

Native American Rights Fund

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://www.narf.org/narf-testifies-for-native-education/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

NARF staff attorney Amy Bowers testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs last month in support of the Native Culture, Language, and Access for Success in Schools Act. The Act would dramatically increase in tribal sovereignty in Indian education and marks a policy shift in education law toward recognition of the rights of tribes to educate their tribal members.

NARF appeared on behalf of its client, [the Tribal Education Departments National Assembly \(TEDNA\)](#). TEDNA is a consortium of 156 tribes dedicated to improving the academic performance of Native students by assuring adequate resources and local community and tribal input into curriculum and decision making.

The federal government has a trust responsibility to provide education for Native American students. For too long this has not been met and these students are struggling. American Indian and Alaska Native students are the lowest performing group on standardized tests. The national high school dropout rate of Native American students is 50% and even higher in many states.

Tribal education departments can help reverse these troubling trends by ensuring education is culturally appropriate. Specific examples include:

Amy Bowers testimony before Committee Chairman Senator Daniel Akaka and committee focused on building on those success stories. The enormous opportunity to invest in TEDs and tribes for the sake of Native students must be seized. S.1262 does this. It aligns Federal law with what is already happening, and with what needs to happen. View all of [Amys testimony](#).

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