

# Fort Belknap Indian Community



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Fort Belknap Indian Community  
(Tribal Govt.)  
Fort Belknap Indian Community  
(Elected to administer the affairs of the community and  
to represent the Assiniboine and the Gros Ventre Tribes  
of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation)

The Fort Belknap Indian Community Council strongly supports the proposed *Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States Act*. Boarding Schools were the government sponsored genocide of Indian people.

From Carlisle Boarding Schools which attempted to eradicate Indian identities, languages, dress, and family ties where little children were forcefully taken from their families, causing the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act. To building boarding schools located within reservations, still imposing military-like standards and sub-housing conditions, to off reservation regional schools where children attend voluntarily, the Boarding School experience has varied. So have the policies.

The *Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States Act* is a focused effort to review the historical impact of those policies, review current policies and needs, making recommendations to correct any deficiencies, and provide the best educational opportunity for Indian children in a safe and comfortable environment. This is an effort to reverse principle federal policy of cultural genocide to one which enhances Indian children's ability to function successfully in the wider world while remaining true to their identity.

Recognizing that the boarding school has been beneficial for some students, this Act will allow children, families and tribes to work collaboratively with boarding schools to provide the best environment for students. We applaud the efforts of Senator Warren and U.S. Representative Sharice Davids in reviving this effort to document the boarding school policies and provide another avenue to help heal any past transgressions. Thank you.

  
ANDREW WERK, JR.  
President