

# ND ICWA

## State Design Team: Affinity Group Goals



Partnership



Collaboration



Understanding



Better Outcomes

### ND ICWA Implementation Partnership

ND Human Services – Children and Families Division

Children and Family Services Training Center

Native American Training Center

Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation

Spirit Lake Nation

Standing Rock Nation

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

ND Supreme Court

University of North Dakota – Dept. of Social Work

ND Indian Affairs Commission

# Overarching Goal

**Reduce and eliminate cross-systems challenges that impede effective ICWA implementation.**

1

## **Need/Problem/Opportunity**

Lack of consistency in implementation across state.

2

## **Cause**

Complex & difficult to achieve in “real-time” across silos and under-resourced systems.

3

## **Effect**

Non-compliance and poorer outcomes.

4

## **Solution in Place**

Existing committee structures: Juvenile Policy Committee, STEPS tribal group- mostly not cross-system.

5

## **New Solution Needed**

Enhance existing structures with deeper cross-systems collaboration that identifies and clarifies cross-systems roles, tasks, improvement goals, & improves open and frequent communication and genuine dialogue. Invite more people to these meetings to make them less siloed.

# Affinity Group A: Foster Care

**Sufficient Native American foster homes exist to meet the needs of Native American children requiring placement in ND.**

1

## **Need/Problem/Opportunity**

There are insufficient Native American foster homes in the state.

2

## **Cause**

Resources to recruit and sustain native foster parents are limited. Some mistrust exists.

3

## **Effect**

Noncompliance and poorer outcomes.

4

## **Solution in Place**

Casey grant is working with some counties and TSS. Creating MOUs to license foster homes on and off the reservations (some tribes have already done this with their county).

5

## **New Solution Needed**

Options for tribes and the state to have licensing agreements for foster homes on and off the reservations.

# Affinity Group B: Active Efforts

**Effective Active Efforts are being carried out with every family in every case.**

1

## **Need/Problem/Opportunity**

Active Efforts are not being completed, this needs more attention and data.

2

## **Cause**

There is confusion and skepticism around the difference between reasonable and active efforts. Case loads are high and resources to provide active efforts are limited.

3

## **Effect**

Children are being removed and reunification is delayed due to lack of clarity of how to engage in active efforts.

4

## **Solution in Place**

Limited training pertaining to active efforts.

5

## **New Solution Needed**

More training in the area of active efforts. Increase in resources and improved collaboration with the tribes.



# Affinity Group C: Court System

**High-level decision-makers understand and support the letter and the spirit of the law.**

1

## **Need/Problem/Opportunity**

Some high-level decision-makers in system do not understand/support policy.

2

## **Cause**

Misinformation, bias, stereotypes. State's attorneys don't currently have any requirements on ICWA education and law school does not educate.

3

## **Effect**

Non-compliance and poorer outcomes.

4

## **Solution in Place**

No current solution identified.

5

## **New Solution Needed**

Identify and harness effective champions at higher systems levels (e.g., Chief Justices & some state attorneys) to develop effective change strategies at this level. Education should be required and not voluntary for court officials.

# Affinity Group D: Spirit of ICWA

**Improved ICWA training with regular reinforcement of learning attending to both the letter and the spirit of the law.**

1

## **Need/Problem/Opportunity**

Non-tribal workers frequently do not understand the intent of ICWA or its spirit.

2

## **Cause**

Lack of adequate training and supervision.

3

## **Effect**

ICWA audit shows gaps and problems in implementation.

4

## **Solution in Place**

Annual ICWA and CFSTC forums good, but “preaching to choir”.

5

## **New Solution Needed**

Training more frequent and systematic w/focus on spirit of law + experiential component. Keeping culture alive is something that has been valuable in Bismarck. This model could possibly be used in other places throughout the state.