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### **Native American achievement school grants awarded**

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Education has awarded three Native American achievement school grants. The grant program was established by [Senate Bill 82](#) and is a result of the Native American Student Achievement Advisory Council’s work. The purpose of the grant program is to fund three pilot schools within targeted public school districts, aimed at improving academic outcomes for Native American students.

The following three schools have been awarded grants:

- Todd County Cultural Elementary School
- Todd County Middle School
- Wakpala High School

“These schools will be infusing Native American culture and language throughout their curriculum,” said Mato (MAH-toe) Standing High, director of the South Dakota Office of Indian Education. “Sometimes Native students struggle to feel a sense of belonging in our education system. It’s hard to learn when you don’t feel like you fit in. These grants are intended to help combat that problem. And the more students who feel like they belong, the better off every student in our state will be.”

In selecting grant recipients, priority was given to projects that encourage academic perseverance, support development of the whole child, encourage student leadership skills and show commitment to increasing student success through building cultural identities.

The achievement schools will have 2.5 years to plan for implementation before official rollout of programs in fall 2019. Each awardee will receive \$590,000 over the grant period.