

## A Timeline of Selected Events Impacting Native Americans

### Historical Trauma:

Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart describes historical trauma as "...the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over one's lifetime and from generation to generation following loss of lives, land and vital aspects of culture." – *The American Indian holocaust: Healing historical unresolved grief*.

US passed **laws to protect against the taking of Indian land**. Few of the laws were actively enforced, and expansion of settlements was encouraged.<sup>1</sup> [1780s-1820s]

**Treaties – Education:** Sixteen US Government treaties with Michigan tribes include specific provisions for education.

In the Washington Treaty, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians ceded much of western and northern Michigan to the federal government. In return, the federal government agreed to compensate the tribal signatories with "five thousand dollars per annum, for the purpose of education, teachers, schoolhouses, and books in their own language, to be continued twenty years, and as long thereafter as Congress may appropriate. . ."<sup>2</sup> [1836]

**Indian Removal Act** – Forced removal of most Eastern tribes, often on forced marches that caused the death of many children, elderly, and people who became injured or sickened. Michigan's Potawatomi lose many people on the Potawatomi Trail of Death, a march of 660 miles in 61 days. [1830]

**Company K**, a special sharp-shooter unit of around 150 Native Americans from Michigan – mostly Ojibwes and Odawas – fights for the US.<sup>3</sup> [1863-1865]

The US government **outlaws Native American dances and ceremonies**.<sup>4</sup> [1884]

US policy **outlaws instruction in any Native American language**, and **prohibits use of books** in Native American languages.<sup>5</sup> [1886]

**Allotment:** The Dawes Act provides for dissolving tribes and distributing portions of tribal lands among individuals. The "surplus" land is offered to non-Indian homesteaders.<sup>6</sup> [1887]

### Military-Style Boarding Schools, often forced.

Michigan becomes the site for one of the nearly 350 military-style US Government Indian boarding schools, the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.

- Children were punished for any use of Native languages or interacting with any of their siblings or other relatives also in school.
- Ziibiwing Center researchers using state death certificates found that 250 children died in the school's custody. The school had only reported 5.<sup>7</sup> [1893-1934]

Writ of **Habeas Corpus** used by journalist Charles Lummis to help Isleta Pueblo parents win right of parents to give or withhold consent for their children to attend the Albuquerque government Indian boarding school. Official still often ignored parental rights anyway.<sup>8</sup> [1892]

**Changing hair & faces:** The Bureau of Indian Affairs instructs its agents to have Native men cut their hair short and to eliminate the practice of painting faces.<sup>1</sup> [1902]

US **citizenship** granted to Native Americans. [1924]

Mt. Pleasant Boarding School Superintendent is warned about his whipping pupils. Department of Interior criticizes the school for not allowing children to return home after their enrollment periods.<sup>1</sup> [1924]

US Government's Meriam Report (“**The Problem of Indian Administration**”) recognizes Dawes Act as cause of poverty on reservations, finds boarding schools overcrowded and undersupplied with students underfed, and the schools' unsanitary conditions giving rise to diseases. It also raises the question of whether the boarding schools are in violation of child labor laws.<sup>2</sup> [1928]

By this time, an estimated **two-thirds of Native Americans had attended boarding school** at some point in their life.<sup>3</sup> [early 1930s]

**Indian Reorganization Act** reverses the Dawes act, allowing tribes to own land and form tribal governments subject to the approval of the US Bureau of Indian Affairs.<sup>4</sup> [1928]

**Termination:** Official US government policy is to terminate tribes. Many tribal governments were disbanded and reservations abolished. [1953-1968, through 1988]

**Relocation:** Large government program for relocation of Native people to urban areas to weaken family ties.<sup>5</sup> [1956 Relocation program (Pevar)]

Native Americans get the **right to vote** in New Mexico.<sup>6</sup> [1962]

**Self-determination** becomes the official US policy regarding tribes. [1975]

US Government admits **forced sterilization** of thousands of Native women over past decade.<sup>7</sup>

- Two of the victims were fifteen-year-old girls who went into the hospital for tonsillectomies and came out with tubal ligations.<sup>8</sup> [1976]

