



# Introduction to the Office of Indian Education & Indian Education Policy



Presented by  
**Elaine Mollindo**, Professional Learning Specialist

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# Agency Overview

**Arizona Department of Education**

**Division of School Support,  
Improvement and Indian Education**

**Office of Indian Education**



*"The Arizona Department of Education is a service organization committed to raising academic outcomes and empowering parents."*



# Office of Indian Education

**An office in the Division of School Improvement  
within the Arizona Department of Education**

- ❖ Administers federal and state programs to meet the educational and cultural needs of Arizona Native American students
- ❖ Offers technical assistance in collaboration with all ADE units who interact with Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
- ❖ Partners with internal and external entities to provide resources and professional learning for Native American students and educators
- ❖ Encourages and fosters parental involvement in the education of Native American students



**Arizona Revised Statute 15-244**

# Meet the OIE Team



**Lynnann Yazzie**  
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**Vacant**  
Education Program Specialist



**Bethaney Allison**  
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**Leann Smith**  
Program Project Specialist  
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# OLE Programs and Support



- Johnson O'Malley (JOM) – 25 CFR Part 273
- RISE (Raising Indigenous Success in Education) Grants
- Tribal College Dual Enrollment Program – A.R.S. 15-244.01
- Native American Code Writers Initiative Program – A.R.S. 15-249.17
- Professional Learning
- Indian Education Advisory Council
- **Data** Annual Reports
- Tribal Consultation





# Indian Education Policy

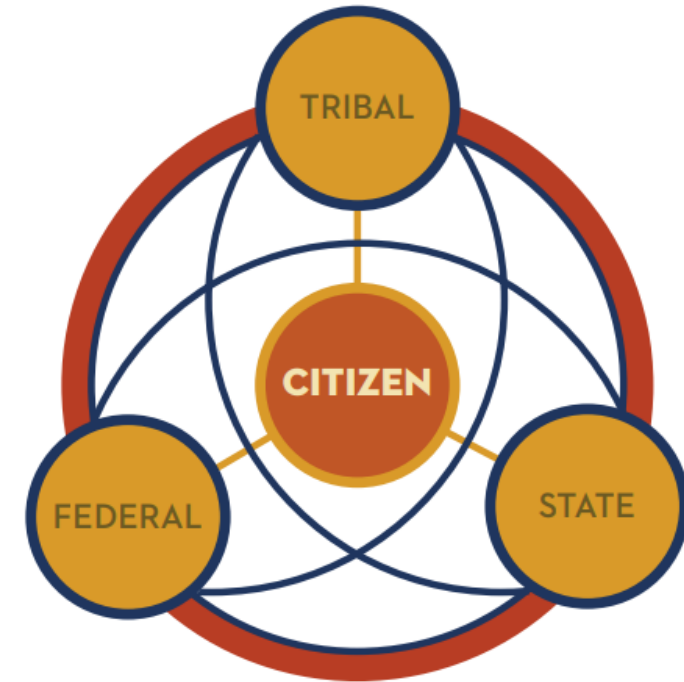
# POP QUIZ!

Scan the QR  
Code  
with your  
smart phone  
to participate



# What is tribal sovereignty?

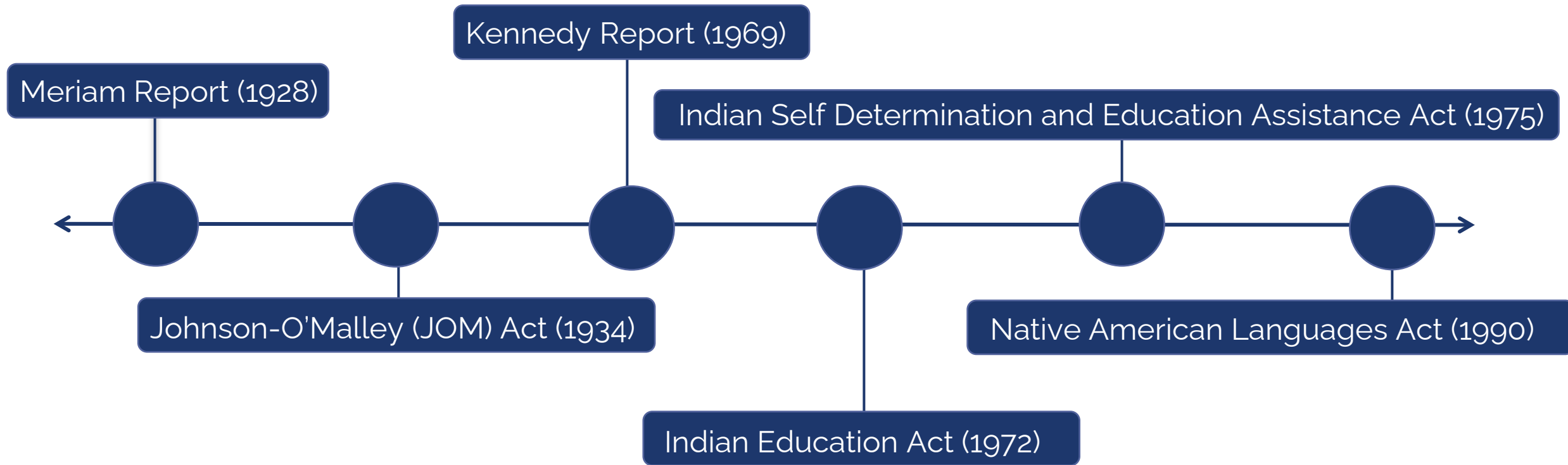
- The **inherent** authority of Indigenous tribal nations to govern themselves within the borders of the United States.
- Tribal sovereignty includes the **inherent** right to govern one's community, the ability to preserve one's culture, and the right to control one's own economy.
- Native peoples and governments have **inherent** rights and a **political relationship** with the US government that does not derive from race or ethnicity.



