



TO: **Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee (WSNAEAC)**
FROM: Shandy Abrahamson, ONE Director
DATE: July 15, 2025
RE: Projects Report

Washington State Tribal Education Leaders Summit (TELS)

The Washington State Tribal Education Leaders Summit (TELS) was held April 17–18, 2025, at Washington State University, hosted by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Office of Native Education, in collaboration with Washington State University. The summit was structured as a two-day event, with April 17 featuring presentations by topic experts and discussions on critical education topics identified by tribal leaders in preparation for consultation with Superintendent Reykdal. This was followed by government-to-government discussions between Tribally Elected Leaders and the Superintendent on April 18. Key discussion priorities identified by the TELS Advisory Committee included:

- Examining the impacts of the Trump Administration on Native Education
- Exploring student data and accountability through tribal partnerships, and
- Advancing tribal language revitalization efforts.

OSPI Action Steps and Commitments:

Following the summit, OSPI committed to several concrete actions:

- **Strengthen the Office of Native Education (ONE)**—Continue building internal capacity and resources while ensuring relationships guide structure in collaboration with tribes
- **Annual Summit Commitment**—Make the Tribal Education Leaders Summit an annual event
- **Legislative Engagement & Policy Development**—Pursue opioid recovery funding and reimbursements for tribal/community leader engagement in JMLSTI, clarified and expedited data-sharing agreements, and deeper examination of FERPA rules
- **Communication & Tools**—Use district newsletters to remind schools to include the ED506 form in registration packets to support accurate Native student identification
- **Teacher Pathways & Certification Flexibility**—Collaborate with PESB and FPLCOT to expand access and flexibility in pathways to educator certification for Native teachers and language instructors
- **Data Dashboard Development**—Work toward developing an AI/AN-specific data dashboard to advance tribal data sovereignty

The summit operated under the foundational frameworks of the Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989 and the Millennium Agreement, emphasizing tribal sovereignty and respectful government-to-government relationships as mandated by Washington State RCW 43.376.

HB 1956 Tribal School Opioid Education Pilot Project Summary

Executive Overview

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was directed under HB 1956 to collaborate with the Department of Health (DOH) and Health Care Authority (HCA) to develop age-appropriate substance use prevention materials for schools. The Office of Native Education (ONE) was specifically tasked with implementing a one-year pilot project with State Tribal Education Compact Schools (STECS) to develop, review, and select opioid and fentanyl abuse prevention materials during the 2024–25 school year.

Leadership: Rebecca Purser, Native Educator Cultivation Program Supervisor, served as the implementation lead under Executive Director Henry Strom.

State Tribal Education Compact School Pilot Project Implementation

The pilot project was grounded in the principle that culturally specific prevention strategies are most effective for Native communities. The initiative emphasized that prevention must be rooted in Indigenous identity, healing, and ancestral knowledge rather than imposed from external sources.

Participating Schools

Five Tribal schools volunteered and received funding totaling \$107,500:

- Chief Kitsap Academy
- Muckleshoot Tribal School
- Quileute Tribal School
- Pascal Sherman Indian School
- Chief Leschi School

Policy Recommendations

1. **Support Healing of the Canoe Curriculum Expansion:** Fund and provide technical support to expand this culturally grounded life skills curriculum across all Washington state schools, with increased support for high-population tribal-serving schools.
2. **Recognize Culturally Grounded Curricula as Core Prevention Infrastructure:** Include culturally specific programs like *Healing of the Canoe* as eligible and prioritized interventions in prevention funding streams.
3. **Support Tribal-Led Evaluation and Knowledge Sharing:** Invest in tribally led research and evaluation to document outcomes and inform statewide prevention policy while respecting Indigenous knowledge systems.

Conclusion

State Tribal Education Compact Schools have demonstrated that culturally grounded education can foster resilience, identity, and wellness among Native youth. The pilot project confirms that effective prevention efforts must be rooted in the cultural strengths and sovereignty of Native communities. By supporting these Indigenous-led models, policymakers can advance prevention strategies that are both evidence-informed and culturally transformative.

The success of this pilot provides a foundation for expanding culturally specific prevention programs statewide, ensuring that prevention strategies address the root causes of trauma and disconnection in Washington communities through the strength of Indigenous teachings and cultural identity.