



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Indian Education
1849 C Street NW, MIB-3610
Washington, DC 20240

January 26, 2024

Dear Tribal Leader,

The following federal agencies invite you and other important stakeholders to attend a listening session in conjunction with the National Indian Education Association's (NIEA) 2024 Hill Week, on **Wednesday, February 28, 2024, from 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. ET:**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Native Americans (ANA), the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), the U.S. Department of Education Office of Indian Education (OIE), and the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities (WHI-NATCU).

The purpose of this listening session is to identify American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian (Native) data priorities and traditional knowledge in education. High-quality, culturally relevant data collection is critical to serving the educational needs of Native students. Native Nations maintain a sovereign right in the collection, use, management, and access of their own data.

The above agencies are seeking input on perspectives from Native Nations regarding the collection, development, protections, and applications of sovereign data. (*e.g., cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and Native languages*).

This listening session will seek input on the following questions:

1. What recommendations do you have on improving data sovereignty procedures and data agreements with Native Nations in the educational sector?
2. How can the federal government improve the quality and application of Native educational data?

3. How can the federal government respectfully engage and gain permission to collect data from your community?
4. What recommendations do you have for further improving federal engagement with Native Nations on data collection?
5. What current benefits or barriers does your community experience with the current status of data reporting?
6. How best should the federal government make decisions regarding access to the data in a way that respects the autonomy and cultural values of the Native Nations and communities?
7. What recommendations do you have for specific federal reforms regarding the use of traditional knowledge in the U.S. educational system?
8. How can the federal government co-steward with Native Nations, Native and non-profit organizations, states, schools, and higher education institutions to create or improve protections (*e.g., memorandum of understanding, consent letters*)?
9. When collecting data, are there certain types of questions or topics that your community would prefer *not* to answer?
10. What kind of assurances (*e.g., protections of cultural knowledge and intellectual property*) from the federal government would your Native Nation or Native language community need to participate in the federal governments data collection and surveys?

The NIEA 2024 Hill Week and listening session will be held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton, Washington, DC Convention Center, 900 10th Street NW Washington, DC 20001.

In addition to providing feedback in person at the listening session, written feedback can be provided via email to whcnaa@bia.gov. The deadline to submit feedback is March 28, 2024.

If you have any questions regarding the listening session, please contact Stephanie Conduff at stephanie.conduff@bie.edu.

Sincerely,



Tony L. Dearman
Director