

Old Capitol Building  
PO Box 47200  
Olympia, WA 98504-7200



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

March 30, 2023

( ) Action Required  
(X) Informational

## BULLETIN NO. 014-23, SYSTEM AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

**TO:** Educational Service District Superintendents  
School District Superintendents  
School District Principals  
High School Counselors

**FROM:** Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**RE:** Students' Right to Wear Tribal Regalia at School Events

**CONTACT:** Bernie Thomas, Interim Executive Director, Office of Native Education  
360-918-3953, [bernie.thomas@k12.wa.us](mailto:bernie.thomas@k12.wa.us)

## PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

In 2020, the Washington State Legislature affirmed inherent rights assured through tribal sovereignty and expressly provided that school districts must allow American Indian and Alaskan Native K–12 and higher education students who are members of federally recognized tribes to wear tribal regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation ceremonies and related events ([House Bill 2551](#)). In addition, school districts and institutions of higher education are required, when necessary, to update relevant policies or procedures in accordance with this law.

School district leaders and staff are encouraged to promptly consult with tribal nations and collaborate with Native American parent and family advisory committees and Native American education leaders to develop policies, procedures, and practices associated with the law. It is critical that districts work in a timely manner to resolve any potential issues regarding cultural inclusivity prior to district or school ceremonies and events.

## INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Bernie Thomas, Interim Executive Director, Office of Native Education, at 360-918-3953 or email [bernie.thomas@k12.wa.us](mailto:bernie.thomas@k12.wa.us). The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

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System and School Improvement

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Interim Executive Director  
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CR:kt

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