

Every Student Succeeds Act Primer: Native Language Immersion



Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, Native American and Alaska Native languages will be supported as the primary language of instruction.

Language Immersion

ESSA supports the rights of Native American and Alaska Native students to use, practice, and maintain Native languages in public schools. Activities under the new grant program include:

- Providing professional development for teachers and staff to strengthen the overall language and academic goals of the school.
- Developing or refining curriculum, including teaching materials and activities.
- Creating or refining assessments written in the Native American or Alaska Native language of instruction that measure student proficiency and that are aligned with state and tribal academic standards.

Eligible Entities: Tribes, tribal colleges or universities, local education agencies – including a public charter school, a school operated by the Bureau of Indian Education, an Alaska Regional Corporation, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations.

Funding: Title VI Language Immersion schools and programs under National Activities shall be funded at a 20% set-aside of the total appropriated amount for this section.

Immersion Language Study

The Report on Native American Language Medium Education authorizes a grant to a consortium of universities with significant knowledge of Native languages and immersion programs to study best practices. The consortia reports to the Departments of Interior and Education, and relevant Congressional Committees. The purpose of the study is to:

- Evaluate the level of expertise in educational pedagogy, Native American language fluency, and experience of staff.



- Assess how schools and programs are using Native American languages to provide instruction in multiple subjects.
- Evaluate how schools and programs assess the academic proficiency of the students.
- Report on academic outcomes, including graduation rates of students who have completed the highest grade taught through the school.

Reporting: By not later than 18 months after the enactment of ESSA, the Secretary of the Interior, in collaboration with the Secretary of Education, shall develop a report of findings and conclusions, including recommendations for legislative and administrative actions.

For additional fact sheets about ESSA and Native communities, visit <http://niea.org/>.

*The **National Indian Education Association** (NIEA) advances comprehensive educational opportunities for all Native students. Serving as the critical link between Native communities and the diverse array of institutions that serve our students, NIEA holds all accountable for improving achievement. Through advocacy, capacity-building, and education, NIEA supports Native students and their communities to succeed. **NIEA.org***

