



Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)

Office of Indian Education

Tribal Leaders Consultation

PUBLIC MEETING

The Tribal Consultation was held in the Courtyard Scottsdale Arizona, 5201 North Pima Road, Scottsdale, Arizona on September 12, 2013 at 9:30 a.m., William Mendoza, Executive Director, White House Initiative on American Indian & Alaska Native Education, presiding.

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PRESENT

ARNE DUNCAN, Secretary,

U.S. Department of Education

LIBBY DOGGETT, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning,

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education

JOHN HUPPENTHAL, Superintendent of Public Instruction,

Arizona Department of Education

WILLIAM MENDOZA, Executive Director,

White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

DEBORA NORRIS, Director,

Office of Indian Education, Arizona Department of Education

SEDELTA OOSAHWEE, Associate Director

White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

JOYCE SILVERTHORNE, Director,

Office of Indian Education (OIE), U.S. Department of Education

LINDA K. SMITH, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison

Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

MARY KIM TITLA, Executive Director,

United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY), Inc.

TRIBAL LEADERS PRESENT:

JOHN BUSH, San Carlos Apache Tribe

LORA ANN CHAISSON, United Houma Nation

LUIS GONZALES, Arizona House of Representatives

SALLY GONZALES, Arizona House of Representatives

REX LEE JIM, Navajo Nation

STEVEN KUTZ, Cowlitz Indian Tribe

MARK MARTINEZ, Pueblo of Zuni

LYNN PALMANTEER-HOLDER, Colville Confederated Tribes

RICARDO LEONARD, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

WAVALENE ROMERO, Tohono O'odham Nation

LEROY SHINGOITEWA, Hopi Tribe

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

9:43 a.m.

MR. MENDOZA: Good morning, everybody and thank you for joining us this morning. My name is William Mendoza, Executive Director for the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.

It's such a pleasure to be here in Arizona, in the Salt River Greater Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. At this time if we can begin our opening ceremony. We have a busy schedule ahead of us today and we're wanting to make sure that we're inclusive of as many people to be able to participate as we can.

We'll go into those outreach efforts that we've brought you all here on in a little bit more detail to come, but if we could please start with the posting of colors from our American Legion Post 84 please, from the Gila River.

(Posting of colors)

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, American Legion Post 84. If you could remain standing, please, for our opening blessing from Ricardo Leonard from Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

COUNCILMAN LEONARD: Notifications. I ask the blessings for all the people that are here to be with us or that please for the children.

As we continue bless all the ones that went back and forth that have done this work and have put us to where we're at at this time.

All the ones that have given of their time and their effort to pass on the knowledge to all of the ones that are here today to see this tribe for the betterment of our Indians.

I say this blessing on them, that and that they may return to a happy family with safe guidance.

And take part of this time to help them open up and think with their minds when they look at and speak about the issues of our Education Department and all of the problems that we've had and all of the good things that we've had, and try to describe to make everything equal in education.

The degree we're allowing all the people to come, every direction that they come from to bless the nations.

Again, you bless the nation so that one day we can become one, strong, that each town will be blessed, invoking the two worlds to the traditions of the Educational Department. And thank you for all those blessings that you have given us so far and I pray that you will continue to bless us over the days to come. Thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, Councilman. At this time I'd like to have everybody be seated and we'll begin receiving introductory remarks from Mr. Leonard, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN LEONARD: Good morning to everybody and welcome to the Valley of the Sun. You are very lucky because we were having 113 degree weather just a couple of weeks ago. So, I don't know who it was but thank you kindly for bringing that rain.

(Laughter)

COUNCILMAN LEONARD: I want to thank you and talk to you a little bit about our history. We are of four tribes within this valley which are the Tonoho O'odham Nation, the Akchin Community, the Gila River Indian Community and ourselves, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

All our tribes are connected, our sister tribes are connected by our ancestors who were the Hohokam, the ones that have passed on. And they built vast, vast canal systems within our valley and they were the farmers of the valley.

And I just wanted to say that much. We also have another tribe that came and joined us who are the Xalychidom Piipaash, the people who live toward the water. And they came in the early 17 but if you ask the Piipaash they'll say they were here forever, so we'll just leave it at that.

But we're two different tribes, two different languages, very different traditions, but we continue to live together in peace and continue to be strong as nations within ourselves, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and also the Gila River Indian Community.

We reside on the borders of Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe, Fountain Hills and Apache Junction. So we're landlocked in and it just happened so quick, it happened so quick that these things came to be.

We have approximately 56,000 acres which 19,000 acres are held as natural preserves. And I hope if there's a possibility that you get a chance if you're from the north you maybe stop by and go through our area there where all natives are welcome. Our Salt River and also the Verde River come together. There are eagles there and a lot of our animals are starting to come back because we put it into preserves.

We have approximately 9,700 community members which half are under 18 years of age. And we were told this by our elders that this would happen in the future.

And education is a big part of this. There are many times that we as community leaders feel that we're falling short of what our goals should be. But we continue to strive and with your help, all of your help that we can network and become stronger in education and help each other out.

I want to thank all of you personally too for coming here and doing this and being a part of this consultation. And all those ones that have come from Washington, thank you very much for coming this way.

And I also want to add that I'm very, very glad to be here. I'm just kind of sad I can't stay for the rest of the day. We have meetings that are planned so I wanted to come this far and thank you all for coming and being a part.

But there's something that as the people we do. We've always said when our children were born, when there are ceremonies that happen we always sing songs for our people and for the people that are being visited.

So I'd like to, if you would indulge me to sing a blessing song for all of you to hopefully get yourselves in the mood to talk about the educational problems that we do have and some of the strengths that we have so that we can continue to work as a team and work together.

And hopefully one day all our children will be very highly educated. Maybe one day we'll have a Native American as President. Now, that would be something.

But this is called "Mario and The the Cross." This is a God song. And what the song says is -- and it goes back to how we look at our songs. There are so many different series on ants and birds and insects and those type of things, animals.

But these songs, when the Christian faith came through it was so close to our Au-Authm faith that we took it very closely to heart. And this talks about how a lady is lamenting.

And the way the story goes as it was told that this is Mary and she's crying to Jesus on the cross. And she knows that he's gone, he's passed and his soul has gone. So she cries, where have you gone? Where have you gone? I will continue to follow you. I cry at this time but I will continue to follow you for life.

So there are many songs that are blessing songs. And these are some of the songs that our people don't dance to, but that are used in this context. So I want to do this song for you. And please indulge me. You don't have to stand or anything but I'd just like to ask for your time, a little bit of time.

(Whereupon, the song "Maria at the Cross" was sung)

COUNCILMAN LEONARD: Thank you very much and I pray for special blessings for all of you and your families. And I hope and I pray that they are healthy and well when you return home.

And please if there's anything that this hotel can do, let me know, short of free rooms I guess.

(Laughter)

COUNCILMAN LEONARD: Thank you very much. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, Councilman Leonard.

At this time I want to just do a little housekeeping and talk a little bit about what has brought us here today. We have done a number of outreach and engagement. The Office of Indian Education and the White House Initiative on American and Alaskan Native Education have worked hard to implement what, in 2009, was the President's call for greater specificity and action around consultation and collaboration in coordination with tribes.

And throughout 2010 and `11 we consulted on reservation lands and in urban native centers. And the culmination of that, what we learned from those conversations led to one of the more expansive shifts in Indian education which amounted to the President's Executive Order on Improving

American Indian and Alaskan Native Educational Opportunities and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities.

That initiative and the memorandum of agreement that was developed as a result of that initiative was taken to tribal leaders and educators throughout 2012. And in 2013, we've continued the consultation aspects of which you are now participating in today.

As we've looked at the 90/10 dilemma, if you will, as many of you have come to know how I communicate the issues and concerns as tribal leaders have communicated them to us. We have a situation in Indian education right now where we need tribes coordinating and collaborating with their own educators within their communities and within public schools.

And so these proceedings in 2013 and to come are going to work towards trying to engage our most senior officials from the Department with our tribal leaders and, of course, our educators. As I know, looking through the room, many of you represent that.

Today we have gathered with us an impressive and in many respects an unprecedented group of individuals to address you. They will be able to introduce themselves in more detail and I refer you to your packets for their biographies and their offices that they represent.

But just to summarize who we have before us and who we have targeted for outreach, we have targeted federal, state and tribal elected officials. And to bring them together to be accountable for these conversations as we hear from our public as well, our educators, our education advocates, our parents, our teachers and our community members.

We have three primary topics that our consultation today will cover. And in general we will be discussing the President's educational -- early education proposal that supports Native American families from birth through age 5 on the continuum of learning and how this impacts our Native communities.

We have with us today to be able to receive those concerns, various stakeholders from the early learning community including Linda Smith, our Deputy Assistant and Interdepartmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development who will be joining us shortly if she has not already.

As you can imagine, as being coordinating with the Secretary's bus tour--the annual bus tour through America--a lot of our senior officials are in high demand so they'll be here at certain times to receive your comments and concerns.

And we have others, Libby Doggett who is specifically our new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning at the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education who will be joining us this afternoon.

And of course we have the Secretary of Education Arne Duncan who will be joining us later as well to hear from our tribal leaders.

The other item that we have on the agenda today is the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services and their published request for information, for input into the proposed definition of the Department's interpretation of reservation, and how that would align with the Government Accounting Office's interpretation.

We have a senior official from that Office, Mr. Tom Finch, who will discuss that in detail, in depth with you as we move along in our agenda.

And of course, core to our local education agencies and funds that are designated specifically for Native students in those areas, our Title VII formula program gathers information through the electronic application system for Indian education that includes student accounts and applications.

And then during the 2012-13 grant cycles, they're proposing some enhancements to the programs and are considering additional work for the subsequent grant year. Revisions to that form are also being explored and so we'll be talking about those issues as well. So this is a working consultation with our tribal leaders and we need to hear from our public.

Now, you all obviously received the invitation and are here and RSVP'd. And one of the main points that we are striving for through our coordinating offices within the Department of Education has been to ensure that there is a directory of Indian education as a point of accountability at the Department of Education.

So we have a growing database of around 2,400 individuals that we have engaged with throughout these consultation efforts and that aligns with our responsibility to our 566 tribal nations. And we also step beyond that to establish relationships that we've had either through previous grantees

or with our existing Indian education organizations, as we know them, to be able to communicate the opportunity for these consultations.

And so we've sent invitations to all the tribes in the greater area as well as the nation as a whole to be able to participate today. And the ones that are before you here today and will be joining us at different junctures throughout today are the ones who have committed to engage in these activities.

So we welcome how we can do better in this process. And please ensure that you communicate to us that your organization, you yourself as an individual, or that your tribe and various levels within your tribal leadership are included in our Indian education directory.

You have a number of documents that are within your packet that you'll need to be referring to today. I won't go through that list but if you find that you're missing something, please reach out to some of our staff who I will point out here in a moment to be able to access that.

Please, if you all can place your cell phones and smart devices on mute so that we can have minimal interruption to the proceedings today. Just thank you so much for taking that step to be respectful of the proceedings that we have today.

I also want to ask if everybody could please respect everyone who is speaking. Keep your conversation to a minimum. As you can see, we have numerous exits to the room. There's areas in the back of the room here that you could access as well as to the side of us for any sidebar conversations that you need to have.

We also want to let you know that you are being webcast around the country. It's been important to us and we've heard from Indian communities that we continue to explore and strive to bring these conversations to persons who cannot travel here.

We have a number of people who are interested nationally and so we are being webcast both audio and video today. And we will be having participation from the field as well. So if you have people that you wanted to have engaged in today's conversation, please send them the registration information. I'm sure that the time has still not passed for them to be able to participate and we'll make sure our team reaches out to them.

I also want to introduce our staff who can assist with either having better accommodations for you if we need more chairs. If you need some accommodations made, please reach out to them. We have Brandon Bayton with Kauffman and Associates. He's wearing -- they're all wearing badges like this with "Staff" on there. You may have interacted with them on the registration process.

And we also have Amara Okoroafor who is with our Manhattan Strategy Group as well who is in the corner here. And she could serve as your liaison.

We are having a public comment period and depending on the amount of tribal leader comments and considerations that we'll be having, that period may be expanded as well. And so that public comment period is slated for 2 p.m. And we have a pre-registration for that. And so, please, if you could sign up for that by 1:30 p.m. so that we can make sure that we engage in the public comment period in an organized fashion.

Depending on the sign-ups for the registration, we'll try to find an appropriate block of time. And having gone through this process a number of times, we're looking at probably about 3 minutes. So if you can plan on that block of time. And if we have an overwhelming response to the public comment period, we may have to even reconsider that. So we'll do our best to do a responsible way of approaching that time period given the great turnout that we have today.

