

# Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAM) Program 2018 Cohort

June 2022



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### **U.S. Department of Education**

Miguel Cardona  
*Secretary*

### **Office of English Language Acquisition**

Supreet Anand  
*Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director*

### **JUNE 2022**

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## Key Terms

- **Characteristics spreadsheet:** The characteristics spreadsheet collects key information about the grant project, such as public/private partnerships, languages served, personnel/staff served in the project, and project aims. The information in the characteristics spreadsheet provides grantee information discussed in this report and also serves to support the ability of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) to quickly respond to questions from internal and external sources regarding grant implementation and outcomes.
- **Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA):** The national education law that seeks to provide all students opportunities to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close education achievement gaps.
- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):** Signed into law December 2015, this act reauthorizes the ESEA.
- **The Government Performance Results Act of 1993 (GPRA):** Under GPRA, federal departments and agencies must clearly describe the goals and objectives of programs, identify resources and actions needed to accomplish goals and objectives, develop a means of measuring progress, and regularly report on achievement.
- **Institutions of higher education (IHEs):** Institutions of postsecondary education, colloquially known as universities or colleges.
- **Knowledge Management System (KMS):** Refers to an online financial and performance monitoring tool for the U.S Department of Education's (Department's) discretionary grants. By reporting in the KMS, grantees provide data to demonstrate that they are making substantial progress toward meeting approved goals, objectives, and performance measures to receive continuation funding.
- **Local educational agency (LEA):** As defined in the ESEA, a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
- **Native American language:** The historical, traditional languages spoken by Native Americans, consistent with Section 103 of the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2902).
- **Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAM) Program:** The purpose of the NAM program is to award grants to eligible entities to develop and enhance the capacity to provide effective instruction and support to Native American and Native Alaskan students who are identified as English learners (ELs). The goal of this program is to support the teaching, learning, and studying of Native American and Native Alaskan languages while also increasing the English language proficiency of students served to accomplish the same challenging state academic content and achievement standards for all students.
- **State educational agency (SEA):** As defined in the ESEA, a state-level government organization within each U.S. state or territory responsible for education, including providing information, resources, and technical assistance on education matters to schools and residents.

## Executive Summary

In the Native American Languages Act of 1990, Congress recognized the importance of preserving Native American languages by protecting and promoting the rights of Native Americans to develop their proficiency and use of Native American languages.<sup>1</sup> It is the policy of the United States to encourage and support the use of Native American languages in the classroom to ensure the survival of Native American languages and to increase educational opportunities and achievement for Native American and Alaska Native students.<sup>2</sup> Native language preservation has been shown to confer cognitive, socio-emotional, and educational benefits to Native students.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAM) program awards discretionary grants to eligible entities to develop and enhance capacity to provide effective instruction and support to Native American students who are identified as English learners (ELs). The goal of the NAM program is to support the teaching, learning, and studying of Native American languages.

This document highlights and presents information about the 2018 grantee cohort of the NAM program.<sup>4</sup> It uses self-reported information from grantees in the 2020–21 project year. The data represented captures the grantees' program performance results based on three GRPA measures for the 2018 cohort. In addition to the required focus on English language proficiency, the NAM program identified priority areas for funded projects that included Native American and Alaska Native language instruction, early learning, parent engagement, and family literacy. The report also presents descriptions and graphs illustrating grantee school program types, project features, and reported program outcomes, progress, and challenges.

Although all 2018 grantees reported that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact project activities, grantees were still able to report on progress made toward activities of their program's performance goals as outlined in the GRPA measures. Highlights from grantee performance on GRPA measures include the following:

- More than 600 preK–12 students participated in Native language programs administered by the 2018 grantees.
- The 2018 grantees reported that 57% of students served attained proficiency in English on the state-approved English proficiency exam, and 72% of students made progress in the Native language.
- Grantees provided teacher/staff professional development and promoted parent and community involvement by hosting family literacy nights and online cultural events.
- Grantees created online modules and other instructional materials to promote the learning of Native languages.

