

Utilizing a Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) tool to increase culturally responsive schooling practices.

Sandra “Bernice” Gover

Institute for Native Educators

Indian Community School Leadership

Author Note:

Sandra Gover is the Indian Education Director for Holbrook Unified School District #3. Correspondence about this curriculum unit can be addressed to Sandra Gover, P.O Box 640, Holbrook, AZ 86025.

Email contact: NativeServingEducators@nau.edu

Context

Nawa tirastapiwâhat. Tâtasâ' Kiripahki Čapât. Tâtakitâ' Skiri Pârî. Akitâru' Pahukstatuu. Tâtakitâ' Čahikstaput. Tâtačahkaku Holbrook, Arizona. Atias tîsâ Siririrutawi' (Charlie Gover) â atira tîsâ Connie Gover. Têkitâ Čahikstaput.

My name is Sandra Bernice Gover. On my father's side, Charles Gover, I am Pawnee, specifically from the Skidi band and the Pumpkin Vine Clan. My mother, Connie Gover, is from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Although both of my tribes are based in Oklahoma, I grew up in Winslow, Arizona, and now reside in Holbrook, Arizona.

After graduating from Winslow High School, I attended South Mountain Community College on a softball scholarship. Once my two years were over, I made the huge move to play softball and finish my degree at Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU) in Lawrence, Kansas. In 2015, I received my Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from HINU. Then, in 2019, I obtained my Master of Arts in Reading from Grand Canyon University while also participating in the Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators (DINE), now known as the Institute for Native-serving Educators (INE). Currently, I am an NAU student in the American Indian School Leadership program under Dr. Joseph Martin. In December 2024, I will graduate from NAU with my master's in educational leadership.

This upcoming school year (SY 24-25) will be my tenth year working for the Holbrook Unified School District (HUSD #3). In my tenure, I have served this district as a first, fifth, and sixth-grade teacher, as well as a Reading Specialist at Indian Wells Elementary School. Last year, I transitioned into a leadership role, serving HUSD #3 as the Indian Education Director.

HUSD #3 has a high-density population of Native American students. We currently have 1,321 students in our district who identify as American Indian, about 70% of the overall student population. Students attending the Holbrook School District are mainly of the Navajo (Diné) tribe, representing over 30 different Navajo Nation chapters. HUSD #3 also has students from the following tribes: Hopi, White Mountain Apache, San Carlos Apache, Yavapai-Apache, Salt River Pima-Maricopa, Gila River, Tohono O'odham, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Assiniboine, Kiowa, Pueblo of Zuni, Pueblo of Laguna, and Omaha.

My mission and vision for this guide are to equip leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to lead effectively in high-density populations of Native American students. By promoting culturally sensitive leadership practices, I aim to support the holistic development of each student, honoring their cultural identities while ensuring equitable access to quality education and opportunities for success. Through this guide, I envision a future where educational leaders advocate for Native American students, driving positive change and fostering environments where every student feels valued, respected, and empowered to achieve their full potential.

Rationale

This leadership guide is crucial for leaders in Indigenous communities as it provides essential support in using the Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) tool to evaluate cultural responsiveness in schools. By assessing practices from the classroom to the entire school, the CRAIS tool helps guide and identify areas of strength and weakness of cultural responsiveness in schools, enabling schools and districts to enhance their culturally responsive practices effectively.

In districts with significant Indigenous student populations, this guide is particularly vital for ensuring equitable practices and improving student achievement. Indigenous students are often underrepresented in the implementation of educational strategies, making a structured evaluation guide essential for fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment ever so important

A leadership guide centered on evaluating and assessing culturally responsive practices is crucial for culturally responsive schooling as it addresses factors that are often overlooked or not explicitly taught in schools. Such a guide ensures that schools receiving federal funding, such as through Johnson O'Malley and Title VI programs, adhere to the relevant federal guidelines. By implementing these guidelines, schools can more effectively support and integrate culturally responsive practices, thereby enhancing educational outcomes for Native American students.

“It is a history which calls an Indian victory a massacre and a US victory a heroic feat. It is a history which makes heroes and pioneers of gold miners who seizes Indian land, killed whole bands and families, and ruthlessly took what they wanted. It is a history which equates Indians and wild animals and used the term “savages” as a synonym for Indians. It is this kind of history - the kind taught formally in the classroom and informally on street corners - which creates feelings of inferiority among Indian students, gives them a warped understanding of their cultural heritage, and propagates stereotypes.” - (*Kennedy Report; Education Resources, National Indian Law Library (NILL)*, n.d.)

