

Cultural Connections October 2021 Update

Cultural Connections, Educational Service Unit 2's US Department of Education's Demonstration Grants for Indian Children and Youth Program's Accessing Choices in Education grant has completed its planning year in which ESU 2, our Tribal partners from the Omaha and Winnebago Tribes and our school district partners Bancroft-Rosalie, Homer, Lyons-Decatur, and Oakland-Craig developed a plan and have begun supporting culturally relevant student opportunities, supports, and educational choice for Native American students and their families.

Dr. Chris Stogdill, the former middle school principal at Blair Community School District, began working as our full time Cultural Connections coordinator on July 1, 2021.

Some Cultural Connections highlights to report on the day after Nebraska's first Indigenous People Day include:

- The Cultural Connections Service and Support Request Portal went live on September 1, 2021
- As of October 12, 2021, seven requests have been submitted. Categories of the requests were academic tutoring, mentoring, access to mental health services, transportation, Native language, dual credit assistance, after school programming, Cultural trips and travel, and sports equipment assistance for items not provided by the school.
- Four kick-off community meetings so far at Homer, Bancroft-Rosalie, Emerson-Hubbard and Lyons-Decatur.
- Purchased culturally relevant books and materials for the media center at each district
- National Tribal maps for each district to hang in their school
- Omaha and Hochunk Languages apps are available in the App Store and Google Play Store
- Supporting nine students enrolled in enrolled in the Omaha Language class from Nebraska Indian Community College.
- Funding two paraprofessional positions in the schools serving Native students
- Bringing the Omaha Language students to the National Indian Education Conference in Omaha, October 2021.