**Resolution # 18-01-02**

**Support for the Tribal Epidemiology Center (TEC) to Apply with Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) for NIH Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) Funding PAR-17-339**

**WHEREAS**, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (hereinafter “NPAIHB” or the “Board”) was established in 1972 to assist Tribal governments to improve the health status and quality of life of Indian people; and

**WHEREAS**, the NPAIHB is a “tribal organization” as defined by the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638 seq. et al) that represents forty-three federally recognized tribes in the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington (Portland Area Tribes); and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with the definitions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act at 25 USCS § 450b, a tribal organization is recognized as a governing body of any Indian tribe and includes any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities; and

**WHEREAS**, NPAIHB is dedicated to assisting and promoting the health needs and concerns of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) people; and

**WHEREAS**, the primary goal of the NPAIHB is to improve the health and quality of life of its member Tribes; and

**WHEREAS,** the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Indian Health Care Improvement Act 25 US Code (18) § 1621m, Epidemiology centers states:

a. “Functions of (Tribal Epidemiology Centers or) TECs: In consultation with and on the request of Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations, each Service area epidemiology center established under this section shall, with respect to the applicable Service area—

* make recommendations for the targeting of services needed by the populations served; and
* make recommendations to improve health care delivery systems for Indians and urban Indians;

**WHEREAS**, there is a lack of AI/AN students entering the health professions as evidenced by 0.7% of medical school admissions being AI/AN students, and an overall decrease of admissions since the 1980s; and

**WHEREAS**, it is known that a provider–patient concordance in race and ethnicity leads to improved understanding, cultural awareness, and enhanced culturally relevant care; and

**WHEREAS**, the education of youth in science can positively influence the decision of youth to pursue science and health careers which are of benefit to AI/AN people; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) has a long history of preparing students for medical, nursing, and allied health careers, including *On Track OHSU!*, which is a career-building program for underrepresented minority students, created in 2013 through a directive of OHSU’s Provost. The program builds long-term relationships with partner communities and school-to-job pathways for students, with the goal of increasing the number of underrepresented students in Oregon’s professional health services and sciences sector. In addition to the Woodburn community and the Jefferson cluster in North Portland, *On Track OHSU!* currently serves The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Northwest Tribal Epidemiology Center has a 20-year history of leadership in providing epidemiology services and technical assistance to the Portland Area Tribes, and has a multiple year partnership with Oregon Health & Science University in providing Summer Institute Training and health track of the THRIVE conference, among others; and

**WHEREAS**, OHSU proposes to partner with the Board to expand *On Track OHSU!* and ensure mutually beneficial support of more AI/AN youth to enter science careers.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board supports efforts of staff of the NWTEC in partnership with Oregon Health & Science University, under the direction of the Executive Director, to apply for the NIH SEPA program.