

Indian Boarding School Remembrance

Social Policy Resolution CA25.02.07



Approved by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly July 29, 2025

RESOLVED:

To receive with gratitude the memorials on “Indian Boarding School Remembrance” from Alaska Synod, Montana Synod, Sierra Pacific Synod, Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod, Western North Dakota Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Metropolitan Chicago Synod, Northern Illinois Synod, Central-Southern Illinois Synod, Western Iowa Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, Northern Great Lakes Synod, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Synod, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southeast Michigan Synod, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, and the Florida-Bahamas Synod;

To address the legacies of this church’s role in Indian boarding schools through the following actions:

- Encourage and equip all congregations, synods, and ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA to observe the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools annually on or near September 30th.
- Urge Augsburg Fortress and the Service and Justice unit of the ELCA churchwide organization, in consultation with other appropriate churchwide organization home areas, to create adult and children/youth educational programs and materials concerning Christian and Lutheran roles in Indian boarding schools to broaden and deepen awareness at congregations, synods, and ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA; and to consistently publish articles in all of this church’s publications.
- Provide on-going recognition of and support for the growing network of laypeople and rostered ministers volunteering their time in the work of the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative on Indian Boarding Schools to locate all known records related to the ELCA’s predecessor bodies’ involvement with Indian boarding and day schools and to educate others about Indian boarding schools.
- Encourage ministries affiliated with or related to the ELCA to commit to learning the truth of their involvement with Indian boarding schools, in partnership with the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative and to responsibly create paths to healing and repair.
- Organize and care for all information in the ELCA’s possession that was recorded about Indian boarding and day schools and the students who attended them, forcibly or otherwise; carry out this work in partnership with the ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative and the ELCA Archives; recognize that this information belongs to and is a source of healing for student survivors, their descendants, communities, and Tribal Nations; and ensure that the records and research are made accessible to Indian boarding school survivors and their families in a responsible manner.
- Direct the churchwide organization to identify the revenue source(s) to sufficiently support research and organizing efforts and to sufficiently support digitization and labeling of all Indian boarding school records in the ELCA Archives.