



Tribal Governments  
Legislative Day set  
for Feb. 13 — pg. 5

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# Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

## Study: Native students face many hurdles

By Dean Rhodes  
*Smoke Signals editor*

A new study funded by Spirit Mountain Community Fund has found that there are many hurdles hampering Native students from being successful in Oregon's educational system, and there also are many problems for educators and Tribal representatives in determining which public school students are enrolled members of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes.

The study's executive summary, released Jan. 22 by its authors ECONorthwest and the Chalkboard Project, compared Tribal membership rolls for seven of Oregon's Tribes with data from the state Department of Education.

The findings were, according to a press release, "informative and disheartening."

The findings include:

- Tribal students in the seven Tribes showed elevated rates of chronic absenteeism, which means students missed 10 percent or more of school days. One-third of Tribal students were chronically absent in 2011-22, with the highest rate – 43 percent – at the high school level. Students who miss that much school are unlikely to ever read or do math at grade level or earn a diploma, educational studies have shown.
- Almost 33 percent of Tribal students in the seven Tribes were enrolled in priority or focus schools, which are deemed underperform-

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## Sixth sense



Halona Butler dances a jingle dress dance during the sixth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Oregon State Fair & Expo Center's Salem Pavilion on Saturday, Jan. 25.

Visit the Tribe's  
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Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno welcomes attendees to the sixth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Oregon State Fair & Expo Center's Salem Pavilion on Saturday, Jan. 25.

Story and more photos on pages 8-9.



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

## Final Four: Bridge may receive Chinuk Wawa name



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

By Ron Karten  
*Smoke Signals staff writer*

PORTLAND — Construction of the country's longest car-free bridge is going up over the Willamette River and the bridge might be christened with a Chinuk Wawa name.

On Wednesday, Jan. 15, Tri-Met and the Oregon Historical Society announced four

potential names for the bridge, narrowing possibilities down from about 9,500 submissions. Unusual for the process was public input, a first in the Portland world of bridge naming.

In a coup for the Grand Ronde Tribe,

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David Lewis, Tribal Historian and a member of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Bridge Naming Committee, talks with a group including Oregon Historical Society Executive Director Kerry Tymchuk, right, during the unveiling of four potential bridge names at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland on Wednesday, Jan. 15.