



Native Education Collaborative

Connecting partners | Cultivating resources



Tribal Sovereignty and Consultation: Tribal Education

Overall Themes

- A socio-historical context is required to understand current state of affairs
- Education may represent an exercise in rights for Native people
- Due to the oral nature of Native history, written accounts by non-Native people must be evaluated for inherent (potentially unintentional) bias

Tribal Citizenship

- 574 federally recognized tribes
- Prior to 1978, tribes were defined by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934
- In 1978, the Department of Interior created the legal definition for tribes
- In the 2009 case, *Carcieri v Salazar*, the federal government ruled that land not included in the 1934 Act could not be considered as Native land
 - ▶ The real-world result was tribes not listed in that document were landless and thus open to economic and political opposition
- Determining citizenship is wholly up to the tribes—2 general determining criteria:
 - ▶ Blood quantum: A certain percentage of blood must come directly from tribal members
 - ▶ Lineal decendancy: Descendants of tribal members are citizens regardless of blood quantum

Tribal Educational Rights

- Tribes have the right to determine who will represent them in all governmental consultations
- Tribes have the right to educate their citizens
- Tribes have the right to educate non-Native people about their tribe

Traditional Educational Values

- All tribes are diverse; however, there are some common values
- Educational decisions were relational, in consideration of:
 - ▶ The surrounding environment
 - ▶ Other tribes
 - ▶ Plants
 - ▶ Animals
 - ▶ Mother Earth
 - ▶ The cosmos
 - ▶ Ancestors
 - ▶ Future generations
 - ▶ The spiritual world
- Education includes language and culture

Tribal Management of Schools

- The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 prescribes tribes to administer federally funded programs, such as those for education and health
- The Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 allowed schools to apply for educational grants
- As of 2013, 126 of 183 Bureau of Indian Education schools are tribally operated

Tribal Education Departments

- Departments within tribes to manage education
- There are 200+ tribal education departments (TEDs) within 32 states

Indian Education Act for State Tribal Education Partnership Grants

- Only tribes with TEDs are eligible to apply
- Funds three objectives:
 - ▶ To promote tribal self-determination in education
 - ▶ To improve academic achievement of Native children and youth
 - ▶ To promote coordination and collaborations between tribal, local, and state education agencies