



# NIEA Survey on Impact of COVID-19 in Native Schools

National Indian Education Association



The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) is the nation's largest and most inclusive organization advocating for comprehensive culture-based educational opportunities for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

## Background

Native schools and communities have been disproportionately impacted by the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Nearly two months after the pandemic declaration, our schools remain closed and students have varying degrees of access to continuing educational services.

## National Landscape

Approximately 93 percent of the 644,000 Native students in the United States attend public school classrooms funded and authorized by the states in which they are located. From tribal lands to urban centers, our public schools represent the diversity of where our students and families live across the country.

Serving nearly 48,000 Native students, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funds federally and tribally operated schools located primarily on and near tribal lands.

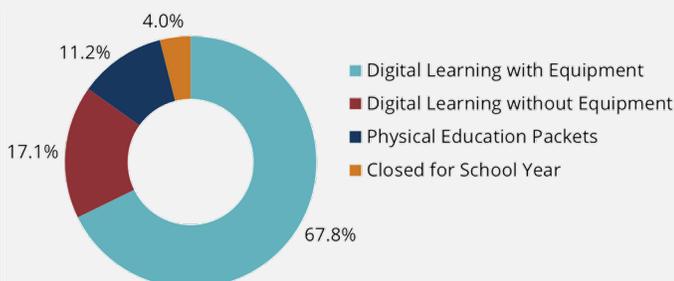
## NIEA Survey

In order to assess the most pressing needs and changing landscape of our education systems, NIEA conducted a survey of our members, educators, leaders, and stakeholders. Conducted from April 21-30, 2020, NIEA will utilize the data to support effective advocacy that provides targeted resources to our students.

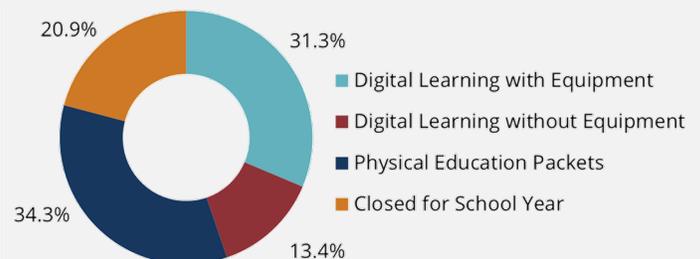
## Transition to Distance Education

A national survey conducted by Education Week estimated that 60 percent of educators were assigning work online and more than one-third of classes were being taught in an online forum by the end of March. However, a history of underfunding in Native schools has resulted in outdated technology infrastructure and computer equipment. Though technology available differs between schools, many Native schools lack the resources to provide laptops or tablets to students. Coined the "homework gap" by national experts and media, many Native schools remain unable to send assignments home with students due to lack of broadband in the community at large.

### Public Schools Serving Native Students



### Bureau of Indian Education Schools



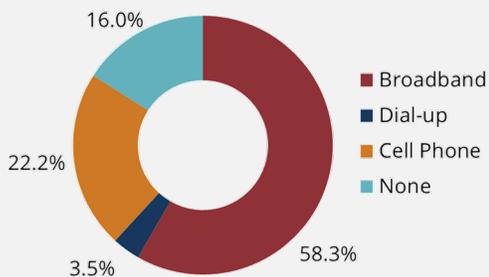


## Student Access to Internet

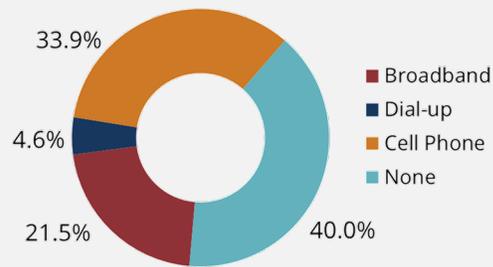
In 2017, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that 36 percent of Native students nationwide did not have internet access in their homes, compared to 18 percent of their peers nationwide. Just last year, the Center for Indian Country Development at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis further clarified that this effect is more pronounced on tribal lands, where only 61 percent of households have broadband access. In comparison, 70 percent of residents the typical county that overlaps a reservation and 69 percent nationwide have access to broadband in the home.

Due to lack of internet access at home, schools serving Native students, particularly those located on and near tribal lands, have struggled to implement virtual education options during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

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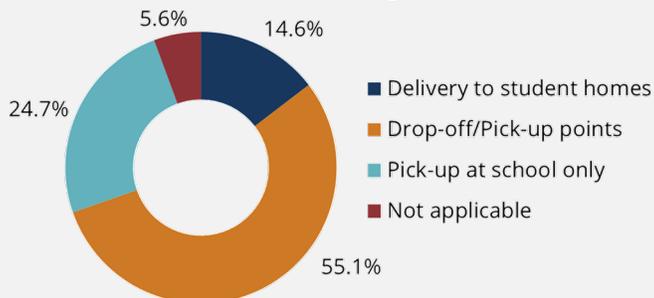
### Bureau of Indian Education Schools



## Food Service Delivery

Nearly 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native students rely on school meal programs to provide affordable and healthy meals for their children throughout the school year. However, COVID-19 has threatened the delivery of meals to many students as schools close and food service workers are infected. Our schools must have access to the resources necessary to ensure that all students, including Native students, continue to have access to meals that support their health and wellbeing during this public health emergency.

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