



Oregon

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Dr. Charlene Williams

Director of the Department of Education

Subject: Important Announcement: Tribal Regalia at Public School Ceremonies

TO: Superintendents, Principals, K-12 PIOs, Charter School Leaders, Education Partner Leaders, and Communicators

FROM: Dr. Charlene Williams, Director of the Oregon Department of Education

DATE: XXXXX XX, 2025

RE: Tribal Regalia at Public School Ceremonies

In This Message:

- Reminder and reaffirmation of HB 2052 (2021) regarding Native Tribal Regalia
- Required actions for districts to ensure compliance
- Contact Information for Questions

The purpose of this message is to reaffirm our commitment to House Bill HB 2052 (2021), which ensures that American Indian/Alaska Native students may wear their tribal regalia or items of cultural significance at graduation and other public-school ceremonies. This law (ORS 329.451 (14)) recognizes the inherent right of tribal sovereignty and has been in effect for several years.

High school graduation is a significant milestone that celebrates the achievements of students, families, and communities. The Tribal Regalia bill strengthens this celebration by honoring the accomplishments of our American Indian/Alaska Native students and supporting culturally inclusive ceremonies.

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is committed to fostering district government-to-government relationships with the nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon. Tribal partners, students, and families have shared how deeply meaningful it is to wear cultural items during graduation ceremonies to honor their tribe, community, and heritage.

Required Actions for Districts:

Ensure Compliance: All Oregon school districts must legally adhere to [HB 2052](#). Review and update district policies, student handbooks, and graduation attire procedures as necessary.

Communicate Clearly: Inform students, families, staff, and graduation participants about HB 2052 and the allowance of tribal regalia. Frame this as a step toward inclusivity and respect for cultural traditions.

Revise Policies: Update graduation attire policies to explicitly state that Native students have the right to wear tribal regalia as part of their ceremony attire.

Collaborate with Families & Tribes: Maintain open communication with Native students and families. Engage with cultural liaisons or Tribal Education Directors for guidance on appropriate regalia and respectful implementation.

Provide Support & Accommodations: Ensure students have assistance if needed when donning or wearing their regalia. Designate spaces and culturally responsive support as appropriate.

The Oregon Department of Education fully supports students who wish to honor their Native American cultures through regalia and cultural items at graduation ceremonies.

For any questions, please contact **Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Indian Education, April Campbell, at april.campbell@ode.state.or.us**.

Thank you for your continued leadership in fostering an equitable and inclusive education system for all students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charlene Williams

Director of the Oregon Department of Education