As the Indian Education Director in a predominately Native-serving school district, the historical issues of American Indian education particularly soundly resonate in my work and leadership. Historically, American Indian education has been overly focused on rote learning and manual labor, neglecting intellectual and cultural development, according to the Meriam Report (1928). As a result of the historical traumas of American education systems and the lack of in-depth study of Native American learning styles and educational practices, a leadership guide is essential for all districts serving Native students. Such a guide provides crucial support for leaders, ensuring that school systems effectively address the unique needs of Native students and implement culturally responsive practices throughout schools. This is especially important for districts that receive Johnson O'Malley, Impact Aid, and other federal funding that aligns with Native populations. The law emphasizes that “Indian communities have a better understanding of their education needs and problems than the schools that serve them. The schools rarely understand the Indian community and cultural differences, and the Indian community rarely has any influence on the school” (Public Law 81-815, 1958).

In conclusion, this leadership guide serves as a transformative resource for school leaders, particularly those in Indigenous communities, striving to create inclusive, culturally responsive educational environments. By equipping leaders with practical tools to implement the CRAIS framework, this guide promotes an essential shift toward equitable and respectful education for Native students. The CRAIS tool helps identify strengths and address gaps in cultural responsiveness, directly supporting the vision of a more inclusive and supportive learning space that acknowledges and values Indigenous perspectives. Given the historic and ongoing challenges Native students face within the educational system, this guide is indispensable for advancing culturally relevant strategies and aligning practices with federal guidelines tied to programs like Johnson O'Malley and Title VI. Ultimately, it enables schools and districts to honor Indigenous heritage while fostering a sense of belonging, representation, and academic success for Native students.

Topic Summary

This Leadership Practice Guide will outline strategies for implementing the CRAIS tool at multiple levels within a school district. It will provide guidance on evaluating cultural relevance across classrooms, after-school programs, curricula, and entire schools, and will culminate in a framework for assessing cultural relevance district-wide.

The Meriam Report, Kennedy Report, Johnson-O'Malley Act, and Indian Education Act collectively advanced the education of American Indian students by addressing systemic issues and promoting tailored solutions. The Meriam Report (1928) highlighted deficiencies in Native American education and called for reforms, leading to increased awareness of educational inequities. The Kennedy Report (1969) further emphasized the need for better educational opportunities and greater Native American control over their schooling. The Johnson-O'Malley Act (1934) provided federal funding to improve education and health services for Native American communities, directly supporting educational initiatives. Building on these foundations, the Indian Education Act of 1972 implemented targeted funding and policies to enhance educational outcomes, emphasize cultural relevance and promote self-determination, thereby consolidating efforts to address the unique needs of Native American students and improve their educational experiences.

The continued lack of research, inequitable outcomes, and narrow focus on Indigenous population outcomes spawned the creation of the CRAIS (Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling) tool by Dr. Hammond, Dr. Castagno, and Dr. Bass (2021). The use of the CRAIS tool in schools is driven by the imperative to create educational environments that recognize and integrate the cultural backgrounds of Native American students. This tool aims to bridge the cultural gap often present in traditional educational settings, ensuring that the curricula and teaching methods are relevant and respectful of Indigenous cultures. Research has shown that culturally relevant education significantly enhances the academic performance and engagement of Native American students by aligning school practices with their cultural values and learning styles. For instance, incorporating Indigenous knowledge and practices into the curriculum fosters a sense of identity and belonging among students, which is crucial for their academic success (Arizona Department of Education, 2024).

Moreover, the CRAIS tool supports educators in developing and implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies that are critical for Native American students. This includes understanding and respecting the cultural nuances that influence learning preferences and communication styles. Studies have highlighted that when educators engage with the community and integrate culturally relevant content, students demonstrate improved learning outcomes and a stronger connection to their educational experiences (Institute for Native-serving Educators, 2024).

Additionally, providing opportunities for students to learn in environments that reflect their cultural heritage helps in reducing educational disparities and promoting equity in education (IES, 2024). By utilizing tools like the CRAIS tool, schools can ensure that they are not only inclusive but also actively supportive of the cultural and academic needs of Native American students. Incorporating cultural relevancy into education through tools like CRAIS addresses the longstanding challenge of creating equitable educational opportunities for Native American students.

