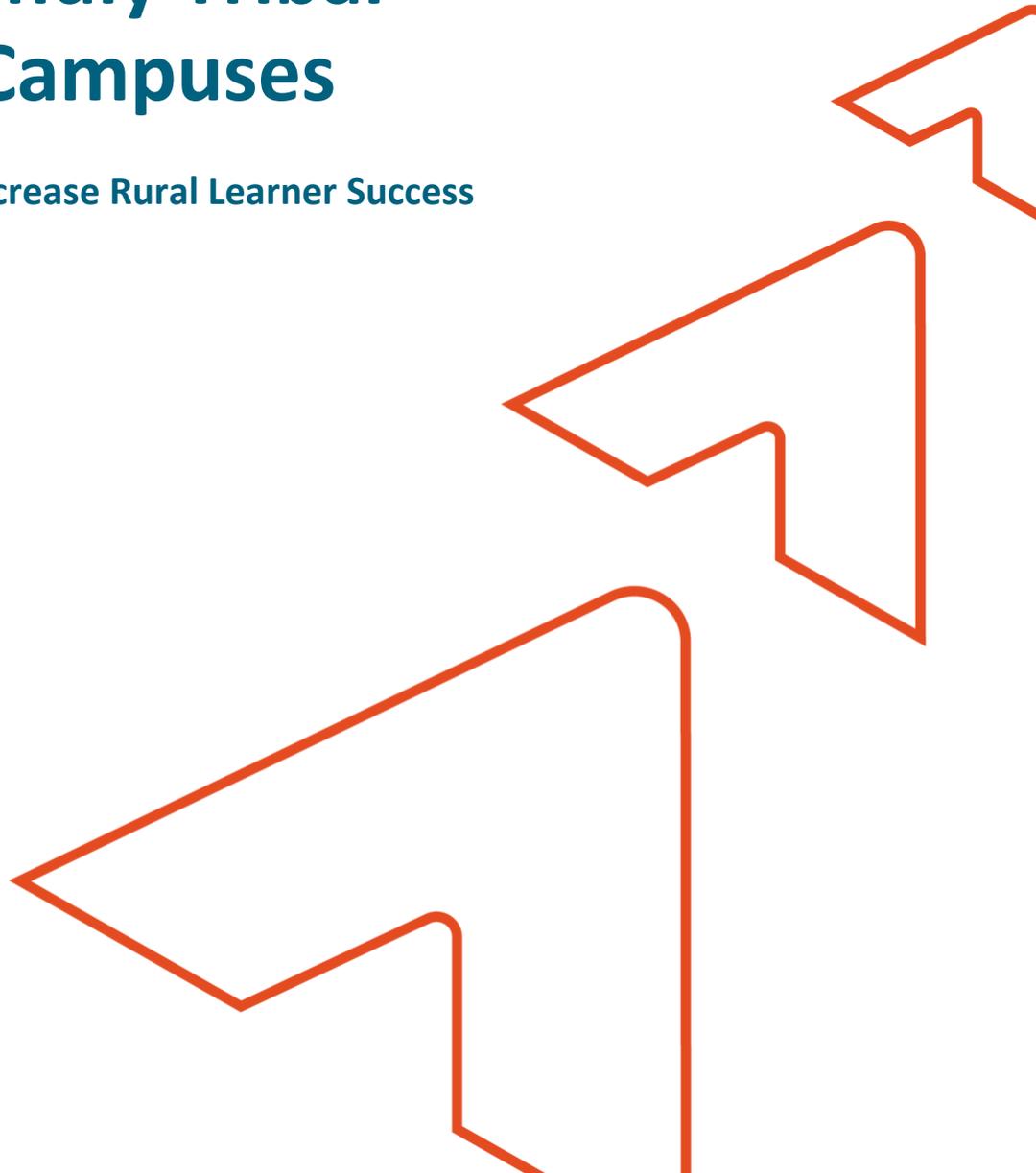


Project Profile

# Family-Friendly Tribal and Rural Campuses

Building Evidence to Increase Rural Learner Success



# Family-Friendly Tribal and Rural Campuses

## Organization

The American Indian College Fund (The College Fund) and Urban Institute | Washington, DC

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Social Media (Urban Institute): [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

## Geographic Focus

Montana, South Dakota, and Wisconsin

## Population Focus

The College Fund's Strategic Enrollment Management initiative funds the following tribal colleges and universities (TCUs): (a) Salish Kootenai College, (b) Oglala Lakota College, and (c) Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University.

All these grantees are rural-serving institutions (RSIs).

## Project Overview

This project helps advance equity and success for learners from low-income backgrounds and addresses other barriers to meeting their education goals. The research will generate insights from TCUs about serving learners with child caregiving responsibilities to inform the refinement of an existing tool to help all types of RSIs. The project will focus on promoting family-friendly campuses, including opportunities for remote learning and support, in rural contexts.

Through a co-led partnership between the Urban Institute and the College Fund, and in collaboration with PERG Learning, this project will bring together the Family-Friendly Campus Toolkit (the Toolkit) — a widely adopted tool to support parenting and caregiving learners on campus — with insights drawn from TCUs' expertise on intergenerational education supports in resource-constrained environments.

The College Fund is excited to partner in this work with Urban to explore the ways we can better understand the supportive services for student parents on rural tribal college campuses. We also think this provides an interesting opportunity to learn what ways these colleges do this work naturally and how they can inform what strategies or approaches other rural colleges should use.

– American Indian College Fund

The College Fund is a great partner, and we are looking forward to learning with them and the TCUs about building family-friendly practices in rural college settings. We believe that TCUs are the source of invaluable insight and wisdom that can inform better approaches to student success throughout U.S. higher education.

– Urban Institute

## Research Questions

1. How can RSIs and TCUs leverage their existing resources to support learners with child caregiving responsibilities, including student engagement through remote learning and support?
  - a. How might examples of family engagement and remote learning and support from TCUs inform best practices for other RSIs?
2. What aspects of the Toolkit work well for RSIs and TCUs? What aspects of the Toolkit require further refinement to be useful to RSIs and TCUs, and what should those changes be?
3. What is the effect of implementing a rural-appropriate version of the Toolkit on outcomes for learners with child caregiving responsibilities?

## Research Methodology

This research project will rely on qualitative and survey data collection to answer the research questions. With support from The College Fund, Urban will conduct an annual series of qualitative focus groups at the grantee TCUs to provide reflections on the Toolkit and insights into the way these schools serve (or could better serve) learners with child caregiving responsibilities.

Student surveys will also be administered at the grantee colleges at the beginning and at the end of the grant period to understand college experiences and academic outcomes, including course performance, persistence, program/college or university satisfaction, and credential attainment. Finally, The College Fund and Urban will convene a mixed group of stakeholders at each grantee college to share preliminary findings and obtain additional feedback, insights, and issues for consideration.

## Research Significance

This project is important for the broader field of rural education and will benefit students at RSIs by informing a valuable tool that can help colleges change policy and practice to support learners with children. The refined Toolkit and the broader insights from this research will:

- Elevate the profile of student parents, especially among rural and tribal populations, and help create opportunities to contribute to their success.
- Provide resources for colleges to take action.
- Result in colleges' taking on the challenge of becoming more family-friendly, creating more RSIs that effectively serve learners with children.
- Promote accessible and achievable postsecondary pathways for people caring for children.
- Help promote better outcomes for children themselves.

## Grant Period of Performance

March 2023 to February 2026