We will also be taking phone conversations, phone testimony as well. And we'll try to toggle between the phone and in-person testimony either until we exhaust or until we run out of the public comment period.

And for your own purposes, if you cannot say everything that you are able to today, or you would like to especially document something for the record, we do have a court reporter today who is documenting everything audio-ly. And so you also have public comment cards within your packets as well. And there you will find a contact card for the Department of Education itself to be able to submit additional documentation via email or United States Postal Service. So that information is included in your packet.

The documents discussed during today's consultation are also accessible by online at our website as you registered here, edtribalconsultations.gov. I believe that's [.org](http://edtribalconsultations.org), [.org](http://edtribalconsultations.org). And it will be

accessible within 30 days. These conversations, we turn around with our contractor and should be posted within 30 days for your review.

With that, I want to now turn the mike over for remarks and overview from our Director of the Office of Indian Education and my colleague Joyce Silverthorne.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for being here. It's good to have so many faces and so many different perspectives represented.

The Office of Indian Education has been in existence since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was established and we have a number of programs that you are no doubt familiar with.

Our Title VII formula program is the one with the broadest reach. And we serve approximately 1,300 grantees across the country.

And with those 1,300 grantees, we have students who are in public schools that are of first degree, so the child is enrolled, or the parent is enrolled, or the grandparent is enrolled. So up to a second generation descendant is still eligible for Title VII.

The programs that we offer in addition to that formula program is the discretionary. We have professional development, professional development for teachers and for administrators. And we have approximately 40 programs across the country that are serving and training educators who are much-needed for our workforce.

In addition to that, we have a discretionary program that serves demonstration. Demonstration program is where I began my teaching career as a teacher in an alternative school program on the Flathead Reservation. And since then the generations of change in education that -- generations of change, oh my goodness, did I just say that?

It's an interesting process, it's a long process. We have a long way to go before we are educating all of our children well. And so every step that we make to be able to close that gap is important.

Certainly with the No Child Left Behind criteria and the disaggregated data, we have information about what that gap looks like that we didn't have in the past. And so as we continue to

work forward with our demonstration programs, our professional development programs, we hope to begin closing some of the achievement gap issues that we have seen.

Under demonstration, we have two different options. One is an early learning program which is a preschool and the other is a transition to college. And transition to college is one of those times when we see a loss in the numbers and counts that we are working for for a successful education.

The other program that our Office administers is the State Tribal Education Partnership. This is a new program. It has been in existence for just almost one year. We will complete our first year September 30.

We were funded by appropriation to provide capacity-building and support to tribal education agencies. With that, we developed a new program which is a partnership program with state education agencies where the tribal education agency begins to assume some of the responsibilities of the state education agency within reservation school settings.

And this is a program that is challenged by many of the issues of bringing together the state, the tribe and the federal government. As they exist, coexist and operate within an education school, a reservation public program. So, that is our newest.

We have four grantees and we are hoping that we will learn a great deal from them over this 3-year period and be able to look at where we go as we move forward in Indian education.

With our limited time today I'm going to leave my comments fairly short so that we can be sure that we get to everybody as we move through the agenda. And you'll hear from me again as we review the 506 form. So thank you, thank you for coming today.

MR. MENDOZA: So I'm playing dual roles this morning. We have Debora Norris, who will be serving as our moderator in the afternoon here. She's agreed to assist us today in being able to kind of structure our conversations. Many of you know her. She's with the Office of Indian Education at the Arizona Department of Education. But until that point, I'll just be playing obviously the dual roles.

And at this point I just want to speak to what are the Initiative's update from this standpoint that we're looking at in our efforts.

Certainly the strengthening of these relationships and the way that Joyce just mentioned between tribal governments and how we support tribal governments through the

President's Executive order is something that is either a supreme tenet if not integrated throughout the Executive order. And our activities have really been centered on establishing the kind of infrastructure that speaks to that.

And how can we work towards the inclusion of tribes at every continuum of education that we're seeing versus looking at whether or not we're solely focused and as important as that is on the Bureau of Indian Education side and the tribal colleges and universities.

With those small footprints, so to speak, and our student population the question becomes how do we begin to engage tribes more effectively in the masses of our Indian students in public schools and mainstream institutions.

And so we've had a number of kind of thematic areas that we've been working on in that respect. And certainly they involve the strengthening of those partnerships. And over the last, you know, the administration and certainly leading off in this current administration making sure that we have these senior officials in front of you and in your communities is important.

The Secretary of Education has taken the lead in this regard and his staff have followed suit. He was the first Secretary to speak at a tribally controlled college and since then has been in our communities from everywhere between Lane Deer to New Mexico to now here in Salt River in making sure that he is communicating with you about what our accountability is under the trust responsibility as well as learning from you what the current context is and how that is changing for you in terms of how we are experiencing these really tough times in education by far and especially as they affect our communities.

There are some points of accountability for us as well within the Executive order itself and how we're implementing them.

One is the structure of the Department of the Interior and Education memorandum of agreement that we've developed as a response to the Executive order. That sets forth a Joint Committee on Indian Education. And that Committee has mobilized. We are in consistent conversations with the Bureau of Indian Education and Indian Affairs at large and the Department of the Interior. Those of you who know those structures all too well and are working towards advancing not only the goals of the Executive order as they're laid out but also the specific activities that the two parties have agreed to within that memorandum of agreement.

We know there is a lot there that needs to be operationalized and those conversations are going to involve tribal leaders as well. The memorandum of agreement has called for the inclusion of tribal leaders and we know that there's a path towards effectively engaging with tribal leaders as we begin to grapple with everything that that agreement entails.

The mechanism for -- that we have proposed looks towards existing infrastructures within the Department of the Interior, specifically the Tribal Budget Interior Council. And because that is a representative body would serve as a continuity measure between being able to communicate information.

We've also engaged with our National Advisory Council on Indian Education who produces annually a report to Congress in terms of what their recommendations are to Congress as well as to the Secretary. They have produced this year for the first time a letter to the Secretary with specific recommendations.

And our Offices in particular look forward to providing our National Advisory Council with a response to those recommendations. That report is submitted annually on June 30. And so as they look to their upcoming fiscal activities, we'll continue to engage with them on how the strategic activities of the initiative relates to their recommendations.

Another aspect is, of course, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As you know, in the absence of Congress being able to advance the reauthorization of this act, the Secretary has moved forward with flexibility in this area.

And it's been a main interest for us to ensure that tribes are included in flexibility in a meaningful way, and that consultation and coordination and collaboration is strengthened. And so one of our key goals is to look at strengthening those provisions as it relates to the Department's consultation policy.

We have learned a tremendous amount about this context and how we are moving forward in Indian education. And we are closer than ever before. It was my priority when I came into this Office and it remains an element that is essential to our trust accountability at the federal level. And we really feel good about where we're at and we hope that in this next fiscal year here, our next iteration of consultations, that we can bring to you our consultation policy which looks at what we've heard from you all, which is greater specificity, criteria for how we are -- these issues within federal

programming rises to the occasion of needing to be consulted, and then the mechanism for ensuring response to that consultation.

We've heard from you that we come to your communities, we listen to you, we hear you, we may even understand you, but you hear little of what came as a result of those conversations. So we wrote that into the memorandum of agreement with Interior that we work on those issues together with the Bureau of Indian Education and Indian Affairs about how we can devise a system to more effectively respond to what we're hearing from you in consultation.

Now, I don't know if we can accomplish the kind of specificity that we can all agree upon within our current iteration of our consultation policy, but it's something that we're committed to working on with you. And we appreciate your ideas on how we can better consult and be responsive to the substance of those consultations.

And with that, I just want to highlight -- Joyce has already gone through our Tribal Education Agency pilot. We also developed a memorandum of agreement with the Health and Human Services and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Education specifically on Native languages, histories and cultures. And that working group meets regularly to discuss these issues. And particularly from the standpoint of Education, we have made some significant advancements in trying to pursue greater clarity around what it is that we can do statutorily, where we are at in some research.

We've worked with our Office of English Language Acquisition to look at better identification of our English learners and how it relates to Native learners. We did a request for information of which some of you may have contributed to. We're also working with our Office of Post Secondary Education to include priority for Native languages and activities that are culturally responsive to our strengthening institutions program, particularly our upcoming programs, American Indian -- our Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian programs. And we'll look to that as well for tribal colleges and universities.

And within our Title VII as well, we are exploring how to emphasize culturally-responsive education and tie that to performance measures for students both within the application process and as we look towards our annual performance reports that are currently being shaped so that we can better measure our program effectiveness.

So there's a lot of action yet to be had in this area and as we look at the new jurisdiction of the White House initiative to be able to have these conversations across program offices within Education, we really need to know the specifics of which programs have that flexibility, where those barriers are as you see them in your communities and in your work, and how we can begin to look at those in a way that's more effective for Indian communities.

With that, I also want to keep my remarks short at the moment. I want to check with our staff here to see if our next speaker is here.

Linda, thank you for joining us. I was engaged -- it's such a pleasure to have engagement from our agency partners at our consultation. It's something that we want to encourage and just thank you for taking that step forward. I want to turn the mic over to you now, Linda.

MS. SMITH: My name is Linda Smith and I am the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development at the Department of Health and Human Services.

I'm a little bit of an interloper here into this but I think the testimony to the work that we are trying to do in Washington between the various Departments to bring continuity to our early education efforts and to make sure that we are aligned and that we are working to use federal resources more efficiently.

So in that respect I have responsibility at the Department of Health and Human Services for the Head Start program, Early Head Start, the Childcare and Development Block Grant, CCDF Fund implementation, Tribal Home Visitation which is -- the responsibility for home visitation is partially with my office for the tribal programs and the state programs are with another part of HHS.

And I also work with the Department of Education on the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grants that are jointly administered between our two agencies.

And then there's one other program that I would like to talk to or to mention here. It's another initiative that we are working on that is directly related to early education and that is what we call the Tribal Early Learning Initiative. And we are funding planning money in four reservations right now to see how we can break down the barriers and what are the barriers between Head Start, early childhood, the Head Start program, childcare and the home visitation programs working more collaboratively and providing a comparable level of service within the Native American community.

We actually see that as a model that we hope to use at the federal level to improve things within the states. So we're testing it actually in tribal communities with the eye on it becoming -- informing what we do to break down barriers at the state level.

With that said, I want to talk -- I'm sort of the warmup act for Secretary Duncan. There will be one after me, Deputy Assistant Secretary Doggett, who will speak to early childhood from the Education side and then Secretary Duncan, who is very committed to early education as I think we all know.

And so I want to talk a little bit about the President's Early Learning Initiative and just describe that so when Secretary Duncan and Doggett get here you will have some understanding of what they are going to be talking about.

The President's Early Learning Initiative, in that initiative, we are trying very hard to clarify roles and responsibilities, clarify funding streams at the federal level and make sure that we are working in tandem between the two Departments to ensure that children beginning actually prenatally, and that is with the home visitation program, and continuing on into school have a continuum of services that address all of their needs, comprehensive needs.

So beginning with the home visitation program and the tribal home visitation program, the President's Early Learning Initiative will expand and extend the home visitation program across this country. It is part of the Affordable Care Act and it will be extended through this initiative to continue to provide those services to families prenatally and in the birth to 3 and birth to 5 years through home visitation. We have various models that we use and you know them as well as I do.

So, beginning with home visitation and then extending into a partnership between Head Start and childcare. And it gets to what I was saying, how can we help these programs work together.

So, the part of the President's initiative, the two parts actually, the home visitation and the birth to 4 initiative, or part of the President's agenda, is within HHS. And it's those partnerships between childcare and Head Start.

Then continuing on funding pre-K, full-day pre-K for all 4-year-olds in this country. And that initiative is one that is -- the Secretaries following me will speak to more in detail. But that program will then provide funding through the Federal Government to the states on a match basis to expand pre-K for all children 200 percent of poverty and below.

So, what will happen then, and this is just a little complicated but not too, one of the reasons we went this direction was to clarify roles. In many states and in different communities, we have seen competition for 4-year-olds between Head Start and pre-K. And that is not a good use of federal funds. And so the idea is to change the funding for 4-year-olds through the Department of Education and that the money currently spent on 4-year-olds in Head Start will be redirected down to the birth to 4-year-old population, thus allowing us to expand services to infants, toddlers and 3-year-olds as a result of that.

In addition, in the President's budget, we have \$1.4 billion to expand those partnerships.

Now, how will those partnerships work? What we envision is that we will be using the Early Head Start grant-making process and that the money will go out competitively to programs interested in creating partnerships between Early Head Start and childcare.

