

Tac Titooqan Article
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What is Impact Aid?

The purpose of Impact Aid is to provide formula grants to school districts burdened by the presence of nontaxable federal land and installations to make up for the lost revenues and additional costs associated with the federal presence. It is one of the few formula programs where Local Educational Agencies receive funds directly from the U.S. Department of Education rather than through their states. Impact Aid was first signed into law by President Harry S. Truman in 1950 and has been amended many times since then. This program provides a payment in lieu of local taxes otherwise collected for Local Educational Agencies that are burdened by the presence of nontaxable federal land and installations, but are nonetheless responsible for educating children of federal personnel who live and/or work on these properties. Except for money earmarked specifically for children with disabilities, the aid becomes part of the Local Educational Agencies regular budget, and no specific restrictions are placed on the use of the funds.

After reviewing the results of the 2017-2018 Impact Aid Questionnaire, three learning needs emerged as the highest priorities to the parents and patrons of the Lapwai School District. Current efforts to address these priorities in the Lapwai School District include:

1) Nez Perce language recovery schoolwide.

The Lapwai School District is proud to report a long and successful partnership with the Nez Perce Language Program. Program funding and teacher availability continues to provide language learning opportunities throughout the school day districtwide wherever possible. High school students are earning college credit for their participation in addition to high school credit. Nez Perce Language is also a consistent offering during the elementary afterschool program.

2) Enhanced whole child educational Pre-K-12 programs that develop positive human relations, self-discipline, good citizenship, self-esteem and success.

The Lapwai School District is currently implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (P.B.I.S). P.B.I.S. is a best-practice framework for improving academic and behavioral outcomes for all students. The purpose of this program is to increase academic time-on-task by reducing problem behaviors. The students are explicitly taught how to be respectful, responsible, and safe in all locations on the school grounds. Our goal with PBIS and bully prevention is to create a safe learning environment to maximize learning for all students. The elementary is also implementing the P.A.T.H.S. curriculum (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), which encourages the development of strong social skills, problem solving, positive character traits, and bullying prevention, all which support academics. These research-based tools for teachers minimize learning interruptions and prevent bullying and other behaviors with strategic procedures and prevention techniques. Positive character traits and citizenship are also recognized in both schools with rewards, celebrations, and assemblies.

A leadership class is also offered for high school students focusing on positive human relations, self-discipline, good citizenship, self-esteem and success. These students also assist with the middle school lunch hour acting as mentors engaging the younger students in activities.

3) More academic challenges and competitions or advanced coursework.

- a) The elementary afterschool program includes a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics focus with engaging activities and family engagement events.
- b) The Higher Education Center allows 100 percent of our senior class to access college applications, FAFSA, and scholarship applications. The coordination with the University of Idaho and the Bridge Idaho program have been critical in these efforts. This program has funded six campus visits during the 2017-2018 school year.

- c) Our seniors are part of the Gear Up Idaho Grant. This program has afforded our students a full time math tutor and college advisor. Students have access to math support in the classroom and after school hours including ACT preparation. All seniors are eligible for a 5 year renewable scholarship to attend Idaho institutions. 100 percent of the Senior Class has participated in FAFSA, Idaho College Application Week, and toured at least two college campuses.
- d) BPA (Business Professionals of America) and FFA (Future Farmers of America) provide career awareness, work experience, and professional-technical opportunities for our students.
- e) BPA, FFA, and Nez Perce Language students are also participating in academic competitions with great success.
- f) University of Idaho Upward Bound has an office at the high school including a full time dedicated staff member. Their college preparation services include ACT assistance, dual enrollment opportunities, campus visits, and financial aid assistance.
- g) The Middle-High has a College and Career Readiness Professional Learning Community working on a research-based approach to preparing students for graduation and the requirements and challenges after high school.
- h) Dual credit opportunities through LCSC for high school students currently include: Public Speaking, Nez Perce Language, College Writing, Native American History, Math, College and Career Readiness, and Art.
- i) 65 middle school students are currently taking Advanced Opportunity Droneology. There are plans to expand drone technology opportunities to the elementary afterschool program as well.
- j) Drone use in Environmental Science is also offered to high school students through a partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe and University of Idaho.
- k) A high school newspaper, journalism, and broadcast course is new this year. These students will be also be competing in Business Professionals of America.
- l) Anatomy and Physiology is a new high school course this year.
- m) Speech and debate have been expanded to the middle school.
- n) Lapwai Middle-High School was awarded a Native Youth Community Project grant which provides a full time College and Career Readiness Teacher, technology, assessment materials, college visits and other advanced opportunities for students in grades 6-12.

Respondents who listed priorities in the survey not explained above are welcome to contact the superintendent at their convenience for additional information at (208) 843-2622. In addition to working on these priorities, we have a continued partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe Education Department. Their State Tribal Education Partnership Education Partnership (STEP) Project is providing professional development, coaching, and resources related to culturally-relevant instructional strategies and increasing family engagement. The project focuses on improving the academic achievement of tribal students by meeting their unique educational and cultural needs. Through use of the Nez Perce Tribe Education Standards, aligned to the Idaho Common Core State Standards, we are working collaboratively to define what “culturally relevant” education means for Lapwai students. This partnership has become a critical component to our success.

It is not too late to provide input. You are still welcome to complete and submit a survey which can be accessed on our district website at www.lapwai.org. You can also request a copy at (208) 843-2622. I would like to thank the Lapwai School District Board of Trustees, Indian Parent Committee, Nez Perce Tribe Education Department, and our district administrators for their input in creating the survey.