



# WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE

A Sovereign Tribal Nation

## (Authorizing Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health to Conduct “Project SafeSchools” Study with Schools on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation During COVID-19)

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**WHEREAS,** The Constitution of the White Mountain Apache Tribe (“Tribe”) of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation provides, at Article IV, Section 1(a) that the Tribal Council (“Council”) shall exercise the power, “To represent the Tribe and act in all matters that concern the welfare of the Tribe, and to make decisions not inconsistent with or contrary to this constitution”; and

**WHEREAS,** The novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”) has created a worldwide pandemic, infecting over 64 million people, causing nearly 1.5 million deaths, and resulting in vast numbers of elementary schools, middle-schools, and high-schools being closed for in-person learning nationwide; and

**WHEREAS,** On the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (“Reservation”), the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in most schools on the reservation being closed for in-person learning, leaving thousands of children and adolescents lacking the structure, support, resources and additional adults that schools provide and are critical to healthy growth and development; and

**WHEREAS,** To address the impact of COVID-19 on schools reopening in the White Mountain Apache community, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for American Indian Health is requesting to conduct a research study entitled: *Project SafeSchools*; and

**WHEREAS,** This study will be conducted in partnership between the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health (“JHCAIH”), the Indian Health Service (“HIS”), the Tribe, the Theodore Roosevelt School, and Dishchiibikoh Community School; and

**WHEREAS,** The goal of the study will be to understand the means to safely reopening schools during the COVID-19 pandemic within the White Mountain Apache Tribe through the following activities:

- 1) Understand the barriers and facilitators to school re-opening from the perspective of multiple stakeholders;
- 2) Design a comprehensive approach to surveillance testing for COVID-19 for use in schools on the WMAT reservation; and

- 3) Evaluate the acceptability, feasibility, reach and impact of surveillance testing for COVID-19 in schools on the Fort Apache Indian reservation; and

**WHEREAS,** The safety of school students amidst COVID-19 is of the utmost importance. This study will establish a comprehensive approach to surveillance testing for COVID-19 and help to ensure that the Tribe's students can safely transition from virtual learning back to in-person, classroom learning when appropriate; and

**WHEREAS,** The Council has reviewed and considered JHCAIH's request and finds that conducting the proposed study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding best public health practices in schools as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic, and is in the best interests of the Tribe and its members.


**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby authorizes the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health *Project SafeSchools* study in partnership with the Indian Health Service, the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Theodore Roosevelt School and Dishchiibikoh Community School to develop a protocol to safely reopen schools within the White Mountain Apache community.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby directs that in the event this Resolution directly conflicts with the Tribal Constitution, Tribal Ordinances, or any material facts concerning the issues presented are later found to be false, this Resolution shall be deemed null and void and have no legal effect.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby directs that in the event that this Resolution conflicts with a prior Resolution or Policy, this Resolution shall supersede and govern over the conflicting subject matter.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that the Chairwoman, or in her absence, the Vice-Chairman, is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the intent of this Resolution.

The foregoing resolution was on **DECEMBER 8, 2020** duly adopted by a vote of **ELEVEN** for, **ZERO** against, and **ZERO** abstentions by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, pursuant to authority vested in it under the enumerated powers listed in Article IV, Section 1 of the WMAT Constitution, so ratified on September 30, 1993, and federally recognized pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984).

  
Gwendena Lee-Gatewood  
Tribal Chairwoman  
Date 12/9/20

  
Doreen T. Numkena, Tribal Secretary  
Date 12/9/2020