The idea being that if you are a childcare provider coming into this partnership, you will agree to meet the standards of the Early Head Start program.

In return for that, you will be funded at the same level as Early Head Start which I do try to make this clear by -- I always have to use my hands and I apologize for that.

We know at the federal level that we spend \$12,500 per space for Early Head Start on average. We spend, on average, \$5,500 for childcare for a subsidy. And that gap has created the problem with childcare. The quality of it is low and there is not that much. So what our vision is, through the partnerships, is to raise the level of funding for those childcare providers in the partnership willing to meet the standards to the same level as Early Head Start.

And in return, they will be required to get the same level of education, which is essentially an AA or a CDA, and meet the same requirements for screening children, providing comprehensive services, family support, et cetera. So that, in a nutshell, is how the partnerships will work at the Department of Education.

As we transition programs from the 4-year-olds into the schools, or the school-funded programs. And I must stress that those will be a diverse delivery system. As we do that, that other money will go down.

So, in addition to the \$1.4 billion that we have right now, we estimate that we will be putting another \$3 to \$4 billion in the birth to 4 age group over the next several years. So, by saving money in this initiative and putting money in one end, we will force that money down to serve more infants and toddlers. And I think that we all know are critical years for our youngest children.

So, with that, I think the only other two things that I would put on the table as a part of the discussion that we are looking at re-authorization of two major pieces of legislation here in the next 2 years.

One right now which is the Childcare and Development Block Grant, which is probably -- it has been marked up in the Senate and we're not sure what will happen in the House at this point. But we do have movement on that re-authorization.

And we are beginning conversations about Head Start re-authorization, which we anticipate will happen in another year and a half or so.

So with that, I look forward to the comments that you have and the advice that you have to offer us. I didn't say as I came in -- Joyce, I don't know if we know each other, but I actually was born and raised on the Flathead Reservation and I just came from there. And I got my start in early childhood on the Northern Cheyenne. So the tribal issues are near and dear to me, and I look forward to hearing from you how we can help make things better within the Native populations. So, thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, Linda. Thank you so much for your participation today. It's great to know that you have that connection to the Flathead.

At this time I want to just pause for an introduction of our officials that we have here. I neglected in kind of doing the overview of our federal participants our other people that we have also called upon to assist us today.

Namely, our Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal will be joining us with Secretary Duncan this afternoon as well. Of course, I mentioned Debora, who will be serving as our moderator who I will gladly be turning over the helm to here in a second.

And also Mary Kim Titla (San Carlos Apache) who is the executive director of United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc., (UNITY) and is also a board member on the National Indian Education Association as well. And I'm sure she holds numerous other titles which I'm overlooking.

We have called upon her to provide us with an overview and synopsis of education in the area in the region. It's always a daunting task and she'll try to address that in the way that I know she's -- her expertise and experiences could do justice to. It's always a difficult position that we put someone in to handle that task, but we're in good hands there.

Also joining us later today would be Diane Enos as well, with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, so we look forward to her participation as well.

At this time I just want to go around the room and do a quick introduction. Those of us who have already introduced ourselves or spoken need not -- maybe just mention who you are in case somebody came in the room. But if you could just give us your name, your organization or tribe, and title. And we'll just make sure we get a good introduction around the room. If we could start with you, Mary Kim.

MS. TITLA: Thank you and good morning. It's good to be here.

The only other things that I'll add to what Mr. Mendoza has said is that I'm a mother of three sons and a grandmother of three. So, good morning.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: Good morning, my name is Lynn Palmanteer-Holder. I'm down here as Nancy. Only my mother calls me that.

I'm a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation's Colville Business Council.

I am a second generation tribal leader. My father was on tribal council for 43 years. So I'm very excited to be here. My heart and passion is in Indian education so I'm very excited. Thank you.

And I'm from the other Washington that brought the cool air.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN SHINGOITEWA: My name is LeRoy Shingoitewa. I'm chairman of the Hopi Tribe. And my background is in education. I've been a principal for 27 years and now made a transition to a new area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KUTZ: My name is Stephen Kutz. I'm a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, also in Washington State.

I am a tribal council member currently serving as chair of our tribal council. I also am deputy director of our health and human services program.

I'm a registered nurse. My life's work has predominantly been in the public health sector. Also, a 20-year veteran for -- in active duty in the military. Thank you.

MS. CHAISSON: Good morning, my name is Lora Ann Chaisson. I'm the vice principal chief of the United Houma Nation in Louisiana.

My background is in Department of Labor with the WIA program. And I thank you for having me.

VICE CHAIRWOMAN ROMERO: Good morning, my name is Wavalene Romero, vice chairman for the Tohono O'odham Nation.

VICE PRESIDENT JIM: Good morning, my name is Rex Jim for the Navajo Nation.

COUNCILMAN MARTINEZ: Good morning, everybody. My name is Mark Martinez, councilman with the Pueblo of Zuni, New Mexico.

MS. NORRIS: Good morning, I'm Debora Norris, deputy associate superintendent at the Arizona Department of Education.

I'm a member of the Navajo Nation and I grew up for most of my life on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

MS. OOSAHWEE: Good morning, my name is Sedelta Oosahwee. I'm an enrolled member of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation. I'm also part Cherokee and I'm the associate director of the White House initiative.

VICE CHAIRMAN BUSH: Good morning, my name is John Bush. I've been in education most of my life. I'm vice chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe.

DR. FINCH: Good morning, I'm Tom Finch with the Department of Education the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

MR. MENDOZA: Okay, so thank you so much. And at this time we're going to jump right into our consultation topics to take us up to our break.

We are scheduled for a break at 11:10 and we'll do our best to stick to that break time there so that we can start everything promptly at 11:45 once the Secretary and our other delegates get here.

We will have time for more expanded tribal leader thoughts and considerations as we move in our agenda later in the day. And during Mr. Finch's and Silverthorne's presentation they will be seeking comments and considerations from our tribal leaders represented at the table here.

And then during the public comment the audience can comment specifically on your presentations. So during the presentations we'll only be sticking with comments from the table and then we'll take any considerations from the public during the public comment period.

So at this time I'd like to turn the mike over to Mr. Finch and Debora Norris, our moderator, to take us throughout the rest of the day. Thank you so much, Debora and Tom.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. I think we've already had the pleasure of Mr. Finch's introduction, his basic introduction. In the interest of moving us forward on the agenda because we're a little bit behind I will just turn this over to you now, Mr. Finch.

DR. FINCH: Well, thank you and good morning to everyone. It is certainly an honor and a privilege for me to be participating or to take part in this consultation, to learn and to listen to the concerns that you bring to the table here today.

As I introduced myself I'm with the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. I am further the director of the Training and Service Programs Division located within the Rehabilitation Services Administration which is one of three components within the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

I also bring greetings from our Acting Assistant Secretary, Michael Yudin and LaBreck who is newly appointed as our Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The Training and Service Programs Division within RSA is responsible for the administration and management of the majority of the discretionary grant programs that are authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended.

One of the discretionary grant programs and the reason for me to be here and to participate in this consultation refers to our American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Service Program.

The purpose of this program is to establish a program to provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians and Native Alaskans with disabilities to assist them, prepare for and engage in training activities leading back to employment.

This particular program or under this particular program only governing bodies of Indian tribes and consortia of those governing bodies located on federal and state reservations are eligible to apply for these grants.

I share that with you because today because the Department of Education seeks input from tribal officials, tribal governments, tribal organizations and affected tribal members regarding a possible change in the Department's interpretation of "reservation" as it applies to the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

In addition, I share with you that back in -- or on July 5 we published a notice in the Federal Register seeking comments to the very three areas that I will share with you in just a few moments which closed on September 3. And we are currently in the process of reviewing those particular comments that we have received as it relates to guidance that we may pursue in answering some very specific issues that have been posed before us.

By way of background, and this information is included in your packet of information, but rather than to ask you to pull it on out I'll just summarize some of the major findings.

Back in or as of November 9, 2012 the Government Accountability Office released a report entitled "Federal Funding for Non-Federally Recognized Tribes." The web or link is identified in that particular inclusion in your packet and I would ask you to when time permits take a look at that particular report.

But in that the GAO questioned whether the Department's interpretation of the term "reservation" when used in determining eligibility for grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program was broader than the term's statutory definition.

The statutory definition of the term "reservation" includes Indian reservations, public domain Indian allotments, former Indian reservations in Oklahoma and land held by incorporated Native groups, regional corporations and village corporations under the provisions of the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act.

The Department's interpretation also includes a defined and contiguous area of land where there is a concentration of tribal members and in which the tribe is providing structured activities and services such as the tribal service areas identified in a tribe's grant application.

The GAO recommended to the Secretary that we were to review the eligibility requirements of the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program and to take appropriate action on grants made to tribes that do not have federal or state reservation.

So if the Department adopts the narrower definition tribes without state or federal reservations or other areas of land listed in the statutory definition of "reservation" would no longer be eligible to apply for grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program within the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

So the purpose here for me to be talking or addressing you is essentially to seek your comments with regard to three areas. The first is to ask what is the potential effect of limiting eligibility for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program grants to those Indian tribes and consortia of tribes located on federal and state reservations and the other land areas specifically listed in the statutory definition of "reservation."

The second area we're seeking comment focuses on those tribes that currently provide services under this program and that would not meet the revised interpretation of "reservation." The Department is particularly interested in whether individuals currently receiving services from these tribes would continue to receive vocational rehabilitation services to assist them to return to work, and if so, how and where the clients might obtain these services.

And lastly, we are seeking comments with regard to how a revised interpretation of "reservation" would affect the pool of potential applicants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program, including tribes that have not previously applied for but may consider applying for any grant in the future.

So, this picks up on what was published in the Federal Register back in July. I mentioned that the comment period ended on September 3. It picks up on really the finding that came from the GAO report back in May of 2012.

And the importance of this refers to an inability from the Department's American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program to convene competitions because we are and have not been able to agree on a definition.

So we seek your input. We encourage as you return home to share this with others, to provide your input and particular response to the areas of concern that will ultimately be used to assist us move forward with the future of the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

I thank you for your attention and I look forward to meeting with you even after the session this afternoon to further discuss this particular issue. So, thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you, Tom Finch. The next session that we have -- from the front table do we have any people that would like to make comments or questions for Dr. Finch?

CHAIRMAN KUTZ: My name is, again, Stephen Kutz, tribal council chairman for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

I don't particularly -- didn't particularly see where exactly the consultation conversation could enter in here but I'm prepared to do so at this time if that's appropriate or hold my comments to the later conversation.

So I don't have any questions but I do have one observation because I think I will save my comments basically till the comment period.

But in the GAO report one of the -- and in the GAO report they footnoted a statement from Senator Bartlett who amended the act it looks like in 1978. Now, I don't know Senator Bartlett but from his general comments, and I don't know what state he came from, and there may be some in the room who do, but it appears to me that his comments and the intent of his comments and the amendments that he made to the act were to work to include Indians in the eligibility, not to exclude Indians.

And his statement says, "Because not all the Indians are on federal and state reservations the Senator offered amendment which is enacted to include a definition of "reservation" that put in other language."

And it did not say in this language that this was -- it didn't say in this that these are the only things that ought to be considered a reservation.

And many of us -- and so I come from a tribe that is fairly newly recognized in 2002. And the Federal Government as tribal leaders know in this room are not exactly speedy in putting your land into trust. And so I represent a group of people both now and into the future who are going to be recognized that ought to be able to participate in these programs and just because the Federal Government does not want to put their land into trust in an expeditious manner we should not be penalized for that.

So, I think I'll hold my comments then for later. I do have some written comments prepared and some comments that I want to read into the record. And I want to note that even though the comments for the record have been closed when you're running a consultation with tribes that allows those comments to be included for the record. Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: I'll wait for public comment.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: In an effort to try and catch us up a little bit we'll go fairly quickly through the 506.

You have in your packets on the right-hand side a copy of the full PowerPoint that will be shared this morning and you have a copy of the proposed revisions to the Education 506 Form complete with instruction package on the back.

The Education 506 Form is utilized in order to provide a count of students across the country who are eligible for Title VII services. This form has not -- well, no, it has been amended, but its amendments have been to add information and more information and the print got smaller and smaller. And so for those of you folks who have been using the Ed 506 Form you know that it has become more and more of a challenge for people as they enter school to register their children with the form.

So what we're trying to do is to take us back to the statutory language and the four components that need to be covered within the Education 506 Intake Form.

Within this we need to know the number of students who are eligible who are either first generation, second generation of tribal descent. And so it may be the child that's enrolled, it may be their parent, it may be their grandparent. But unfortunately that's as far as we can extend that.