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<sup>1</sup> 25 U.S.C. 2903 (1)

<sup>2</sup> 25 U.S.C. 2903 (3)

<sup>3</sup> Jesse, D., Northup, J., & Withington, A. (2015). *Promising education interventions to improve the achievement of Native American students: An annotated bibliography*. [A report from the West Comprehensive Center.] WestEd.

<sup>4</sup> Due to lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on grantees' ability to complete their final project activities, project outcomes for the 2016 grantees will be reported in the following year's discretionary report.

Disruptions due to COVID-19 included collecting student outcome data, shifting activities from in-person events to virtual events, reduced family engagement opportunities, and difficulties staffing projects.

## 1. Introduction

The NAM program is authorized under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, and is administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). The NAM program seeks to improve academic outcomes in English for Native American and Alaska Native (NA/AN) students by providing funding for programs that support language instruction education programs, including NA/AN language and culture revitalization. Thus recipients of this discretionary grant program have designed projects to support the teaching, learning, and studying of Native American languages while also increasing the English language proficiency of students served to achieve the same challenging state academic content and achievement standards for all students. In addition, the NAM program identifies priority areas that include early learning and development, family and community engagement, and the promotion of family based literacy practices for the 2018 grantees. The 2018 grantees were not required to address all of these priority areas in the design of their projects but were encouraged to employ an array of activities and strategies in support of them.

Grantees may design five-year projects that include teacher training, curriculum development, and evaluation and assessment to support the core program of student instruction and parent-community participation. Student instruction may comprise preschool, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels, or combinations of these levels.

NAM applicants must operate elementary, secondary, and/or postsecondary schools primarily for Native American children (including Alaska Native children). Eligible entities based on this criterion include the following:

- Indian tribes
- Tribally sanctioned educational authorities
- Native Hawaiian or Native American Pacific Islander Native language education organizations
- Elementary schools or secondary schools operated or funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) or a consortium of such schools
- Elementary schools or secondary schools operated under a contract with or grant from the BIE in consortium with another such school or a tribal or community organization

All NAM grantees are required to submit an annual performance report (APR) that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information. The APR must include information on performance outcomes related to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), as well as project-specific performance measures. The U.S. Department of Education (Department) considers these data in making annual continuation awards. At the end of the project period, grantees must submit a final performance report, including financial information, goal attainment, and program evaluation.

Approximately \$5 million is available for NAM grantees annually. The average award amounts for fiscal year (FY) 2021 were \$300,627 for the 2018 cohort.

Table 1.1. Total Proposed Funding NAM 2018

Cohort	Years completed	Total funding for all 5 years <sup>5</sup>	Number of awards
2018 Cohort	3 of 5 years completed	\$11,051,490	7

## Government Performance and Results Act

The GPRA of 1993 requires federal agencies to prepare a strategic plan covering a multiyear period and to submit an annual performance plan and an APR. The Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 updated some aspects of the GPRA of 1993 and placed emphasis on the use and analysis of goals and measures to improve outcomes of federally funded programs.

The Department developed three GPRA performance measures for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the 2018 NAM cohort. All institutions receiving federal funds under the NAM program must report on their progress toward meeting these performance measures. The three performance measures are listed below:

### GPRA for 2018 NAM Cohort

- **Measure 1:** The number and percentage of ELs served by the program who score proficient or above on the state reading assessment
- **Measure 2:** The number and percentage of ELs served by the program who are attaining proficiency in English as measured by the state-approved English language proficiency (ELP) assessment
- **Measure 3:** The number and percentage of students making progress in learning a Native language as determined by each grantee, including through such measures as performance tasks, portfolios, and pre- and post-tests

<sup>5</sup> Total proposed funding for the NAM 2018 cohort can be found here:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/naancs/awards.html>.

## 2. Overview of the Grantee Cohort

### Data Sources and Methodology

This section of the report provides a profile of the NAM program based on information received through numerous data sources. It conveys a profile of important characteristics of these grantee entities through tabular and graphic presentations of key information related to the characteristics of institutions and grant activities. All available electronic data (partial and completed surveys) residing in the sources outlined in the box below were used in the analysis.

