



Protecting, Maintaining and Improving the Health of All Minnesotans

June 8, 2026

To: SCHSAC members, SCHSAC alternates, and CHS administrators

CC: Local public health leaders, MDH staff

Dear SCHSAC members and alternates, and CHS administrators:

I want to start by thanking you all for your commitment and dedication to protecting the health of all Minnesotans. I also want to express my appreciation for your participation in the State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC).

For nearly fifty years, SCHSAC and its members have played an important role in our public health system. SCHSAC advises, consults with, and makes recommendations on matters relating to the development, funding, and evaluation of public health services. SCHSAC members provide important perspectives and experiences to inform conversations about public health in Minnesota.

I am excited to announce that we will be adding new voices and perspectives to SCHSAC. Effective August 1, 2026, federally recognized Tribal Nations that share geography with Minnesota will be able to appoint a member and alternate to SCHSAC, if they wish, to represent their Tribal Nation.

Tribes are sovereign nations with their own inherent public health authority and would not be considered community health boards.

With this change, an important partner in our public health work will now be represented in the place where important conversations about public health are held, and they will have a voice in recommendations that impact their citizens' health as well as the health of all other Minnesotans.

We acknowledge that there are many details to discuss and decide as we move forward with the expansion of this important partnership. SCHSAC will be asked to establish a new workgroup of current SCHSAC members and new Tribal members to identify and work through necessary changes. Participation by all partners will be key to the success of this work.

I hope you will join me in committing to work together across community health boards, Tribal Nations, and the Minnesota Department of Health, to ensure that we continue SCHSAC's tradition of partnership, learning, and leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brooke A. G.' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Brooke Cunningham, MD, PhD
Commissioner
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

Memo from Commissioner DeAnne Malterer, SCHSAC Chair

To: SCHSAC Members and Alternates and CHS Administrators

Cc: Local Public Health Leaders and MDH Staff

I am so pleased that SCHSAC's membership will be expanding to include our Tribal partners. Community health boards are no stranger to working with our partners in Tribal public health, and I believe this new connection will only strengthen our state-local-Tribal partnership.

At our last SCHSAC retreat, we focused our learning around creating a better understanding of Tribal health. We learned about Tribal sovereignty and heard from Tribal health leaders about their system and some of the challenges and opportunities that they face. I was struck by how much our public health systems have in common while at the same time realizing how much there is for us to learn from one another.

I would encourage you to consider attending a Tribal-State Relations Training if you are able. You can find more information online ([Tribal-State Relations Training - MnDOT](#)), and I have asked our MDH staff to send out more information to you all. I attended this training last year and found it very helpful and engaging.

This change in membership does not change SCHSAC's role and focus on our vision of a seamless, responsive, publicly-supported governmental public health system that works closely with the community to ensure healthy, safe, and vibrant communities. It *does* broaden our ability to improve our understanding of the entire system and our ability to coordinate more effectively with Tribal Nations for the benefit of all of us.

There is learning for us to do and there are many questions about moving forward that will have to be answered. We look forward to working in partnership with Tribal members to address those questions and bringing forth recommendations to all of SCHSAC as we seek to meet our responsibilities.

I look forward to moving SCHSAC forward into our next 50 years with new voices at the table and new partnerships for the betterment of our system and our communities.

If you have any questions about this expansion of our membership, please don't hesitate to reach out directly to me or through health.schsac@state.mn.org.