

MN ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS – NEW LAW PRIMER 2024

AMERICAN INDIAN AND INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

NEW: RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL OBSERVANCES 120A.35

A School **must make reasonable efforts** to accommodate students who wished to be excused from a curricular activity for:

- A religious observance
- American Indian cultural practice, observance or ceremony

School boards **must provide annual notice** to parents of the school's policy relating to absence from school for religious or cultural practices.

NEW: PROHIBITION ON AMERICAN INDIAN MASCOT TIMELINE CHANGE 121A.041 Subd.2

A school **cannot** have or adopt a name, symbol or image that depicts or refers to an American Indian Tribe, individual custom or tradition as a mascot.

- This takes effect in September of 2026 (previously 2025).
- Schools with prohibited mascots must report to the Education Chairs of the legislature either confirming they have removed the mascot and selected a new mascot, or a summary of their progress and resources needed to finalize the removal.

NEW: SMUDGING PERMITTED 121A.08

Schools **must allow** American Indian students and staff members to use tobacco, sage, sweetgrass and cedar to conduct individual or group smudging in school.

The school or building **administrator will determine the process** for conducting smudging.

The school or building administrator must determine who is the appropriate staff to be present to supervise the smudging process.

EFFECTIVE DATE – MAY 17, 2024