

The Next 30 years (1957 – 1987)



J. W. "Duke" Wellington, superintendent of the Wahpeton Indian School from June 16, 1957, was not only been an active administrator, but found time to take part in many of the city's important activities. Both Mr. and Mrs. Wellington have educational training, and both started their careers as teachers. Their daughter, Barbara, was a surgical nurse at the Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles, Calif. Mr. Wellington graduated from Montana State. Mrs. Wellington is a graduate of St. Cloud Teachers College. He spent most of his youth on Montana Ranches. In college he excelled in sports and later taught and coached.

After taking over the administration of the Indian School, Mr. Wellington obtained many improvements through his close cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Area office at Aberdeen, S.D.

The school grounds were landscaped. New lighting installed and streets improved. The kitchen was completely modernized, as have the dormitories. Most vital to the school program has been the increase by 17 members, of the staff. Teaching loads have been improved and the experienced people on the staff of instructors have improved the curriculum.

January 19, 1940, Wellington entered the employment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Carson Agency, Stewart, Nevada. From there he went to Denver, Colo., as supervisor of education in stock raising and dairying.

In 1947, he became superintendent of Fort Belknap agency at Harlem, Montana. Sept. 1, 1954 he became superintendent of Standing Rock Agency at Fort Yates N. D.

While in Wahpeton, Mr. Wellington was very active in the work of the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club and the Bois de Sioux Golf club, besides taking an active part in church work, athletics and in many educational activities in Wahpeton. He helped with the civil defense program. Like other staff members, his great interest is the Indian children. He has compiled several interesting talks given at various functions in the area on Indian history, folklore, hunting, and general methods of living. He had many pictures to illustrate his talks.

The School began down sizing during the mid 50's. The following concerns received parcels of farm land adjacent to the school campus: Wahpeton Cemetery Association In 1956; State School of Science in 1957 in return for this land, the Science School through Federal Public Service Law 8525, will provide 10 scholarships per year for 10 years to qualified Indian students in the form of tuition scholarships; the City of Wahpeton in 1959 received as a direct grant a parcel of land of some 14 acres west of the campus between the highway and the railroad track to be used for educational and recreational purposes. (PRESENT SITE OF STERNS HOCKEY ARENA AND WATER TOWER)



Leroy Chief, Superintendent of the Wahpeton Indian School from June 1967 to 1992.

To this date, Chief has the distinction of holding the Superintendents position for more than 20 years.