

Using a Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) Tool
for School Wide Planning
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Indian Community School Leadership Institute
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Author Note:

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Introduction

Federal funding is essential in the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools. Often this type of funding creates complexities for operating BIE schools. As business manager in a BIE school, it is an enormous challenge to help BIE schools link funding to the academic and cultural outcomes of BIE schools.

BIE funding begins with a federal award letter that is used in federally funded schools which covers the funding program purpose. The focus of an award letter is to better understand how the school will utilize funds to meet student outcomes and overall school goals. A major challenge for business managers and overall leadership in tribally controlled schools, is the ability to communicate a budget to school stakeholders in a culturally relevant manner. In this Leadership Practice Guide I will focus on how district and school administrators can utilize the Culturally Responsive Assessment for Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) tool to better align academic outcomes to budgets.

Context

My name is Lisa Ann Lewis-Byjoe, I am from the Big Water Clan born for Salt Clan, my maternal grandfather clan is the Red Cliff Dwellers Clan and my paternal grandfather clan is the Water Edge Clan. I was born in Ft Defiance, Arizona and raised in Steamboat, Arizona, a place called Bear Springs. I am the eldest daughter of the Tapaha/Lewis family. Being the eldest, my Navajo cultural teachings were taught with love, respect and kindness which has helped me become a highly educated Navajo woman leader in a business manager/administrator career.

I graduated from Greasewood Springs Community School in 1990, Prior to 1990, I attended Toyei Boarding School. Toyei Boarding School was shut down, and they closed the school permanently. My parents enrolled me in Greasewood Springs, and I finished out my junior high school years there. The school buildings still exist today, without any changes, and I would say it has become somewhat of an historical site. At Greasewood Springs Community School, the teacher and staff taught me well through their knowledge, skills and encouragement. I stayed in the Greasewood Dormitory when I was a student. My teachers and dormitory mothers (home living aides) took great care of me. Each one of the teachers/staff taught me a lot about being independent, to be a scholarly student, always be true to yourself first as a Navajo woman, to go to college, and to learn how to speak up (too shy). I enjoyed my time as a student in Greasewood.

Being in boarding school, I learned a lot about living amongst a lot of sisters and brothers (girls/boys), as well as a lot of pseudo mothers and fathers as well. As students attending Greasewood Springs Community School advanced in age, many of the students that

stayed in the dormitory slowly started to go to day schools (school districts) because of their family's preference. Each year I had to adapt to new friends and new staff. It was not easy but over time one does get used to the changes. My parents encouraged and motivated me to be a better person when I meet new students or staff.

After years of decay and neglect, Greasewood Springs Community School has now been awarded 84 million dollars to build a new academic building, residential building, and bus barn. It's a blessing for the Navajo students and staff and I am honored to be part of this process as a former student and now business manager!

From 1990 to 1994, I attended Holbrook High School and stayed in the dormitory in the community of Holbrook, called Tiisyaakin Residential. High school was exciting because the atmosphere gave me a chance to see outside of our home land, the Navajo Reservation. The culture of the two different educational environments showed me possibilities to adapt to change and still be a Navajo woman. I joined school clubs, tried out for sports, worked on leadership skills as class president (dormitory), learned about challenges within western society but most importantly, I taught myself what I can establish purpose, goals and choices as I continue my education endeavors. Guidance counselors, math teachers, government class teachers, and dormitory staff all encouraged me to improve my ability to work with numbers and leadership skills. I participated in Future Farmers of America (FFA), Future Business Leaders of American (FBLA), FTA and other clubs, where I discovered accounting and business courses which I enjoyed.

When I graduated high school, I asked for help when I applied to colleges throughout America. When colleges accepted my applications, I remember asking my parents for permission as to which college they wanted me to attend and ultimately Northern Arizona University (NAU) was the school of choice. NAU is close to home and since being the first one to attend a university college, I believe my family wanted an institution where the school climate was safe and near home.

At NAU, I learned much about different cultural backgrounds among my friends. These experiences enhanced my focus for the possibilities of getting a business degree. Each of my college friends shared about choices in life, their family traditions, the cultural teachings, and the options of dreams/goals/visions. One thing in common we had was funding our college education expenses. Some of us got scholarships to assist with Indigenous student's college expenses. Other students had their parents' income to rely on, accessed student loans, and started to work to pay for college expenses. Our friendship grew strong due to being Indigenous and as students from diverse cultural backgrounds we would help one another when we needed to.

