

A History of Potawatomi Language Planning and Policy: Education Funding from 1819 to 1848

This paper investigates how the Potawatomi Nation planned education through funding sources and policies starting with the 1819 Civilization Fund Act to the last attendance of Potawatomi students at the Choctaw Academy in 1848. I compile school enrollment records and an audit of school funding. Using Lomawaima and McCarty's *Safety Zone Theory* (2006), I argue that Potawatomi education planning was seen as additive to fill new English-speaking positions in trade and leadership, even when the outcomes sometimes were otherwise or seen as dangerous by the United States government.

Miami Mission, Carey Mission and the University of Notre Dame: In 1820, Potawatomi Cone-Zo-Quah brought her son Nan-Wesh-Mah (nephew of Chief Topinbee) to the Miami mission near Fort Wayne, Indiana for schooling. The next year, Chief Menominee invited Baptist Missionary Isaac McCoy to visit villages on the Yellow River. Later McCoy went to a village on the St. Joseph River led by Topinbee (Edmunds 1978, 222-3). In the 1821 Treaty of Chicago, leaders from the St. Joseph River requested \$1,000 for a teacher. A year later, McCoy started the Carey Mission School. Attendance fluctuated between 18 and 76 students. The school taught English, geography, ancient history and manual labor (IMP). After McCoy moved his mission to Kansas in 1830, Chief Leopold Pokagon asked the Catholic Church to start a new school on the St. Joseph River – the University of Notre Dame.

Choctaw Academy (1821-1848): The Choctaw Academy was started for the Choctaw; however, it was open to other tribal students. Potawatomi leaders set aside funds so that Potawatomi students could attend: \$2,000/Treaty of 1826 at Mississinewa, \$1,000/Treaty of 1828 at Carey Mission, and interest from \$70,000/Treaty of 1833 at Chicago. The Academy taught English, arithmetics, bookkeeping and trades. It used the Lancastrian system (Snyder 2017, 227).

	Number of students per year							
Tribe	1827	1829	1831	1833	1835	1837	1841	1848
Potawatomi	11	10	15	20	18	21	20	34

Table 1. Students at the Choctaw Academy from QCARs

References

Edmunds, R. David. 1978. *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. ♦ Isaac McCoy papers (IMP) 1808-1874. Kansas State Historical Society. ♦ Lomawaima, K Tsianina & Teresa L. McCarty. 2006. *To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy From a Century of Native American Education*. New York: Teacher's College Press. ♦ Quarterly Choctaw Academy Report (QCAR) 1827-1848. ♦ Snyder, Christina. 2017. *Great Crossings: Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in the Age of Jackson*. New York: Oxford University Press.