**Source:** *Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction*, National Congress of American Indians  
**Learn more at** <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/professional-development/recorded-webinars>



# Modern Indian Education Timeline



- Consistent call for education that was **culturally appropriate** and held Native students to the same **high standards** as others

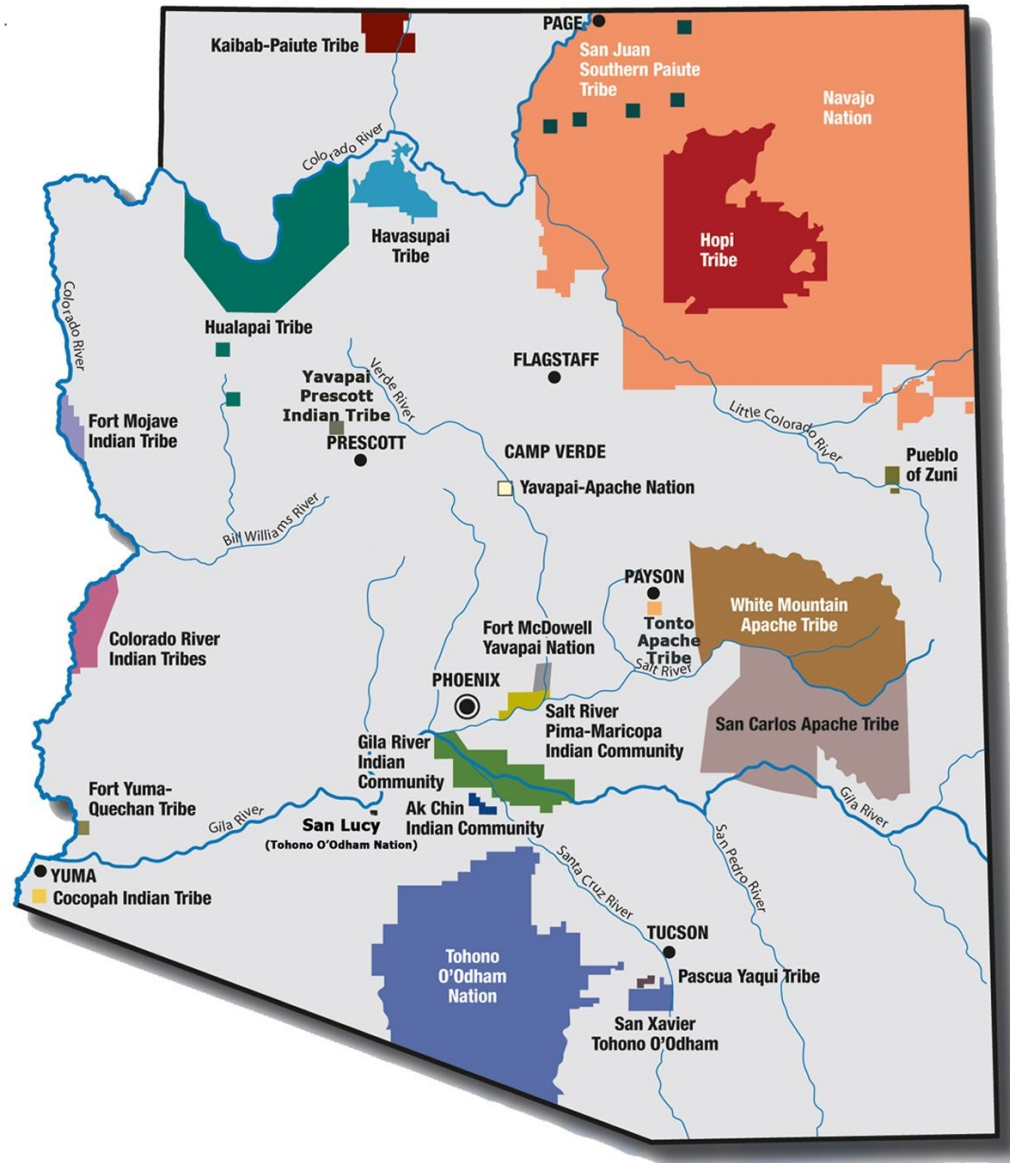


# Contemporary Indian Education Policies

- **Indian Education Act (1972)** has been reauthorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- **A.R.S. 15-244 Indian Education Act** – OIE provides support to schools and tribal nations around:
  - curricula and instruction that are culturally relevant and aligned to state standards
  - family and community engagement



# 22 Federally Recognized Tribes in AZ



1. Ak-Chin Indian Community
2. Cocopah Indian Tribe
3. Colorado River Indian Tribes
4. Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
5. Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
6. Gila River Indian Community
7. Havasupai Tribe
8. Hopi Tribe
9. Hualapai Tribe
10. Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians
11. Navajo Nation
12. Pascua Yaqui Tribe
13. Pueblo of Zuni
14. Quechan Indian Tribe
15. Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
16. San Carlos Apache Tribe
17. San Juan Southern Paiute
18. Tohono O'odham Nation
19. Tonto Apache Tribe
20. White Mountain Apache Tribe
21. Yavapai-Apache Nation
22. Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe



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**Arizona Revised Statute 15-244**



# ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES



**A.R.S. 15-341 A. #33** General powers and duties; immunity; delegation

**A.R.S. 15-710** Instruction in state and federal constitutions, American institutions and history of Arizona



**A.R.S. 15-348** Dress code policies; traditional tribal regalia; objects of cultural significance; graduation ceremonies; definitions

# Indigenous Context of Arizona Schools



**22** Sovereign tribal nations in our state

Over **84,000** Native American/Indigenous students

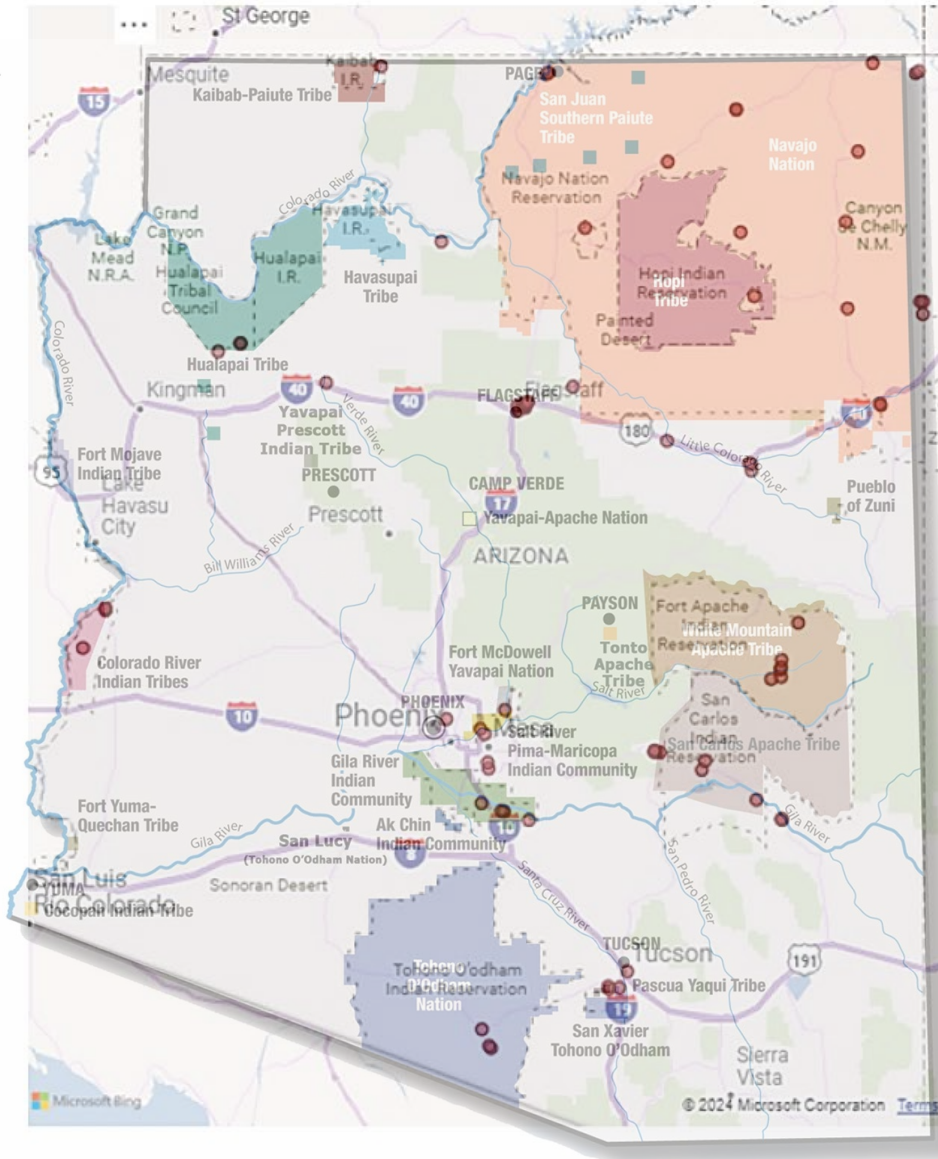
Representing over **210** sovereign tribal nations