Historically, Native American students have faced an education system that often disregarded their cultural backgrounds, leading to a disconnect and lack of engagement in the classroom. As highlighted by the Western Educational Equity Assistance Center, integrating cultural elements into the curriculum helps students feel more connected and supported in their learning environment. This approach not only boosts academic achievement but also fosters a positive sense of identity and belonging (WEEAC, 2024). Culture-based education also addresses the socio-emotional needs of Native American students. Schools that employ culturally responsive practices report higher levels of student trust and better relationships between students and teachers, which are crucial for students' holistic development, ensuring they are emotionally and academically supported. Strategies such as incorporating Native languages and cultural traditions into daily lessons, along with providing professional development for teachers on culturally responsive pedagogy, are essential for achieving this goal. These approaches align with recommendations by Martin and Reyhner, who emphasize that preparation and support for teachers in Indigenous-serving schools are vital for fostering an educational environment that respects and integrates Native cultural backgrounds. Martin and Reyhner's work underscores the need for culturally responsive teaching, which is particularly critical for the socio-emotional well-being and academic success of Native American students (Martin & Reyhner, n.d.)

Furthermore, the implementation of the CRAIS tool requires a systemic approach that involves all stakeholders, including educators, administrators, students, and the community. By fostering partnerships with Native American communities, schools can gain valuable insights and resources that enhance the cultural relevance of their educational programs. This collaborative approach ensures that the educational strategies are not only theoretically sound but also practically effective and reflective of the community's needs and values (REL West, 2024).

To successfully integrate the CRAIS tool, schools need to undergo continuous assessment and refinement of their practices. This includes regular training for educators on cultural competency, revising curricula to include Native American perspectives, and creating an inclusive school climate that values diversity. By doing so, schools can provide a supportive and enriching environment for Native American students, helping them to thrive academically and personally. The adoption of tools like CRAIS represents a significant step towards addressing the

educational inequities faced by Native American students and ensuring that their cultural heritage is respected and integrated into their educational journey (IES, 2024).

Implementation Plan

Elementary (K-5) Settings:

In an elementary setting, the universal aspects of the CRAIS Tool can be effectively used to create a classroom environment that is inclusive, respectful, and encourages critical thinking from a young age. At this level, addressing stereotypes is crucial, as young students are just beginning to form their understanding of the world. Teachers can introduce activities and discussions that correct common misconceptions and promote positive representations of different cultures, helping students appreciate diversity early on.

Action Steps to Use the CRAIS Tool:

1. Observation and Documentation:

- Conduct classroom observations to identify how stereotypes are addressed and how diverse cultures are represented. Use the CRAIS Tool to rate the presence and effectiveness of these practices on a scale (e.g., low, medium, high).
- Document instances where teachers introduce discussions or activities that challenge stereotypes and promote positive representations of different cultures.

2. Lesson Plan Review:

- Review teachers' lesson plans to ensure they include culturally diverse materials and activities. Use the CRAIS Tool to assess whether these plans integrate diverse perspectives and encourage respect for different cultures.
- Provide feedback based on the CRAIS Tool scores, suggesting improvements where necessary.

3. Student Engagement Assessment:

- Use the CRAIS Tool to evaluate how well students are engaging with culturally responsive content. For example, assess whether students are actively participating in discussions about diversity and showing an understanding of different cultures.
- Observe whether students are developing critical thinking skills through activities that challenge stereotypes and encourage inclusivity.

4. Feedback Sessions with Teachers:

- Hold feedback sessions with teachers to discuss the CRAIS Tool findings. Highlight strengths in their culturally responsive practices and offer suggestions for areas needing improvement.
- Encourage teachers to set goals for increasing cultural responsiveness in their classrooms, using the CRAIS Tool as a guide.

Middle School (6-8) Settings:

In a middle school setting, specifically for 6th to 8th graders, the universal aspects of the CRAIS Tool can be used to deepen students' understanding of diversity, promote critical thinking, and

strengthen social connections within the classroom. At this developmental stage, students are beginning to explore their identities and how they relate to the broader world, making it an ideal time to implement culturally responsive teaching practices.

