

June 2022

**Dear North Carolina Fellowship of Friends Yearly Meeting,**

**W**ARM GREETINGS FROM [Friends Peace Teams](http://FriendsPeaceTeams.org) (FPT). We are attaching a model minute that we hope North Carolina Fellowship of Friends Yearly Meeting will consider at your next meeting for business. It was drafted by FPT's [Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples](http://TowardRightRelationshipWithNativePeoples.org) program in collaboration with Decolonizing Quakers. It draws on [preliminary research](http://preliminaryresearch.org) about **the role Quakers played in the forced assimilation of Native children by operating Quaker Indigenous boarding schools.**

As you know, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has initiated a federal investigation into the role the federal government played in operating the boarding schools and in providing funding to religious denominations to operate them. They will be asking the denominations, including Quakers, to provide information about the federal funds we received for operating our Indigenous boarding schools. We believe the Yearly Meetings that supported the Quaker schools will want to take responsibility for conducting this research and submitting their findings to the Interior Department. We believe the Yearly Meetings will want to take further steps to examine their own investments in the operation of Indigenous boarding schools and to consider appropriate actions.

**We are offering the attached model minute as a template** for you to consider and to modify however you wish. We hope it will stimulate prayerful reflection and discernment among North Carolina Fellowship of Friends Yearly Meeting.

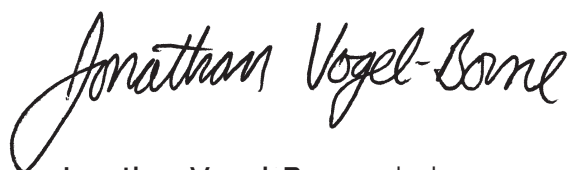
With gratitude and in humility,



**Paula Palmer**, co-director  
Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples



*Three Lakota Boys, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, circa 1900*



**Jonathan Vogel-Borne**, clerk  
Friends Peace Teams

# MODEL MINUTE on the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative for Consideration by Yearly Meetings

ON MAY 11, 2022, the United States Department of Interior released Volume 1 of an investigative report as part of its ongoing Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. The report outlines the forced assimilation techniques employed to erase the names, languages, religion, customs, and cultural identity of Native American children. Thousands of Native children were forced away from their families and communities and subjected to military-style discipline, forced labor, and institutionalized living in 408 federal Indian boarding schools. The report also identified burial sites where children who died at the schools were interred; the Initiative will press forward to identify all such sites. .

The initial investigation showed that approximately 50 percent of Federal Indian boarding schools may have received support or involvement from a religious institution or organization, including funding, infrastructure, and personnel. The U.S. Senate has recognized that federal funds from the 1819 Indian Civilization Fund "were apportioned among those societies and individuals—usually missionary organizations—that had been prominent in the effort to 'civilize' the Indians." "Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report," (May 2022), p. 11.

Quakers, both individually and as Yearly and Monthly Meetings, were directly involved in the founding, financial support, and administration of Indian boarding schools under the federal government's effort to eradicate Indian culture by eliminating all traces of Indian identity from upcoming generations.

In 2015, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS), called upon the religious denominations to investigate their involvement in the operation of Indian

boarding schools and to make amends for their complicity in this genocidal enterprise. Friend Paula Palmer was motivated by this call to do preliminary research on Quaker involvement. However, given our local and regional organizational structure, no comprehensive denominational response has yet been made by the Religious Society of Friends, nor have Yearly Meetings yet responded to the call to investigate their own records and take appropriate reparative action.

Both NABS and the Department of the Interior report call for support of pending legislation that would establish "The Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act" (H.R.5444 and S.2907). Friends Committee on National Legislation has called on Quaker organizations to voice support for this legislation, and several monthly and yearly meetings have done so.

In the next phase of its work, the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative will take further steps to investigate the degree to which federal funds, including monies held in Tribal trust accounts, were paid to religious organizations and institutions to operate Indian boarding schools. It will also continue to investigate where Native children have been buried.

## Links

### *U.S. Department of the Interior:*

Press Release — [tinyurl.com/2yhvw4xi](https://tinyurl.com/2yhvw4xi)

### *Paula Palmer's Reports:*

Video — [tinyurl.com/bdedg36c](https://tinyurl.com/bdedg36c)

*Friends Journal* (10/2016) — [tinyurl.com/4mkym4k9](https://tinyurl.com/4mkym4k9)

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## THEREFORE

We resolve that it is our responsibility as North Carolina Fellowship of Friends Yearly Meeting to undertake a thorough and comprehensive review of our own records to determine what financial support our institution received from the federal government to operate Quaker Indigenous boarding schools;

We resolve to determine the amount of financial and material support our institution contributed for the operation of the Quaker Indigenous schools;

We resolve that it is also our responsibility to identify any graveyards where Native children may have been buried in conjunction with the operation of any Indigenous boarding schools we ran or supported and to report our findings to NABS and the Department of the Interior;

We resolve to publish a report of our internal investigation;

We resolve to determine the value in current dollars of the money received from the federal government, and of the funds and materiel our institution contributed, for the operation of Indian boarding schools.

We resolve to apologize to the tribes and nations affected by our actions, and in consultation with them, to make reparations in a form and manner acceptable to them.

We resolve to encourage individual Friends and corporate bodies to urge their U.S. senators and representatives to cosponsor and support passage of the "Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act" (H.R. 5444 and S.2907).