This is one of the more expansive eligibility areas for American Indian children in school and so this is already extended beyond what many of the other programs do.

There are four sets that need to be acknowledged within this. That is, the federally recognized tribes and of course we have a full list of federally recognized through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And not every school understands how to access that. So we'll be trying to get that information to them better.

Also, there is a list of state-recognized tribes that are recognized through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. That list is also available and we're trying to help schools to understand how to contact that list.

We also have in our history the terminated tribes. Of those tribes that have been terminated and those who have reinstated their children are eligible for services under the Title VII program. And so for those people who are from a community where the termination has taken place they generally do have information about that but school districts need to understand that process better.

In addition, Indian-organized tribe, and that refers back to -- and this we can't quite trace how we got this as a legacy in Title VII. But all of those programs who were recognized in 1994. And if you are one of those you will have that information in hand and you'll be able to provide that to your school. So schools will be operating mostly on the knowledge of the person who is claiming that.

The document, if you take a look at the proposed new document it has some streamlined effects. The box sections are student information. And in this example it tells you all the information that would have to be put into the student section. So the name of the child, date of birth, the school name and the grade. That gives them a starting point for when they begin with that particular school system.

The next section is tribal information. Tribal information, and that can be more than one tribe. Certainly, many of our children are from multiple tribes. And this is a choice by the family how they're going to interpret this and claim it on the form. But that is open to more than one tribe.

And whether they are federally recognized, of course they terminated -- or 1994.

Name and address of the tribe if at all known. And we're going to work with school systems across the country to encourage them to have a list of tribes that they know they are working with so that it isn't something that the parent necessarily has in hand as they come in the door but they can also refer to the list that the school is working with.

The next section is tribal information, tribal membership. Is it the child, the parent, or the grandparent? If it's the child that's preferable because that's the closest to being the tribal member. And then if there is a membership enrollment if it's readily available or whatever document you have to verify that in fact the child is a member.

And then the last box is the attestation box, and that is that the parent signs that the information on the above form is accurate and to the best of their knowledge. And that should be the requirements for completing the 506 form.

On the back you'll see that much of the information that was previously on the Ed 506 Form is now included in the instruction page and will not necessarily become a component of the records management for the school. That's more for the instruction as they work on completing this.

Education 506 forms stay with the child for their career in the school system. So these are not forms that need to be filed every year. Even though another revised form could come out while the child is still in school you do not have to update to those new forms unless there is a problem with the content in those four areas and the verification. And so with that that becomes part of the school record for the school.

I've covered this awfully quickly and I hope it's clear enough that you can develop questions from both the PowerPoint and from the form. On the last few pages there's information about how to contact the Title VII office, Office of Indian Education in D.C. And we will work through.

And there will be more webinars and technical assistance as we work through this in the school year. We had a new form for 506 that had to be published before we were able to get this one completed. And so we've got a temporary form that was approved in April of 2016. That will continue, there is no problem with it. If you are using that form, that's fine. This will replace it soon.

Are there any questions from the table?

MS. NORRIS: Joyce, could you just kind of summarize what is the main change in here with this revision?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Mostly it's a reorganization and a making things more clear. And taking the sections and identifying the four sections that are statutory language.

MS. NORRIS: Okay. So it's just a clarification of all of the necessary components. Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: I'd like to make a comment. As an old school counselor for 15 years and registering kids in school I work with many other school districts. I see that, it's really unfortunate but administrators and school secretaries who actually are doing the child find -- helping children apply for school, they are actually still going by the recognition of are you light-skinned. They don't give this form out unless you look Indian.

So my concern is working with all the school districts because we have a high population out there that aren't self-identifying in their general school application but this should be a part of every packet.

So across our reservations and our eight public schools that's what we're requesting the school districts to do, to put the 506 form as part of every person who comes into register in the school system. So that's one idea.

Secondly is it's always good to have the gender on there. I just was wondering why that was absent for record purposes. Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: We debated about gender, but it actually is part of the school record. And so this only supplements that school record and so it should already be present.

CHAIRMAN KUTZ: Yes. Again, Steve Kutz with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe in Washington State.

When you talk about giving the schools lists of the tribes that they might generally be working with in their area across this great United States all of our people have moved. And just in some of our smaller communities that I serve, and I'm not talking about the larger ones where probably most of the tribes are represented, there's more than 200 tribes represented. And so just to give them a name of a few that they think they might be interacting with is probably not -- I'd give them all 550-some so that they all have it.

Because the kids will say, well, I'm with this tribe. Well, they don't even know what that tribe is. They may not even recognize it as a tribe. So they ought to work within their school communities to identify the possible tribal members that could be there from all of those different tribes and offer the kids an opportunity to proudly step forward with their families.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Are there other comments from tribal leaders? Okay.

Are we ready for the break? Is that where we're at? Okay, very good. We'll take a break and we're returning at -- well, our schedule says 11:45, is that correct?

MR. MENDOZA: Yes. We have a break here just to make sure that we're in synch with the Secretary's bus tour. I encourage you to take the time to network. We have a number of esteemed educators in the room and professionals that we wanted to take this opportunity. We've built in time because there's never enough time to engage. Linda, Joyce, myself, other senior officials here, of course our tribal leaders.

And I just want to flag for you too that the Secretary will be arriving in the Back to School Bus outside. It's a beautiful bus. I've seen the design but I haven't even seen it myself yet. Please encourage you to go out there and pause for a picture or something. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Great. Let's go have snacks and network.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off the record at 11:08 a.m. and went back on the record at 11:44 a.m.)

MS. NORRIS: Okay, we'll go ahead and get started now. I hope that you all had a chance to visit with your friends a little bit. I know we have a lot of longtime colleagues, former coworkers, community members, tribal members and sometimes family. I saw a friend that I went to a high school summer school program with here today and it was really -- I'm always happy to see her and meet up with my friends once again in the field of education.

Right now we're going to move onto the topic of early learning. And I have to tell you that our tribal community members had come to our state tribal meeting a couple of days ago and were very concerned about early learning topics. We have a lot of challenges getting our students prepared for school readiness, college readiness and all of that starts at the very young ages in our early childhood programs in each of our communities.

So at this point I'm very happy to introduce Libby Doggett. She is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning. And this is with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at our U.S. Department of Education.

She has said of herself that she's very new to this position. She's really excited to be in her first 3 weeks. She is a fellow western state person. She grew up in El Paso, Texas. So we're very happy to have you here to start us off on this conversation. I'll turn it over to you.

MS. DOGGETT: Great, thank you so much. I'm delighted to be here. I'm Libby Doggett and as you know I'm the brand new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Learning. But I've been doing early learning all my life. I worked in Head Start, in childcare, in schools with kids with disabilities, with children who don't have disabilities. I've worked at the local, state and the national level. So I'm delighted to be bringing my expertise to a place where early learning is really valued.

I know that you had the pleasure of getting to hear my partner, Linda Smith, who is my counterpart over at the Department of Health and Human Services. And as you all know Education and Health and Human Services each have some oversight and some programs for kids with disabilities.

And it's created problems for you at the state level and probably in tribal lands as well and certainly at the local level to try to get these coordinated. So we're trying to eliminate that at the federal level and show this partnership we're not only partners in this but we are longtime friends. So this is going to be very easy for us to do.

I hope you all know the importance of early learning. I hope you know that it really is the place where we can get kids off to a great start and that it really is the smartest investment that we can make.

We're fortunate because the President understood this and came out with a very, very bold proposal that would support families including Native American families with a birth to age 5 continuum of learning that starts with home visiting. And I'm sure Linda told you a little bit about that. And an Early Head Start-childcare partnership which I'm sure she talked about. And then is followed by preschool for all 4-year-olds across the country. And that's where the Department of Education would come in. We won't do that by ourselves. We'll do that in consultation. But that would be a major new role for the Department of Education.

We think this presents a really wonderful opportunity for Native American children and I hope we'll have some conversations about that.

Secretary Duncan who you're going to get to hear later who is the greatest boss I've ever had said, "To do what is best for Native children we must collaborate with people who know the students and the community." So that's really why we're here, because you know your children, you know your communities and we're really here to listen.

I hope you'll share with us today what you've been thinking about, trying, what's been working, what are the challenges, what are the opportunities.

So a little bit about the President's proposal. It starts with a \$15 billion investment over the next decade to expand home visiting, I think Linda probably touched on that, for which tribal home visiting has reached so many Native American families over the last 4 years. This would continue to be administered through HHS.

And I have to say, I ran the early childhood, it was a federal interagency coordinating council and learned a lot about the FACE program and think you have a wonderful model there. I hope we'll learn more about that today as well.

Also at HHS as Linda talked about you have the Early Head Start-childcare partnerships. And then there are two pieces to the President's preschool proposal that will be administered by the Department of Education.

First, there's preschool for all formula grant program. It's \$75 billion. This is an idea, it's not there yet. You're going to have to help us make this happen. Seventy-five billion proposed funding through a tobacco tax over 10 years to provide high-quality preschool for all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families.

In the next fiscal budget which would be Fiscal Year `14 we've asked for \$1.3 billion to begin the program in the first year with a \$6.5 million set-aside for Bureau of Indian Education to serve Native American children.

This set-aside is in addition to programs the state would administer to serve Native American children through local school districts and community-based organizations. The plan is to provide voluntary high-quality preschool for all 4-year-olds in the nation.

Second, we're also requesting \$750 million in this budget for preschool development grants which are a discretionary program which will help states get ready. If they're not yet ready to receive the other funds we want to get them ready so they can move their standards up. These development grants would help states and tribes build their capacity.

The preschool for all, the \$75 billion, is a partnership with the Federal Government for states, territories and tribes in demonstrating. And it does require that there be some standards.

You'll have to have early learning and development standards across the essential domains. We're not just talking about cognitive development, we're talking about emotional development. Those executive functioning skills that we know are so important for children.

We're talking about high-quality standards with teachers that have degrees and certified. And we want the ability to link our data in preschool with the K-12 data.

So as we've set the bar higher for states and tribal communities we also want to set the bar high for preschool programs. We want to have high expectations for staff including bachelor's degrees. We want to have low staff-child ratios. We want to have low class sizes. We want to have ongoing evaluation to ensure continuous improvement. And we want to have onsite comprehensive services, not just cognitive, you know, go to school, but comprehensive services for children.

You know, this won't happen unless we have your support so that's one of the things we're here is to tell you a little bit about it but also to ask for you to give us your ideas, but then also to help us go out and sell this.

Babies don't have a lobbyist, they don't have a political action committee, they don't make campaign contributions and they can't even vote. But we can give them that voice. And certainly I'm delighted to be at the Department of Education with a Secretary who is doing that every single day. So we're delighted to be here and look forward to your thoughts and ideas. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you very much, Ms. Doggett. At this time I'm very, very happy to introduce our Arizona superintendent of public instruction. It's my turn to brag a little bit about my boss and I promise I won't take much time. But I'm really, really proud to be working in this administration.

One of the things that I'm so proud of is his 30 years of dedication to public service. Although he's been superintendent of public instruction, this is his first term, he has also served in many other capacities in public service and in the Arizona Legislature.

And right now more specifically I'm really pleased to say that during his administration we've done a lot of things with revitalization of Native American languages which is really important to our communities. We've had a relationship with tribal governments.

We had a meeting a couple of days ago where we also had dialogue between tribal governments and school leaders which is really important to get that information flowing on a government-to-government basis.

We've started more research on American Indian issues. And I could go on and on. We just don't have the time. But I'm really, really happy that we're here in this discussion also working on a multi-layered level of government-to-government discussions because this is where things really happen and ideas can really come about.

So at this time I'd like to introduce Mr. John Huppenthal.

MR. HUPPENTHAL: Thank you, Debora. It is a pleasure to be here today and we're here to talk on a very serious subject which is education.

But I couldn't help but thinking as the Secretary came out of the bus, and it's so great to have Secretary Arne Duncan with us in Arizona. It is a blessing whenever we have that opportunity to engage leadership in such a massive way.

But as he came out of the bus I was looking at him and I was reminded that his nickname used to be "Slam Dunking" Duncan.

(Laughter)

MR. HUPPENTHAL: And I noticed Joe Martin who's the assistant to the president of NAU and he carries around a ring which is -- it signifies five state championships in basketball. And Joe Martin used to go up against Superintendent Andrew Todd who's the superintendent of the tribal government -- or superintendent of education for the Navajo Nation. And so I was wondering if he could throw up a hoop real quick --

(Laughter)

MR. HUPPENTHAL: -- and have a little one-on-one here to see who's got bragging rights in Arizona here now.

But anyway, it is a real pleasure to be among so many friends. And as I took the mantle of the superintendent for the State of Arizona I quickly became aware that in order for me to be successful as superintendent that we had to be successful with our Native Americans.

