

# For Higher Education Institutions

## Policy Explorer: Resource Guide

This resource guide is designed to assist higher education institutions in effectively utilizing the insights presented in Policy Explorer: The Federal Trust Responsibility and Higher Education and The Role of Higher Education Institutes in Upholding the Federal Trust Responsibility.

As educational institutions that receive state and federal funding, post-secondary institutions play a critical role in fulfilling the federal government's trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations. This includes ensuring that American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students receive culturally responsive support, access to education, and opportunities that align with their sovereign political status.

### Higher Education Institutions Can:

- **Institutional Commitment:** Reaffirm colleges and university role in upholding federal trust obligations through charters, mission statements, and strategic plans that recognize Tribal sovereignty and partnerships.
- **Policy & Program Design:** Design and support educational initiatives for Tribal students that are based in federal trust responsibilities, not race-based, ensuring that programs are recognized as fulfilling a political and legal mandate.
- **Consultation & Partnership:** Engage in formal consultation processes with Tribal Nations. Collaborate with Tribal communities and develop long-term, reciprocal partnerships grounded in sovereignty and mutual respect.
- **Student Success & Cultural Inclusion:** Support Tribal students through dedicated services, programs, and culturally responsive curriculum. Ensure institutional environments are safe, and reflective of Tribal values and knowledge systems.
- **Research, Data, and Outreach:** Invest in Tribal-led research, community-based projects, and data sovereignty initiatives that prioritize Tribal leadership and benefit Tribal communities directly.

### Key Takeaways:



The federal government is legally required to support American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian education through funding, policy, and oversight.



Tribal education programs are based on political status, not race.



Higher education institutions must uphold these obligations, regardless of political shifts.

### Higher Ed Institutions

Entities that are encouraged to interact with this informational resources include:

- Four-year Colleges & Universities (Private, Public, etc.)
- Two-year Colleges

### More Resources:

- **Tribal Consultation Best Practices**  
Guidelines on meaningful engagement with Tribal Nations.
- **Key Federal Laws Impacting Indigenous Education**  
ASU Law LibGuide on Indian Education provides resources, legal materials, and research guidance on federal, state, and tribal laws impacting Tribal education.
- **American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Higher Education Resources**  
Information on advocacy for legislation and policy that supports Tribal higher education.
- **National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Policy & Advocacy**  
Federal and state policy resources for Tribal education.