PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
Limited Options Available for Many American Indian and Alaska Native Students

Why GAO Did This Study
Education refers to school choice as the opportunity for students and their families to create high-quality, personalized paths for learning that best meet the students’ needs. For Indian students, school choice can be a means of accessing instructional programs that reflect and preserve their languages, cultures, and histories. For many years, studies have shown that Indian students have struggled academically and the nation’s K-12 schools have not consistently provided Indian students with high-quality and culturally-relevant educational opportunities.

GAO was asked to review K-12 school choice options for Indian students. This report examines the public school options located in areas with large Indian student populations. GAO used Education’s Common Core of Data for school year 2015-16 (most recent available) to analyze public school choice in (1) school districts in which Indian students accounted for 25 percent or more of all students (i.e., high percentages of Indian students) and (2) the 100 school districts with the largest number of Indian students. GAO also interviewed federal officials, relevant stakeholder groups, and tribal leaders to better understand school choice options for Indian students.

What GAO Recommends
GAO is not making recommendations in this report.

View GAO-19-226. For more information, contact Jacqueline M. Nowicki at (617) 788-0580 or nowickij@gao.gov.