And as I looked at the data more deeply we get beat up on a lot in Arizona for our education system. But when you look at it on a demographic basis, an apples to apples basis, we do pretty good among Caucasians, Asians, African-Americans, and Hispanics. But we have enormous challenges with our Native American tribes.

And as I looked deeper into the data and looked at the research it talks about not just the breadth of poverty but also the depth of poverty. And what we see when we compare our Native American tribes with others across the nation is really much deeper poverty.

But it goes beyond that. When I go up to visit Canta, and I've been up there three times, it's a 6-hour drive. It's dislocated poverty. It's well away from our urban centers which represents unique challenges.

And it's also been enduring poverty stretching across generations. When I did my tours out in the Navajo Nation and down at Akimel O'odham, Baboquivari, the thing that struck me was if you just looked at the data you would expect it to be an intellectual wasteland out on our tribal nations.

But instead we saw incredible heroes as we did our visits, as we visited schools, as we visited school districts. We saw amazing things happening.

We saw the veterinary tech program up in the Navajo Nation. Students that were so engaged in what they were doing, supporting veterinary operations consistent with the local culture of generations of involvement with livestock, supporting operations, supporting post-operative care.

Two surgical suites for the veterinary operations that would be the envy of Harvard Medical School. And four students walking away with Gates Millennium scholarships. Almost every single student in the veterinary tech program passing AIMS, over half of them getting college scholarships. An amazing program.

Terry Gilliam over at Chinle. He had the students building custom homes with the very highest-end treatments in the architecture. Students so engaged that when I walked through the home they didn't even look sideways at me they were so focused on the work of building that home. And when you looked at the treatments it was world class.

We know that there are world-class things going on in every one of our Navajo -- every one of our tribal nations. And we want to say thank you for the great work that you're doing, that we want to dedicate ourselves even further to energizing that work, to extending that work and strengthening that work.

And we fully recognize all the challenges that you have. It is simply amazing work. We recognize all of the substance abuse issues. We recognize just enormous challenges on every front. But we can't fail in this endeavor.

It is vital for our success as a state. It's vital for our success as school districts and schools, as teachers.

But mostly it's vital that we carry on a tradition that we've carried on in this country that we are absolutely dedicated to the success of the most disadvantaged among us.

So with that I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to be a part of this. We have our Native American advisory group that we bring in about every 6 weeks to the department. It's been a vital part of one of our greatest accomplishments which was allowing the tribes to license teachers of Native American languages. That would seem like a no-brainer but I was stunned to find out that that had not happened. We now have successfully executed that.

I want to congratulate the Navajo Nation, the Apache Tribes. They were forerunners on that. And we now have 35 teachers licensed and accredited to teach the Native American language, to extend the culture, to extend the traditions and further. So we have quite a number of accomplishments with you all. We look forward to extending those accomplishments in our future partnerships. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, John. Okay, at this time I'm really very excited to do this next introduction. He is our ninth U.S. Secretary of Education Mr. Arne Duncan.

I want to say on behalf of everyone in this room that we are very thankful that you are here in Arizona today and that we acknowledge this is not the first time that we have seen you working on behalf of Native American students, on Indian education issues.

Thank you very much and at this time let's welcome Mr. Arne Duncan.

SECRETARY DUNCAN: Thank you so much. Me and my team are really honored to be here. John, I appreciate your tremendous commitment to working harder.

And I will tell you before I started this job I had very little contact coming from Chicago with the Native American community. And over the past 4 and a half years the visits I've made to reservations, to schools have been both some of the most inspiring school visits I've been on and frankly some of the most heartbreaking.

And everywhere I see young people who desperately want to build a positive future for themselves who are working as hard as they can, but people here know the real challenges. Unemployment rates of 60-70 percent, huge drug and alcohol abuse, very few opportunities for young people to have the mentors and role models they need.

And so the challenge for all of us collectively is how do we radically, not just a little bit, how do we radically improve the opportunity structure for our Native children. And there are no easy answers here, but we have to work together.

We have to challenge one another. We have to be great partners to figure out how we give our Native children a chance to be successful.

There are some points of progress. We see high school graduation rates increasing which is a huge step in the right direction. But John, the challenges you see in the state are the same as you see across the country, progress but relative to other racial and ethnic groups nowhere near where we need to be. And so we should all work with a great sense of impatience.

Led by Bill Mendoza and our team who I think are doing a fantastic job we've held over 20 tribal consultations since 2010. We want to listen. We know the best ideas are never going to come from us in Washington. They're going to come from local communities. And we want to be out there listening and learning from you.

But I also want to be very, very clear that consultation by itself to me does not mark success. The question is what are we doing again to change the opportunity structure for children.

I know Libby spoke earlier. I think this early childhood piece, I can't overemphasize how important that is. If we can get our babies off to a great start it opens up a whole new world of opportunity. When our babies start school too far behind it is very, very hard to close that gap. And so with her leadership and hopefully bipartisan leadership in Congress we can dramatically expand access to Head Start and to pre-K Native communities.

We're trying to work very, very closely with the Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. She and I went out just last month actually to Wyoming to visit a Native community. She is fully committed to this.

We know they run the BIE schools. Some transition there. They want to get better. So in tough times we have detailed one of my top deputies, Don Yu, to go over there in the next couple of months and just do whatever he can to help strengthen what they're doing there.

I have to apologize for sequester. Sequester is an unmitigated disaster and the impact on your communities, the impact of the communities of military families, there is just no upside here. And when you see the types of cuts in an already severely under-resourced situation with the children who need the best it's frankly infuriating to me. And we need to get Congress to come together to work in a bipartisan way to do the right thing for our children, for our communities and ultimately for our country.

Where you have detailed information on the impact of sequester on your schools and on your communities my team and I would love to get that. We have to keep telling these stories to folks in Washington. We keep urging them to get out of Washington and get out to the real world and see the impact of their action, or frankly their lack of action. But please feed us those stories and we want to make sure that those are heard.

We have many places raising standards, higher standards, which we think is a huge step in the right direction. Arizona is helping to lead that effort.

Nothing easy about it. Whenever you're asking more, change is hard. But I'm convinced the vast majority of our children drop out of high school not because it's too hard but because it's too

easy, because they're not engaged. And if we can start to raise the bar and make sure all of our high school graduates are truly college- and career-ready we open up a new world of opportunity.

Finally, we want to do everything we can, and John talked about this as well, to help preserve languages, to help support cultural competence amongst our teachers. Our children need to learn in the context of their communities.

There is so much strength, there is so much tradition, there is so much pride for children who are feeling hopeless or lost to have some sense of their history. I think it's extraordinarily empowering. And we want to continue to help there.

And the final thing, one of the joys of my job is to go out and do graduations every single year. And I always try and do a tribal college. And those are some of the most meaningful opportunities I have to speak at commencements.

I think tribal colleges are a huge part of the answer. They are doing extraordinary work again on very, very tight budgets. They are often the economic driver in tribal lands. And whatever we can do to support the great work that tribal colleges are doing we want to do that.

But thank you for your commitment and please challenge me and my team to be the best partners possible so we can radically improve the opportunity structure for our children. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Secretary Duncan.

And I'd like to start the direction of the meeting by looking backwards a little bit. And we're going to do that by highlighting one of our own, Mary Kim Titla, who is with the San Carlos Apache Unified School District but is here also as an officer of the National Indian Education Association.

I've known Mary for a long time and I am always happy when I see people come into the field of education, particularly from other fields. Because we always have room for our best and brightest.

And Mary, that's what you are. You're one of our best and brightest in Arizona. And thank you very much for participating. I will turn this time over to you to share your thoughts on the history of Indian education in Arizona.

MS. TITLA: Thank you for that introduction. And thank you to all the host agencies for this opportunity to be a part of this tribal consultation hearing.

My name is Mary Kim Titla. I'm a member of the San Carlos Apache Tribe. I was born and raised on the San Carlos Apache Reservation.

As of July 1, 2013 I became executive director of United National Indian Tribal Youth, also known as UNITY, Inc. It's a non-profit national network organization promoting personal development, citizenship and leadership among Native American youth.

I'm also a member of the board for the National Indian Education Association. I had the privilege of being a part of the iLead principalship program at Arizona State University and I graduated from that program in May of 2012.

I interned as principal at the San Carlos secondary school where I learned firsthand the challenges facing educators. So I worked with the San Carlos Unified School District for the last 5 years.

I'm also a freelance writer and a former TV news reporter. As I mentioned earlier, I'm also the proud mother of three sons. The youngest is a senior at Chandler High located in Chandler, a suburb of Phoenix.

Indian education began long before Europeans arrived on this continent. However, I will address Indian education in the context of more modern times.

While I was a graduate student at ASU in the nineteen eighties I worked for ASU's Center for Indian Education which published the Journal of Indian Education. It is from this journal and other sources including the 2012 Native American Education Summary Report produced by the Arizona Department of Education and the 2011 National Indian Education Study sponsored by the Office of Indian Education that I present an overview of Arizona Indian education.

Before we take a look at the present it is important to look at the past. In 1961, Robert Russell, Jr., the director for the Center of Indian Education, wrote a series of articles about Indian

education. He provided some statistics and facts specific to Arizona beginning a century ago. I will provide highlights.

In 1918 there were 19 Indian students in public school. Prior to this date, many Indian students were taken from their homes to attend off-reservation boarding schools such as the Phoenix Indian School and the Carlisle Indian School.

In 1928 the Meriam Report was published. The Meriam Report was critical of boarding schools and favored the use of day schools.

In 1933 there were 553 Indian students in public school. The recommendations of Meriam's report were implemented primarily during the mid-nineteen thirties. For example, in 1934 there were but 9 day schools on the Navajo Reservation while in 1938 there were some 50 additional day schools.

In 1953 there were more than 3,000 Indian students in public schools. In 1961 there were 30,000 Indian children of school age.

The average number of grades completed for Arizona Indians was less than 3 years of schooling while for the state as a whole the average was over 10 years of schooling.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1959 accounted for approximately 66 percent of the education of Indians in Arizona and they operated some 68 schools. The BIA operated off-reservation boarding schools.

In Arizona the only off-reservation boarding school was the Phoenix Indian School. Arizona was the site of 29 reservation boarding schools in 1959 with an enrollment of approximately 5,000 students.

There were 50 Bureau-operated day schools in Arizona with a total enrollment of over 7,000 children. In 1959 more than 1,200 Navajo children enrolled in 4 Arizona public schools as part of the Peripheral Dormitory Program.

They lived in Bureau dormitories located in towns such as Flagstaff, Holbrook, Winslow and Snowflake, and attended the local public schools.

The public schools of Arizona enrolled approximately 26 percent of the Indian children between 1959 and -60 in more than 80 schools.

In 1960 there was an increasing demand on the part of tribal leaders for education on the reservation and for tribal history, traditions and issues to be taught in schools.

There were comments made by the late and former chairman of what is now known as the Tohono O'odham Nation and the chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe who talked about teaching our Indian children about reservation life and teaching them in a positive manner about Indian culture and traditions.

We're going to fast forward to the present, or at least the last 2 years. Highlights from the 2012 Native American Education Summary Report show in 2012 60,000 American Indian students are in Arizona public charter school systems.

Statewide, Native American students comprise 5 percent of total student enrollment in Arizona public schools. There are only five BIE high schools within the borders of Arizona so a large percentage of Native American students attend state schools when they reach grade 9.

The majority of Native American students are concentrated in counties that border or encompass Native American reservations. For example, Native students comprise 79 percent of the total student enrollment in Apache County, home to many Navajo tribal members.

Although Maricopa County houses the most Native American students it is the most populous of Arizona's counties statewide so Native American students comprise only 2 percent of its total student enrollment.

In terms of academic achievement there are interesting patterns in the percent passing Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards, or AIMS.

For instance, in reading students in the early grades, especially in grades 3 and 5 showed lower performance than students in the upper grades. Native American students had the highest passing rates in grades 6 and 7. Students in low-density schools outperformed students in high-density schools in every grade.

In math, students generally performed better in the earlier grades than in later grades in all school types. However, students in low-density schools passed at a higher rate than students in high-density schools in all grades.

On the state's new accountability system the low-density schools' letter grades are distributed relatively evenly. However, the high-density schools are concentrated in the C and D grades.

High- and low-density schools show the same proportion, 32 percent, achieving grade C whereas two-thirds, 69 percent, of high-density schools received a D letter grade.

On a quick side note, these issues impact students who go on to higher education including our three Arizona public universities, ASU, U of A and NAU. When students aren't college-ready it frustrates their attempt to obtain college degrees and leads to longer times spent and tuition payments made.