Frequencies were generated for all data elements, and summative reports on key continuous variables for the program were developed. Key variables presented in this report include the following:

- Location of grantees
- School program types served by grantees
- Priorities addressed by the grantees
- Grant-funded activities and outcomes reported by the grantees
- Student-level data in partnering LEAs or SEAs
- Project-level and aggregated GPRA measures

The data were closely examined to identify the occurrence and distribution of missing data and data values that appeared inconsistent and out-of-range. In all cases, data were aggregated and analyzed at the level corresponding to the outcome in question.

### Characteristics of Grantees

All seven grantees in the 2018 cohort are included in this report.

A complete list of the seven entities awarded a NAM grant in 2018 can be found in the Appendix. Grantees from the 2018 cohort formed partnerships with six organizations, including early childhood centers, public school districts, IHEs, and an immersion school. Ten Native

#### Data Sources

Data for the development of this report were collected from four primary sources:

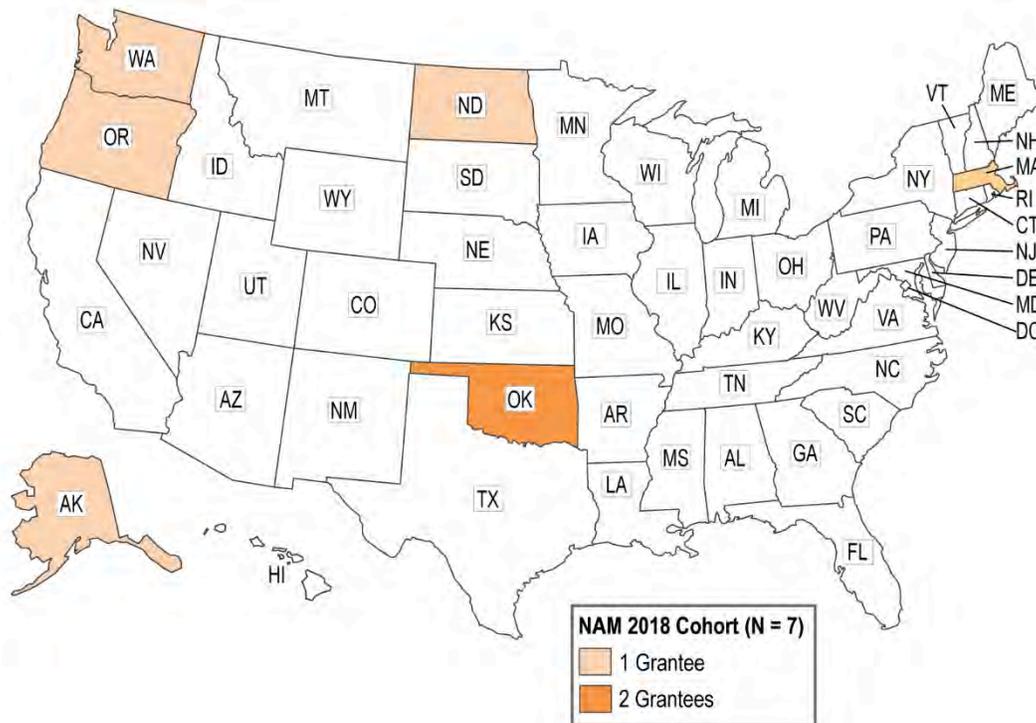
- **Knowledge Management System (KMS) data:** The KMS provides the majority of program- and grant-specific information. On this online platform, grantees report on project measures for individual grant activities and outcomes for the entire grant.
- **Characteristics spreadsheet:** This provides some program- and grant-specific information, such as (1) the name of the applicant; (2) the partner LEAs or SEAs; (3) the title of the proposed project; (4) which, if any, of the competitive and invitational priorities a project is addressing; (5) a brief project description, including a description of major project activities; (6) the number of students served; (7) project goals, objectives, and performance outcomes; and (8) contact information, such as the project director's name, telephone, and email.
- **GPRA data:** The overall effectiveness of the NAM program is measured by three GPRA measures for the 2018 cohort, developed by the Department. All NAM grantees report their progress toward meeting these performance measures each year.

languages are utilized by participants working with the 2018 grantees, including Yup'ik, Inupiaq, Ichishkiin, Numu, Kiksht, Tsalagi, Twulshootseed, Cherokee, Lakota/Dakota, and Wôpanâak.