College business courses were challenging and I soon got lost in analyzing numbers, formats, and business operations that I had to learn. NAU had good professors that taught

equally to students. After two years attending NAU, I found myself having a hard time adjusting to both the rigor of college and the format of coursework. During these college years, scheduling a professor's meeting or asking for tutoring wasn't established well. Eventually, I learned I wasn't comfortable in this learning environment anymore. At that juncture I felt I needed to come home and figure out what I wanted to do. During summer break, I went back to a hobby, herding sheep, and reflected on what happened to the goals, vision and purpose I once had. Two weeks later, I had the epiphany to go to Navajo Community College.

Two years later, I enrolled at Dine College (formerly known as Navajo Community College) in Tsaile, Arizona. Why? It is a question I get asked when I share my college history. The answer is, to be among my people, my culture and learn again how to give back/reconnect. Being in Dine College, as a student, just being in the presence of elders, scholars, students, parents, and other community members. I was reminded about the importance of cultural teachings, the Navajo philosophy and spiritual wellbeing expectations were enormous. Embracing the idea of becoming a leader. (Shawn L. Secatero, pg 69). I made a choice to finish Dine College, graduate and finish what I started at NAU, using all the cultural teachings and applying my own understanding of the business field as a Navajo woman. The experience of returning to ground myself in my culture before advancing to advance my next level of my education journey was pivotal.

In 2000, I graduated from Northern Arizona University with my Bachelor degree. Shortly after, life began and I started my job hunting within the business fields and local education schools around Flagstaff, Arizona. My purpose in life changed at this time, due to my parents' wishes for me, which was to start a family. My own cultural relevance had to change, reflecting back on how I was raised with values, friendship, establishing a career, and remembering the purpose.

From 2000 to 2021, my own cultural perspective changed in many ways. My outlook on life, education and my future endeavors seemed to make a life-changing shift. My vision changed to determining how I could work with many leaders and mentors, each individual views' purposes ranged from a Navajo perspective with western education or vice versa. Opinions, ideas, recommendations, suggestions, stories, teaching, journals, reading, verbal interviews, and conversations. Each one of the cultural relevance shared or pointed out meant an exciting opportunity to make a difference for myself, yourself and others.

Currently I serve as the Greasewood Springs Community School (GSCS) business manager. Greasewood Springs Community School has a population of about 500+ who enroll their children in our school. GSCS services students of age ranges from birth to 13 or 14 years of age. I have been at Greasewood Springs Community School for five years.

Before coming to Greasewood Springs Community School, I worked in another grant school. I like working for the grants schools because I get a chance to work with my Navajo family communities and establish mentorships with other Navajo women leaders. I have learned many administrative responsibilities from each grant school, especially working with parents, community members, staff and administrators/board members.

When I was hired as GSCS business manager, in 2021, I became an essential worker due to the pandemic school closure. In former grant schools, I have never experienced a school shutdown and how it will affect our school culture and students. During this time, I was able to build upon existing experiences after being assigned duties that were outside my normal scope of duties. I learn how to be a delegated administrator from time to time and make management decisions. I took on various professional roles to help with our school during those school closure years. The Bureau of Indian Education and the Navajo Nation gave many different projects and tasks to continue during the school closure. These duties gave me better insight, a clear perspective of how other administrators and teachers utilize federal funds, such as classroom curriculum, professional development, staff development, training, conferences, and student learning environment. In addition, in this role I was able to help by assisting and being available for meetings (in person, virtual, travel, etc.), establishing communication between everyone that spends federal funds and engaging Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) spending plan approvals. I enjoyed the possibilities it taught me as a Navajo woman.

Most administrators would be challenged by the expectations of third-party organizations such as the Department of Dine Education, Bureau of Indian Education, Navajo Nation, Local Surrounding Chapters, and Community which are all partners in BIE schools. As a Navajo woman administrator, some of the expectations in the business field are to do the work and make sure my skills are applied to manage the funding correctly. There is a need to understand the structure, planning, organizing, and documenting the purpose with ease. Planning for solutions are needed to ensure leadership is providing guidance and comprehension; rather than doing everything last minute or not at all, which can hinder a school vision, goal, mission, purpose, philosophy statements.

When schools post their budgets, it's expected to share with the community. Financial statements sheets are difficult to read and understand but the dollar signs are easy to read. The majority of time, individuals read those budgets, as lots of money is available and why are we not hiring, helping, giving opportunities etc. There are many different types of reports to run and share with certain stakeholders. The stakeholders may have questions but don't know how to ask or ask for help.

When I came back to Greasewood to work as a business manager, I was excited to see how the business manager position could make decisions that would benefit our students in preparing for college and beyond.

Each student has a unique background since his or her own parents, aunts/uncles or even their grandparents are raising them. Within the Navajo family life, we live in groups and we support one another in raising children. We use our clan system to establish a family relationship amongst our own family and within our community. By using our clans, being Navajo, we are able to use Ké; our Navajo way to greet, talk, share, and respect one another as needed.