**2300** Public and Charter Schools in **700** Districts

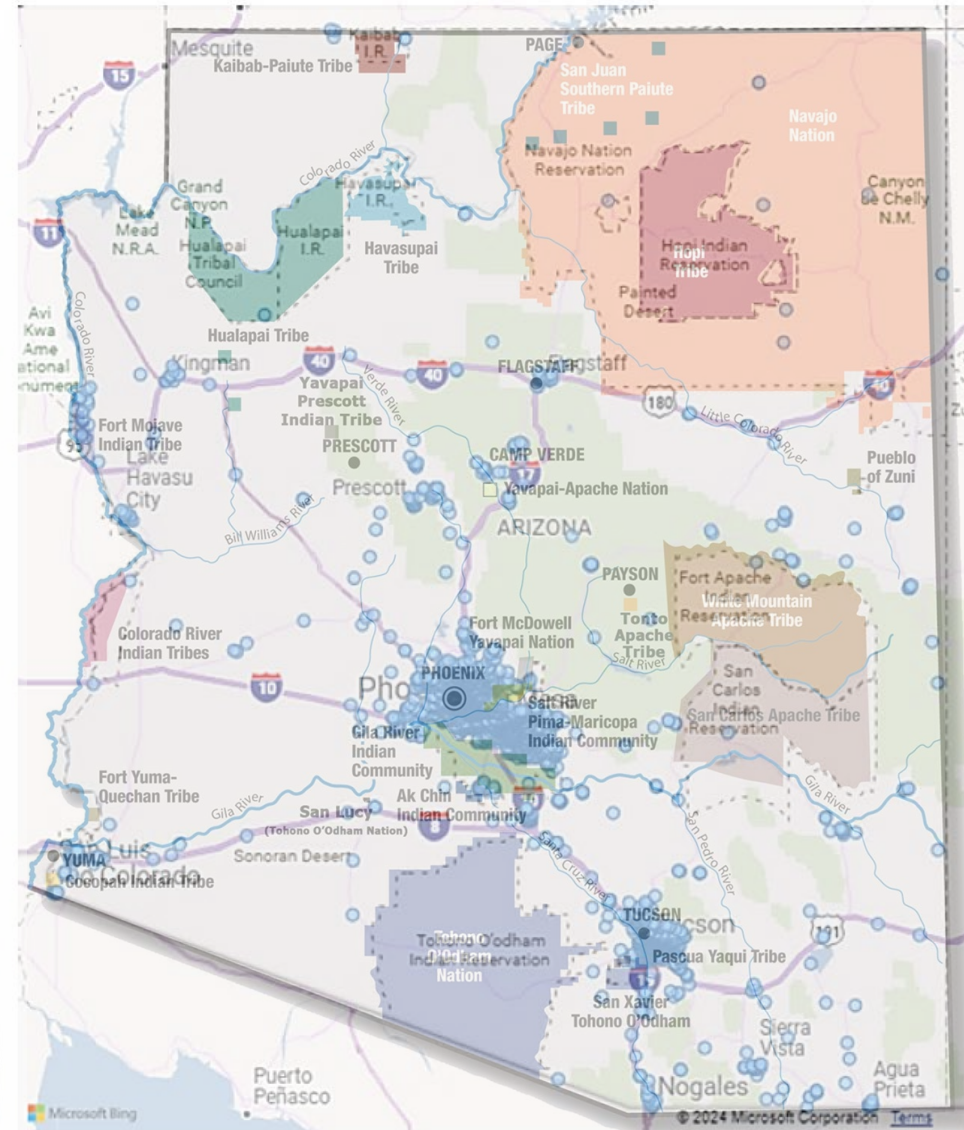
About **90%** of Public and Charter schools  
have at least one student that identifies as AI/AN

About **2%** of teachers identify as AI/AN (1150 out of 57,191)

