

# Native Education Factsheet

February 2018

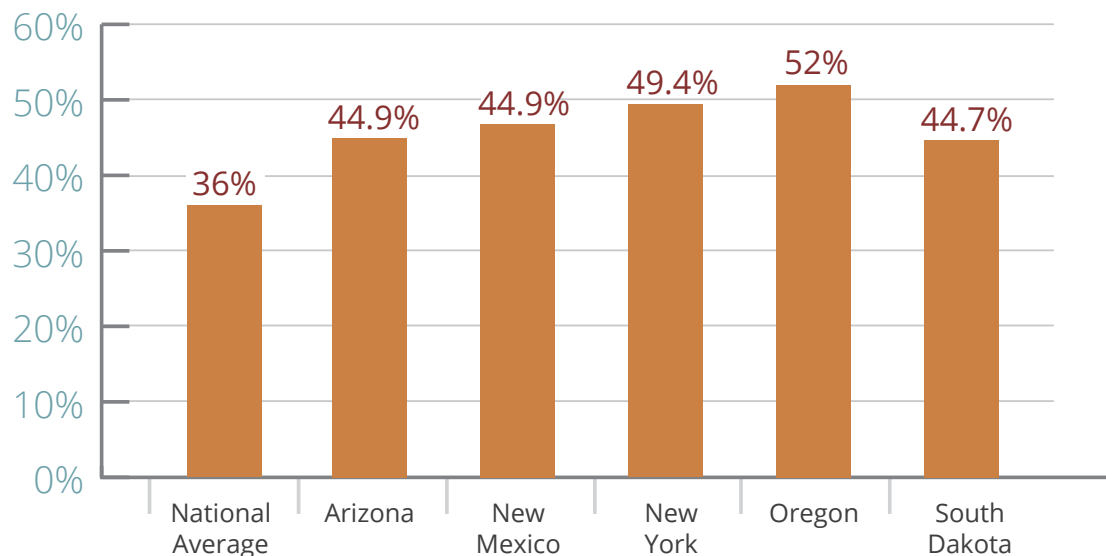
## National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Teacher Initiative



There is nothing more important than ensuring that every student has access to a high quality, culturally-responsive teacher. Teacher shortages in rural and low-income school districts have had a pronounced and negative impact on Native students. Data on enrollment in teacher prep programs indicates the number of educators entering the teaching profession is decreasing dramatically. Since 2009, national enrollment rates in teacher training programs has declined over 36%.

The teacher shortages are more prevalent in states with high Native populations as shown by the chart below. Due to the rural and isolated locations of many reservation schools, recruiting and retaining effective teachers are challenges school leadership face every school year.

Decline of Enrollment in Teacher Preparatory Programs



With the demand of teachers projected to increase in future years and the number of teacher preparatory program enrollees decreasing, the drop in teacher preparatory program enrollment indicates that the teacher shortage crisis will only grow in scope.

In schools experiencing teacher shortages, the need is especially prevalent in math and science classrooms, and the special education field- leaving gaping holes in academic and service areas for our students. Teacher shortages also increase classroom sizes, making it difficult for students to receive individual attention and assistance needed, negatively impacting student achievement.

## NIEA's Response to the Teacher Shortage Crisis

In October 2016, the membership of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) passed a resolution in support of the establishment of a working group that would develop a national strategy for the training and employment of effective and culturally-competent teachers in Native-serving schools. This resolution became the basis for the Teacher Initiative (Initiative). In February 2017, NIEA members and allied stakeholders convened in Washington, DC for the launch meeting of the Initiative to discuss guiding principles and objectives and begin a series of working meetings to determine the scope, needs, and goals of our communities. From these discussions, the vision and guiding values of Teacher Initiative were formed.

### Goals of the Teacher Initiative

NIEA is committed to creating learning environments where Native students can be inspired and engaged, teachers play an important and defining role in their academic success. By making the recruitment process easier to navigate, and equipping resources with the professional development opportunities, resource, and tools needed to support Native students, we can ensure Native students are given the opportunity to thrive in the classroom and beyond.

NIEA and our stakeholders have identified three overarching goals that serve as the foundation of the Initiative's work. By concentrating our efforts on the goals identified below, we hope to create positive and safe learning environments for Native students.

**Inspire & Invest:** Identify opportunities to attract qualified educators to teach in Native-serving schools through the creation of a recruitment website and providing resources to schools, teachers, and hiring managers on marketing and responding to employment opportunities.

**Break Barriers:** Support the growth and impact of educators by providing culturally-responsive professional development resources and opportunities to educators and schools that serve Native students.

**Inform Policy:** Inform recruitment strategy and policy decisions by supporting the collection of accurate and comprehensive data.

## Current Work on the Teacher Initiative

NIEA has taken steps to further the goals of the Initiative including:

- Meeting with stakeholders, members, and partners to inform them about the Initiative.
- Updating and creating marketing materials to increase awareness about the Initiative.
- Connecting hiring managers and prospective teachers through the NIEA Teacher Recruitment website ([teach.niea.org](http://teach.niea.org)).
- Providing hiring managers of Native-serving schools with the tools to effectively market and promote open teaching positions on the NIEA Teacher Recruitment website.

### How to Get Involved in the Teacher Initiative

NIEA is looking for opportunities for additional working meetings throughout the next year and partners to join in the Initiative's work. We welcome opportunities to partner with you and your school district to foster relationships to market and promote the Teacher Recruitment Website to potential applicants, hiring managers, partners, and allied stakeholders.

If you are interested in helping your school or organization to implement new professional development resources and tools or use the Teacher Recruitment Website, please email [teachnative@niea.org](mailto:teachnative@niea.org).

We look forward to working with you to create educational opportunities for Native students.

For additional information or questions, please contact NIEA at (202) 544-7290.