Being part of the Greasewood Springs Community School administration is exciting. I am encouraged by community members, former classmates who are now parents, my relatives and other principals from surrounding areas. To make a full circle is a purpose, a reason to be home and serve my school and community.

Rationale

I chose my topic because as a business manager, I am always in need of a justification, format or guidance to validate our budget expenditures. This can be a very complex task due to the abstract nature of school district budgets and the lack of knowledge by board members and staff to understand the complexities of BIE funding.

It is my rationale that using a rubric to help link budgets to cultural practices can help bridge the gap between district budgets and operational budgets in school districts and particularly in BIE schools. By using the established Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) tool, there can be a budgetary design in establishing an easy, culturally relevant model for any business office to develop a culturally relevant budget for school systems.

Part of the justification for this Leadership Practice Guide on building culturally responsive school budgets, is that most administrators do not understand which expenses are allowed or not allowed due to the federal funding laws guided by the federal government today. Some of the factors for allowable vs unallowable expenses can be culturally confusing include expense justifications for cultural events, activities, trips, services, and needs. Over the years there have been comments about how it is difficult to understand what to say or write, or even simply putting words down on a requisition form. It is difficult for administrators to understand the financial details of a federal budget because they are engaged in operating a school and ensuring students are properly educated.

In past experiences, when I attended local chapter meetings or any parent school activity function, I listened to Navajo sidebar conversations between individuals about budgets, spending and other political views. In Navajo, the conversation would revolve around the why? Why was it misuse, why weren't the expenses allowed, why is there always a lack of student impact, why less pay for teachers, why no field trips, and many other sidebar conversations that eventually become opinions or assumptions causing confusion

between the public and the school systems. This has led me to believe that culturally responsive budgeting is important.

School finance can be very abstract for anyone that is not in the business field or may not have a simple understanding of the school funding sources and protocols that drive the school system. Sharing federal funding information can be a start, however introducing the CRAIS tool first can help guide the decision making and planning phases for culturally responsive schools. I believe it can become successful over time. Navajo people are subject to habits; show them many times and they learn to use it well. Most of the tribal community schools reach out to me and ask for my guidance in their business office functions. Proper management of school finances becomes a core topic to the overall effectiveness of a grant school in overcoming the mistrust and a lack of confidence amongst tribal school systems; therefore, building a foundation of culturally responsive schooling through the Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling can be the foundation to the financial platforms of Indigenous schools.

Within my own family, my parents used to tell me to keep explanations simple and easy to comprehend. I used to wonder why, but over the years, I realized my audience was not educated in my business terminology and context. I learned quickly that speaking in Navajo helped the conversation move more smoothly. To this day, I do my best to help individuals when they see a budget or have some questions about the budget. The CRAIS tool is a guide to start with and it can help not only administrators, teachers, or business managers; I believe it can become useful with BIE schools, Navajo Nation, and Navajo people.

As a business office employee, we learn how to be an observer to see the various aspects of funding and spending from a federal perspective. As an administrator over the years, many different finance guides have graciously given me a chance to learn, adapt and change things like accounting software being used, budget reports, a new budget summary report, and other changes to give leaders a sense of comfort about the intricacies of school budgets.

Business offices get overwhelmed with changes and create staff turnovers. The decision-making, leadership, management, and political aspects of being a business manager are challenging aspects of managing school finances. CRAIS tool can ease some of the thinking and planning phases for the schools year to year finance planning.

As a result, it is my goal to focus on culturally responsive leadership to help any business officials in Indigenous communities to use the CRAIS tool as a guide in tribal office, administration, parents, staff and parents. The following leadership practice guide is designed to take a cultural perspective, communicate school finances, and to track the effectiveness of school budgets in Indigenous schools.

Topic Summary

The Culturally Responsive Assessment of Indigenous Schooling (CRAIS) tool is broken down by the five domains. The CRAIS tool can be a guide for any teacher, business manager or administrator that works in a Tribal Grant School when doing school/classroom related purchases. (Castagno, A.E., Joseph, D., & Dass, P.M. (2021).