For example, at ASU first-year American Indian students earn fewer credits and achieve a lower GPA than their peers. Currently there is a 27 percent 6-year graduation rate for American Indian students compared to the 57 percent rate for ASU students overall and a 50 percent rate for minority students.

While school districts have made concerted efforts to teach tribal history, traditions and issues, more must be done so students can reclaim their image and identity.

How can we as Native people reclaim our image and identity for the next seven generations?

First, our Native children must fully embrace who they are. Nationwide an estimated 93 percent of Native children attend both urban and rural public schools. The remaining 7 percent attend Bureau of Indian Education schools.

According to the 2011 National Indian Education Study which involved a survey of Native students in 12 states including Arizona 44 percent of American Indian Alaskan Native fourth graders reported knowing a little or nothing of their tribe or group's history.

A mere 32 percent of American Indian Alaskan Native eighth graders had some knowledge of their native history, and 32 percent had some knowledge of their native traditions and cultures. That means two-thirds knew little or nothing of their native history and heritage.

This lack of knowledge about their identities as members of proud and powerful cultures along with the lack of self-pride is devastating. It is one reason why just 3 out of every 5 of our American Indian and Alaskan Native high school students graduated on time in 2011.

I know all too well about the lack of self-pride. My first negative experience surrounding image and identity began when I attended public school as a young child. I attended a school with non-Indian students in a nearby town. During a field trip that required traveling through my reservation a non-Indian student pointed at an Indian home and laughed. Most Indian homes in the nineteen sixties including mine did not have plumbing or electricity. What happened that day did not make me feel good about myself.

When I was a teenager my friends and I decided to attend a dance in another nearby town. Mostly non-Indians were at the dance. As we drove around the building a young man shouted, "Dirty Indians." My friends reacted by shouting profanities. We drove away. Those memories are forever etched in my mind.

How many Native American children today still live in situations that are embarrassing to them or are victims of racism? We must continue to work hard to educate the ignorant and put an end to racism.

World-class culturally based education is one way to help Native students reclaim their proud image and identity. It is also one of the most important solutions to helping our children and communities succeed in a world in which knowledge is economic, social and political power.

I'm going to skip to the last page. I was originally told I had about 15 minutes but I realize I only had 10 when I got here.

Indian Country's priorities for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Improving education is imperative to the success of Native nations and communities who need an educated citizenry to lead our governments, develop reservation economies, contribute to the social well-being of our communities and sustain Native cultures.

Strong Native economies led by educated Native leaders are crucial partners in growing regional economies and driving job creation. Including the following tribal priorities in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is critical in providing educational parity for Native students.

First, strengthen tribal participation in education. The ESEA reauthorization should authorize tribes to operate ESEA title programs in public schools that are located on Indian lands and serve Native students.

Second, preserve and revitalize Native languages. Because immersion is largely recognized as the best way to learn a language the ESEA reauthorization should establish a grant program for eligible schools to develop and maintain Native language immersion programs.

Three, provide tribes with access to student records of tribal citizens. Tribes and their education agencies are in the best position to track and coordinate Native student data regardless of the education provider and student location. With a comprehensive database tribes can synthesize and analyze data about their own students and utilize it to make data-driven decisions to improve education outcomes.

Encourage tribal-state partnerships and equitably fund the Bureau of Indian Education.

In conclusion, we are rapidly moving through the 21st century. Our children do not know or comprehend what it means to be American Indian in this modern age.

As parents, tribal leaders, agency leaders and non-profit leaders we must learn from the past and work together with the support of our lawmakers if our next seven generations are to reclaim their heritage and capture the vision of American Indians in the 22nd century.

I am onboard and ready to work with you. *Ahéhe'e*, thank you and God bless you.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Mary Kim. Okay, now we'll move on to the most important segment of our agenda today which is the government-to-government piece. And we will now move into the tribal leader comments.

I would like to just remind everyone in this room that we request that we maintain respect for our tribal leaders by turning off our cell phones and minimizing our discussion. Our tribal leaders are here to present and comment on things that are important for all of our Native American students in the state and the other states in the region.

And right now it's time for tribal leaders to talk and for tribal education officials to listen. We lost about 5 minutes in this whole morning but we will restore those 5 minutes and we'll just eat 5 minutes into the lunch break. So right now we'd like to open it up to our tribal leaders to comment.

Vice President of the Navajo Nation, Rex Lee Jim.

VICE PRESIDENT JIM: Good morning. I will not speak as fast as Ms. Titla.

(Laughter.)

VICE PRESIDENT JIM: These Apaches tend to speak Navajo very fast too. Thank you for that information.

Secretary Duncan, Superintendent Huppenthal, thank you. I'd like to offer the following comments on behalf of the Navajo Nation.

Let me begin by a short story which will become the basis of my comments. One time I was with a group of people in a square table like this. All of us had Ph.D.'s and M.D.'s and they were introducing themselves. They said I'm running this research and millions of dollars and running this billion-dollar company.

At the other end was a Native woman, a Ph.D. And I looked at her and I said, I wonder what multimillion dollar research she's running. When it came to her she introduced herself and said I'm from Akimel and I'm the kindergarten teacher there. And that stuck with me for a long, long time. I still think about it. What would it take for the Navajo Nation to train our teachers with Ph.D.'s to teach in kindergarten Head Start and to pay them appropriately.

And I've always thought about the need for quality teachers in early learning, early childhood and Head Start is so important. And we need to think about quality teachers at that level and along with the pay and everything and the respect that they need.

This brings me to the second point and that is we have a need for Indian professional development grants. That's in your department to include a doctoral program. Not only for administrators to run schools as superintendents and principals but as teachers in these particular areas like the Head Start. And so we need a doctoral program. So if you could reconsider and ask Congress and work with them to find funding for those types of grants. That's important.

The other issue I'd like to address is impact aid and our public schools. A lot of our public schools are Navajo and Indian Country depends on that impact aid money. So we need to restore that and add more to it if we are going to make a difference in how we educate our children in these school systems.

That brings me to the Navajo Nation Accountability Workbook. We need to continue to work on that and approve that because what that does is you empower a nation to be in charge of its own education program so that it can work with its school systems and work with administrators and the school boards and to find a way to make sure that our children are learning.

And as you have mentioned earlier one of the key ingredients of the Navajo Nation Accountability Workbook is the Navajo language. We want to teach children in our Navajo language.

My office is also engaged in private projects where we will teach mathematics like calculus or microbiology entirely in Navajo to challenge the Navajo language to expand its capacity. And at the same time we also would like to measure academic progress in our Navajo language. And we need to be allowed to do those kinds of programs.

So, these are just some short comments I'd like to make and thank you very much for listening.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Just a couple of reminders for tribal leaders. If you would before you begin to talk state your name and your tribe or organization for the record.

And also, only one person can use these speaker buttons at a time. So if you're not speaking please remember to turn it off. I'm guilty of it myself.

But the next person I'd like to address is Dr. Bush from San Carlos Apache -- or vice president of San Carlos Apache Tribe.

VICE CHAIRMAN BUSH: Yes, thank you. My name is John Bush, vice chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe.

We're part of the Intertribal Council, the 22 tribes in Arizona. Some of them are represented here today. We're also part of the national Congress of American Indians which is hundreds of tribes nationwide.

Our biggest concern is what's -- especially with education is the sequestration cuts. We tribes, for example, us and the White Mountain Apaches, we at one time had 5 million acres of land. Now we're down to 2.3. So, and part of our land cuts were due to the mining areas around Lawrence, Superior, Hayden, Winkelman, around that area.

And that was our land. That was actually our money that we could support our own educational system. We gave up a lot of water rights. We gave up a lot of -- that's just not Apache people, that's tribes nationwide that lost a lot of land.

And what we lost in sequestration is not equal to what we would have really had to begin with. So we gave up a lot and we're lobbying for not to cut anymore from Indian Country. Because I think we've lost a lot as it is already. And see if we can get to our Senators and our Congresspeople in Washington to see that this is really happening and that what we lost, you know, we don't need to lose anymore.

And it hurts our children and our school systems. We have our superintendent back there, Catherine Steele from San Carlos. And Debora here from Window Rock. They've experienced the cuts that they have in their schools and it affects every child.

And we just hope that you take that message back to Obama and say hey, we don't need anymore cuts. So that's my message.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Dr. Bush. On the end, sorry.

COUNCILMAN MARTINEZ: Good morning, good afternoon. My name is Mark Martinez, councilman with the Pueblo of Zuni.

Our biggest concern, I guess I would like to share with you what our -- I think somebody made a comment. I believe it was the Secretary that mentioned that speak for the ones that can't really speak for themselves as our younger children, especially with the Head Start pre-K children within our communities whom the Pueblo Zuni, a population of 12,000-plus.

Economics are not great within our community. We're still driving to succeed in some of those areas but a lot of the -- especially with being limited to a lot of avenues especially with the federal agencies, federal funding cuts are happening throughout the entire tribal organization. So it's difficult to really make ends meet with a lot of the social ills that we have.

And it's impacting a lot of our children's educational processes. This is something that was written by our director of Head Start and I would like to share that with you.

The Pueblo Zuni Head Start program received a funding amount of \$992,000 this year, due to the sequestration \$54,000 less from the original funding base of \$1,046,000. Before the sequestration funding received already was very limited despite all the demands made by the Department of Human Services of Head Start in regards to meeting school readiness goals of enhancement of family engagement and meeting teacher degree mandates.

Despite these expectations there's been no additional funding provided to address limitations, initiatives efficiently to fully implement to be effective.

Head Start has always received 80 percent of federal funding with 20 percent in-kind cash or contributions. Limited resources in rural area make gathering in-kind contributions a challenging task within itself.

Congress needs to take a good look at the effects of the budget cuts due to sequestration, Head Start priorities and recruitment of children from low-income families and those with disabilities which provide services to provide for the whole child, not just academically. Community services with access to good health overall perform academically which is the main ingredient of achievement.

Currently in New Mexico 371 children did not have seats in the Head Start due to sequestration; 16,692 fewer days of school is being provided. With funding cuts in a shorter time period, an environment which provides nurturing to children daily to perform well academically.

How does Congress expect children to be well prepared? They forget the target families being served in Head Start are the disadvantaged who are encountering homelessness affected by the lack of employment and related issues such as drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence within their communities.

Public school pre-K children's only eligible criteria is age with little regard to income and basically enrolled on a first-come first-served basis. This process has little regard to low-income families who should be prioritized for services.

For example, within their community Zuni Head Start serves 153 children in which 100 percent of the children meet poverty guidelines and there are 30 other children on the wait list at this point who are income-eligible. In the meantime, the local elementary school pre-K has 20 slots for enrollment which are filled on the roster are children from high-income families. One child's parent -- skip that one.

Lastly, it is commented that the President Obama's plan to provide a universal pre-K to states. This is great but how is the funding going to be equally funded between counties and tribes within state? If pre-K funds are going to be distributed as block grants then there is going to be a competition for funding.

It is the consensus that early childhood education is important for all children and it is a matter of how the funding formula is going to be set up between states, tribes and migrant programs. That's the main concern that our community is facing right now. If those can be worked out we fully support Obama's early childhood initiative. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Chairman Shingoitewa.

CHAIRMAN SHINGOITEWA: Thank you. First of all, Secretary Duncan, it's good to see you again. I believe I met you about 3 years ago during a tribal leaders summit. Secretary Huppenthal, Mr. Mendoza, who I've also had the pleasure to meet.

For myself as we talked about consultation today and I echo really what the tribal leaders before me have spoken. I think one of the things that as Indian Country that we have been doing a lot of is fighting for the survival of education.

It has always been that our system, public school, tribal schools, religious institution schools, we've always been trying to play catch-up with everybody else. And this has been an issue throughout Indian Country.

And I think one of the things that Dr. Bush over here mentioned was the fact of quit cutting funding in Indian Country. It's disheartening to our tribes as we watch money flowing out of the country rather than money coming into the country to support what we already have here and the people that we have involved here.

And today as I went and listened to the various programs on the consultation today I'm one of those products where my start was with the Head Start program back in 1968 as a teacher. And many of us who are in education, our goal was to come back and help our people so that they can learn how to be able to learn the education component to be successful not only in school but also within their lives as well.

So as I looked at the programs and I heard about what you're wanting from the tribes the same questions have come up. The rehabilitation program, some of us were very fortunate to have taken advantage of that. I for one, if I didn't have that I would have never gotten through college.

Having the Title VII. I worked in Flagstaff Unified School District and every year the money keeps getting lower and lower. And what happens, many of our school districts bring Native people on to be -- and services to help support their children. And yet money keeps getting lower and lower. And every year the districts also fall behind in fully supporting these educational programs.

