



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Chief Mark H. Garrow
Chief Randy Hart
Chief Ron LaFrance Jr.
Sub-Chief Stacy A. Skidders
Sub-Chief Shelley Jacobs
Sub-Chief Michael L. Connors

PRESS RELEASE

For release:
Kentenhko:wa/November 15, 2011

For more information:
David T. Staddon, Director, Public Information
Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
Tel: (518) 358-2272 ext. 286

Tribal and School Officials Meet to Discuss Priorities *Contract Between NYS and School District in Discussion*

Akwesasne Territory. On November 10, 2011, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council met with Salmon River Central School District representatives. The purpose was to provide input to a contract to continue educational services to Mohawk children at the St. Regis Mohawk School and Salmon River Schools. The contract is between the school system and the state of New York. The previous contract expired in June 2010.

Both parties agreed that there will be no interruption to instructional/educational programs during negotiations. "The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe has an inherent interest in the education of Mohawk children," remarked Tribal Chief Mark Garrow. "The Tribe promotes and encourages educational achievement."

The Tribe has been a strong supporter of the school system, reflected by the funding of the school resource officer, Corporal Marty Jock. Due to New York State budget cutbacks, state funding for the position was withdrawn in 2010. The tribe then stepped in to provide the financial support to continue this position. "This demonstrates our commitment to providing a safe and secure community and school environment," said Randy Hart, Tribal Chief. "Having a cooperative relationship between the school system and the tribe is important to everybody."

The resource officer acts as a liaison between students, families, teachers and educational administrators. Corporal Jock's duties include providing safety and security to all areas of the school, to make appropriate arrests and referrals for "Persons in Need of Supervision" (PINS) and to provide a visible resource for students and faculty. "This position provides benefits to each and every student and staff person in the school district," stated Tribal Chief Ron LaFrance. "We all want the best education for our children."

Tribal Sub-Chief Stacy Skidders has served on the Salmon River Board of Education since 2004. "School superintendent Jane Collins is pro-active and understands how important the tribe's input is," said Sub-Chief Skidders. "It's important that all elements of the district be represented. This includes representatives on the board of education and the hiring of as many qualified Mohawk teachers, staff and administrators as possible. We're interested in a quality education for all the students in the district."

The Salmon River School district is one of the few districts in the state which is growing. This is due to the influx of Mohawk students who now comprise about 70 percent of students in the district. The increase in the number of students affects the state funding formula for the school and provides more resources to the Salmon River School district.

The St. Regis Mohawk School contract is a top priority," declared Chief LaFrance. "We will continue our discussions with Salmon River on December 6, 2011."

Tribal members with comments, questions or concerns about the St. Regis Mohawk School portion of the contract are encouraged to contact Tribal Council in writing or in person.

#

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People

Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

412 State Route 37
Akwesasne, New York 13655
Phone: 518-358-2272