**Figure 5: Geographical Information of High-Density Schools**

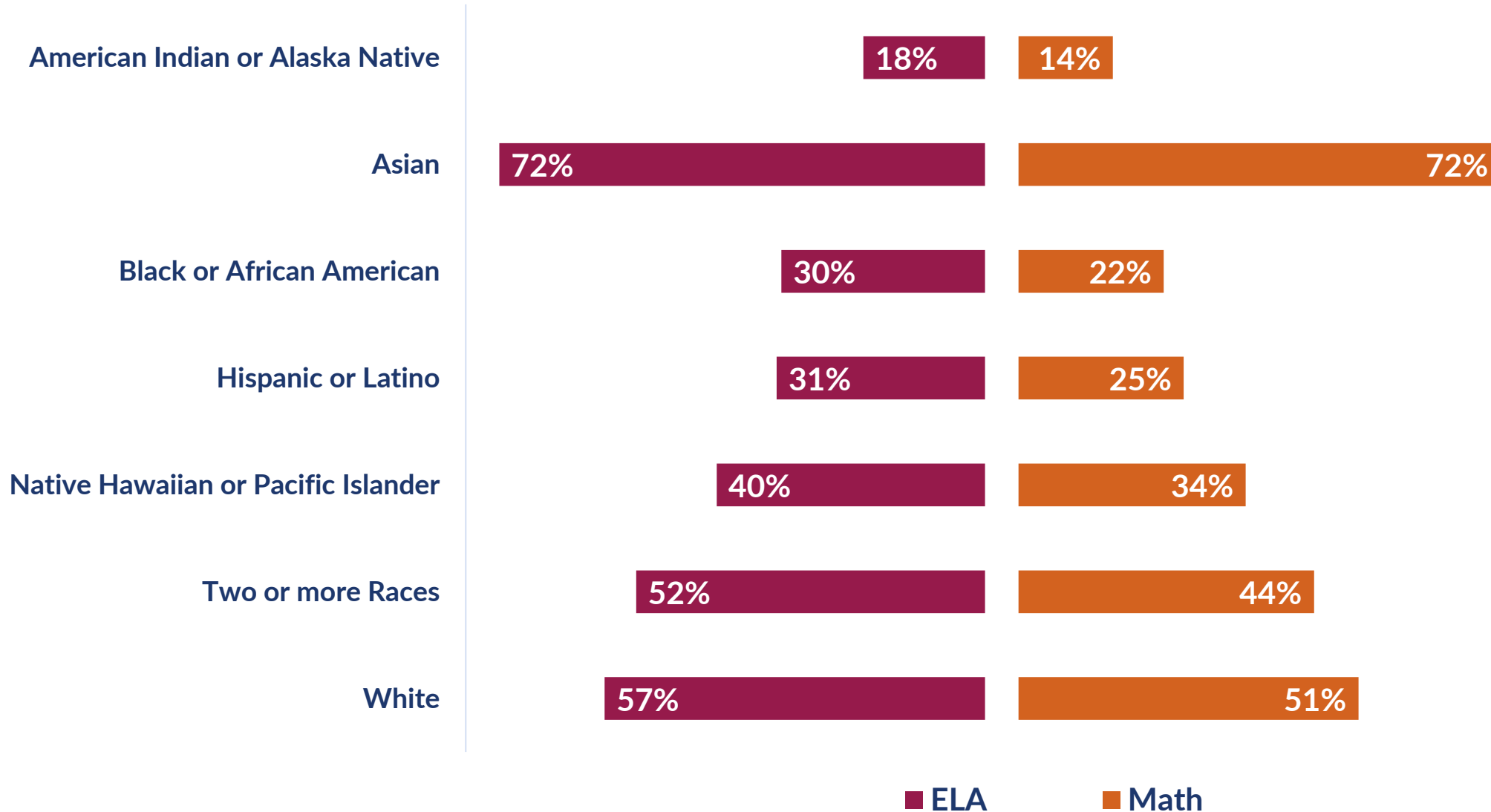


**Figure 6: Geographical Information of Low-Density Schools**



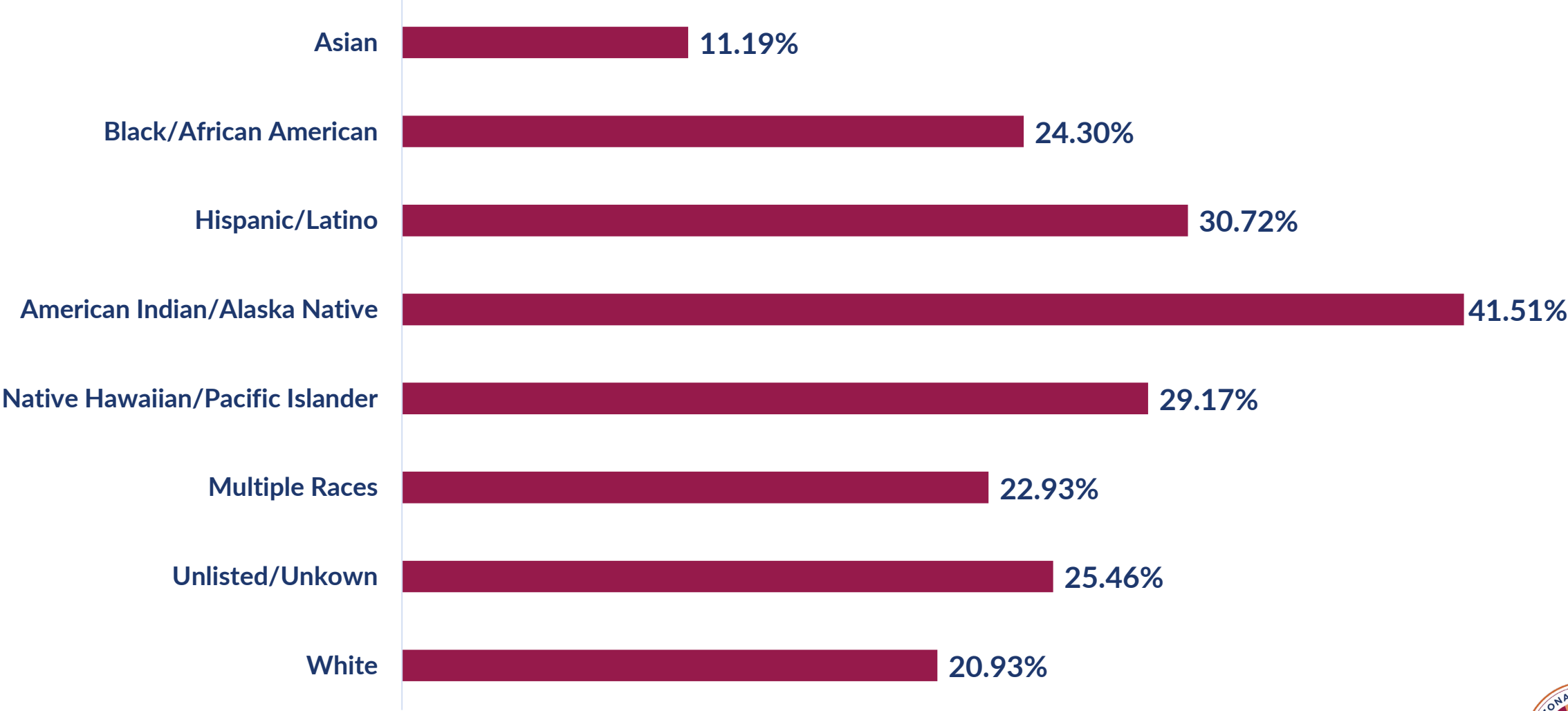


## Students Passing ELA / Math SY23



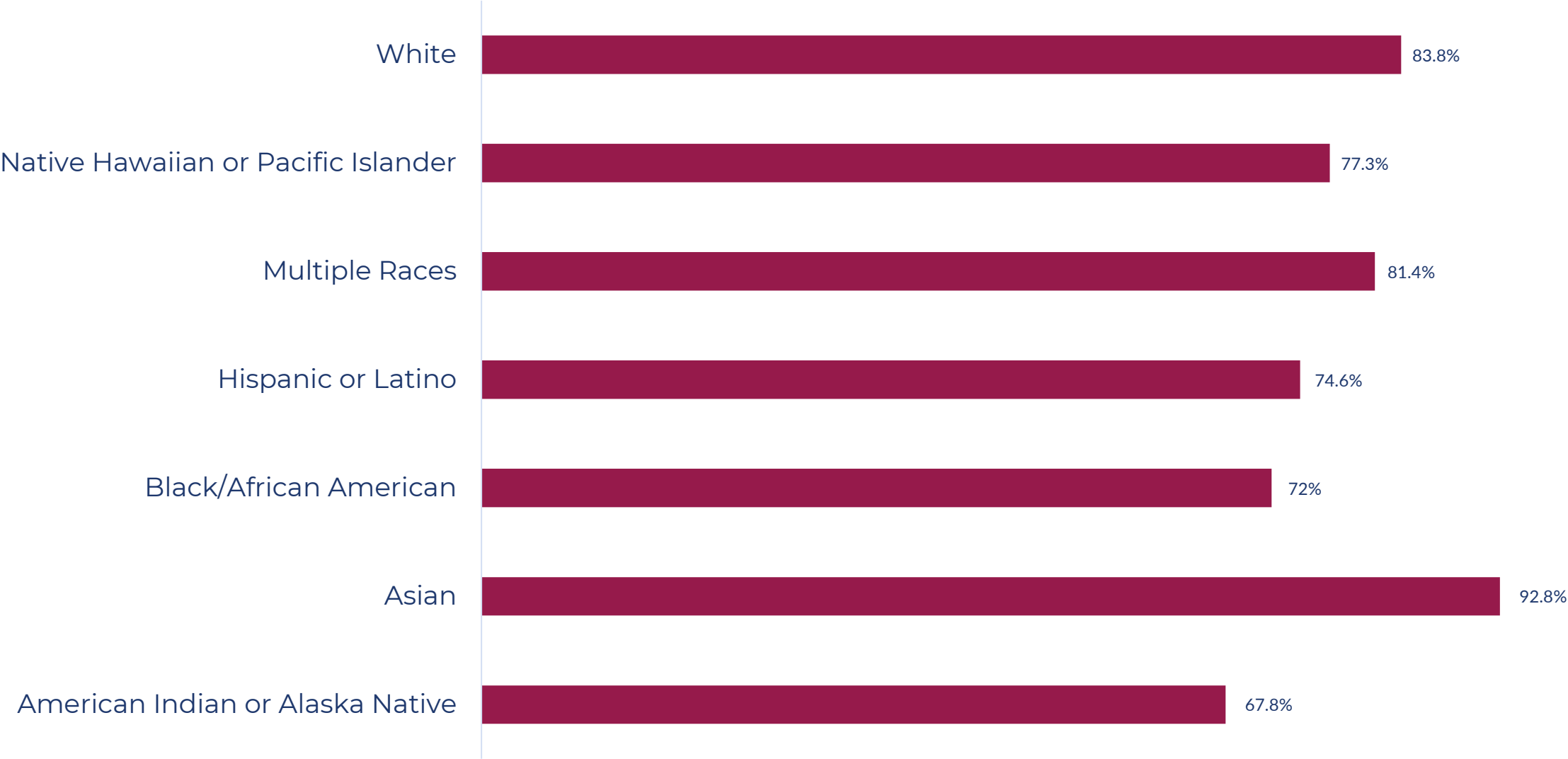