1. Relationality, relationships, and communities
2. Indigenous knowledge systems and language
3. Sociopolitical context and concepts, and specifically sovereignty, self-determination, and nationhood
4. Representation of Indigenous peoples
5. Critical understandings of diversity and specifically race

Being in leadership, as a business manager, one can explain the CRAIS tool in a way it can be used in school operations. As the business manager of a tribal grant school; I can use a guide like the CRAIS tool on a monthly basis or plan a year in advance for school operations such as:

1. A school leader, whether its principal, manager, or school board members roles; want to build the relationships within communities. The school will need to learn how to be patient and understand how the community members establish their relationships. The CRAIS tool can teach or guide administrators and communities' relationships with families, parents, or other community leaders. Leaders normally introduce themselves to communities or families etc., therefore, leaders are setting the tone of the school environment as role models. The greetings and welcoming individuals or families' sets the stage for the leadership to grow.
2. As an administrator, an important leadership skill to acquire is communication. Leaders must learn how to utilize their local Indigenous language to build a positive support system for the community to learn about the school district finances. Leaders need to try to understand how locals speak or act through body language, dialects, and social events. Over time, a word or sentence is sometimes learned and jokes within the language can be used. Asking a question can be difficult from one leader to another leader; however, using the can CRAIS tool to help guide and ask the right questions or learn how to understand the language itself.
3. Sociopolitical context and concepts in areas of sovereignty, self-determination and nationhood can be a sensitive and political topic when discussions are held on school reform or school finances. As part of the school finance approval process, leaders need to design or implement a curriculum through school field trips or school events that are related to community history and local history. The

majority of non-native employees/staff don't understand sovereignty as a whole, but they understand the definition. Leaders can teach by establishing the field trips and school events with the sociopolitical topics with CRAIS tool as the guide practice.

4. When guiding a school through the CRAIS principles, Domain 4 Representation of Indigenous People can be a focus area for celebrating the national holidays in a positive manner with school administrators as guides and support for cultural heritages. By establishing a safe positive learning environment and providing guidance in studying history with students can help with parent involvement. By linking this back to the CRAIS tool the cultural relevancy aspect in the school budgets can be linked.
5. As a leader, to understand Domain 5, diversity and race of a community or tribe the leader must creatively link the CRAIS outcome to the activities that support Domain 5. This domain needs to be addressed in a more direct and positive nature. When one talks of approaching an understanding of a culture or heritage or traditional perspective one needs to remember as a leader, it's not about you, it's about the students' learning environment. Gaining trust and insight of how to grow students into better humans for their future is a way that schools can fund activities to support diversity and race of a community or tribe.

By using the CRAIS tools as a guide to help another administrator to keep the school finances in check with strong statements within the justification section. Right now, many individuals just explain what they want to do with the requisitions request. Most individuals don't think about it thoroughly and just push the paperwork per approval process. As finance or business managers, we enforce the procurements, have a structure, are organized, and must follow the tribal, state and national laws for the restricted federal fundings which all have deadlines to report on revenue/expenses on a quarterly or annual basis.

Many times, in staff orientation or work sessions, whether with staff members or administrators, employees are given an opportunity to introduce a flowchart or PowerPoints. With this in mind, the use of the CRAIS tool can help give a picture of what the business office is trying to explain about the five domains of culturally responsive schooling and how it relates to business operations. It is my goal to provide the CRAIS tool as a device to align culturally responsive schooling to budget operations. The development of a flowchart aligned to the CRAIS tool can be a way to help staff understand their purpose in making classroom/school related purchases. This can be especially beneficial in the areas when organizing the school year around lesson design, observations plans, curriculum plans and development and school-wide initiatives.

Often, academic information takes precedence during school meetings such as orientations and work sessions. In schools, a business manager needs to have an awareness of academic programs, data and organizational structures to ensure the business has awareness of coordination of funding and programs. This vital information is the driving force behind federal grants. Federal grant guidelines are aligned with national laws and regulations. The national student assessments, academic enrollment, bus mileage, other supplemental enrollments are used as a guide when issuing federal funding. Reimbursements programs are also guided by national student count meals.

At the tribal school level, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) (depending on how the US President sets the guidelines) the federal grants guidelines are based on needs in tribally controlled schools. Tribal grant schools need business managers to monitor/track data expenses, guide communication between staff/administrators, and establish simple closeout purposes.

Part of the breakdown and lack of efficiency and effectiveness in BIE schools centers upon figuring out the spending plans and how they align with academic and school-wide outcomes. Irrational decision-making of spending begins and it spirals out of place when managers don't think the situation through; such as the mindset that the decision worked last time so do it again. By using the CRAIS tool as a tool for decision making, alignment to culturally responsive schooling and criteria for meeting the allowable cost criteria, a positive outcome for all Indigenous students' education and better understanding in spending funds.

Implementation

Currently, tribal grant schools are monitored and given certification status by the Bureau of Indian Education within the Navajo Nation. This method or process was created to assist tribal schools for accountability purposes. Every tribal school must have an Annual Financial Audit, do quarterly reports, submit an Annual Financial Report (combination of school operation program and finance report), and receive a COGNIA or Navajo Nation Reauthorization Certificate to be a tribal school entity by law.

