



TO: Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee (WSNAEAC)
FROM: Bawaajigekwe Boulley, Native Student Success Program Supervisor
DATE: July 15, 2025
RE: ONE Native Student Success Report

Native Student Success (NSS)

Native Student Success (NSS) Survey Report Overview

Building on our March report, which introduced the Native Student Success (NSS) Survey and proposed a phased rollout of key findings, this month's update reflects how the data has already begun shaping our statewide efforts.

The survey responses, submitted by over 100 participants, remain a powerful source of guidance. Contributors emphasized culturally sustaining practices, strong relational foundations, community-driven definitions of success, and holistic approaches that affirm Native students' identities and experiences. These insights continue to affirm and guide the direction of the Native Student Success Program.

How These Insights Inform My Work as Native Student Success Program Supervisor

The stories and wisdom shared in the NSS Survey confirmed the importance of deeply rooted, community-based educational work. Since the March report, I have continued to integrate these findings into practice and programming through the following:

February 2025 Graduation Equity Webinar: Culturally Responsive Practices & Policies that Help Students Attend & Engage

I facilitated a state-level webinar that shared five actionable takeaways:

1. Relationships Are Foundational
2. Recognize and Honor Cultural Identity
3. Focus on Strengths, Not Deficits
4. Adapt Policies to Be Inclusive and Supportive
5. Amplify Student and Community Voices

Sugarcane Documentary Educator Reflection & Healing Guide

I developed a self-guided reflection tool for educators to accompany the documentary *Sugarcane*, emphasizing trauma-informed and healing-centered learning. The guide encourages:

- Recognition of the ongoing impact of colonization
- Honoring the intergenerational trauma of boarding schools
- Trust-building with Native students and families
- Centering Indigenous knowledge systems in schools

Native Literacy and Tribal Language Convening

In May 2025, ONE hosted its second annual convening in Airway Heights, WA. With direction from Henry, and in partnership with Destiney and the ONE team, I co-facilitated the Native Literacy strand. This convening brought together leaders from tribal communities, school districts, universities, and advocacy groups.

The event was rooted in Indigenous pedagogy and designed as a community space—not an individual-led initiative. Participants explored three guiding themes:

Braiding Knowledge Systems—Literacy includes Indigenous storytelling, oral tradition, land-based learning, and identity

Native Ways of Knowing—Learning happens in relationship to land, community, and story

Weaving Literacy & Language—Literacy deepens when tied to culture, oral tradition, and identity

We were honored to be joined by members of the First Peoples Language, Culture, and Oral Traditions Committee, who shared critical perspectives on certification, sovereignty, and Native-led language instruction. The convening also affirmed research showing the strong connection between heritage language use, increased literacy skills, and students' cultural confidence and academic success.

Native Literacy Principles and Indicators

This spring, we finalized the Native Literacy Principles and Indicators document. I want to especially lift up the leadership of Henry, who helped guide this work from vision to execution. Our working group, composed of cultural knowledge bearers, academic scholars, school leaders, and literacy experts from across Washington State, also benefitted from the partnership of Dr. Staci Block from the San Diego Office of Education. Dr. Block has shared a wealth of Native literacy resources and insight with our team and remains an invaluable partner.

Mary-Dean Barringer, a deeply committed educator and facilitator, helped synthesize our collective work into the final draft, which is currently in formatting at OSPI and scheduled for rollout in the coming school year.

The principles include:

- Belonging & Trust
- Strength-Based Learning
- Cultural Identity & Representation
- Oral Language & Storytelling

- Indigenous Excellence
- Criticality & Empowerment
- Holistic & Culturally Relevant Assessment

Our working definition: Native literacy is more than reading and writing. It is a cultural practice grounded in story, land, identity, and relationality.

Indigenous Mentoring and Coaching Academy

With the support of our ONE Program Specialist, Kat, we secured a direct buy contract in record time with Annette Woolley—an Indigenous scholar, educator, and experienced mentor. Working in collaboration with former colleague Rebecca, and with support from WEA, WSCA, and OSPI's BEST Program, Annette created a culturally grounded mentoring and leadership academy for Indigenous educators.

This initiative is designed for Indigenous educators interested in mentoring and coaching early-career Native teachers. The content is now complete, and we are preparing to pilot the academy.

Contact

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Native Student Success Program Office Hours

- Fridays, 10-11am
- Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88104470136>