



Council of the Cherokee Nation

Cherokee Nation Complex
17675 S. Muskogee Ave.
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Meeting Minutes - Final EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Candessa Tehee, Chair
Julia Coates, Co-Chair

Recording Secretary, Shelli Brittain Coke
Phone: 1-800-995-9465,
E-mail: council-public@cherokee.org

Monday, February 9, 2026

3:00 PM

Tribal Council Offices

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tehee called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Councilor Shotpouch gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present 14 - Sasha Blackfox-Qualls; Lisa Hall; Daryl Legg; Codey Poindexter; Dora Patzkowski; Kevin Easley Jr.; Julia Coates; Danny Callison; Ashley Grant; Clifton Hughes; Johnny F. Keener; Joshua Sam; Melvina Shotpouch and Candessa Tehee

Absent 3 - Joe Deere; Uriah Grass and Kendra McGeady

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Legg moved to approve. **Councilor Poindexter** seconded the motion. The motion carried.

REPORTS:

Vocational Programs/Talking Leaves Job Corp/Career Services - Diane Kelley

Ms. Kelley announced they accepted an award at the National Job Corp Conference. She reported they are working to update the Career Services database and webpage. They are making changes at TERO to provide more bang for the buck. She offered to answer any questions. Councilor Kidwell gave appreciation for TERO attendance at the At Large meetings.

Executive Director's Report - Aaron Emberton

Mr. Vance announced the following events and deadlines for February: March 1st the scholarship applications open on the GaDuGi Portal for the 2026-2027 school year. The Trail of Tears Awards applications deadline is March 2nd. Camp Cherokee

planning is underway and dates will be release soon on the GaDuGi Portal. February 11th will be the Tribal Consultation wit Public Schools at the Chota and virtual on the 25th. The Tango Flight Airplane Celebration at the Tahlequah Municipal Airport is on March 4th. He offered to answer any questions.

Head Start - Verna Thompson

Ms. Thompson commented on the open house held at Salina. She announced all sites are now NAC accredited. The federal audit is complete and they are in full compliance. She offered to answer any questions from the report.

Sequoyah High School - Terry Heustis

Mr. Heustis announced March 4th is 8th grade day. He provided an update on the indoor facility, athletics, Speach Club, and Drama Club. He offered to answer questions from the report. Councilor Callison commented the band and royalty made us proud at the RSU vs. Haskell basketball game.

OLD BUSINESS

None pending.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. [26-015](#) AN ACT RELATING TO THE NAMING OF THE CHEROKEE IMMERSION MIDDLE SCHOOL AS (TSUNADELOQUASDI GALIQUOGI NIDUYUGDV)

Councilor Shotpouch moved to approve. Councilor Poindexter seconded the motion. Mr. Paden introduced Michael Cooksey who provided a background on the building and name meaning "The School of Seven Directions" The motion to approve carried with the following roll call vote:

Yea: 14 - Sasha Blackfox-Qualls; Lisa Hall; Daryl Legg; Codey Poindexter; Dora Patzkowski; Kevin Easley Jr.; Julia Coates; Danny Callison; Ashley Grant ; Clifton Hughes; Johnny F. Keener; Joshua Sam; Melvina Shotpouch and Candessa Tehee

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Callison moved to adjourn. Councilor Blackfox-Qualls seconded the motion. The motion carried at 3:22 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT:

Mark Vance	Terry Heustis	Sheila Bowlin
Josh Newton	Verna Thompson	Brooke Neff
Chelbie Turtle	Diane Kelley	Howard Paden
Michael Cooksey		

VISITORS PRESENT:

John Young