Professional Educators Standards Board's Role

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is the state agency responsible for policy and oversight of educator preparation, certification, assignment, professional learning, and workforce development in Washington. Its work most directly connected to Tribal Nations includes:

- Ensures teacher preparation programs implement the John McCoy (lulilaš) Since Time Immemorial (JMLSTI) curriculum
- Oversees the clock hour system, the professional learning educators complete to renew their certificates, which presents an opportunity to improve educator professional development in Tribal education
- Administering the Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) and Bilingual Educators Initiative (BEI) programs.
- Supports the First Peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal certification program

Washington State and Pacific Northwest History Requirement

Teacher preparation programs must integrate the JMLSTI curriculum into their programs and courses, and ensure that teacher candidates engage and familiarize themselves with the content. Programs may modify the curriculum to incorporate regionally specific elements.

RCW 28B.10.710 states that programs must offer and require candidates to complete a one-quarter or semester course, or the equivalent, in either Washington State or Pacific Northwest history and government.

Any course used to meet this requirement must include information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who were the first human inhabitants of the state and the region.

The current interpretation of the RCW is that offerings by preparation programs must be a **separate and distinct course**.

However, some programs have interpreted the RCW differently and, rather than offering a separate course, have integrated its content into other courses throughout their programs.

Consultation question: *How do Tribal Nations interpret this requirement, and should PESB's current interpretation be maintained or changed?*

Clock hour policy

Clock hours are professional development units for educators to renew their certification. Currently, PESB must approve all clock hour providers annually. WAC 181-85-045 currently does not list tribal nations as an eligible category to become a clock hour provider.

PESB seeks to correct this and has identified two policy pathways:

1) **Recommended pathway:** PESB could modify WAC to recognize any professional learning units created by tribal nations as equivalent to clock hours. This would allow for automatic recognition of tribal professional learning without the need to apply annually as a clock hour provider. It would also allow tribal nations to design their processes for issuing professional learning credit.
2) **Alternative Pathway:** PESB could modify WAC to allow Tribal Nations to apply annually to become clock-hour providers. Any clock hours issued would require tribal nations to follow the same processes and procedures as other clock-hour providers.

Consultation question: *Which pathway best reflects the sovereignty and priorities of your Nation?*

Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) and Bilingual Educators Initiative (BEI)

Both programs are rooted in "Grow Your Own" values. When done correctly, programs prepare future educators from within local communities and build on the knowledge and way of teaching that their communities have long practiced.

- **RWT** (2007, RCW 28A.415.370): By law, recruits, prepares, and mentors high school students to diversify Washington's teaching workforce.
- **BEI** (2017, RCW 28A.180.120): Builds on the linguistic strengths of multilingual high school students, preparing them to become multilingual educators.

Programs currently operate at six sites across the state. A 2026 community-rooted workgroup review of the curriculum centered on the JMLSTI curriculum, Cultural Competency, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CCDEI) standards, and the Social-Emotional Learning framework.

Opportunities for Partnership
Current RWT and BEI laws do not include pathways connected to Tribal language and culture revitalization. Legislative changes or additions can be made to include Tribal language and culture revitalization initiatives.

In spring of 2026, PESB completed its first direct contract with a Tribal Nation, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, focused on educator pathways and language and culture revitalization.

Our commitment: PESB will walk alongside Tribes, share in this work, and honor the state's responsibility to support Tribal Nations in restoring Tribal education, languages, and cultures.