## Grantee Locations

Out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, entities in six states received NAM grants in 2018, as seen in Figure 2.1. One state received two or more NAM grants, five states received only one grant, and 44 states and the District of Columbia did not receive any NAM grants.

Figure 2.1. NAM Grant Locations: 2018 Cohort



## Grant Priorities

The NAM competition is structured using the following three types of priorities:

- Absolute priority: Under 34 *CFR* 75.105(c)(3), only applications that meet this priority are considered.
- Invitational priorities: Under 34 *CFR* 75.105(c)(1), applicants may address these priorities, but they are not given competitive preference points.

In 2018, the NAM competition included the same absolute priority of supporting the learning and studying of Native American languages while also increasing the English language proficiency of the children served. Competitive and invitational priorities are summarized in the box below.

### The NAM 2018 Grant Competition Priorities

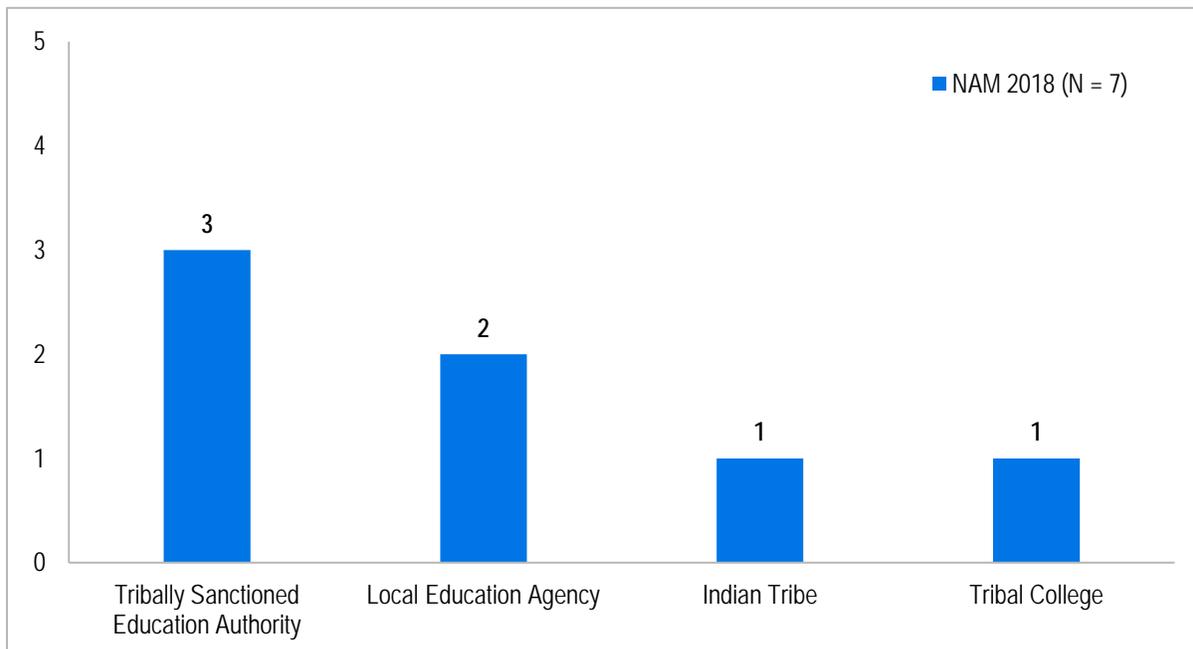
- **Absolute Priority:** Supporting the teaching, learning, and studying of Native American languages while also increasing the English language proficiency of the children served under such a project
- **Invitational Priority:** Promoting literacy by providing families with evidence-based (as defined in 34 *CFR* 77.1) strategies for promoting literacy. This may include providing families with access to books or other physical or digital materials or content about how to support their child's reading development or providing family literacy activities (as defined in Section 203(9) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act).

The invitational priority that all seven of the 2018 cohort responded to was promoting family based literacy.

