUCATION ACT 31

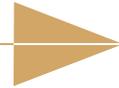
2014

Administrator and Teacher Survey Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Survey Research Center Report 2014/6
University of Wisconsin-River Falls
June 2014



funded by a
Program Innovation Grant
from **UW
Extension**

Foreword

**Alan Caldwell, Retired educator and former
DPI American Indian Studies Consultant (1984-1991)**

In the August 1989 biennial budget bill, a piece of legislation was included requiring all public school districts and teacher education programs in Wisconsin to include instruction on the history, culture and tribal sovereignty of the eleven federally recognized tribes and bands located in the State of Wisconsin. The legislation also requires the inclusion of instruction on the treaty rights of the six Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) bands in Wisconsin. Another requirement is that teachers must have this instruction in their education training program or they are not eligible for a license to teach in the State of Wisconsin. This legislation is commonly referred to as Act 31 (1989/1991).

Twenty-five years after the passage of this legislation, many elementary, middle, and high schools in Wisconsin have implemented the legislation as have the thirty plus teacher education training programs in the state. The legislation was created in response to the years of turmoil when the various bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) exercised their treaty rights to hunt, fish and gather off the reservation in the ceded territory of northern Wisconsin. Although the federal court process confirmed that the Chippewa (Ojibwe) retained their treaty rights, various groups of treaty protestors demonstrated in protest. Often these protests required intervention by law enforcement officials in an attempt to maintain the peace. Additionally, there was much promotion of misinformation and stereotypes, as well as fear and anger directed toward native people and their supporters.

In response to the protests and unrest occurring in northern Wisconsin, Representative Frank Boyle, 89th Assembly District, contacted staff at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the American Indian Language and Culture Education Board (AILCEB) in the fall of 1988 to gather details on what classroom instruction existed in the K-12 system on American Indian history. As I recall, there was no specific requirement or guidance related to the study of American Indian studies on Wisconsin's tribal communities that existed. In May 1989, Representative Boyle asked AILCEB and me, as the DPI American Indian Studies Consultant, to draft a proposal requiring instruction about Wisconsin American Indian history, culture and tribal sovereignty, including the treaty rights of the Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) bands. David Lovell, Legislative Reference Bureau staff member, worked with us in drafting this proposal. Specific legislation was included in the 1989-1991 biennial budget signed by Governor Tommy G. Thompson on August 19, 1989, which we now know as Act 31 (1989/1991). The requirements for instruction in the public school districts and teacher training programs found in the legislation became effective July 1, 1991.

Since the legislation was enacted I have seen good instructional programs developed as well as many excellent classroom resources. Publications such as *Classroom Activities on Chippewa Treaty Rights* by the late Ron Satz and Bad River Ojibwe journalist Patty Loew's *Indian Nations of Wisconsin*, are examples. Several wonderful Wisconsin PK-16 educators have developed outstanding instructional programs and serve as resources to their colleagues. There are also many tribal community members who have stepped forward with programs and resources specific to their tribe's histories and cultures, for the benefit of all our children and our future.

Finally, to all of our elders, tribal leaders, administrators, teachers, tribal educators, storytellers, and community members, who have led the way and supported the efforts toward sharing the history, culture and tribal sovereignty of the eleven federally recognized American Indian tribes and bands in Wisconsin, I say, "Maeq waewaenen, Gichi-miigwetch, Anushiik, Pinagigi, and Yaw^ko."

I am deeply indebted to my successors at DPI, Dr. J.P. Leary (University of Wisconsin-Green Bay) and David O'Connor, American Indian Studies Consultant, and Connie Ellingson, DPI Office Operations Assistant, for continuing the work in helping Wisconsin fully realize the potential of Act 31 (1989/1991).

Respectfully,

Alan J. Caldwell

"Awaeseah Enaniew"

Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Executive Summary

In February 2014, the Wisconsin Education Act 31 (1989/1991) Survey Committee conducted Wisconsin school administrator and teacher online surveys to determine how state and tribal agencies can help provide information, training, and technical assistance to school districts in teaching about Wisconsin American Indian sovereign nations. The Survey Committee chose to work with the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls to collect the data and analyze the results.

