

Working Respectfully With Indigenous Communities Around Data, Research, and Evidence

A Resource for State Education Agencies

Purpose

This resource is intended to support state education agency (SEA) staff members as they build partnerships with tribal leaders to improve educational outcomes for Native students through the use of data, research, and evidence. Tribal governments are sovereign nations that promote self-determination¹ for approximately one-half million American Indian² students in the United States, who experience disproportionately high rates of special education identification, suspension, and chronic absenteeism (Collier, 2012; Hanson, 2021; National Center for Education Statistics, 2019a; U.S. Department of Education, 2019). This disproportionality is due to structural inequities that persist in educational systems, such as a hostile school climate and policies that do not accommodate absences for ceremonial and cultural observances (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Audience

The target audience is SEA staff. This resource is meant to help them collaborate more effectively with tribal communities so that the integration of SEA and tribal community resources can help benefit the academic and social-emotional outcomes for Native American students.

Principles for Working With Indigenous Communities Around Data, Research, and Evidence

Centering students and their needs is essential for building strong, mutually beneficial, and lasting relationships with Indigenous communities. In addition, the inclusion of Indigenous expertise and knowledge is key for SEA staff as they partner with community members to conduct required evaluation, research, and data collection in order to benefit students.

¹ Self-determination is the idea that Indian nations should determine their own futures (Cornell & Kalt, 1998).

² Native American, American Indian, Native, and Indigenous are terms used throughout this text to refer to Indigenous peoples of the United States. Each of these are imperfect, general terms.

Additional resources

The following list of resources is for individuals who want further information on student count data, Indigenous scholarship, and the aforementioned six principles.

Student count data

Arizona Department of Education. (2021). *SY 2020–2021 enrollment*. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data>

California Department of Education. (2021). *2020–21 enrollment by ethnicity*. <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthGrd.aspx?cde=00&agglevel=state&year=2020-21>

Centers for Disease Control. (2018). *American Indian and Alaskan Native metro populations*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/tribal/tribes-organizations-health/tribes/metro-populations.html> \ National Center for Education Statistics. (2019b). *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic groups: Indicator 10: Reading achievement*. Institute of Education Sciences. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/raceindicators/indicator_rda.asp

National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). *Public high school graduation rates*. Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved August 21, 2021, from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/coi>

State of Nevada Department of Education. (2020). *Enrollment for Nevada Public Schools: 2020–2021 school year*. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from <https://doe.nv.gov/DataCenter/Enrollment/>

Utah State Board of Education. (2019). *2019–2020 fingertip facts*. <https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/9b5f5e04-184b-4113-b506-0bb14ee9458f>

Indigenous scholarship

Cordova, V. F. (2007). *How it is: The Native American philosophy of V. F. Cordova* (K. D. Moore, K. Peters, T. Jojola, & A. Lacy, Eds.). University of Arizona Press.

Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc. (2017). *7 tips on building relationships with Indigenous peoples*. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/7-tips-on-building-relationships-with-indigenous-peoples>

Layland, A., & Molina, M. (2019). *Sovereignty performance management: Performance management for Tribes, tribal education agencies, and tribal education departments*. Academic Development Institute.

Lomawaima, K. T. (1994). *They called it prairie light: The story of Chilocco Indian school*. University of Nebraska Press.

Mackety, D. M., Bachler, S., Barley, Z., & Cicchinelli, L. (2009). *American Indian education: The role of tribal education departments*. McREL. <https://sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/files/2012/04/The-Role-of-Tribal-Education-Departments.pdf>

Related to principles

Cornell, S., & Kalt, J. P. (1998). Sovereignty and nation-building: The development challenge in Indian country today. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 22(3), 187–214.

Muhammad, D. A., Tec, R., & Ramirez, K. (2019). *Racial wealth snapshot: American Indians/Native Americans*. National Community Reinvestment Coalition. <https://ncrc.org/racial-wealth-snapshot-american-indians-native-americans/>

Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 9, 117–125. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1524839919884912>