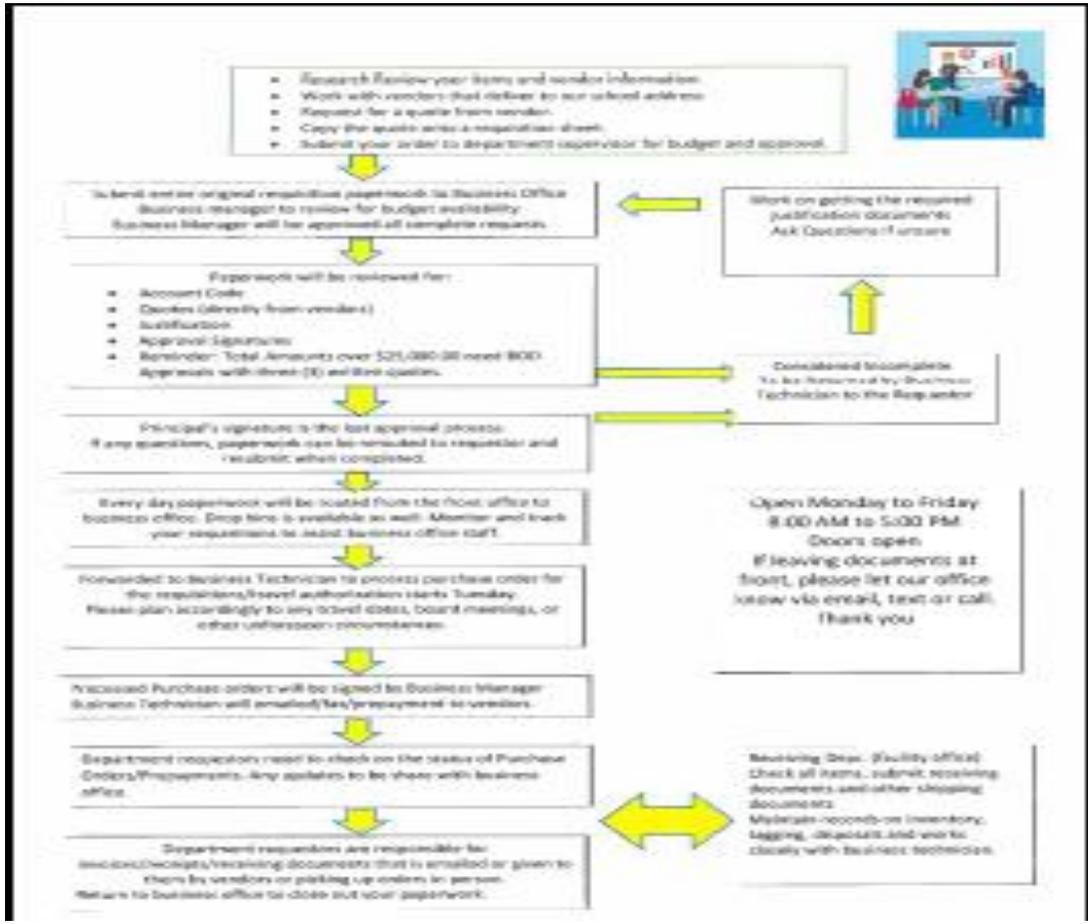
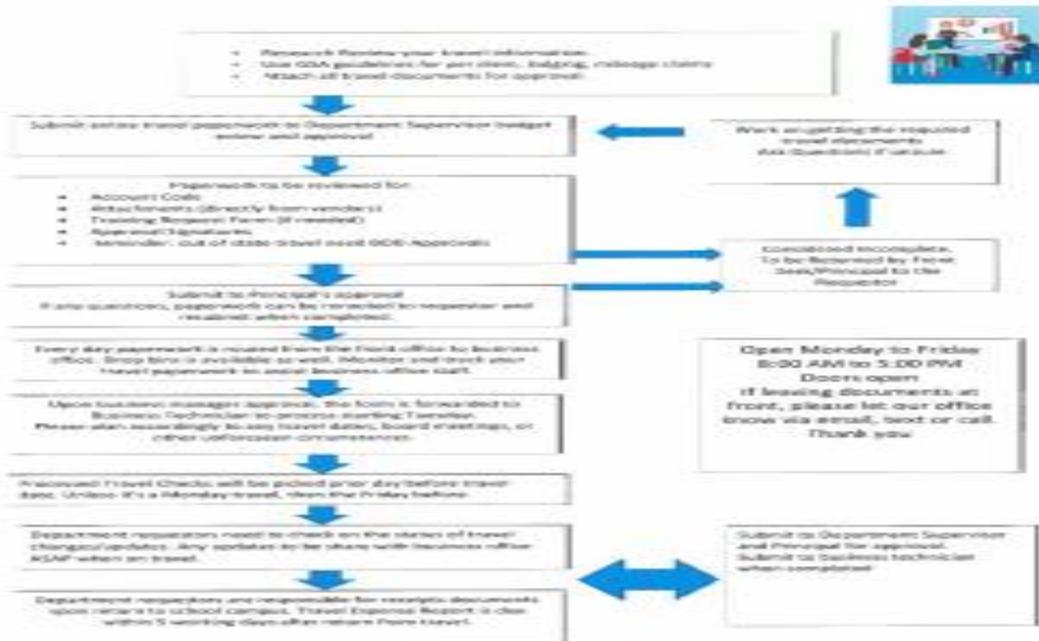
One of the timelines in this process is the annual financial audit and its engagement letter which states what will be reviewed and audited in the finance program. This letter includes expectations and questions to be answered by the school. That list is called a PBC (Prepared By Client or Provided By Client). A check off list is provided as to what schools have to present or what must be provided to auditors. The PBC gives an idea of which grant will be the major program and how the procurement review will be handled by auditors. This is where the expenditures (requisitions/checks) are being justified to match the funding program guidelines.