Middle School (6-8) Settings:

Action Steps to Use the CRAIS Tool:

- 1. Critical Thinking and Diversity Observation:**
 - Observe classroom activities and discussions to assess how well they promote critical thinking about diversity. Use the CRAIS Tool to score these observations, focusing on the depth of student engagement and the inclusivity of the content.
 - Evaluate how teachers facilitate discussions around identity and diversity, ensuring that these are handled in a way that promotes understanding and respect.
- 2. Curriculum and Material Review:**
 - Review the curriculum and teaching materials for content that reflects diverse perspectives. Use the CRAIS Tool to assess whether the materials help students explore their identities and relate to the broader world.
 - Suggest additional resources or adjustments based on CRAIS Tool findings to better align with culturally responsive practices.
- 3. Peer Interaction Assessment:**
 - Use the CRAIS Tool to evaluate how well students from different backgrounds are working together in group projects and activities. Assess whether these interactions foster social connections and mutual respect.
 - Observe if and how students are encouraged to reflect on their cultural identities and the identities of others through classroom activities.
- 4. Professional Development for Teachers:**
 - Use CRAIS Tool results to identify areas where teachers may benefit from additional training or resources. Organize professional development sessions focused on culturally responsive teaching practices.
 - Encourage ongoing self-assessment using the CRAIS Tool to help teachers continually improve their approaches to diversity and inclusion.

High School (9-12) Settings:

In a high school setting, for students in grades 9-12, the universal aspects of the CRAIS Tool can be employed to cultivate a more mature and nuanced understanding of diversity, encourage sophisticated critical thinking, and strengthen social responsibility. High school students are at a stage where they are developing their own identities, values, and worldviews, making it crucial to implement culturally responsive practices that challenge them to think deeply about the world and their place in it.

High School (9-12) Settings:

Action Steps to Use the CRAIS Tool:

- 1. Advanced Critical Analysis Observation:**

- Observe classroom discussions, debates, and assignments that involve critical analysis of historical and contemporary issues. Use the CRAIS Tool to evaluate how well these activities promote a nuanced understanding of diversity.
 - Assess whether students are being challenged to think deeply about their own identities, societal norms, and global perspectives.
- 2. Curriculum Evaluation:**
- Review the curriculum for the inclusion of diverse narratives and critical perspectives. Use the CRAIS Tool to assess whether students are being exposed to a wide range of cultural viewpoints and are encouraged to critically analyze these.
 - Recommend curriculum adjustments or additional materials based on CRAIS Tool findings to enhance cultural responsiveness.
- 3. Social Responsibility Assessment:**
- Use the CRAIS Tool to observe how well students are being encouraged to take on social responsibility within their communities. Assess whether classroom activities and projects are promoting an understanding of global citizenship and ethical decision-making.
 - Evaluate how well students are applying critical thinking skills to real-world issues, particularly those involving diversity and social justice.
- 4. Teacher Collaboration and Feedback:**
- Facilitate collaboration among teachers to share best practices identified through the CRAIS Tool. Encourage teachers to use the tool to self-assess and peer-assess their approaches to culturally responsive teaching.
 - Provide feedback sessions to discuss CRAIS Tool results, focusing on ways to enhance the integration of cultural responsiveness into classroom practices.

Using the CRAIS Tool for Evaluation (as an Indian Education Director):

1. Classroom Observations: Key Indicators

Cultural Representation and Awareness: The CRAIS Tool can guide the Indian Education Director in assessing how teachers integrate and respect Indigenous cultural representation. Indicators might include:

- **Stereotype Awareness:** Are teachers actively dismantling stereotypes by presenting Indigenous cultures as complex and contemporary?
- **Use of Indigenous Knowledge and Values:** Are teachers incorporating relevant Indigenous knowledge, values, and traditions, particularly from local tribes? This could involve land-based education, language use, or stories aligned with Indigenous knowledge systems.
- **Active Reflection on Cultural Identity:** Does the classroom environment support Native students' exploration and affirmation of their cultural identities? Examples could be seen in discussions, reading selections, or visual representations.
- **Scoring and Documentation:** Directors using CRAIS can score each indicator on a scale (e.g., 1-5) and make qualitative notes with specific examples. For instance, a lesson that successfully includes a local Native perspective on history or science might score highly,

while areas that lack Indigenous representation might score lower, prompting recommendations for improvement.

2. Curriculum and Material Review: Key Indicators

1. **Inclusion of Indigenous Narratives:** The CRAIS Tool’s indicators assess whether curriculum materials go beyond Western perspectives to include Indigenous narratives.
2. **Diverse Historical and Contemporary Narratives:** Does the curriculum cover both historical and modern Indigenous perspectives, challenging any single narrative of “discovery” or assimilation? Are Indigenous communities portrayed as active, sovereign entities?
3. **Recognition of Indigenous Rights:** Do materials respect Indigenous sovereignty, addressing topics like treaties, land rights, and current issues in Indigenous communities?
4. **Local Cultural Relevance:** Is the curriculum tailored to the local Indigenous context, with stories, case studies, and examples drawn from nearby tribal communities?
5. **Scoring and Feedback:** Scores for curriculum inclusivity and cultural relevance help the director provide feedback to the school on areas needing additional Indigenous perspectives. Qualitative notes might indicate specific strengths, such as the inclusion of tribal histories, and gaps, like a lack of modern Native authors in reading lists.

