



Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children

Eastern Regional Hearing AGENDA

Location:

DoubleTree Nashville Downtown

Salon AB Room

315 4th Avenue N

Nashville, TN 37219

June 13, 2023 – June 15, 2023

**All start times listed in Central Daylight Time*

Agenda Overview

- **Wednesday – June 14**
 - Regional Hearing Welcome (morning)
 - Regional Hearing Panels (all day)
 - Panel 1 – Physical, Mental, and Behavioral Health;
 - Panel 2 – Education and Early Childhood Development;
 - Panel 3 – Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, and Violence, and
 - Panel 4 – System Innovations and Best Practices in Native Communities.
- **Thursday – June 15**
 - Regional Hearing Tribal Welcome (morning)
 - Regional Hearing Panels (morning only)
 - Panel 5 – Youth Panel, and Community/Public Panel



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Wednesday, June 14th - Regional Hearing

**All start times listed in Central Daylight Time*

Zoom link:

<https://kearnswest.zoom.us/join/91512820000>

The public is welcome to attend and listen to the Regional Hearing. The dialogue will be between the panelists and the Commissioners only.

8:30 am **Doors Open to the Public** (30 min)

9:00 am **Tribal/Community Welcome** (1 hour)
(5:00 am HI, 6:00 am AK, 7:00 am PT, 8:00 am MT, 9:00 am CT, 10:00 am ET)

Remarks from Commission Chair around Commission goals and each Commissioner will briefly introduce themselves.

Cultural Opening:

- **The Tennessee Arts Commission video**
<https://tnartscommission.org/governors-arts-awards/2019-award-winners/sally-wells/>
- **Opening Prayer: Sally Wells** (Mississippi Band of Choctaw), President of the Native American Indian Association TN
- **Welcoming Song: “Praises” performed by Shayna Hobbs** (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican) Indigenous artist, musician, and entrepreneur

Eastern Region Tribal/Community remarks

The goal of this session is to provide a general overview of current issues faced by Native children and youth (both on reservations and in urban communities) in the region, covering all topics to be studied by the Commission. Speakers will highlight common systemic challenges and discuss programs and strategies that have been effective in tribal communities in the region (including trauma informed and culturally based strategies). Opening remarks (45 min)



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- **Dr. Beverly Cotton**, DNP, Nashville Area Director, Indian Health Service
- **Dr. Cherie Poitra**, Associate Deputy Director of Tribally Controlled Schools (ADD-TCS), Bureau of Indian Education.

10:00 am **Panel 1: Physical, Mental and Behavioral Health (1.5 hours)**
(6:00 am HI, 7:00 am AK, 8:00 am PT, 9:00 am MT, 10:00 am CT, 11:00 am ET)

The goal of this session is to increase the Commission's understanding of the systems of health services provision available for Native children in the region (including physical, behavioral, and mental health, and traditional and cultural services). Panelists will discuss the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement within the current health system. Each panelist will provide 22 minutes of testimony, followed by a 5-minute opportunity for questions from the Commissioners. After all panelists have spoken, there will be a 15-minute period of general conversation and discussion with the full panel.

- **Mercia Cummings**, Clinical Director, Native American LifeLines
- **Dr. Anthony Bullington D.C.C.**, Director, Center for Behavioral Health, Seminole Tribe of Florida
- **Melerena Back**, A/CDP Assistant Director of Alcohol and Chemical Dependency Prevention, Saint Regis Mohawk Health Services

11:30 am **Break (15 min)**
(7:30 am HI, 8:30 am AK, 9:30 am PT, 10:30 am MT, 11:30 am CT, 12:30 pm ET)

11:45 am **Panel 2: Education and Early Childhood Development (1.5 hours)**
(7:45 am HI, 8:45 am AK, 9:45 am PT, 10:45 am MT, 11:45 am CT, 12:45 pm ET)

The goal of this session is to explore two issues. The first topic will be around supporting Native students by incorporating Native language and culture into educational systems at all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education. Panelists will discuss the characteristics of Native students in their systems, the ways that their systems incorporate Native language and culture, and the factors that support and hinder the health and well-being of Native children and youth. The second topic will be a discussion about the importance of early childhood programming serving children 0-5 in Native communities. Panelists will discuss programs like Head Start, childcare, pre-kindergarten, and



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home visiting and share results that have been shown to have positive impacts on child and family development, supporting increased child and family health, improved school readiness and academic achievement, and improved family economic self-sufficiency. Each panelist will provide 15 minutes of testimony, followed by a 5-minute opportunity for questions from the Commissioners. After all panelists have spoken, there will be a 10-minute period of general conversation and discussion with the full panel.

- **Connie Albert**, Education Program Administrator, Office of Tribally Controlled Schools, Albuquerque, Nashville, and Seattle Education Resource Centers (ERCs), Bureau of Indian Education
- **Dr. Randall Grierson**, Director of Schools, Choctaw Tribal Schools
- **Dr. Reza Namin**, Superintendent of Schools, Maine Indian Education

1:15 pm

LUNCH (1 hour)

(9:15 am HI, 10:15 am AK, 11:15 am PT, 12:15 pm MT, 1:15 pm CT, 2:15 pm ET)

2:15 pm

Panel 3: Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, and Violence (1.5 hours)

(10:15 am HI, 11:15 am AK, 12:15 pm PT, 1:15 pm MT, 2:15 pm CT, 1:15 pm ET)

The goal of this session is to explore two issues. First, to increase the Commission's understanding of issues around child welfare in Native communities in the region, including addressing jurisdictional issues related to the implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act by improving state-local-tribal collaboration, and building tribal capacity to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect and related issues. Second, to discuss the efficacy of the juvenile justice system for Native children, youth and communities and the disproportionate rates of arrest, detention and incarceration among Native youth compared to non-Hispanic Whites. Research is generally agreed that a more behavioral health approach to juvenile delinquency is better for youth, especially in light of increasing mental health challenges, greater suicide risk, challenges accessing education, and feelings of isolation and disconnection from culture and community. Each panelist will provide 10 minutes of testimony, followed by a 5-minute opportunity for questions from the Commissioners. After all panelists have spoken, there will be a 10-minute period of general conversation and discussion with the full panel.

