

WHY CAN STUDENTS WEAR TRIBAL REGALIA AT GRADUATION?

Arizona law (A.R.S. § 15-348) protects the right of Native American students to wear tribal regalia and culturally significant items at graduation ceremonies. This recognition honors the political and legal status of tribal nations and the cultural traditions connected to tribal citizenship.

WHY NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE COURSES ARE OFFERED

Native American language courses recognize the sovereign status of tribal nations and support the preservation of languages that are central to tribal identity, citizenship, and self-determination. Arizona schools may offer these courses in partnership with tribal communities to help sustain Indigenous languages for future generations.

QUICK FACTS

- ✓ Tribal nations are governments.
- ✓ Tribal sovereignty is recognized by federal law.
- ✓ Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes.
- ✓ Native education programs were established through federal legislation.
- ✓ Tribal regalia at graduation is protected by Arizona law.

To learn more, visit the
Office of Indian Education's website



www.azed.gov/oie



OFFICE OF
INDIAN EDUCATION



WHO MAKES THE RULES?

Understanding
Tribal Sovereignty
in Arizona

*An informational guide for students, families,
educators, and community members.*

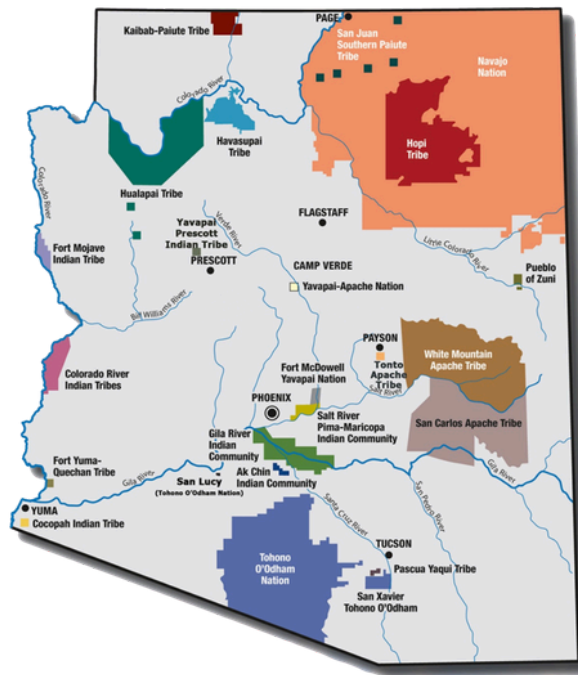
WHAT IS TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY?

Tribal sovereignty is the inherent right and authority of tribal nations to govern themselves.

Tribal nations existed before the formation of the United States and continue to maintain governmental powers over their citizens and lands.

Today, federally recognized tribes maintain a government-to-government relationship with the United States. This relationship is based on treaties, laws, and the recognition that tribes are sovereign nations.

Because of this unique political status, Native American students may be eligible for programs and services that support their educational success, language preservation, cultural identity, and treaty rights. These programs are not based on race, but on the political relationship between tribal nations and the federal government.



TRIBAL NATIONS IN ARIZONA

Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribal nations.

These nations operate governments that may include:

- Elected leaders
- Courts
- Public safety services
- Natural resource management
- Education departments
- Health services

Just as cities and states make decisions for their communities, tribal governments make decisions for their tribal citizens.

A COMMITMENT, NOT A FAVOR

Federal laws help fulfill the federal government's responsibility to tribal nations by supporting Native American students.

Examples include:

Johnson-O'Malley (JOM)

Provides supplemental educational support services for eligible Native American students.

Title VI Indian Education

Supports academic achievement and culturally relevant educational opportunities.

Native American Education Departments

Some school districts have a Native American Education Department to support Native American students and connect them with programs, resources, and opportunities.

These programs exist because of the unique legal relationship between tribal nations and the federal government.