I think one of the things as, Secretary Duncan, you mentioned, you've set a higher goal for Indian Country. I think in setting the higher goal I really appreciate what has been talked about culture.

I believe one of the goals that we need to deal with our young people and education is how do you balance both the outside society and our cultural values so that they support one another, so that our children become successful in what they're doing.

If I recall 3 years ago when we talked at the Interior offices regarding education and the idea of movement, changing. You asked me a question what can we do then to make education more effective in Indian Country. And my answer to you at that time was we need to all train -- also have trained our own educational leaders who become effective leaders in developing teams that are helping our children learn.

To me this is one of the goals I think that we need to talk about in consultation with tribes. And for an educator I support early learning.

Those times when I've had our children come into school, many of them were not ready to come into kindergarten. And with First Things First now that has been a big boost because it's helped tribes to take a closer look at not only our language but also taking the values we have and integrating into the learning system.

I think one of the things hopefully you will see is that our Indian way of teaching is really no different from the dominant society, other than the fact is how it's talked about. Our people have been teaching our children since they were -- from the time they're born until they go through life in our way of life.

But in turn we are also told that we must also learn how to be able to communicate with the outside world. So I think in short really as I listen to what we've got going here and all the programs that you're wanting to consult, one of the concerns that I heard earlier in regards to the Title VII was, and I think the rehab was what is a reservation. What is Indian Country.

Dr. Bush brought up a great point in his presentation. To us, all of United States is Indian Country. It doesn't matter where you live, it was once Indian Country.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN SHINGOITEWA: And to ask the question as to where do our people live and how can we identify them, whether they're by a lighter color or darker color. How do we know they're Indians? Well, I think all you need to do is ask and you will find that we can tell you, yes, we're Indian people.

So, whether we're Apaches, or Hopis, Navajos, or Papago, Tohono O'odham, any of these, the fact is that I think we need to work closer together. Because I will tell you there are Hopis here living here in Phoenix who sometimes are not considered to be tribal members when they go to Indian Health Service for services. Yet when they come home they're Hopi. So I think maybe this is something that we talk about.

The other part I want to bring up and I kind of mentioned it was that in developing educational leaders at one point the Department of Education used to have a program in several universities creating doctoral students, getting a doctor's degree to go into education. I don't know where that went to.

I am hoping that this is one of the goals that maybe through President Obama and through the Secretary's of Education Office that we get looking back into creating and identifying universities who are willing to start this program again.

I am one of those products. And I was fortunate. If it wasn't for that I would have never gone beyond the place that I was at. So I have to say that that's one of the areas. And I believe the three schools that did it at the time was -- I believe it was Minnesota, Penn State and, what was the other one. Now I forgot. But I was counting on Penn State only. I'm just kidding. But those were the universities that had them at the beginning and then it grew -- oh, Oklahoma -- and then it died again. So I'm hoping that this will happen.

But I am a high supporter of Indian education. I will always stand behind educators. If you look in this room those are all educators. And look at them, they're all tribal members of different tribes. And they are committed to making sure education counts in Indian Country.

And as tribal leaders, Dr. Bush and I go way back. And we've learned that the only way you can help our Indian students is you have to be with them and work with them.

And I appreciate the fact that we have this consultation. I would like you to go back to the President and say in Indian Country we want a better education for our children but we also want to preserve who we are. *A-key-yeh*, thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. At this time I'd like to address any tribal elected officials who are participating online. I just would like to let you know we haven't forgotten about you and you will be able to provide comments to us when we return in the second segment of tribal consultation when we return from lunch.

Are there other tribal leaders in this room who would like to comment? Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN KUTZ: Again, my name is Stephen Kutz with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe in Washington State.

So, Secretary, when we talk about the grim funding for Indian education across this great United States I hesitate to bring up this topic because there's never enough money to go around.

But when you look at the public school districts, and I'm familiar with many of those in our area, they're canceling their Indian education programs. They're contracting them out to outside organizations. They are not engaging well with the Indian tribes that live around them.

And what is really discouraging, what is really discouraging to me is that when I see our children, and I use the term "our children" for all of our Indian children that are scattered in these urban areas, these cities, these rural areas away from their reservations and away from their families.

And many times what's happened, we've talked about the higher incidences of abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental health illnesses. I come from the healthcare side. And so my staff on both my drug and alcohol side and my mental health staff working with both adults and youth are finding that a key component to break the historical trauma, to break the PTSD, to break the intergenerational cycles that we're seeing happening out there, some exposure and return to culture and their history is so important.

And many of these kids, they've moved away. They've been in foster care. They've lost touch. I mean, we talked about two-thirds of them that was just mentioned just I think in this little study in Arizona where there's this high concentration of Indians, many of them not too far away from their homes and just the break in the culture. And so there needs to be a way to incentivize and with these schools that are in these areas to try and get them to do a better job of giving our Indian children opportunities to learn more about themselves.

Because I am -- my staff are working with the kids in treatment programs. We're spending money on kids that -- and we believe and have found that one of the key components in working to return these children to health is to work with them around their cultural identity.

So it's a challenge when we talk about not enough money to do that. And I would hope at some point in time my tribe could run an Indian school. But there's so many opportunities out there that need to be better identified and better resourced and better incentivized to treat all our children.

I would hope that my grandchild growing up in St. Louis would have that opportunity. And it's going to be difficult because they'll look around and they'll say well, there are not very many Indians in St. Louis. Just like they're saying there aren't very many Indians in Chicago. There's bunches I can guarantee you. So, thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Kutz. We have time for one more and I'll turn this over to Lynn Palmanteer-Holder.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: Good afternoon, and it's exciting to be here among all the tribal leaders.

I first want to acknowledge the Arizona tribes for allowing this Plateau woman from Washington State to come and visit and bring our cool air.

My name again, Lynn Palmanteer-Holder. I'm a member of the Colville Business Council for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation.

Our reservation is a confederation of 12 tribes. I'm a member of six of those tribes. I could not marry within my tribe because everyone was related.

(Laughter.)

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: I am first a wife of 38 years, a mother of three, a grandmother of seven. I have my whole life 28 years as a professional has been in the field of education.

I had a really long speech here that I don't want to take everybody into. I believe that a lot of the words that have been said the Colville Tribe relates with.

Our reservation is 1.4 million acres. It's a large land-based tribe. Not as large as our Navajo friends, but like them their territory crosses four states. Ours crosses four counties.

Within the reservation we have eight public school systems. We have one tribal school, one BIE school. Those public schools service 2,300 children from grades K-12.

We have only 0.5 percent of that population is served by the BIE tribal school. Therefore, a lot of the funding and discretionary programs that were discussed earlier are -- we haven't discussed impact aid.

And impact aid is destroying a lot of our progressive programs that have been implemented specifically for a lot of our Indian education programs within our public school systems.

Sequestration as we know has had a huge, huge impact on those public schools that have large land bases, that sit within large land bases because of the cut in those important funds.

I bring this up because I'm hoping that -- I know that you don't have a lot of -- maybe you do have a lot of power. And the sequestration formula, to exclude impact aid funds from sequestration would be beneficial to remote, rural communities like the Colville Reservation.

I wanted to give a little bit of a story. I have my bachelor's degree in education from Eastern Washington University. They actually were -- a teacher education institute. They were nationally recognized for guaranteeing every teacher that was trained out of their program and was hired by a public school system that if there was any deficiencies that were identified as a teacher then they would -- EWU, Eastern Washington University, would retrain them in the area that there may be a deficit. So, that was my bachelor's degree.

Then my graduate work, my master's in education was at WSU, a very wonderful school. And that's where I got my school counseling background.

My nickname is Nosey Rosie in my region. I was a teacher, school counselor, a coach, I coached many years. You were talking about basketball. We went to state 12 years in a row. My daughter went to college on a basketball scholarship. So, you want to get in a free throw line, this old granny will be there with you.

(Laughter.)

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: The point is I want to bring up the fact that schools were the center of our communities. And somewhere we've kind of lost that.

The focus on the old school improvement plans where we looked at the school climate, school leadership. I hear cultural competency training. There's no way you're going to be -- anyone is going to be competent in somebody else's culture, but creating culturally responsive teachers with culturally responsive curriculums, training administrators to be culturally humble when they enter communities of diverse backgrounds might change school districts from when budget cuts happen that those key arts and music programs from getting cut to focusing on teaching to the test. We might be able to build upon the relational holistic view of education again, partnering.

I really enjoyed listening to Linda speaking earlier about the Early Learning Initiative. We will participate in a tribal consultation in Seattle next week regarding the Early Learning Initiative. Head Start has done many great things. Many of us are the product of Head Start.

Head Start has done things for Indian communities. Many of the parents who learn about policy council, who learn about having a voice in policy regarding the education of their children become active as they transition into the public school system. Parenting classes, promoting them to become employees of Head Start and participate in training, the same kind of training that the staff are experiencing.

I've watched parents get their GED in Head Start and turn around and get their master's in education years later because of the influence of Head Start. So, Early Learning Initiative, what we're doing, I'm excited. I see the long-term outcomes.

Because I'm old and I've been in education for so long, I've been able to register kids in kindergarten and attend their graduations in the school of law when they graduate from schools of law. So I've got -- this is the most rewarding place to be is in education.

When we get back to creating those school climates, developing school leaders and teachers that care and have the passion in our communities to work on the holistic education model and integrate like we heard earlier, integrate our language. Language revitalization is one of our top priorities nationally in the National Indian Education Association.

We've been promoting funding through the Esther Martinez grants, the ANA grants. Our tribe has three of those grants. We have two immersion schools that we're supporting. They're non-profits but the tribe is contributing to those and we believe in them.

Washington State has a very unique relationship with our state. And you probably are aware of this through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. We've created a time of more -

MS. NORRIS: I hate to rush on this but we've got to finish up this final thought.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: Okay, thank you. Of course it would be me, a former teacher, who goes on.

MS. NORRIS: We have additional time later.

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: So, I just wanted to say that there's a wonderful curriculum that we have developed in Washington State that actually is being modeled across different states where we are working closely with tribes in their history and language programs.

And I will speak later. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, tribal leaders, for providing these important comments to our officials here. Thank you, Secretary Duncan and Superintendent Huppenthal for joining us this morning.

We know that the bus tour continues. We want to thank you for your presence. Go and enjoy visiting the schools.

And at this point we would like to break for lunch. We do have boxed lunches available outside of these sets of doors here. And there are some seating available outside of this room. But if you choose to you can bring your food back in here. And we will reconvene at 1:30. And please come back, thank you.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off the record at 12:54 p.m. and went back on the record at 1:39 p.m.)

MS. NORRIS: Okay, so for this next segment we're continuing our tribal leader comments. There isn't like a 1- or a 2- or 3-minute. Just be aware that we only have a finite amount of time and would like to hear from as many tribal leaders as possible. So that would be the limitation.

And I feel really badly about cutting off Lynn here. She traveled so far from Washington. So we're going to continue with her and then the next I have on the list is Wavalene Romero from the Tohono O'odham Nation. So, Lynn, would you continue where you left off?

MS. PALMANTEER-HOLDER: Thank you very much. Again, forgive me for going over but I did have a couple of comments I wanted to make before the end of my statements as a tribal leader.

I spoke to the importance of continuing to fund and exclude from sequestration Title I, Title III, Title VII, our JOM, Title VIII, our impact aid dollars. All those dollars that help support school

districts on or adjacent to reservations, especially serving reservation schools that are rural and remote. There's too many gaps and too many barriers that we're already dealing with out there.

We heard earlier about the importance of partnerships but we're moving forward and maybe sharing resources, looking at building capacity on reservations.

I wanted to make a point about how I want to applaud and raise my hands to Department of Education for reaching out to H&H, Health and Human Services. I believe that working on the home visiting piece and some of the prenatal, early learning initiatives that we also need to consider looking at expanding the circle to provide school-based health centers in our school systems, especially on rural and remote reservations.

As a former school counselor we all identify the social ills of our people. There are many. We're still dealing with a lot of intergenerational trauma, historical trauma. And we can try to force academic knowledge down our children but if they are in pain and coming from disadvantaged homes, we need to go back to that holistic view that we need to help improve their social, academic, emotional and cultural areas within themselves.

I want to also make a point on that partnership with higher education institutions, those teachers of ed programs that are out there. That's where I left off with Eastern Washington University. I want us to add that to our movement because we have a lot of state institutions that are promoting teacher education programs, culturally responsive curriculums, and I hope that we do that.

Another point is the partnerships between youth organizations like UNITY, Native American Boys and Girls Clubs, those other programs that are out there. I think that schools, reservations can help to promote our future leaders.