Quarterly reports show the expenses that are spent and revenue that is received in that quarter. The report will show in-depth the amounts being spent and what is remaining. This report will be used during the annual financial report on departmental balance amounts.

Within an audit, two major components are chosen based on the amount awarded. One is a major program and the other is financial statements. In both components, the expenditures are reviewed for deficiencies and weaknesses. Documentation is important for expenditures being approved and selected in the procurement process. (Heinfeld Meech Co, Scott, Aug 2025)

As part of my duties as a business manager, I ask teachers or staff members if they have an idea as to how they can complete a school order. Many are not forthcoming to say yes that they understand. Some basic flowcharts can help individuals understand correlations between expenditures and program outcomes. This process also allows input to change as well. Below are two flowcharts that can be utilized. These flowcharts show how the purchase is to be made and travel process guide.

Examples of Process:



As a business manager within a tribal school; it is important that the school involves the business office in functions, meetings and planning sessions. As part of those meetings, the CRAIS tool could be utilized to cross reference the budget with culturally responsive schooling criteria, thus, building continuity between the budget and school operations.

Goal setting tools such as the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) tool or utilization of Smart Goals can help as a tool guide in aligning with the funding plans. By aligning the school-wide goals with the CRAIS tool's five domain categories schools are able to develop a guide to the allowable and unallowable expenditures. In addition, the CRAIS tool can create a communication between a principal or superintendent to the business office to the staff itself.

Within each category, a purchase can focus on one or more domains. Whether a scheduled field trip to the local Navajo Nation tribal chambers for a presentation or staff development training on culturally responsive presentations, the CRAIS tool can give a basis for how the expenditure ties into culturally responsive schooling. Another example is utilizing the CRAIS tool for STEM expenditure. The CRAIS tool can justify the purchasing of technology equipment for classroom curriculum or taking students on a field trip to expand their knowledge. Most auditors would like the justification of the CRAIS tool during requisition purchases reviews or exit meetings questions. The clarity and language would justify that the expenditure was spent well on cultural and academic expenses per federal funding guidelines.

Part of the challenge for a BIE business manager in purchasing state of art technology or classroom supplies is guiding the teachers to link the purchase to the school-wide plan, budget priorities and overall achievement outcomes. Linking the CRAIS tool to academic and budgetary outcomes can make this process simple using a CRAIS tool. This can help eliminate audit findings as all tribal grant schools need to organize and plan its proper usage with justification on purchases.

A process at DINE College uses, when trying to implement a process or planning a project into a diagram. <https://www.dinecollege.edu/about-us/educational-philosophy/>

By using this diagram, it gives an idea of how to approach a project or goal to achieve good results. Schools and other organizations may use similar diagrams to help guide budget development in alignment to academic outcomes. Understanding the Navajo teachings or any other teachings is important and it helps leaders be better at their duties and responsibilities.

As a business manager, guiding and listening to ideas or concerns is a major aspect of the role of a business manager. The one-page flowchart process below helps guide decisions as a business manager. Over the years the flowchart changes through different implementations. The guide below can implement the five domains within the process of

requisition paperwork. A visual picture can help an individual with paperwork. At the same time, business managers can educate the business office staff as to how paperwork will be coming in and need to be processed in a timely manner.

This diagram is used to organize and plan school operations. Once the school year is set and a budget is approved, other timelines may guide the budget decision making process.

Dine College Philosophy Diagram:

This philosophy guides all aspects of Diné College's educational planning activities, including priority setting and research project implementation.

- Nitsáhákees (Thinking), Nahat'á (Planning), Iiná (Living) and Sihasin (Assuring)
- Studying Diné language, history, and culture
- Preparing for further studies and employment in a multi-cultural and technological world
- Fostering social responsibility, community service and scholarly research that contribute to the social, economic and cultural well being of the Navajo Nation.