# Chronic Absenteeism in 2024





# 4 Year Graduation Rate - Cohort 2023





# Resources for Districts/Schools

## High Density School

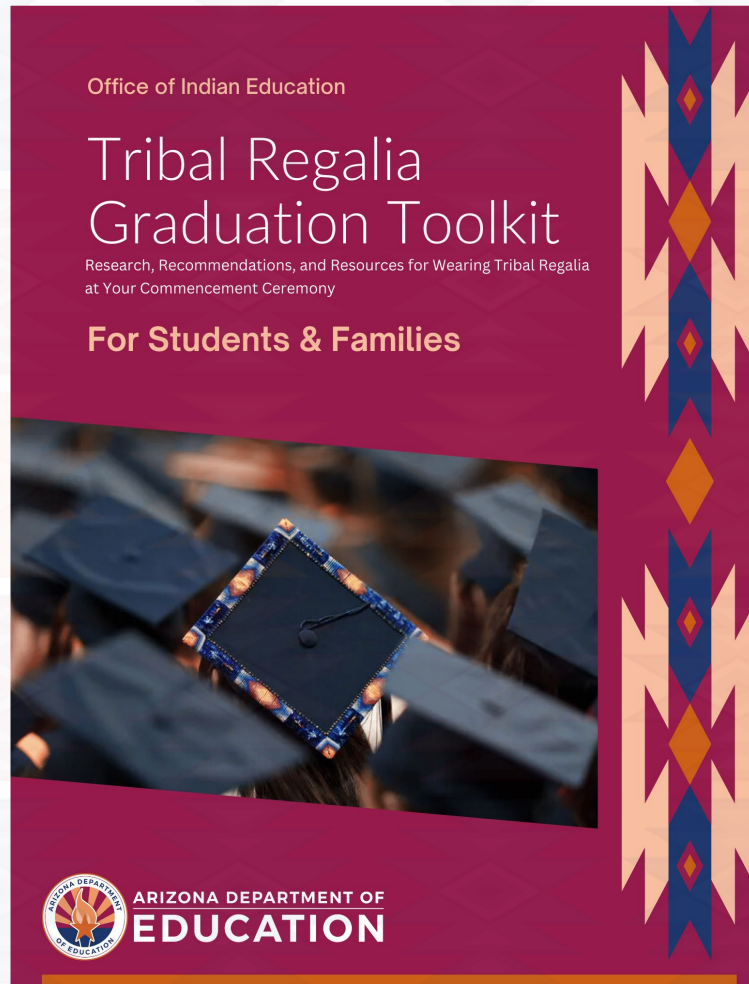
- Office of Indian Education
- National Indian Education Association
- Tribal Health Departments (Mental Health Programs)
- Tribal Education Departments
- Tribal Culture & Resource Departments

