

A bill for an act
relating to education; establishing a volunteer working group on Native language
revitalization and preservation; providing for appointments; requiring a report;
appropriating money.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **VOLUNTEER WORKING GROUP ON DAKOTA AND OJIBWE
LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION AND PRESERVATION.**

Subdivision 1. Establishment. A volunteer working group is established to develop
a unified strategy to revitalize and preserve indigenous languages of the 11 federally
recognized American Indian tribes in Minnesota. As the federal government recognized
through passage of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act
of 2006, the revitalization and preservation of American Indian languages is of vital
importance to preserving the American Indian culture. There have been recent efforts in
Minnesota to develop programs to teach the Dakota and Ojibwe languages to students
and to create fluent speakers at both the kindergarten through grade 12 level and at the
postsecondary level. The volunteer working group shall, among other duties, inventory
these efforts and make recommendations regarding how to further revitalize and preserve
Dakota and Ojibwe languages.

Subd. 2. Membership. The executive director of the Minnesota Indian Affairs
Council shall invite each of the 11 federally recognized tribes under Minnesota Statutes,
section 3.922, subdivision 1, clause (1), to participate by appointing one member of each
tribe to the working group. Three additional members shall be appointed by the Indian
Affairs Council. Two of these members must represent the American Indian population
in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and one member must represent the American Indian

population in Duluth. Other working group members may include, at their discretion, the commissioner of education or the commissioner's appointee, the director of the Office of Higher Education or the director's appointee, one member of the Board of Teaching, the director of the Minnesota Historical Society or the director's appointee, one member of the senate appointed by its Subcommittee on Committees, and one member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house. The working group may add other members as deemed appropriate by a majority vote of the existing members. The executive director of the Indian Affairs Council must convene the first meeting no later than September 1, 2009. At the first meeting, the members shall elect from amongst themselves a chair and vice chair of the working group.

Subd. 3. **Duties.** The working group must develop strategies for the 11 federally recognized American Indian tribes and the state to work together to revitalize and preserve the Dakota and Ojibwe languages in Minnesota. The duties of the working group include, but are not limited to:

(1) creating an inventory of existing programs designed to preserve Dakota and Ojibwe languages in the state, including postsecondary programs, programs in tribal schools, and other schools throughout the state;

(2) creating an inventory of available resources for Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization and immersion programs, including curriculum, educational materials, and trained teachers;

(3) identifying curriculum needs to train teachers to teach the Dakota and Ojibwe languages in immersion programs and barriers to training teachers to teach the Dakota and Ojibwe language;

(4) identifying classroom curriculum needs for teaching students in Dakota and Ojibwe languages;

(5) determining how the identified curriculum needs should be met;

(6) determining if there is a need for a central repository of resources, and if there is a need, where the repository should be located, how it should be structured, and who should have responsibility for maintaining the repository;

(7) determining what technical assistance the state could offer to further Dakota and Ojibwe language immersion programs;

(8) identifying both existing state and national financial resources available to further Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization and preservation efforts;

(9) identifying current state and federal law, rules, regulations, and policy that should be repealed, modified, or waived, in order to further Dakota and Ojibwe language immersion programs; and

(10) assessing the level of interest in the community for Dakota and Ojibwe language immersion programs.

Subd. 4. **Administrative support; expenses.** The commissioner of education shall provide the working group with meeting space and the necessary staff support for meetings of the working group. Members of the group are not eligible for compensation but may receive reimbursement for their expenses as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, subdivision 3.

Subd. 5. **Report.** The working group must report its findings and recommendations, including draft legislation, if necessary, to the Indian Affairs Council and the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over early childhood through grade 12 education and higher education by February 15, 2011. The committee expires on February 16, 2011.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

\$150,000 is appropriated in fiscal year 2010 from the arts and cultural heritage fund to the commissioner of education to promote staff support and expense reimbursement for the working group on Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization and Preservation. Any balance in fiscal year 2010 is available in fiscal year 2011.