



THE MILLE LACS BAND OF  
**OJIBWE INDIANS**  
*Legislative Branch of Tribal Government*

**SECRETARIAL ORDER 43-17**

**A SECRETARIAL ORDER AUTHORIZING MILLE LACS BAND  
SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AWARDED TO BAND MEMBERS ONLY**

- WHEREAS, pursuant to 3 MLBSA § 7(a), the Secretary-Treasurer has the authority and duty to superintend and manage all fiscal operations, planning and budgeting of the Mille Lacs Band as authorized by the Band Assembly; and
- WHEREAS, pursuant to 3 MLBSA § 7(g), the Secretary-Treasurer is authorized and has the duty to issue Secretarial Orders to implement decisions concerning matters of the fiscal affairs of the Band; and
- WHEREAS, the Band Scholarship program currently awards educational scholarships to Band members and non-Band members; and
- WHEREAS, revenues from Band gaming and non-gaming businesses have declined and Band membership has steadily increased; and
- WHEREAS, the Secretary-Treasurer believes it is in the best interest of the Band to limit scholarship funds to Band members only.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, that the Mille Lacs Band scholarship funds are to be awarded to enrolled Mille Lacs Band members only effective FY2018.

Dated this 8th day of August, 2017.

  
Carolyn Beaulieu, Secretary-Treasurer

Effective Date: October 1, 2017  
Expiration Date: September 30, 2021

**OFFICIAL SEAL OF THE BAND**

**DISTRICT I**

43408 Oodena Drive • Onamia, MN 56359  
(320) 532-4181 • Fax (320) 532-4209

**DISTRICT II**

36666 State Highway 65 • McGregor, MN 55760  
(218) 768-3311 • Fax (218) 768-3903

**DISTRICT IIA**

2605 Chiminising Drive • Isle, MN 56342  
(320) 676-1102 • Fax (320) 676-3432

**DISTRICT III**

45749 Grace Lake Road • Sandstone, MN 55072  
(320) 384-6240 • Fax (320) 384-6190

**URBAN OFFICE**

1404 E. Franklin Avenue • Minneapolis, MN 55404  
(612) 872-1424 • Fax (612) 872-1257

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# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE MELANIE BENJAMIN  
**FROM:** *Cross* CAROLYN BEAULIEU, SECRETARY-TREASURER  
**SUBJECT:** SECRETARIAL ORDER 43-17  
**DATE:** AUGUST 8, 2017  
**CC:** BAND ASSEMBLY

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The attached Secretarial Order 43-17 is being issued in response to the proposed Higher Education Scholarship Policies that were amended and forwarded to Band Assembly on May 16, 2017. The Higher Education Policies as amended are unacceptable to the Band Assembly.

For the last 3 years, Band Assembly has been analyzing areas where all net revenues are allocated. We have asked the commissioners to identify areas where they can eliminate ineffective programs and combine under-utilized programs that are funded by net revenues. In addition, gaming net revenues and distributions to the band have been decreased significantly and band membership has been steadily increasing. We can no longer fiscally support non band member's educational goals. We must focus our resources and efforts on enrolled Mille Lacs Band Members.

Band Assembly has other concerns with the proposed policy amendments, not just funding for descendants. The policy limits achievement awards for higher education in the area of the GED or HS diploma to age 25. Why would we do this? The goal of the Higher Education Program should be to encourage higher education at any age in an individual's life.

We are not certain why we would limit achievement awards to only one Graduate degree (Masters). We should be supporting additional awards for individuals that obtain a Doctorate degree in addition to a Master's degree.

What is the Higher Education Committee? There is nothing stating who this committee is or how it is established, however, they are mentioned as an entity that makes additional decisions about the policy.

Overall, the Higher Education Policy needs additional work. Band Assembly has other suggested revisions and would like the opportunity to present those proposed revisions to

the Commissioner of Education and Higher Education Office for consideration of an acceptable, fair and easy to follow Higher Education Policy.

**Proposed Mission Statement**

*The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe values and encourages education for all enrolled Band members. We strive to offer scholarships and incentives that entice members to pursue their educational goals at any time in their lifetime.*

**Proposed Purpose of the Higher Education Department**

*The Higher Education Office is established to assist enrolled Band members with planning and applying for higher education programs and courses as well as supporting and mentoring students as they pursue their higher education goals.*



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# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** BAND MEMBERS  
**FROM:** SPEAKER OF THE BAND ASSEMBLY *omb*  
**SUBJECT:** SECRETARIAL ORDER 43-17  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 15, 2017  
**CC:** DARCIE BIG BEAR, PARLIAMENTARIAN

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I would like to explain how this came about. First, this decision was based on consensus of the entire Band Assembly. For the past several years, the scholarship program has experienced significant budget shortfalls consistently, hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Band Assembly has repeatedly requested that the Executive Branch, Education Department and the Higher Education Office come up with a revised policy (limiting amount awarded to descendants and grant awards on a needs basis only). They were also asked to ensure Annual budgets that were proposed were sufficient to cover all the scholarships processed. This has not happened. Instead, they continued to allow deficits and unfortunately take net revenues from other programs that are supposed to fund services for enrolled Band members.

We also have a Revenue Allocation Plan that provides the percentage of net revenues we can spend on government operations. Scholarships are funded by net revenues. Until we gain approval from the Federal government to revise this, we must adhere to what we are allocated. We have a duty to serve the needs of enrolled members first.

Band Assembly agreed that we had given the Executive Branch enough time and opportunity to assess the program, address the shortfalls and communicate to descendants any necessary changes. The latest higher education policy provisions proposed by the Executive Branch in May of 2017 were not acceptable. It was at that time, Band Assembly made the tough decision to end funding for descendants by supporting the Secretarial Order.

The Band newspaper, has been updating Band members regarding the significant decline in our gaming net revenue distributions. The number of enrolled band members is on a steady increase and we are forced to revise spending accordingly. Every department has been asked to reduce expenses. We are not discriminating against anyone, we are ensuring Band funds are focused on the needs of the Band membership. That is what we were elected to do.

If you like, you are more than welcome to express your thoughts to the Band Assembly at

any of our upcoming meetings. Or if you choose, you may want to reach out to each District Representative directly. Please contact Legislative Parliamentarian, Darcie BigBear, so she can add you to an agenda should you decide you want to address Band Assembly in person. We meet officially Tuesdays and Thursdays each week, alternating between the three districts and Band businesses.