

Teaching Notes

Are Tribal Compact Schools the Answer to Improving Native Student Success in Washington?

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the history of Indian education in the United States
- Explore the various notions of Native student success over time and the goals for Native education
- Be able to explain the development and impact of tribal compact schools in Washington
- Describe the pros and cons of tribal compact schools as an approach to improve Indian education
- Explain the reasons for establishing tribal compact schools at Lummi, Muckleshoot and Suquamish and their impact
- Be able to describe how tribal compact schools differ from public schools
- Be able to describe the complex nature of tribal sovereignty in relation to tribal-state relations

Intended Audience. This case can be used in a variety of courses in multiple disciplines. It is especially appropriate in education, political science, public administration, Native studies, and history. Depending on the questions posed it is suitable for students at any college level.

Implementation: The case can be taught in a variety of ways including small group discussion as outlined below.

Small group discussion and presentation.

You have been divided into small groups to analyze and discuss this case. Each group has a different set of themed questions. In your group someone should volunteer to be the notetaker and record your conclusions on the butcher paper. After about 45 minutes of discussing the case and your questions, each group will present their questions and conclusions to all of us.

Group 1: Improving Native Education in Washington

1. What are the lessons you see in this case about improving Native education in Washington?
2. Who do you see as the key leaders in improving Indian education in Washington? How have they exercised leadership? What strategies have been pursued?
3. In what ways does this case reflect the negotiation and power sharing that is typical of the democratic process? What are the dynamics that come into play?
4. What is the potential of a State-Tribal Education Compact school for impacting Indian Education?

5. The majority of NA students do not live on reservations. In what other ways can Washington State innovate to address the academic needs of the majority of Native Americans?

Group 2: What are the pros and cons of the tribal compact school approach to improving Native Education?

1. Prepare a list of what you see as the major pros of tribal compact schools as an avenue of improving Native education?
2. Prepare a list of what you see as the disadvantages of tribal compact schools as an avenue of improving Native education? What are mitigations that might help overcome the disadvantages?
3. How can Native education be improved in schools that are not and cannot be tribal compact schools, especially in urban areas? How can this be accomplished? Is there support for this? What evidence supports your conclusion? What are the obstacles?
4. Much of the success behind STECs is the relationship between the state and tribes. How plausible would it be to replicate this model in other states?
5. Develop several additional questions that you would ask your students

Group 3: History of Indian Education

1. Develop a detailed timeline describing the history of Indian education and the relevance of this history to today's issues and approaches
2. What were the objectives of the first 100 years of Indian education and how did Indigenous peoples in Washington begin to challenge these objectives?
3. How does the current era of Indian education in Washington address the past injustices of the approach to Indigenous education in the United States?
4. How is Tribal sovereignty impacted by the compacting process? Is it strengthened? How? Is it weakened? How?
5. Develop several additional questions that you would ask your students

Group 4: Learning More

Your group has been invited to create a next chapter in the story of tribal compact schools in Washington through a role play. Imagine that the members of your group are from a tribe that is exploring whether to start a tribal compact school. Some of you will go visit and interview people at the current tribal compact schools described here. Others will go and interview will visit newer compact schools at Quileute and Wa-he-Lute. Your job now is to prepare a set of interview strategies and questions.

1. What are the key considerations you start with that would motivate you to consider starting a tribal compact school?
2. What do you want to learn?
3. In terms of their roles, who do you want to visit at these schools? What information do you want?
4. Prepare a set of questions that you will ask each of the identified parties.

Assessment and Evaluation. Student understanding can be assessed in a variety of ways through position papers, tests, essays, research papers and in class presentations. We recommend that students write and hand in individual answers to two or three reflection questions at the end of the class when the case is done. They can also be asked to fill out a short survey on their group's performance.