- **Michael Corey Hinton**, Attorney, Drummond Woodsum
- **Dr. Melanie Sage**, Assistant Professor of Social Work, State University of New York, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work



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- **Chief Judge Eric Menhert**, Penobscot Nation Tribal Court

3:45 pm **Break (15 min)**
(11:45 am HI, 12:45 pm AK, 1:45 pm PT, 2:45 pm MT, 3:45 pm CT, 4:45 pm ET)

4:00 pm **Panel 4: Systems Innovations and Best Practices in Native Communities (1.5 hours)**
(12:00 pm HI, 1:00 pm AK, 2:00 pm PT, 3:00 pm MT, 4:00 pm CT, 5:00 pm ET)

The goal of this session is to highlight cross-system models, innovations, and best practices to meet the needs of Native children in a seamless and coordinated way. Each panelist will provide 10-15 minutes of testimony, followed by a 5-minute opportunity for questions from the Commissioners. After all panelists have spoken, there will be a 15-minute period of general conversation and discussion with the full panel.

- **John Barbry**, Director of Development and Programing for the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe
- **Peter Wilson**, Supervisor Community Services Department Overseeing Seneca Strong/Prevention, Seneca Nation Health System
- **Tish Carr**, Executive Director/Program Manager, Wabanaki Youth in Science (WaYS)
 - **John Neptune**, Cultural Resource Coordinator, Wabanaki Youth in Science (WaYS)

5:30 pm **Closing Remarks and Adjourn**
(1:30 pm HI, 2:30 pm AK, 3:30 pm PT, 4:30 pm MT, 5:30 pm CT, 6:30 pm ET)

The Commission will provide closing remarks for the day.



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Thursday, June 15th – Regional Hearing

**All start times listed in Central Daylight Time*

Zoom link:

<https://kearnswest.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYofuypqTIsH90HD6x1XaCnMf009tkPvXNC>

The public is welcome to attend and listen to the Regional Hearing. The dialogue will be between the panelists and the Commissioners only for the morning session.

8:30 am **Doors Open to the Public** (30 mins)

9:00 am **Tribal/Community Welcome** (1 hour)
(5:00 am HI, 6:00 am AK, 7:00 am PT, 8:00 am MT, 9:00 am CT, 10:00 am ET)

The Commission will provide remarks to the audience around Commission goals.

The goal of this session is to provide a general overview of the current issues faced by Native children and youth (both on reservations and in urban communities) in the region, covering all topics to be studied by the Commission. Speakers will highlight common systemic challenges and discuss programs and strategies that have been effective in tribal communities in the region (including trauma informed and culturally based strategies). Opening remarks:

- **Kimberly Bouchard**, Eastern Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- **Connie Albert**, Education Program Administrator, Office of Tribally Controlled Schools, Albuquerque, Nashville, and Seattle Education Resource Centers (ERCs), Bureau of Indian Education

10:00 am **Panel 5: Youth and Community Panel** (1 hr)
(6:00 am HI, 7:00 am AK, 8:00 am PT, 9:00 am MT, 10:00 am CT, 11:00 am ET ET)

The goal of this session is to explore two issues. First, to provide an opportunity for youth from the region to provide a general overview of current issues faced by youth (both on reservations and in urban communities), covering all topics to be studied by the Commission. Second, the community session is open to everyone and offers people with diverse backgrounds a chance to express their views.



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- **Nolan Altvater** (Passamaquoddy), Harvard Graduate School of Education
- **Kahlil Corwin** (Lumbee), Graduating High School Senior
- **Gracie Lowery** (Lumbee), Duke University
- **Jada Allen** (Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina), Rising Junior at Duke University majoring in Public Policy
- **Isabella Anderson** (Pamunkey Indian Tribe and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians)

11:00 am **Break** (15 min)
(7:00 am HI, 8:00 am AK, 9:00 am PT, 10:00 am MT, 11:00 am CT, 12:00 pm ET)

11:15 am **Community/Public Panel** (1 hr)
(7:15 am HI, 8:15 am AK, 9:15 am PT, 10:15 am MT, 11:15 am CT, 12:15 pm ET)

The Commission invites Native children, their families, tribal leaders, and community members to share their thoughts on issues that are important to protecting Native children served in the various communities. The Commission will provide an introduction and ask for those assembled in the room to comment. Witnesses will register ahead of time (or will sign up onsite) and will be given five (5) minutes each to speak. Testimony will be facilitated and open to any topic related to health, education, and well-being of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children (age prenatal-24).

12:15 pm **Closing Remarks/Prayer/ Adjourn** (15 min)
(8:15 am HI, 9:15 am AK, 10:15 am PT, 11:15 am MT, 12:15 pm CT, 1:15 pm ET)

The Commission will provide closing remarks and prayer. Regional hearing adjourned.