3. Teacher and Student Engagement: Key Indicators

Teacher Competency in Cultural Responsiveness: CRAIS indicators assess teachers’ confidence and skills in presenting culturally relevant material.

- **Professional Comfort with Indigenous Content:** Are teachers visibly at ease discussing Indigenous topics, or is there a need for further training? The director can observe language use, engagement, and proactive inclusion of Native perspectives.
- **Classroom Practices Promoting Inclusivity:** Do teachers utilize discussion formats that validate diverse perspectives, including Indigenous viewpoints? For example, do they encourage critical discussions around Indigenous resilience, environmental stewardship, or contemporary issues?
- **Student Engagement and Connection:** CRAIS indicators also track students’ participation and investment in culturally relevant material.
- **Active Participation in Culturally Relevant Topics:** Are Native students engaged in lessons that reflect their backgrounds, and do all students show an understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures?
- **Empowerment and Belonging:** Do students feel empowered to bring in cultural perspectives and connect classroom content to their own heritage?
- **Scoring and Observations:** Directors can score engagement levels for both teachers and students and take notes on specific moments of high engagement or instances where additional support could enhance cultural understanding.

4. School-Wide Practices: Key Indicators

School Events and Community Involvement: The CRAIS Tool evaluates broader practices, such as school events and community involvement, in promoting Indigenous culture.

- **Honoring Indigenous Cultures in School Celebrations:** Are Indigenous holidays, languages, and cultural practices recognized in events, signage, and school-wide displays?
- **Community Partnership and Collaboration:** Does the school regularly consult with local Native community leaders and families to ensure Indigenous voices are represented in school initiatives?
- **Equitable Policies and Practices:** Do school policies, such as those for dress code, discipline, or language use, reflect an inclusive approach that values Indigenous cultural practices?
- **Scoring and Documentation:** School-wide practices can be scored, with notes providing examples of effective initiatives (e.g., Native American Heritage Month events) and areas where additional cultural integration may be beneficial.

Communicating the Evaluation to the Building's Principal: Structured Approach

1. Pre-Meeting Preparation:

The director compiles CRAIS scores and qualitative notes into a structured report, emphasizing both areas of cultural strength and specific improvements needed.

2. Initial Discussion

Acknowledging school strengths first, the director then introduces areas for improvement based on CRAIS Tool scores and detailed observations, creating a constructive conversation with the principal.

3. Recommendation of Action Steps

- **Professional Development:** Suggestions may include training sessions for teachers to build cultural competency.
- **Curriculum Adjustments:** The director may propose incorporating additional Indigenous authors or perspectives.
- **School-Wide Initiatives:** Suggestions could also encompass community engagement strategies and school-wide cultural events to deepen Indigenous cultural presence.
- **Collaborative Planning and Ongoing Support**

Encouraging a collaborative approach, the director and principal create a plan for incremental improvements, scheduling follow-up evaluations to track progress. This sustained partnership helps integrate cultural responsiveness effectively into the school's environment.

Assessment

To assess the accomplishment of the goals outlined in my leadership practice guide, I will structure the evaluation process around key culturally appropriate methods, utilizing the CRAIS Tool for classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, student engagement assessments, and collaborative teacher feedback. These methods will help me determine both the successes and

challenges encountered during the implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices in an elementary, middle school, and high school setting.

1. Observation and Documentation

Classroom observations are vital for understanding how cultural responsiveness is being enacted on a day-to-day basis. Using the CRAIS Tool, I will conduct targeted classroom observations in elementary, middle, and high school settings. In an elementary setting, for example, I will focus on how stereotypes are being addressed and how teachers incorporate diverse cultural representations into lessons. The tool will rate these practices on a low, medium, or high scale, allowing me to capture the degree to which culturally inclusive practices are embedded into the classroom environment.

To ensure the evaluation process is culturally appropriate, I will document instances where cultural misunderstandings may arise, while also celebrating positive examples of teachers challenging stereotypes and promoting cultural diversity. In middle and high school settings, observation of student-led discussions on diversity, identity, and global perspectives will provide insight into how deeply students are engaging with the material. Observing group projects and peer interactions will offer additional data on how students are working collaboratively across cultural differences, fostering mutual respect and social connections.