### Grant Entity Types

For the 2018 cohort, all seven grantees received funds and completed the third year of their projects in school year (SY) 2020–21. The entities receiving NAM grants in 2018 were Native tribes, nonprofit organizations, tribal colleges, and public school districts. Figure 2.2 describes the distribution of these grantees. In the 2018 cohort, more than 40% of grantees are tribally sanctioned educational authorities and 29% are LEAs. Grantees are also Indian tribes and a tribal college.

Figure 2.2. Entities Receiving NAM Grants

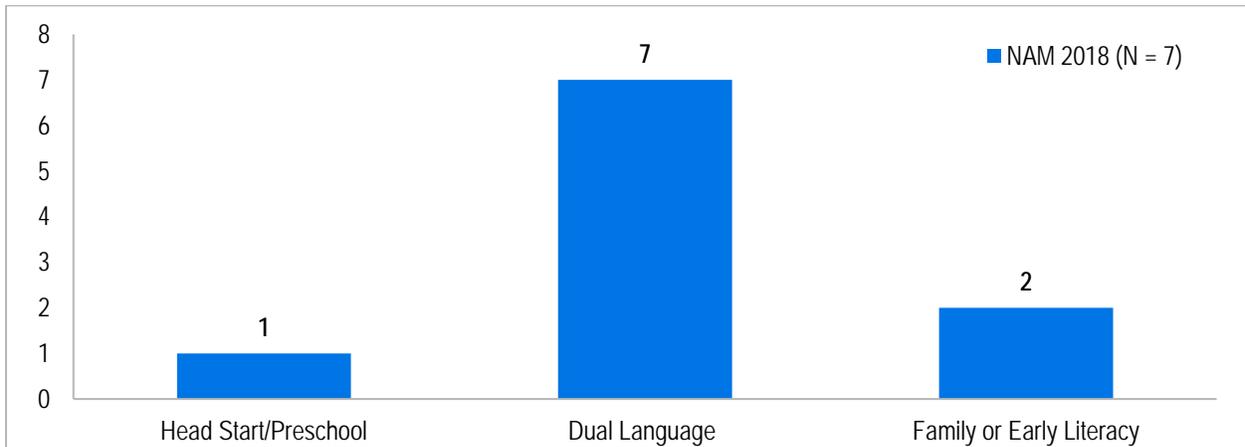


### School Program Types

Figure 2.3 illustrates the school program types served by the NAM grantees. All seven 2018 grantees worked with teachers and students in dual language programs. Early childhood

education was also an area of focus for one 2018 grantee, and two grantees indicated a family or early literacy model.