Lawsuit for enforcement of the provisions of the 1817 Treaty of Fort Meigs leads Michigan legislature to pass the **Waiver of Tuition for North American Indians Act**.<sup>9</sup> [1976, 1978]

**Religious Freedom Act** for Native Americans. [1978]

Supreme Court maintains that tribes, like states, have the right to establish bingo or other gaming on their lands. [1987]

**Termination policy** is officially **repealed** by Congress. [1988]

The Native American Languages Act **legalizes the teaching of Native languages** in colleges and universities. [1990]

**Canadian government formally** apologizes to students who were sexually or physically abused while attending Canadian Indian Residential Schools. [1998]

**5.2 Million** Native Americans and Alaska Natives recorded in the census. Michigan is one of the 10 states with the highest recorded Native American / Alaska Native populations.<sup>10</sup> [2010]

- 1 From "Seven Time Periods In Indian Policy," a summary compiled from *The Rights of Indians & Tribes* by Stephen L. Pevar, Fourth Edition (2012), Oxford University Press, New York, NY. [http://www.institutefornativejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Seven\\_Time\\_Periods\\_of\\_Federal\\_Indian\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.institutefornativejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Seven_Time_Periods_of_Federal_Indian_Policy.pdf)
- 2 Kiesewetter, Melissa, Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver Presentation, Michigan Department of Civil Rights, <https://www.lcc.edu/resources/documents/mccdec/mitwmccapresentation.pdf>
- 3 LeBeau, Patrick Russell, *Rethinking Michigan Indian History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005), p. 101, in *Ziibiwing Center Comparative Timeline: List of Events with Footnotes*, <http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/planyourvisit/pdf/ZiibTimelineList%20FINAL%2007-19-12.pdf>
- 4 Outlawing Native American Religions. 2010. <http://nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/380>
- 5 LeBeau, Patrick Russell, *Rethinking Michigan Indian History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005), p. 101, in *Ziibiwing Center Comparative Timeline: List of Events with Footnotes*, <http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/planyourvisit/pdf/ZiibTimelineList%20FINAL%2007-19-12.pdf>
- 6 <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/elections/voting-rights-native-americans.html>
- 7 <http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/planyourvisit/pdf/ZiibTimelineList%20FINAL%2007-19-12.pdf> ; "HONORING, HEALING & REMEMBERING" Student Roll Call, June 6, 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYAL\\_eaMuyc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYAL_eaMuyc)
- 8 <http://www.charleslummis.com/indian-rights-crusader/> ; Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, "Albuquerque Indian School: Retrospective with a Vision Forward." 2015 Exhibition.
- 1 Outlawing Native American Religions. 2010. <http://nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/380>
- 1 The Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, *American Indian Boarding Schools: An Exploration of Global Ethnic & Cultural Cleansing*, (Mount Pleasant, MI: Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, 2011), p. 14
- 2 The Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, *American Indian Boarding Schools: An Exploration of Global Ethnic & Cultural Cleansing*, (Mount Pleasant, MI: Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, 2011), p. 15.
- 3 <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/education/us-indian-boarding-school-history/>
- 4 LeBeau, Patrick Russell, *Rethinking Michigan Indian History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005), p. 102, in *Ziibiwing Center Comparative Timeline: List of Events with Footnotes*, <http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/planyourvisit/pdf/ZiibTimelineList%20FINAL%2007-19-12.pdf>
- 5 PBS. Indian Country Diaries: Assimilation, Relocation, Genocide: The Urban Relocation Program. September 2006. <http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/relocate.html> in *Ziibiwing Center Comparative Timeline*.
- 6 <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/elections/voting-rights-native-americans.html>
- 7 US National Library of Medicine, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/543.html>
- 8 Blakemore, Erin, *Jstor Daily*, 2016, <https://daily.jstor.org/the-little-known-history-of-the-forced-sterilization-of-native-american-women/>
- 9 Kiesewetter, Melissa, Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver Presentation, Michigan Department of Civil Rights, <https://www.lcc.edu/resources/documents/mccdec/mitwmccapresentation.pdf>
- 10 United States Census Bureau. *2010 Census Briefs: The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2010*. Issued January 2012. Tina Norris, Paul L. Vines, and Elizabeth M. Hoeffel. <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-10.pdf>