For the Administrator survey, 2,213 Wisconsin school administrators representing all public schools in Wisconsin were invited to participate. Out of 2,213 surveys sent, 381 online surveys were completed. The response rate was 17% (381/2,212). The estimates included for administrators in this report should be accurate to within plus or minus 4.6% with 95% confidence. A total of 34,906 Wisconsin public school teachers were invited to complete the Teacher's survey. Out of 34,906 surveys sent, 1,726 usable surveys were completed. The response rate was 5% (1,726/34,906). Statewide estimates included for teachers in this report should be accurate to within plus or minus 2.3% with 95% confidence.

Administrator Survey

A large majority of administrators said that their school or district includes instruction in the history and culture of Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands. A slight majority said that tribal sovereignty is included in instruction.

Nearly all administrators said that social studies is a curricular area that includes Wisconsin American Indian content. Approximately one-third of administrators said that English, reading, and art included instructional content relating to Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands.

Textbooks were by far the most frequent choice among administrators as resources used to teach about Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands. The only other resources with majority usage are videos or DVDs.

Approximately 7 in 10 administrators said that their school or district needs additional instructional materials regarding Wisconsin American Indian culture and approximately one-half believe more professional development is needed in this area.

Most respondents to the administrator survey were principals. A majority of respondents said that their administrative duties included elementary and middle school grades.

Nearly two-thirds of administrators said that less than 1 percent of their enrolled students are American Indian.

Teacher Survey

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, and the Ho-Chunk Nation were the tribes and bands most included in instruction.

Wisconsin American Indian history and culture were covered by large percentages of teachers who teach in these areas. One-fifth of respondents said that they include contemporary tribal issues and tribal sovereignty in their instruction.

Approximately 4 in 10 teachers integrate Wisconsin American Indian tribe and band curriculum material throughout their curriculum, about one-third teach it as a single unit, and about one-fourth do both.

The average classroom contact hours spent per school year teaching about Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands is 11 hours.

Two instructional tools are currently being used by a majority of teachers to assess students' understanding of instruction about Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands: question and answer and projects.

As was the case with Wisconsin administrators, the resource most used by teachers to teach about Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands are textbooks.

Equal percentages of teachers said they had received college level instruction in the history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of Wisconsin American Indian tribes and bands as those that had not; one-fourth of teachers were not sure or did not recall. Of the teachers who had received training, slightly more than one-half said they received their training in one class only.

THE ACT 31 INITIATIVE

Teaching Wisconsin Tribal History, Culture and Sovereignty

A wide range of partners throughout the state have joined forces to embark upon an ambitious, multi-year, multi-media initiative focused on the American Indian tribes located in Wisconsin. Endorsed by the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, this coalition is collaboratively investigating the reasons for the shortfalls of Act 31 implementation, addressing those issues in a combined effort, and collecting their individual production of materials into a common resource of accurate and Wisconsin-appropriate videos, books and educational aids for teachers, students and the general public.

The Act 31 Coalition

The Wisconsin Indian Education Association, working to strengthen 1989's Wisconsin Act 31, which mandates schools to educate students about the Wisconsin tribes; requires pre-service and in-service teachers to be certified competent to teach students about Native American culture, history and tribal sovereignty; and asks school districts to provide instructional materials which reflect the diversity of the state.

The Wisconsin Media Lab, whose curriculum-focused online video project titled *The Ways* profiles contemporary Indian life for grades 6-12.

The Wisconsin Historical Society and their numerous books and publications focused on American Indians, including the revised edition of Professor Patty Loew's *Indian Nations of Wisconsin: Histories of Endurance and Renewal*.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, which provides in-service training with its annual American Indian Studies Summer Institute for teachers.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Education, where the Act 31 mandate for pre-service teacher training in Native American history and sovereignty is continually evolving.

The University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension's Community Development Educators, working to increase the flow of accurate and unbiased communication between tribal and non-tribal communities.

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, First Nation Studies Program, whose efforts are premised upon the 4 Rs of the tribal world: Respect, Relationship, Reciprocity and Responsibility.

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, American Indian Studies Program, studying the cultures, values, histories, and contemporary lives of the indigenous nations and peoples of North America.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Tribal Libraries, Archives, and Museums (TLAM) Project, incorporating American Indian topics into Library and Information Studies education.

Wisconsin Public Television, currently in production on a series of twelve 30-minute programs presenting the stories of the Wisconsin Nations as told by tribal members in their own voices, thus creating accurate and culturally-sensitive portraits of the tribes that capture their uniqueness and individual oral tradition.