## Low Density Schools

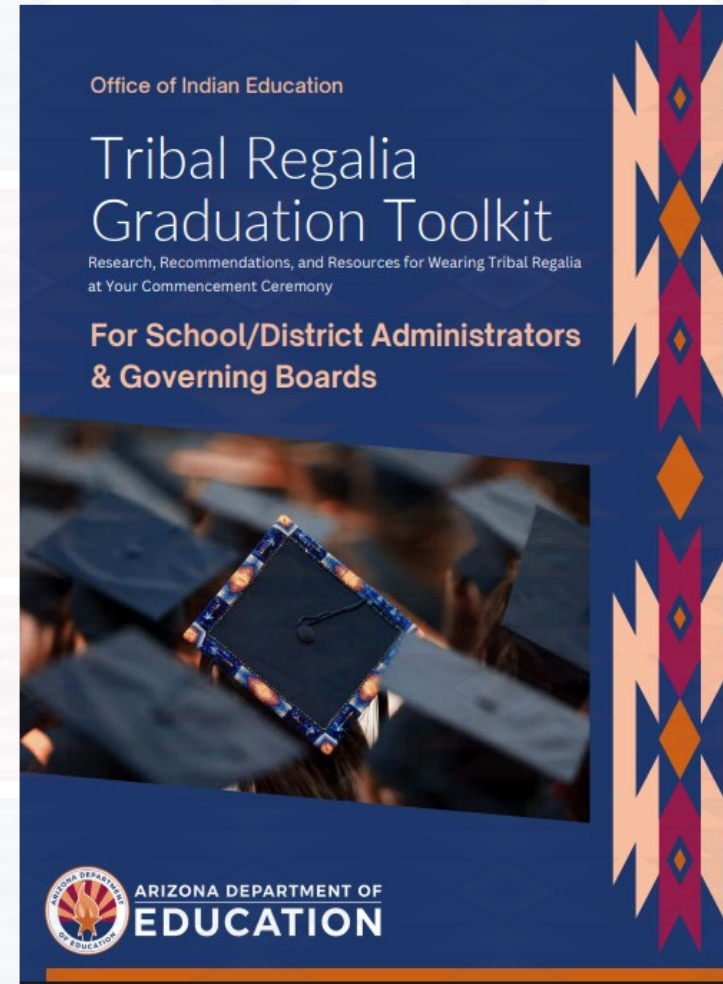
- Office of Indian Education
- National Indian Education Association
- Non-profit organizations
  - Phoenix Indian Center
  - Native Health
  - Tucson Indian Center
  - Native Americans for Community Action (Flagstaff)
- Colleges/Universities
- Indigenous Professional Networks