<https://www.dinecollege.edu/about-us/educational-philosophy/>

In addition, having chart guides can be time lines or deadlines when current action items or topics need to be discussed annually. Currently, online ads do have similar diagrams.

Examples of Time Lines:

Recurring Action Items for Board Meetings School Year 2024-2025

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
New Hires for Upcoming SY	Use of Interest \$ (Royalties, Ham & Turkey for Staff		Retention Stipend	Stipend for Staff PD in Dec		Performance Evaluation for Principal	Use of Interest \$ (Drums of Summer, Promo	Policies	Contracts	Summer Program (put Program & Staffing into one Item)	New Hires for Upcoming SY
Program Narratives (Home living Base & Behavior Intervention, ELL, Dine, Gifted & Talented	Thanks giving and Christmas					Annual Sports (Wrestling overnight travel)	Student Council Annual Student Retreat	School Wide Budget		Summer Food Service	NN Corporation Code Annual Report
Out-of-state Travel	Over Night Trips Residential					BOD Election of Officers	Job description, salary schedules stipend, school calendar, organizational chart, pay period schedule	Single Audit Report		Short Term Contracts Summer School (Residential, recruitment, green house, ESY for Sped K-7, Transportation)	Short-term Contracts (Curriculum Assessment & Instruction, Drivers Residential & PD)
						Out-of-state Travel				Changes in insurances, retirement plan, 401K, check signers	Service Providers & Consultants for upcoming SY (School Improvement, Peacemaking, Audit, IT, T-6, Sped, Sole Source listing)
						Over Night Trips K – 8 th & Residential				Assurances (Sped)	Insurance Renewal Mahoney Proper and Casualty Application

(e.i.) Chart of Recurring Board Action Items

Work Sessions and Corporate Meeting SY 2024-2025

	Work Session #1 August 9-10, 2024 Flagstaff, AZ	Work Session #2 October 24-25, 2024 Albuquerque, NM	Corporate Meeting December 7-8, 2024 Phoenix, AZ	Work Session #3 January 17-18, 2024 Flagstaff, AZ	Work Session #4 March 20-21, 2024 Phoenix, AZ
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Development Review of Site Academic Assessments (Formative & Summative) New School Construction & Quarters Communication Plan Department Action Plans Strategic Planning of Academic Classroom Visits, Enrollment, Data, Ratio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Carryover Retention Stipends Forecast Academic Observations and Classroom Visits by BOD Interactive Strategic Planning for GSCS Analyze Results of School Surveys (Department Data Presentation using SWOC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws & Board Policies Rethinking Vision, Mission, and Values Leadership and Ethics Attorney Appropriate Use of Federal Funds – Attorney Preplanning for Remainder of SY Short-term and Long-term Board Goals and Objectives Wells Fargo Investment Account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to Polices Proposed Budget for next SY, Estimated Carryover Funds School Calendar, Organizational chart, Salary Scales and Job Descriptions Academic Data Analyze Results of School Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Planning for next SY (enrollment, st/staff ratio, services/programs, positions on organizational chart Work Sessions/Corporate meeting, School Wide Events, Reports, BOD items) Employee Contract Considerations Board Policies & Goals School (separate group to brainstorm) 2nd Reading of Polices

Chart of Work Session Topics

As a business manager planning for the school wide activities, organizing the school activities with other managers and the overall process for linking budgetary items to academic outcomes can get easier. (Kaplan & Norton, 1992)

Typically, BIE funded schools have three years to show the improvements and changes, if there are no staff/management turnovers or annual financial audit findings. (Kaplan & Norton, 1992)

The CRAIS tool can be introduced and given an opportunity to explore during budget work sessions, summer planning, etc. which will make the work session, orientations, and meetings more productive. Using the summer time to do the organizing and planning allows business managers to utilize the school calendar to their advantage to apply the CRAIS tool to expenditures and budget plans. In addition, around this time, managers normally know what worked and what didn't work. Part of the education will be improvements and recommendations to give students the opportunity to become a better educated student.

Business managers can use the school mission statement, vision statement, goals, or all three statements to get an idea of what the school needs to produce. Establish goals for each department and use that information to accomplish the goals. It can start small; improve a customer service skill to completing a clean audit - no findings. By sharing departmental goals, I believe it gives a purpose to staff for their own expectations and how to be involved in a school operation. The CRAIS tools will be a benefit when managers learn how to word them in their board reports, monthly staff meetings, parent meetings and even community meetings.

