



**Dennis W. Olson Jr.** is currently appointed as the director of American Indian Education for the Minnesota Department of Education. In this role, Olson serves as the agency's chief liaison in working with the 11 tribal governments and Twin Cities metro populations and works in collaboration with multiple agencies on issues impacting Indian Education in Minnesota. Prior to this appointment, Olson served as Commissioner of Education for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe overseeing operations of the tribal education department including early childhood education, K–12 Bureau of Indian Education–funded Nay Ah Shing schools,

four chapters of the Boys & Girls Clubs, higher education, and the tribal scholarship program. Olson also worked nearly 10 years in various capacities for the University of Minnesota–Institute on Community Integration, coordinating federally funded grant programs working directly with all 11 tribal communities in Minnesota, focussing on postsecondary transition for American Indian high school students, students with disabilities, and at-risk youth. Olson, an enrolled member of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, holds a bachelor of arts from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities in American Indian studies, sociology, and communications. He also holds master's degrees in liberal studies and education from the University of Minnesota Duluth, both with a focus on federal Indian policy and American Indian Education.