

# Sustaining Educational Excellence for South Dakota Students

## Using Bright Spots to Increase Native American Student Achievement

### Partnership Highlights

The work in South Dakota focused on three areas:

1. Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards (OSEUS) implementation pilot school study
2. OSEUS needs assessment comparison study
3. Indigenous student wellness study

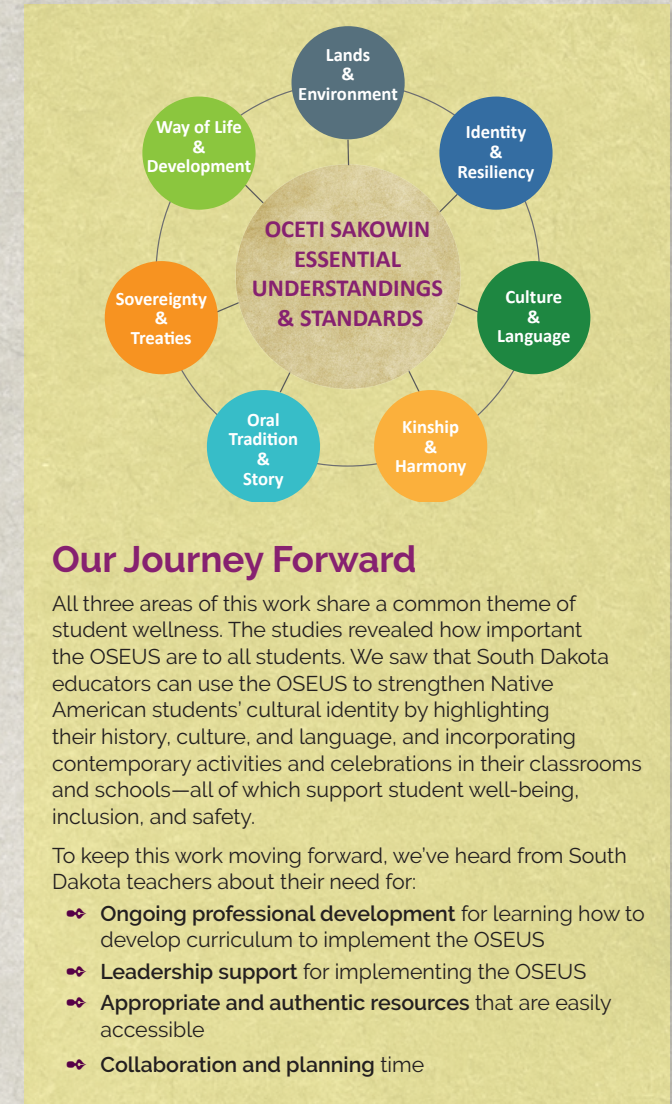
The work set out to understand:

- What can the state learn about the resources and supports that advance OSEUS implementation from a pilot school study?
- How can the state support Indigenous student wellness?
- How can the state support students' mental health?
- How can this work inform the next round of OSEU standards revisions?
- How can the state expand its relationship with the South Dakota Tribal Education Directors in this work?

### Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards

Years of work focused on building teachers' knowledge and skills for implementing the OSEUS is culminating in a series of infographics to help educators use the OSEUS in their classrooms. In the first infographic, we outline what teachers need to know to understand and use the OSEUS, which includes recommendations to:

1. Build your knowledge and skills for **Indigenous holistic child-centered education** and understand cultural ways to support the **health and well-being** of your students.
2. Reflect on your **personal readiness** for using the OSEUS to create engaging learning opportunities that are **student and community centered**.
3. Learn **community protocols** to demonstrate your commitment to using the appropriate ways to interact with elders, students, and community members.
4. Engage with family and community to strengthen **students' connections** in school.
5. Understand the Oceti Sakowin people of today, including how the school environments can reflect and support **students' culture, languages, and history**.
6. Deepen your **understanding and knowledge** of the Oceti Sakowin nations in South Dakota to begin to develop and practice the OSEUS in your classroom and school.



### Our Journey Forward

All three areas of this work share a common theme of student wellness. The studies revealed how important the OSEUS are to all students. We saw that South Dakota educators can use the OSEUS to strengthen Native American students' cultural identity by highlighting their history, culture, and language, and incorporating contemporary activities and celebrations in their classrooms and schools—all of which support student well-being, inclusion, and safety.

To keep this work moving forward, we've heard from South Dakota teachers about their need for:

- **Ongoing professional development** for learning how to develop curriculum to implement the OSEUS
- **Leadership support** for implementing the OSEUS
- **Appropriate and authentic resources** that are easily accessible
- **Collaboration and planning time**