

KEY FINDINGS

Recruiting & Retaining Indigenous Educators



This document synthesizes key findings from Chapter 3 of the *Systems and Supports to Develop Indigenous Educators Landscape Analysis Report*. It is designed to help inform leaders of districts, teacher education programs (TEPs), and state and regional agencies about promising practices and innovative solutions for recruiting and retaining Indigenous educators through Grow Your Own (GYO) programs. GYO programs are often partnerships between school districts, TEPs, and community organizations. These programs seek to cultivate the opportunities and supports for current classified staff and students to become educators.

Explore the full report at r16cc.org/resources for detailed recommendations for Tribes, TEPs, and regional and state agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 1: SUPPORT CLASSIFIED STAFF

“ Indigenous perspectives are everywhere, and that’s the thing that we have to remember– that culture is not separate; it is the heart of our school; it is everything that we do. And then if your culture is successful, the rest of it will follow.

Interview Participant
Systems and Supports to Develop Indigenous Educators

HOW CAN MY GYO PROGRAM IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION?

Supporting district staff in obtaining a teaching certificate can support recruitment and retention of Indigenous educators. Your GYO program can:

- » Provide classified district staff, such as paraeducators, coaching and mentoring to grow professionally.
- » Explore partnerships with colleges and TEPs to support experienced classified staff in pursuing a teaching certificate.

- » Compensate paraeducators during their student teaching and allow release time to meet TEP requirements.
- » Offer a cohort model that allows students to complete teacher education coursework online or in their home communities.
- » Develop alternative pathways to program admission and teacher certification, including alternative routes to certification for cultural practitioners that allow Indigenous community members to be involved in the school.

RECOMMENDATION 2: DEVELOP EDUCATOR PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

“ To get young people, Native folks, to see themselves as educators ... [we are] trying to restore that narrative around who belongs in the classroom and what education is for. ... In a healthy community, really everyone is an educator and has a lot of gifts to offer and a lot to teach.

Interview Participant
Systems and Supports to Develop Indigenous Educators



HOW CAN MY GYO PROGRAM IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION?

Developing educator programs for current students can spark their interest early in pursuing a teaching career. Your GYO program can:

- » Spark and sustain Indigenous students' interest in education as early as possible, such as by offering teaching assistant or internship opportunities
- » Engage high school, college, and graduate students and alumni teachers in a GYO program that invites community members to share about language and culture and supports participants' learning about being an educator

RECOMMENDATION 3: INCREASE REGION- AND STATE-LEVEL SUPPORTS FOR GYO PROGRAMS

HOW CAN OUR STATE OR REGION IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION?

State and regional education agencies can provide

the supports and funding that sustain successful GYO programs. State or regional education agencies can:

- » Incentivize and support TEPs to create programs that are accessible to Indigenous staff working in districts and support cultural practitioners with obtaining teaching credentials specific to their area of expertise.
- » Identify funding or space for satellite programs to support candidates in pursuing education in their home communities.
- » Identify or create funding opportunities for high school students to participate in paid internships and dual enrollment programs.



SO IS IT JUST AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3?

Not quite. Centuries of violence against and vilification of Indigenous peoples, cultures and languages can't be undone in a day. These recommendations should be part of ongoing work to better support current and future generations of Native students, educators, and families. This is just the beginning.



ABOUT REGION 16 COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

Region 16 Comprehensive Center, a network of 29 educational service agencies in Alaska, Oregon, and Washington, is a responsive and innovative partner guided by the needs of educators and communities to improve the quality and equity of education for each student.

Region 16's innovative model creates stronger networks of services and supports for students, staff, families, and educators. Relationships with our communities and equitable access to opportunities for our students are at the center of our mission, vision, and values.

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