



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## National Policy Memorandum

### Bureau of Indian Education

**Number:** NPM-EDUC-30 A1

**Effective:** 02/02/17

**Expires:** 02/02/18

**Title:** Native American Language Programs in BIE-operated Schools – Amendment 1

#### 1. Purpose

The memorandum amends NPM-EDUC-30, Native American Language Programs in BIE-operated schools, issued September 25, 2015, to extend the expiration date one year. The purpose of this policy is to support, promote, and require the teaching of Native languages in Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)-operated schools. Partnerships with local communities and parents will also facilitate native language revitalization and maintenance with an emphasis on improving language fluency.

The BIE recognizes that the traditional languages of American Indian students are an integral part of their cultures and identities, and has been shown to play a role in their academic progress. The desired outcome of this policy is to improve academic performance and increase educational opportunities for American Indian students by integrating Native languages into daily instruction and creating fluent speakers.

#### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all BIE-operated school administrators, personnel, faculty, and staff.

#### 3. Policy

##### A. Establishment of Native Language Instruction

- BIE personnel at BIE-operated schools will recognize, honor, implement, and utilize the local tribe's, or tribes', native language(s) standards, curriculum, scope, sequence, and assessment, if such documents are available.
- BIE-operated schools will determine and establish a methodology to address Native language instruction, e.g., an immersion program.
- BIE-operated schools will define and redefine Native language programs at the discretion of evolving and changing language policies.

## **B. Program Implementation**

- BIE-operated schools will support and implement Native language instruction in all content areas, at all grade levels, daily.
- BIE will budget funds for BIE-operated schools to use in professional development for Native language and cultural programs with a focus on second language learning and language acquisition. The BIE will ensure the funds are used only for their defined purpose.
- BIE will budget funds for BIE-operated schools to ensure Native culture and language teachers teaching at BIE-funded schools are provided opportunities to obtain language teaching certification, i.e., Continuing Education Units (CEUs), from colleges/universities for teaching Native language, culture, history, and the arts to enhance their knowledge for teaching. The BIE will ensure the funds are used only for their defined purpose.
- BIE will budget funds for BIE-operated schools to obtain culturally appropriate teaching resources and materials; and to develop culturally appropriate curriculum. The BIE will ensure the funds are used for their defined purpose.
- BIE will require Family and Child Education (FACE)/pre-school programs affiliated with BIE-operated schools to enhance their current curricula with Native language programs.
- BIE will support BIE-operated colleges and other Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the development of a Native language component for their early childhood education programs.
- BIE will support BIE-operated colleges and other TCU programs for teachers in the early childhood education profession that focus on second language learning, language acquisition, and Native language immersion.
- BIE will support the implementation of quality internship programs for developing teachers skilled in teaching Native languages for early education programs.
- BIE will support BIE-operated colleges and other TCUs to provide additional opportunities for new and established teachers at all grade levels to enhance their skills in Native language instruction.
- BIE will offer monetary incentives for hard to fill positions for Native language teachers at BIE-operated schools with the understanding that certain requirements will be met, such as, obtaining Native language certification designed by local tribal members with linguistic and cultural expertise; and seeking professional development and enrollment in Native language programs at higher institutions or colleges offering teacher education or certificate programs.
- BIE will offer technical assistance to schools with Native language programs, including immersion and/or those who are seeking to strengthen Native language instruction.

### **C. Partnerships**

- BIE, along with local tribal communities, will develop partnerships with TCUs and local universities to promote teacher education programs and internship opportunities to produce quality teachers skilled in teaching Native languages with the purpose of promoting, perpetuating, and improving Native language instruction at BIE-operated schools.
- BIE will work with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) to provide technical assistance to TCUs and Tribal Education Departments (TEDs) to apply for federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education to support professional development for Native language teachers.
- BIE will engage parents in partnering with schools and Native language staff to support student language revitalization, maintenance, and immersion efforts.

### **D. Collaboration with Tribally Controlled Schools**

- BIE will continue to fund and expand the purpose of the Sovereignty in Indian Education Enhancement Initiative and the TED grant for TEDs to include funding for Native language programs.
- BIE will help facilitate collaborations between the state and tribe for Native language teacher certification.
- BIE will help facilitate collaboration between the BIE and TEDs for the development of Native language teacher certification programs.

### **E. TEDs**

- TEDs, Education School Boards, and Executive Directors/or Superintendents will facilitate discussions and collaborations between the Federal Government, states, BIE, and tribes on evolving Native language policy.
- TEDs, Education School Boards, and Executive Directors/or Superintendents will ensure implementation of defined language programs and policies for schools with set-aside funding to support the Native language programs at schools. TEDs are to ensure funds are only used for the specific purpose they are defined to be used for.
- TEDs, Native Language Departments/offices, and BIE-operated schools will collaborate to ensure the Native language programs and policies are fully adhered to, honored, and used to promote fluency in Native languages.


## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

- A. The BIE Director** will promote, implement, and validate Native language policies; advocate Native language fluency for all BIE-funded school students, their families, and communities; and strengthen partnerships between the BIE, TEDs, and post-secondary institutions. The Director will also:

- honor and ensure the implementation of the Native language policies;
- facilitate and lead the development and refinement of a Native language policy;
- facilitate and lead discussions to encourage collaboration between the federal government, states, BIE, and tribes on evolving Native language policy

- B. The Sovereignty in Indian Education Office, Native American Language, History and Culture Coordinator** (Office of Sovereignty and Indian Education) will assist the BIE Director with all defined roles and responsibilities as cited above under 4. A. This includes supporting tribal sovereignty by building the capacity of tribes to operate high performing schools, and allowing tribes to shape what their children learn about their tribe, language, and culture.
- C. The Associate Deputy Directors** will assist the BIE Director with all defined roles and responsibilities as cited above under 4.A.
- D. The Native American Language, History and Culture Education Specialists, and Proposed Education Resource Centers Native Language Coordinators** will assist the BIE Director and Associate Deputy Directors with all defined roles and responsibilities of the BIE Director as cited above under 4.A.
- E. The Principals of BIE-operated Schools** will ensure that BIE directives on Native language teaching and learning are occurring at every grade level on a daily basis, beginning with implementation of a partial Native language program and progressing to full Native language immersion programs.
- F. The Presidents of Post-Secondary Education Institutions** will develop a Native language component for their early childhood education programs with an emphasis on full immersion programs, and collaborate with BIE personnel in the implementation of Native language programs and policies.
- G. The BIE-operated school Faculty and Staff** will align language programs with BIE directives and communicate with tribal leaders and local school boards.

## 5. Approval


2-2-17

---

Tony L. Dearman Date  
 Director, Bureau of Indian Education