2. Lesson Plan Review

Evaluating lesson plans will be another method used to assess the integration of diverse cultural perspectives. For this assessment, I will review teachers' lesson plans to determine if they include materials that reflect the diversity of the student population. In an elementary setting, lesson plans will be evaluated for their inclusion of culturally diverse stories, activities, and discussions. In middle and high school settings, I will assess whether the materials push students to think critically about identity, societal norms, and diverse cultural histories.

The CRAIS Tool will be used to rate the cultural responsiveness of these lesson plans, and I will provide teachers with feedback based on their scores. This feedback will include both commendations for culturally responsive lessons and constructive suggestions for improvement. The goal of this review is to encourage a deep and reflective practice for teachers as they design their curricula to be inclusive, engaging, and culturally relevant for students from diverse backgrounds.

3. Student Engagement Assessment

An important aspect of culturally responsive teaching is student engagement. Assessing how students engage with the content and with each other through a culturally responsive lens will provide valuable insight into the effectiveness of the implementation. In the elementary setting, I will assess whether students are actively participating in discussions that celebrate cultural diversity and inclusivity. For middle school students, engagement will be evaluated based on how they explore their identities and respect others through the lessons and activities. High school assessments will involve observing whether students demonstrate critical thinking about diversity and engage deeply with global citizenship and social responsibility themes.

The CRAIS Tool will again be employed to rate these observations, and I will document examples of active participation or instances where students struggle to engage with the material. Cultural appropriateness in this context will involve being sensitive to different learning styles and providing support to students from diverse backgrounds to ensure that they feel included and understood.

4. Teacher Collaboration and Feedback Sessions

Collaborating with teachers is essential for creating a lasting cultural shift in the classroom. After gathering data from the CRAIS Tool observations, I will hold feedback sessions with teachers to discuss their scores and provide recommendations for growth. These sessions will be conducted in a supportive and non-punitive manner, encouraging teachers to reflect on their practices and set goals for improvement.

This method will include culturally appropriate practices such as recognizing teachers' existing strengths and allowing them space to express any challenges they face in implementing culturally responsive teaching. We will use the CRAIS Tool not only for evaluation but also as a guide for teachers to self-assess their progress and plan their future approaches to diversity and inclusion. The goal is for teachers to feel empowered and supported in their growth toward a more culturally inclusive practice.

5. School-Wide Practices and Policies

Beyond individual classrooms, I will assess school-wide practices using the CRAIS Tool to evaluate how well the school promotes Indigenous cultures and perspectives through events, displays, and policies. The CRAIS Tool will be used to rate the school's overall approach to honoring cultural diversity, and this feedback will be shared with school leadership. The goal of this broader evaluation is to foster a school-wide commitment to cultural responsiveness, ensuring that the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded at every level of the school's operations.

In summary, this evaluation will use a culturally appropriate, strengths-based approach to assess the goals of your leadership practice guide. Through observation, lesson plan review, student engagement assessment, and teacher collaboration, the CRAIS Tool will provide a clear framework for determining both the successes and challenges in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices across different school settings. The findings will guide ongoing reflection, professional development, and adjustments, ensuring that culturally inclusive practices continue to evolve and flourish within the school.

References

- Castagno, A.E., Joseph, D., & Dass, P.M. (2021). Culturally responsive assessment of Indigenous schooling tool. Flagstaff, AZ: Institute for Native-serving Educators.
- Cicero Group. (2019). The impact of culturally responsive practices on Native American students. Cicero Group.
- Institute for Native-serving Educators. (2024). Implementing culturally relevant content in education. Institute for Native-serving Educators.
- Institute of Education Sciences (IES). (2024). Culturally relevant education and its impact on Native American students. Institute of Education Sciences.
- Kennedy, E. M., & Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education. (1969). Indian Education: A National Tragedy - A National Challenge. U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Martin, J., & Reyhner, J. (n.d.). Preparing and retaining teachers of American Indian students. Northern Arizona University.
- Meriam, L., & Institute for Government Research (U.S.). (1928). The problem of Indian administration. Johns Hopkins Press.
- Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West). (2024). Fostering partnerships with Native American communities for culturally relevant education. Regional Educational Laboratory West.
- Western Educational Equity Assistance Center (WEEAC). (2024). Integrating cultural elements into the curriculum for Native American students. Western Educational Equity Assistance Center.
- Johnson-O'Malley Act, Pub. L. No. 73-167, 48 Stat. 596 (1934).
- Indian Education Act of 1972, Pub. L. No. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235 (1972).