# Arizona Tribal Regalia Graduation Toolkit

**April 9,  
2025**



**April 17,  
2025**



<https://www.azed.gov/oie/tribal-regalia-graduations>

# Arizona Tribal Regalia Toolkit

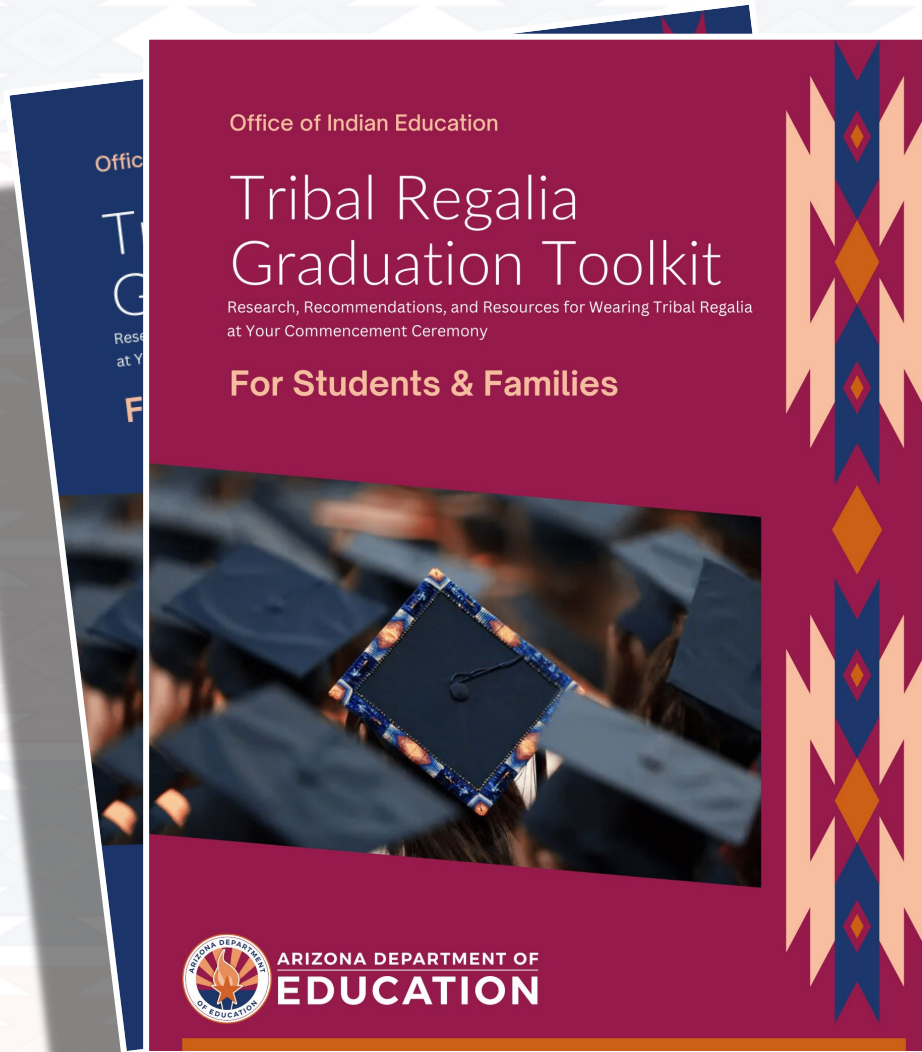


## Audience:

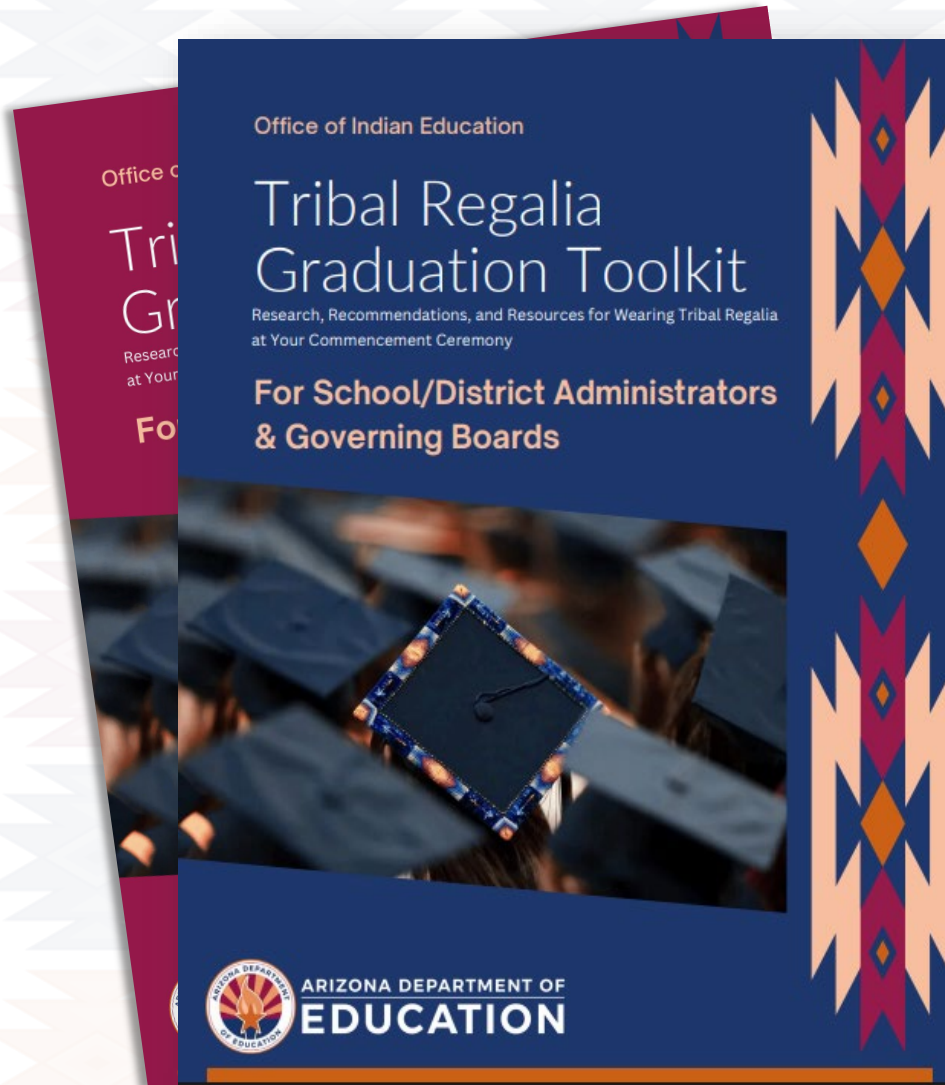
Students and Families

## Highlights:

- Letter from Superintendent Tom Horne
- State and federal policy that protect the right to wear tribal regalia in graduation ceremonies
- **Many** examples of tribal regalia
- Decision making chart for families
- Fillable letter
- State and national resources for Indigenous students and families



# Arizona Tribal Regalia Toolkit



## Audience:

School/District Administrators and Governing Boards

- Public
- Charter

## Highlights:

- Letter from Superintendent Tom Horne
- State and federal policy that protect the right to wear tribal regalia in graduation ceremonies
- **Many** examples of tribal regalia
- Fillable letter notice
- Checklists for School Boards & Schools
- Resources regarding policy and penalty for removing eagle feathers



Questions?



# Get OIE news delivered to your inbox!

## OIE General Listserv

- Bi-weekly
- Updates, events, scholarships, resources, and more!
- For teachers, administrators, parents, and students.



## JOM Forum Listserv

- For JOM grantees
- Updates and guidance from NJOMA Region 1 representative and OIE Tribal Grants Specialist.



## PL Listserv

- For educators, tribal leaders.
- Provides community resources and updates on upcoming learning opportunities.



## Policy & Program Listserv

- Monthly
- For educators, tribal leaders, parents, and other partners.
- Includes updates as available from ADE programs, state legislature, & other federal/state policy information.



# Thank You!

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**OFFICE OF  
INDIAN EDUCATION**