Figure 2.3. Number of School Program Types

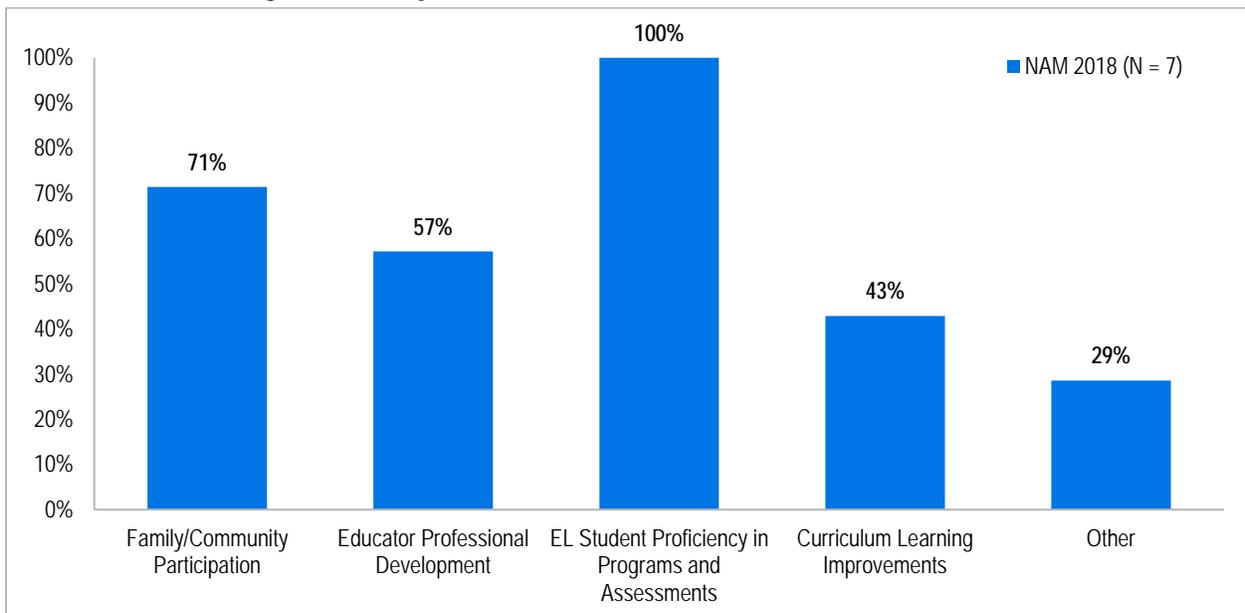


## Project Features

Some NAM projects implemented unique activities or features to support the project goals.

Figure 2.4 illustrates the various project features reported by the 2018 grantees. The most widely reported features include increasing EL proficiency, providing teacher/staff professional development, promoting parent and community involvement, and implementing curriculum development programs. Other project features include creating Native language assessments (N=2), promoting school readiness (N=2), and focusing on STEM instruction (N=1).

Figure 2.4. Project Features of the NAM Grantees: 2018 Cohort



### 3. Outcomes

This section presents the GPRA measure outcomes and project measure outcomes for the grants awarded under the 2018 competition. Using the KMS online reporting system, the grantees submitted quarterly reports in FY 2021. The data reported included GPRA targets and other information (e.g., financial expenditures). This report focuses on data collected from the third year of grant implementation for the 2018 cohort.

The following sections provide detailed information regarding how each GPRA outcome was calculated for the cohort. Notes are included where the COVID-19 pandemic impacted some grantee activities.

Grantees who reported no data (for target or outcomes) often gave reasoning in the notes. Examples of reasons cited include the postponement or cancellation of program assessments due to COVID-19.

#### GPRA Outcomes

As required by the APR, grantees must submit both numerical responses for the GPRA measures and short narratives to describe (a) the strategies used to meet the GPRA measures and (b) the extent to which the program met the GPRA measures.

Table 3.1 summarizes aggregated GPRA outcomes reported by the seven grantees in the 2018 cohort. Some grantees reported exceeding GPRA targets and provided reasoning in the notes.

As Table 3.1 shows, grantees made progress toward many of their GPRA measures.

For the 2018 cohort, grantees made the least progress on the GPRA targets measuring student proficiency in reading and in attaining English language proficiency. Grantees reported only 29% of English learners attaining proficiency in English as measured by the state-approved English language proficiency assessment, and 29% of students scoring proficient or above on the state-approved reading exam. Grantees made the most progress on the GPRA target measuring Native language proficiency, with 72% of students making progress in the Native language, as shown in Table 3.1. As the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact grantee activities, the table below also outlines to what extent the pandemic affected their ability to reach GPRA measures.

Table 3.1. Summary of Aggregated GPRA Outcomes Reported by 2018 NAM Cohort<sup>6</sup>

	GPRA Measures	Percentage <sup>7</sup>	Basis of Calculations	COVID-19 Impact
1	The number and percentage of ELs served by the program who score proficient or above on the state reading assessment	29%	Of the 6 grantees that could report, 99 of the targeted 338 ELs scored proficient.	COVID-19 impacted Measure 1 for 57% of grantees.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Knowledge Management System (KMS): Refers to an online financial and performance monitoring tool for the Department's discretionary grants.

<sup>7</sup> In instances where grantees reported more than 100%, this is due to such reasons as grantees having recruited more participants than expected or more participants having participated in that GPRA measure than first targeted.

	<b>GPRAs Measures</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Basis of Calculations</b>	<b>COVID-19 Impact</b>
2	The number and percentage of ELs served by the program who are attaining proficiency in English as measured by the state-approved English language proficiency assessment	<b>29%</b>	Of the 4 grantees that could report, 86 of the targeted 297 ELs scored proficient.	COVID-19 impacted Measure 2 for 29% of grantees.
3	The number and percentage of students making progress in learning a Native language as determined by each grantee, including such measures as performance tasks, portfolios, and pre- and post-tests	<b>72%</b>	Of the 6 grantees that could report, 663 of 923 students made progress in learning a Native language.	COVID-19 impacted Measure 3 for 29% of grantees.

