



Fact Sheet: Department of Education (ED) and Department of Interior (DOI) Partnership

What is the nature of the partnership? ED and DOI are deepening their partnership to improve American Indian education in the United States. Together, the two agencies will use available statutory authorities to promote innovation and process improvements in pursuit of better outcomes for beneficiaries of Native education programs, by establishing a partnership that (1) streamlines agency policies and programmatic requirements; (2) provides process improvements to enhance the experience for Native education program participants; and (3) aligns federal Native education programs to provide better services to students and families. This partnership will enhance opportunities to invest in and improve education, training, and workforce programs for Native students.

Why is this partnership being launched? This partnership is consistent with [Executive Order No. 14242](#) to “return authority over education to the States and local communities, while ensuring the effective and uninterrupted delivery of services, programs, and benefits on which Americans rely.” It will provide a more efficient federal education and workforce system, in line with [Executive Order No. 14278](#).

The ED-DOI partnership will build an integrated system designed to assist Native youth and adults throughout their academic career and pursuit of high-wage, high-demand, high-skill occupations. This agreement will also reduce the administrative burden on tribal nations by reducing duplicative reporting requirements for programs covered under the agreement, to the extent permissible under existing statutory authorities. This means that grantees will have to coordinate with one fewer federal agency on programs specifically designed to support their communities.

Under what authorities will this partnership be launched? The ED-DOI partnership follows a commonly utilized Interagency Agreement (IAA) framework set forth under the Economy Act at 31 U.S.C. § 1535. ED has broad authority to enter into contracts with other agencies for such agencies to provide services to ED. Under this partnership, DOI will provide grant administration services to ED in managing and overseeing these programs.

What will each agency do as part of this partnership? DOI will take a growing role in administering Indian and Native Education programs funded under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), as amended; Tribally Controlled Colleges and



Universities under the *Higher Education Act* (HEA), as amended, and Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs funded by the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* (Perkins V); and vocational rehabilitation programs serving Native American individuals with disabilities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended. These enumerated programs are currently managed by ED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

With proper oversight by ED, DOI will manage competitions, provide technical assistance, and integrate ED's Indian Education programs with the suite of Native-serving programs DOI already administers. ED will maintain all statutory responsibilities, including policymaking authority, and will continue its oversight of these programs.

What programs are included in this partnership?

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) Programs:

- Indian Education Grants to LEAs
- Special Programs for Indian Children - Indian Education Professional Development Grant Program (PD)
- Special Programs for Indian Children - Demonstration Grants (DEMO)
- State Tribal Education Partnership Program (STEP)
- Native American and Alaska Native Language Program (NALED)
- Native American Language Resource Center Program (NALRC)
- Alaska Native Education Program (ANEP)
- Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP) and the Native Hawaiian Education Council
- Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAM) Program

Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) Programs:¹

¹ The Department is currently winding down several grant programs that allocate resources based upon the racial or ethnic composition of an institution's student body, with preferences for students who are Native Alaskan or Native Hawaiian. The IAA includes these programs and DOI will assist ED with providing services to wind down such programs in an orderly manner.



- American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities authorized under Title III, Part A of the Higher Education Act, Section 316 and Part F of the Higher Education Act, Section 371
- Indian Education-related Research and Development Infrastructure Grant program components authorized under Title VII, Part B of the Higher Education Act

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) Programs:

- Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions Program

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) Programs:

- American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program
- Continued support for IDEA Part D funding for Tribally controlled colleges and universities (TCCUs)

Is there precedent for such partnerships? IAAs are a tool commonly used by government agencies to perform services, collaborate, and ensure efficient service delivery. Agencies frequently rely upon these agreements, so much so that the government has standardized forms to facilitate agencies' use of them. IAAs have been used by both large and small agencies in Democrat and Republican administrations alike. IAAs serve many purposes, and they are often used for administering grant programs.

For example, in 2022, the Biden Administration's Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons signed an IAA designating the Department of Labor (DOL) to administer grants under the *First Step Act*. More recently, ED and DOL successfully implemented an [IAA](#) to streamline the adult education and family literacy programs funded under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and career and technical education (CTE) programs funded by *Perkins V*. Since October 1, 2025, ED's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has processed nearly 500 payment requests from 35 unique grantees and has onboarded all grantees to DOL's Grant Solutions (GS) and Payment Management Solutions (PMS). In summary, ED has entered into IAAs with other Federal agencies for many years when doing so has been in the best interest of the U.S. government — for example, when such agreements are cost-effective or provide enhanced or more efficient program support.

Likewise, the Economy Act has been used by Federal agencies in the past to enter into contracts with other agencies to perform services. These contracts are commonly used to



implement IAAs through a contract for services. ED will continue to perform all of its statutorily required duties and responsibilities.

How will this agreement impact the states and tribes? Procuring the services at DOI for the statutory discretionary programs will benefit states, Tribes, and grantees, and will make it easier to include these programs under targeted program consolidations. DOI is best placed to partner with tribal organizations because of its extensive knowledge of the needs of Tribes and stakeholder communities. This agreement gives Tribes key points of contact who are most familiar with their unique needs and challenges.

Will this agreement change program eligibility for agencies, entities, and institutions?

The grantee recipients for Indian and Native Education-related programs are generally consistent year to year, and ED program staff will collaborate with DOI staff to ensure current and future grantees receive robust support for current and future grant rounds for these statutory discretionary programs. There is no anticipated adverse impact on eligible agencies, entities, and institutions, as ED is enabling DOI to implement and execute the grant programs. All programs will continue to be administered in accordance with the applicable statutory requirements.

Why is this agreement necessary now? This agreement to integrate ED's Indian Education programs with DOI's expertise and relationship with Tribes is necessary now to streamline federal efforts and minimize possible funding delays.

Who should State agency staff contact if they have questions or need technical assistance? States and grantees should not expect to experience programmatic disruptions due to this partnership. States and grantees should continue to remain in contact with their respective ED and DOI programmatic staff. Announcements on any additional process-related transitions will be made available through known channels of communication via ED and DOI programmatic staff.