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July 20, 2017

Ms. Cory Sangrey-Billy
Dean of Academics
Stone Child College
8294 Upper Box Elder Road
Box Elder, MT 59521

Dear Dean Sangrey-Billy:

This is to inform you of recent action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) regarding a substantive change proposal from Stone Child College seeking approval for the institution to offer a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree program in Elementary Education (K-8), effective Fall 2017. The College's Board of Directors authorized the College to offer the proposed BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8) on April 19, 2016. On August 31, 2016, the College's Bachelor Degree Steering Committee unanimously approved the BS degree program. In addition, the College's Curriculum Committee unanimously approved the BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8) on September 23, 2016.

In reviewing the prospectus, the Commission finds that the BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8) supports the College's mission and four core themes, notably, in its mission to promote professionally prepared and career-ready individuals. The curriculum builds upon the College's existing Associate of Arts degree program with a Teacher Education Option including three concentrations in elementary education, early childhood education, and health and physical education. The BS degree program requires 127 semester credits to completion consisting of content areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and physical education and health enhancement. Program requirements also include a 14-week student teaching experience that is supplemented by embedded field experiences throughout the curriculum that add an additional week of teaching experiences.

Organizational arrangements to support the BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8) include using a portion of a federal grant to renovate an existing building to add an additional study lab, two classrooms, appropriate furniture and technology, and a resource room. The library will place recommended books, videos, and learning materials into the new resource room to support the BS program. The library also has an online database system providing access to additional research materials.

With assistance from an Indian Education Professional Development Grant from the Department of Education, the College anticipates enrolling 12 new students in which the 12 participants are expected to graduate in three years and begin working in a school that has at least a 5% Native American student population. After completion of the grant, the College plans to continue to fund the BS program using student fees, tuition, and the income generated from the Tribally Controlled Colleges and University Act with sustainability of the BS program predicted to be 12-14 students.

Due to an existing partnership with Salish Kootenai College, Stone Child College has three fulltime faculty who have already taught in a part-time capacity in courses appropriate to the BS degree program in

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Elementary Education (K-8). One additional fulltime faculty member is anticipated as a need to support the program, and, a second fulltime faculty member with expertise in Pre-School through 3rd grade will be hired. Additional adjunct faculty may be hired as needed and may be recruited from those individuals who are teaching in the local schools or who have retired and are interested in part-time teaching. Regarding staff positions, the College has hired an Indian Education Professional Development Grant Coordinator who may also teach one or two courses each semester. An additional fulltime student retention coordinator has also been hired to assist students and will be supplemented by a second retention coordinator funded by the Office of Indian Education.

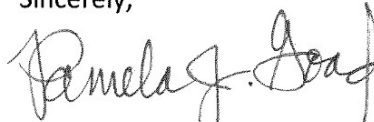
Moreover, the College has a variety of existing student services to support the implementation of the BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8). The services include placement testing, computer-aided services, tutoring and mentoring, library services, career information, cultural enrichment activities, learning center, bookstore, student orientation sessions, advising, daycare, transportation, financial aid, student government, athletics, and engagement in life skills. As mentioned previously, a fulltime student retention coordinator will be hired to provide additional services to students as is the existing position of the Indian Education Professional Development Grant Coordinator.

In accordance with Commission Policy, *Substantive Change*, the institution's prospectus has now been reviewed and approved as a *major change*. Accordingly, the proposed Bachelor of Science degree program in Elementary Education (K-8) is now included under the accreditation of Stone Child College. The College is granted *candidacy status* at the baccalaureate level. Further, the Commission requests an Ad Hoc Report with a visit in Fall 2020 to provide an update on the implementation of the BS degree program in Elementary Education (K-8). The Commission will take action on the College's candidacy status at its January 2021 meeting following the evaluation of the College's Fall 2020 Ad Hoc Report. As a reminder, the College's Mid-Cycle Report is also due in Fall 2020, however, the requested Ad Hoc Report providing an update on the implementation of the BS degree program should be a separate report.

If granted accreditation at the baccalaureate level, the effective date of accreditation at the new degree level is September 1st of the academic year immediately preceding the academic year in which the evaluation occurred. For Stone Child College, this date would be September 1, 2019.

Thank you for keeping the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities apprised of the developments and initiatives at Stone Child College. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Pamela J. Goad
Senior Vice President

c: Dr. Nathaniel R. St. Pierre, President
Dr. Sandra E. Elman, President, NWCCU