## Progress on Program Goals

In addition to GPRAs outcomes, grantees also establish and report on the progress they make toward goals specific to their projects.

Table 3.2 showcases some of the 2018 NAM project-specific measures that grantees worked toward in the project year of 2020–21. As each grantee can specify their own project measures, data in these tables are derived from a qualitative analysis of the grantee-reported, project-specific measures and accompanying grantee notes from the KMS update 3 reporting period. This qualitative analysis yielded four broad themes that grantees are working toward: increasing English language achievement and fostering school readiness; creating Native language assessments and measuring Native language proficiency; promoting family and community connections; and developing curriculum and instructional materials. It is important to note that while all grantees had intended to report on project-specific goals, only some grantees could complete activities due to the school closures that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 3.2. 2018 NAM Cohort-Reported Progress on Grantee Program Goals (N = 7)

<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Number of Grantees</b>	<b>Sample and Summary of Activities</b>
Enrollment/ Attendance	3	Grantees reported increased enrollment interest in their school or program, but some grantees also reported having to limit enrollment numbers due to social distancing restrictions from COVID-19.
Academic Achievement/School Readiness	3	Grantees provided academic camps for students during school breaks and administered formative assessments to measure English literacy.
Native Language Assessment and Achievement	3	Grantees developed and administered curriculum-based measures assessments in the Native language. One grantee also offered school-based camps in the Native language.

Program Goals	Number of Grantees	Sample and Summary of Activities
Family/Community Connections	3	Grantees conducted virtual literacy trainings for families and offered other family engagement activities. Three grantees mentioned wanting to provide family engagement events and other cultural events, such as their Language Bowl, but not being able to due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Teacher Professional Development	3	Teachers received professional development workshops and coaching and participated in coursework toward licensure.
Curriculum/Materials Development	3	Grantees developed books in the Native language and developed online courses in the Native language.

## Challenges Meeting Program Goals

As noted throughout this report, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability of NAM 2018 grantees to complete project activities in the way they initially envisioned. One hundred percent of grantees made references to COVID-19 disrupting project activities. Examples of COVID-19 disruptions included the inability to collect student outcome data, inability to enroll as many students due to safety protocols related to social distancing, reduced family engagement opportunities, and project staff changes or difficulty finding project staff. However, grantees were able to find solutions to many of the challenges they encountered. For instance, some grantees reported using more computer-assisted technologies to fulfill project activities and engaging tutors and the community to support project activities.

Table 3.3. School Year 2020–21 Cohort-Reported Program Challenges of NAM 2018

Program Challenges	Number of Grantees
Difficulty Collecting Data	7
Staffing Issues	3
Decreased Family Engagement Opportunities	5

## Summary

NAM 2018 grantees made progress toward both GPRA measures and project-specific measures, Native language proficiency, and increases in student enrollment. Grantees from the 2018 cohort made the most significant progress on the GPRA measure regarding student attainment of Native language proficiency and made the least progress on the GPRA measures regarding the number of students who scored proficient on state reading assessments and the number of ELs attaining proficiency in English.

## Appendix

Table A.1. 2018 Cohort NAM Grantees

Grantee Number	Institution	Project Title
T365C180007	Jefferson County School District 509J	Warm Springs K–8 Academy Native Language and English Learners Program
T365C180008	Puyallup Tribe of the Puyallup Reservation	Grandview Early Learning Center Twulshootseed and English Language Learner “TELL” Project
T365C180010	Cherokee Nation Education Corporation	Increasing English Proficiency of Tsunadeloquasdi Students
T365C180014	Wôpanâak Language and Cultural Weetyoo, Inc.	Numukayuhsunônak: Our Children Speak Two Languages
T365C180016	Stilwell Public Schools	Cherokee Pride
T365C180022	Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.	Cultural Connections
T365C180025	Sitting Bull College	Makhasitomni Nunpakiye Manipi — They Walk in Two Worlds