



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 25, 2025

Mr. Jason Dropik
Executive Director
National Indian Education Association
1514 P Street NW, Suite B
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Dropik:

Thank you for your letter to former Acting Secretary Denise Carter on January 31, 2025, advocating for local control of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian education programs. Your letter was referred to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, and I am pleased to respond.

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) does not develop curriculum and is committed to ensuring curriculum remains a local decision. In fact, the Department is committed to all education decision-making being local by returning education to States and Tribes. Further, it is the position of the Department that American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian history is not classified as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) or critical race theory (CRT), and the Department will not treat Native history as DEI or CRT.

The United States has a unique political and legal relationship with federally recognized Indian Tribes, as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, executive orders, and court decisions. We continue to deliver on all statutory grant programs that support American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students and are identifying ways to deliver support while reducing bureaucratic red tape and ensuring parental rights remain a national priority.

Education will always be a local responsibility, and we look forward to visiting and consulting with Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and Native Hawaiian Organizations and their leadership to empower high-quality education for all students.

Sincerely,

Hayley B. Sanon
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
and Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.