FUNDING FOR
Tribal Education Departments/Tribal Education Agencies

The US Congress has authorized funding for Tribal Education Departments (TEDs)/Tribal Education Agencies (TEAs) in two separate authorizations, in 1988 through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) within the U.S. Department of the Interior and in 1994 through the U.S. Department of Education.

At present, Congress has appropriated funds for the BIE TED grant program but has yet to appropriate funds for TEDs through the US Department of Education. The BIE TED grant program only funds tribes that have a BIE facility (dorm or school), and most federally recognized tribes are not eligible to receive funds due to the lack of facilities.

Within the US Department of Education, Office of Indian Education (OIE) exists a State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP). This year OIE funded four entities for FY 2024. The OIE STEP is a very productive program; unfortunately, most tribal nations need to develop capacity and/or establish a formal TEA/TED to apply for STEP funding. States are now working more closely with tribal nations because of the US Department of Education Tribal Consultation policy. This is a very important policy that requires LEAs and state education agencies (SEAs) to consult with tribal nations regarding the use of federal funding – Indian Education Formula grant program and the Impact Aid Program – to support tribal education initiatives.

Many tribes do not have an established TED/TEA to engage in an involved process per Indian Education Formula grant program and the Impact Aid Program.

We are asking the US Congress to increase the annual funding for the existing BIE TED Grant Program to $10 million. Additionally, we are seeking for Congress to appropriate $10 million to the US Department of Education to start funding the majority of TEDs/TEAs who may never be eligible to apply for BIE TED funds.

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