

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS Board of Education
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Policy No. 2513.1

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

ADMINISTRATION

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Board of Education recognizes that the land that is now Prince George's County was occupied since time immemorial before the first Europeans arrived by various indigenous peoples. According to the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, there is considerable archaeological evidence of Piscataway tribe settlements here in our county and other Native American settlements along the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers in our region. The native and indigenous peoples of Prince George's County and the United States have significantly contributed to the rich fabric of history and culture we celebrate in our communities and should be rightly recognized.

II. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to designate Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples' Day and to devote a part of at least one day in November, in recognition of Native American Heritage Month, for schools to conduct appropriate commemoration and/or observance exercises to acknowledge and recognize the resilience and contributions of indigenous people and to celebrate the thriving cultures and values of the indigenous peoples of our region. By honoring those who inhabited the land before us, we help to build understanding around the history of our land and its indigenous people, as well as set the tone for honoring all people who have been historically marginalized or underserved.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. Indigenous People - Descendants of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. The new arrivals later became dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.

IV. STANDARDS

1. School communities are encouraged to acknowledge and recognize, as appropriate, the Indigenous lands on which our schools are built in the following ways:

- a. during school programs, events, and activities;
 - b. via curriculum throughout the school year, on any given day;
 - c. through physical notices and signage in or on the school buildings;
 - d. on the PGCPS website and widespread printed materials, whenever and however possible.
2. The second Monday of October, or if the United States Congress designates another day for observance of Columbus Day then the day designated by the United States Congress, shall be designated as Indigenous Peoples' Day across the district. This day shall be an opportunity to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of indigenous people of this land, to celebrate the thriving cultures and values of the indigenous peoples of our region, and to stand in solidarity with indigenous peoples elsewhere. Indigenous People's Day will be noted on every PGCPS calendar here from.
 3. In recognition of Native American Heritage Month, all schools shall devote a part of at least one day in November to appropriate exercises to acknowledge the history of indigenous people in Prince George's County, Maryland, and the United States of America and to acknowledge that the land on which our schools are located was previously occupied for thousands of years by indigenous people.

V. IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure the implementation of this policy across the school system.

VI. REFERENCES

1. Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-103
2. Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs' 2020 Annual Report

VII. HISTORY

1. Adopted 3/24/2022