

**RCW 28A.410.045 First peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program—Established—Rules.**

(1) The Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program is established. The professional educator standards board shall adopt rules to implement the program in collaboration with the sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington, including the tribal leader congress on education and the first peoples' language and culture committee. The collaboration required under this section shall be defined by a protocol for cogovernance in first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions education developed by the professional educator standards board, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and the sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington.

(2) Any sovereign tribal government whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington may participate individually on a government-to-government basis in the program.

(3) Under the first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program:

(a) Only a participating sovereign tribal government may certify individuals who meet the tribe's criteria for certification as a teacher in the Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program. Tribal law enforcement agencies and the Washington state patrol shall enter into government-to-government negotiations regarding the exchange of background information on applicants for certification. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall not authorize or accept a certificate or endorsement in Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions without certification from a participating sovereign tribal government and without conducting a record check of an individual applying for certification as required under RCW 28A.410.010;

(b) For each teacher to be certified in the program, the participating sovereign tribal government shall submit information and documentation necessary for the issuance of a state certificate, as defined by rule, to the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(c) A Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate serves as a subject area endorsement in first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions. The holder of a Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate who does not also hold an initial, residency, continuing, or professional teaching certificate authorized by the professional educator standards board may be assigned to teach only the languages, cultures, and oral tribal traditions designated on the certificate and no other subject;

(d) In order to teach first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions, teachers must hold certificates from both the office of the superintendent of public instruction and from the sovereign tribal government; and

(e) The holder of a Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate meets Washington state's definition of a highly qualified teacher under the

no child left behind act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110) for the purposes of teaching first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions, subject to approval by the United States department of education.

(4) First peoples' language/culture teacher certificates issued before July 22, 2007, under rules approved by the state board of education or the professional educator standards board under a pilot program remain valid as certificates under this section, subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(5) Schools and school districts on or near tribal reservations are encouraged to contract with sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington and with first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification programs for in-service teacher training and continuing education in the culture and history appropriate for their geographic area, as well as suggested pedagogy and instructional strategies. [2007 c 319 § 2.]

**Findings—2007 c 319:** "The legislature finds that:

(1) Teaching first peoples' languages, cultures, and oral tribal traditions is a critical factor in fostering successful educational experiences and promoting cultural sensitivity for all students. Experience shows that such teaching dramatically raises student achievement and that the effect is particularly strong for Native American students;

(2) Native American students have the highest high school dropout rate among all groups of students. Less than one-fourth of Native American students in the class of 2008 are on track to graduate based on the results of the Washington assessment of student learning. Positive and supportive educational experiences are critical for the success of Native American students;

(3) The sole expertise of sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington in the transmission of their indigenous languages, heritage, cultural knowledge, histories, customs, and traditions should be honored;

(4) Government-to-government collaboration between the state and the sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington serves to implement the spirit of the 1989 centennial accord and other similar government-to-government agreements, including the 2004 accord between the federally recognized Indian tribes with treaty reserved rights in the state of Washington;

(5) Establishing a first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program both achieves educational objectives and models effective government-to-government relationships;

(6) Establishing a first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions certification program implements the following policy objectives of the federal Native American languages act of 1990 (P.L. 101-477) in a tangible way:

(a) To preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages;

(b) To allow exceptions to teacher certification requirements for federal programs and programs funded in whole or in part by the federal government, for instruction in Native American languages when

such teacher certification requirements hinder the employment of qualified teachers who teach in Native American languages, and to encourage state and territorial governments to make similar exceptions;

(c) To encourage and support the use of Native American languages as a medium of instruction in order to encourage and support Native American language survival, educational opportunity, increased student success and performance, increased student awareness and knowledge of their culture and history, and increased student and community pride;

(d) To encourage state and local education programs to work with Native American parents, educators, Indian tribes, and other Native American governing bodies in the implementation of programs to put this policy into effect; and

(e) To encourage all institutions of elementary, secondary, and higher education, where appropriate, to include Native American languages in the curriculum in the same manner as foreign languages and to grant proficiency in Native American languages the same full academic credit as proficiency in foreign languages;

(7) Establishing a first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions certification program is consistent with the intent of presidential executive order number 13336 from 2004, entitled "American Indian and Alaska native education," to assist students in meeting the challenging student academic standards of the no child left behind act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110) in a manner that is consistent with tribal traditions, languages, and cultures." [2007 c 319 § 1.]

**Short title—2007 c 319:** "This act may be known and cited as the "First peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification act: Honoring our ancestors."" [2007 c 319 § 4.]