Culturally Responsive Budget Approval Form:

Business Manager Approval Form – CRAIS Expenditure Review

Organization Name: _____

Department/School: _____

Request Title/Description: _____

Date Submitted: ___ / ___ / _____

Section 1 – Request Information

- Requestor Name: _____
- Position/Role: _____
- Type of Expenditure:
 - Supplies
 - Program
 - Event
 - Professional Development

Other: _____

- Estimated Cost: \$ _____
- Funding Source: _____

Section 2 – CRAIS Principles Review

Please review the request in relation to the CRAIS Principles for Culturally Responsive Indigenous Schooling.

A. Relationality, Relationships, and Communities

- Does the expenditure strengthen classroom, school, or community relationships?
 Yes
- No
- Partially
Notes: _____

B. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Language

- Does the expenditure reflect, value, or integrate Indigenous knowledge, traditions, or languages?
 Yes
- No
- Partially
Notes: _____

C. Sociopolitical Context and Concepts

- Does the expenditure respect sovereignty, treaty rights, and promote self-determination?
 Yes
- No

Partially

Notes: _____

D. Representation of Indigenous Peoples

- Does the expenditure ensure Indigenous peoples are represented accurately, contemporarily, and contextually?

Yes

No

Partially

Notes: _____

E. Critical Understandings of Diversity

- Does the expenditure challenge stereotypes and integrate diverse, critical perspectives?

Yes

No Partial

Notes: _____

Section 3 – Decision

Approved as Requested

Approved with Modifications (describe):

Deferred (reason): _____

Denied (reason): _____

Section 4 – Authorization

Business Manager Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ___ / ___ / _____

Assessment

To effectively align culturally responsive schooling to the budgetary process, a business manager must learn to participate in manager meetings or administrative meetings to better understand what is expected of school operations and overall school improvements. The CRAIS tool utilizes a format in which teachers and administrators can utilize funds better and get assistance to ensure that all purchase procurement requests are handled in a timely manner.

Below is a checklist for business managers to ensure the CRAIS tool is utilized in the school budgetary process:

- Familiarize yourself with the CRAIS tool and how it can apply to both the budgetary process and educational outcomes
- Learn to use the school calendar for the budgeting process to align with the CRAIS tool
- Develop SMART goals for culturally responsive schooling
- Understand the SWOT analysis as it aligns to the CRAIS principles
- Attend the worksessions or annual corporate meetings to discuss the CRAIS tool for alignment to the budgetary process.
- Be part of the planning team
- Plan the worksessions topics
- Plan staff orientations around the CRAIS tool introduction and budget process
- Plan for staff appreciation when the proper use of the CRAIS tool occurs
- Ask each principal or teacher to present on a topic using the CRAIS tool as it aligns to the budget process
- Create a story line for implementing the CRIAS tool for ongoing improvements and recommendations

As part of the overall assessment in using the CRAIS tool for school improvement is to begin by listening to colleagues' collaboration to determine what support is needed. This will help the business manager gain ideas about what to expect in the following months of school, the midpoint of the year and to end the year. Developing timelines for when paperwork needs to be in the business office and where the funding can be encumbered for educational purposes is an essential aspect of the budgetary process.. This process can also help to determine whether to expand the organizational chart on current staff

positions or decrease staff positions; as well as information about how to retain teachers and give professional development opportunities.

Utilizing the CRAIS tool in the business field can help build understanding and provide clarity between school practices and the critical funds that accompany effective school operations. Utilizing the CRAIS tool can help establish a positive school culture while staying in compliance with audit requirements. In addition, the implementation of a CRAIS tool can help schools give students a better understanding of why culture is important and how we integrate within school operations. Learning to involve a business manager to act as a guide and assist with communications can help build continuity between the teaching staff and administration.

The CRAIS tool can guide a tribal grant school to operate better with federal spending and align the curriculum and goals set forth by the school board, school administration, and staff.. Utilizing the CRAIS tools as part of the district's basic operations can help the school culture expand and ensure parents and staff understand the link between school budgets and the cultural responsiveness of a classroom, residential living and other school operations.. Culture is important in our everyday lives and livelihood. The CRAIS tool can be a starting point for interaction and implementation.

In conclusion, the CRAIS tool can be used to help administrators and teachers how to interpret their curriculum planning and implementation of their improvements where needed. By having the CRAIS tool, culture responsiveness can be used in deciding what to purchase in school supplies or technology or bringing in community support during parent involvement days.

The CRAIS tool allows individuals to monitor what areas were important and areas needed for improvements. Culture responsiveness will always be part of the Indigenous community through creating structure, planning, organizing and documenting paperwork or reports.

Any Indigenous organizations can create the organization they wish to become. Tribal grant schools can grow and make a difference to attract workers to come and work for. The CRAIS tool can make educators and administrators become more aware of what are the expectations and what to improve themselves on.

Majority of the time, organizations already have culture response in place but just need the extra guidance to continue or improve the practice.

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