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Commissioner

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Department of Education
and Early Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Cook Inlet Tribal Council to develop analysis, recommendations on Native education models for Alaska

JUNEAU – Today the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) announced a grant to Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) to conduct an analysis and identify strategies for developing culturally relevant curriculum, programs, and school partnerships for Alaska Native and American Indian students.

DEED's collaboration with CITC will build upon CITC's successful education initiatives to determine the best ways to further Alaska Native involvement in Alaska public education through chartering, STEM programs, computer science, and other educational models to improve outcomes for students. CITC has a long history of increasing tribal ownership of education for Alaska Native students.

CITC will conduct four primary activities during the project. Working with its partners, CITC will organize approximately 15 community work sessions throughout Alaska. Parental input and student voices will be prominent in these community and regional work sessions. CITC will also conduct other activities with many different stakeholders to help create a vision of education for Alaska's future. Following the community sessions, CITC staff and an Advisory Group will synthesize the input gathered through the projects various methods. CITC will deliver a report to DEED that includes strategic priorities and recommended education models for values-based K-12 public education in Alaska that can be shared with tribes throughout the state.

"CITC is grateful for this support from DEED, and for the opportunity to explore culturally informed education models that serve Alaska Native and American Indian youth," said CITC President and CEO Gloria O'Neill. "This work will be a vital step in building a more equitable education system in Alaska, one that reflects the values of indigenous people while laying a foundation for our youth to reach their endless potential."

DEED has awarded CITC a \$1 million grant for the 18-month project with funding from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act.

[Alaska's Education Challenge](#) includes five strategic priorities. This grant directly addresses three of those: Working to close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources; Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs; and improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

The full grant proposal is [available on DEED's website](#) under "CRRSA Act Information."

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*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 505 public schools across the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*

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