And lastly, I just want to make a comment on thank you, Department of Education staff for being here, for caring about our children and our people and listening. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Our next comment is from the vice chairwoman of Tohono O'odham Nation.

VICE CHAIRWOMAN ROMERO: Good afternoon, my name is Wavalene Romero, vice chairwoman for the Tohono O'odham Nation. I really appreciate this tribal consultation. The

interpretation and the definition of "consultation" to many vary and so most importantly that it be meaningful at the higher level.

And to the respect of tribes that take the time to be here. You know, we have so many tribes in the State of Arizona but it's not that it's not priority or that it's not important, it's just that education is education. Overall it is important.

Some of the comments I'd like to make in hearing the research and the information from Mary Kim Titla it really hit home I'm sure to a lot of us because education and the opportunities that are provided to our children, specifically for Tohono O'odham Nation there are various opportunities for our children.

Today we still utilize boarding schools. And so we have a lot of our students that are still going off to boarding schools and still faced with the challenges that they're faced with.

We have our BIA/BIE schools, charter schools, different schools on our reservation. For some of these young children and high school children they don't have a choice because of where they're located at. So they have to go to the school within their area. And it depends on the family situation also. So that's one of the most key.

And every child, I have made this known but every child on the Tohono O'odham Nation is entitled to equal opportunity when it comes to education. It doesn't matter who's paying the salaries of those teachers, it's equal opportunity to equal education regardless of who's paying the salary of that particular teacher and where the school's located on the reservation or whether it's off the nation.

We know that for early child learning it's really, really key. We talk about curriculums, we talk about funding and our elders and those that are culturally educated.

For some of our elders and our members that have those capabilities, the abilities and the educational background in regards to cultural sensitivity they don't have Ph.D.'s, they don't have the certificates, the documents to prove that this is what I can do to help our people.

And so by bringing them into the classroom, whether it's in a classroom setting, community level, that's really key. And it shouldn't always be based on dollars. But today at this point in time when you ask somebody to do something whether it's in the school system or in your community it's for how much. So we've lost that, we've lost that.

And I believe that there's still hope because there's still many of our members that are out there trying to provide that expertise in regards to cultural sensitivity in reiterating to our children who they are, who they are. Whether they're off leaving for awhile or they're in different environments, that's the real key to keeping that self identity and making them proud and strong of who they are as a Native American.

I know that one of the school systems off the nation, you know, some of them have various programs. And again it's about funding. And when you look at the systems when it comes to funding as it was mentioned earlier that Native American studies or language or different programs specific to Native country, that's the first thing that's going to get cut when you really think about it and you look at some of the statistics.

And so I'm just here to reiterate that for the Tohono O'odham Nation that equal opportunity and equal education needs to be consistent regardless of the funding and where it's coming from. But it's also true that some of the supplies and the needs in Indian Country, the Federal Government, the state, everyone has an obligation. That's why we have the systems that we have in regards to the schools that were placed in our areas.

We really don't have any -- we have tribal boundaries but yet Tohono O'odham members could be in other states, could be in your areas, and they're entitled to that education also. So when we talk about boundaries there really shouldn't be.

And so when we talk about the, again, specific to the early learning, the Tohono O'odham Nation supports the partnership of the Department of Education in regards to culturally responsive research based.

But we'd really like to see set-aside funding specific to that because a lot of times we rely on the tribal government to make up that difference. Or if it's something that the tribe is pursuing or it's priority to the tribe then the tribe should fund it and help to get that movement going.

And so it would be really good to see set-aside funding to help the tribes and Native communities pursue those curriculums at the educational level so we have at the Tohono O'odham Nation.

Those are my comments. And nonetheless we'll all here to promote and support everybody in regards to education, our teachers, our students. Whether you're a tribal leader or not it

takes a lot of effort, a lot of patience, a lot of commitment to reiterate how important education is. So thank you for the time and the effort.

And we always hold deeply our concerns in regards to education. We talk about consultation, that it be very meaningful across the board to everyone that's in the room, everyone that has a role in regards to promoting education in Indian Country. So thank you and God bless each and every one of you for the work that you do and those that you serve.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Vice Chairwoman.

At this time we need to provide an opportunity for our online participants. If you are a tribal elected official and would like to provide comment at this time. I'm going to see if the operator who is working with our online participants, if there's anyone who fits that criteria and who would like -- okay. New change. The operator is not available until 2 o'clock so we will provide at that time, when it comes.

Okay, so moving down the line. Our next comment will be provided by Sally Gonzales.

MS. GONZALES: Thank you, Debora. Good afternoon. I am Sally Gonzales. I'd like to just welcome the Secretary, I know he's gone on to Yuma, and the staff for being here for this tribal consultation.

I'm not a tribal elected representative. I am a state representative and I do represent Pascua Yaqui, my own tribe, at the State legislature.

And if you read Debora's bio, I'm that person. She and I were elected as the first Native American women to the State legislature back in '96. And I always kid her though. I said I was elected the night of the election and your votes didn't come in till 3 days later.

(Laughter.)

MS. GONZALES: So, anyway. But we served together as the first two women, Native women to be elected to the State legislature so we're both very proud of being able to have that claim.

I'm an educator by profession and I taught for many years in the elementary school in Tucson. I moved from Tucson. I'm actually from our little town, Guadalupe, close by here and moved to Tucson almost 30 years ago and started teaching there.

And it was actually my teaching in the classroom that got me into politics. And that's what I would like to talk about. And I want to maybe I think everybody -- I'm in agreement with all of the things that the tribal leaders have already mentioned, sequestration and how that's hurt.

All of our tribal education programs all over the country, all of them that have already been mentioned, Title VII, JOM, and also the impact aid that the districts receive for those -- all of our students who live on the reservation. And also the military bases. It's not just Indian reservations.

And one of the things that I'd like to talk about that I think is very important that I want to touch again because it's so important is the cultural, the teaching of the culture. And what was said with the AIMS and teaching to the test, it's like teachers have been made to get away from actual teaching all the other social skills that our students actually are needing and learning about themselves and identifying with who they are.

I really strongly believe that's so important. Our students cannot move forward unless they are very positive of who they are. And as a mother of 5 and a grandmother of 21 I think that's very important. Yes, our 5 daughters have given us 21 grandchildren. And I'm really concerned about what's going on in our classrooms.

And as a state legislator I'm always -- I actually voted against AIMS back when Debora and I were in the legislature not because I don't want high standards for our students. Our students are very bright and I know they can achieve wonders. And just look at the audience and our tribal leaders.

But it was because it didn't come with the training. Our teachers were not trained. And that's what has been happening for the last 15 years. And that's what's really gotten our culture and our history and our languages left behind.

And we've been fighting, I've been in education for the last 40 years and I can say 40 years because my oldest daughter is 40 years old. And as a parent and fighting the unequal way that education has been taught to Native students and here in Arizona but all over the country.

So I'm just here to really support the tribal leaders in their endeavors in their own communities. And to really send back to the Secretary of Education that we really need their support. And I was really happy to hear the Secretary say that consultation is not enough, it's working with individual tribes and individuals to really build a better educational system for all children across our nation.

And one of the key issues that I think is important, and Mary Kim touched on it, and several of you. I know Ms. Romero also touched on it, and I don't remember who else. But was on the racial discrimination that is still part of our everyday lives, not only for ourselves as Native people, adults, but also our children.

Our children go to school facing this discrimination on a daily basis on the buses and the playgrounds, in the basketball, you know, in the basketball courts and all the sports that our children participate on.

And we have got to be willing to dialogue and talk about that discrimination that is happening because a lot of us -- not Native people, a lot of my colleagues at the Legislature and other folks think, you know, want to believe that discrimination went out in the sixties. And it didn't, it's happening every day.

It happens to me at the State House. Every session that I'm there I get discriminated against because of how I look. And because of who I am and how I'm always identifying with my Indian identity.

You know, we have visitors to -- just to give you a quick example, and I know I'm running out of time, a quick example.

When we have all the lobbyists and people that are trying to get their attention on their agenda and they bring us packets and they come to the -- and feed us and wine and dine, and feed us at the Capitol.

I always go to them because I want to be a well-informed legislator and so I want to hear what the different agencies and programs are wanting me to know about their programs.

And I go to their tables to sign up and they have a legislator's table and they have a public table or other table. And I go to the legislative table. They always want to send me to the other without even asking. That's discrimination because they believe that a person that looks like me shouldn't be elected to the State legislature I guess.

But that happens to me on a constantly reoccurring basis. And if that's happening to me as an elected official I wonder what is happening to my 21 grandchildren, at least 15 of them are now in

school. What is happening to them in the playground, in the schools, by the teachers, or anybody else? And so I think we need to dialogue more about it. I'm glad that other tribal leaders are talking about it.

And one last thing that I wanted to illustrate the discrimination that we Native people face on a daily basis is even at the Legislature, also in legislation.

When Debora and I were serving and charter schools were very new in the state our State legislature didn't want to fund charter schools on Indian reservations. How many are still fighting that? Indian schools on reservations were not being funded by the state.

And we fought that. I proposed a legislation to not allow that. And then the Congress had to come in and they passed a resolution that that was against federal law and discrimination and that was not allowed. But those are the things in education that we've had to fight.

And so I thank you for being here and listening to the tribal leaders. And hope that you come back and visit and work with individual tribes around the country because I think that's what -- and I'm glad to hear Secretary Duncan talk about doing more of that. So I thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Sally. Okay, we are now going to go into our public comment phase. And what we're going to do is bring the podium up here. We will take one more. Thank you for pointing that out. Just identify yourself and your tribe, please.

VICE PRINCIPAL CHIEF CHAISSON: My name is Lora Ann Chaisson. I'm the vice principal chief for the United Houma Nation.

One of the things I'd like to talk about is the Indian education, the reservation part. Our tribe has a vocational rehabilitation program and it states that the vocational rehabilitation is just for reservation.

And in my tribe we don't sit on reservation. We're a state tribe. And you were talking about the discrimination. In my area, in Louisiana we have a lot of discrimination. They have the state vocational rehabilitation program and one of the counselors, just to give you an example, called our office and said, "We have one of your Indian people here. And we're going to send some smoke signals." And so when it comes to the reservation I do have, you know, we have some serious concerns.

Our tribe in Louisiana, it's a little different. I'm just going to read just a brief history on some of the reasoning why.

When the Louisiana Territory became part of the United States the Houma were one of the tribes that were to be protected by Article 6 of the Louisiana Purchase Agreement.

The article obligated the United States to respect treaties and agreements between indigenous people and the former colonial powers of France and Spain. In an attempt to assess the provision the Houma filed claim to 12 sections of land adjacent to our principal village.

When the territory land officials refused to honor this claim the Houma people had no choice but to rely on the individual ownership. Tribal leaders held title to land settled by the tribe. Over the generations despite the lack of federal protection the tribe has managed to maintain their settlement.

We also have a lot of oil and gas in our territory. We've been fighting for federal recognition for over 30 years. We have the oil and gas that has petitioned our federal recognition. So every area has their own -- in the United States everybody has their own issues.

And so when it comes to the vocational rehabilitation we see so many people that come through our program. And we partner up with the WIA program. So it's a collaboration of services that our tribe do have which is very little compared to federal tribes. But we do try to work with our people.

And so when it comes to the reservation language, we do have a problem and we just wanted to express that, put that in the notes on that language.

Also, our people went to missionary school. My dad, my mom went to missionary schools. Even though we're not a federally recognized tribe our people did go to missionary school.

Our people were not allowed to go to the public school system till 1966. And the prejudice, it still exists into our area right now. I'm 48 years old and at 16 years old I wasn't allowed to go to certain places in our area because they had signs "No Indians Allowed." And so it's not that far off.

And so I just wanted to express my concern. Our people actually got together and they wanted me to come out here from Louisiana to be able to make that statement to you all.

And I thank you all for your time and I appreciate it. And it's good to see a lot of familiar faces.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. We have one final -- oh, did I forget your turn? Thank you. One final comment from tribal leaders, Steve Kutz.

CHAIRMAN KUTZ: Yes, again my name is Stephen Kutz, tribal council chairman for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

I have some prepared written statements that I will submit to you. I won't read through those. But I do want to make a few points out of these as I move forward through them quickly.

But before I start I want to tell a quick story. And it's important, at least I believe it's important in the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program that that program be horizontally integrated with other services.

Vocational rehabilitation means you either have a mental condition, a chemical dependency condition, a medical condition, you have some condition that we treat in our other services. And horizontal integration is so important.

And I also realize that there is never enough money. And realistically that's why we're having these discussions, because these programs are underfunded. I wished that every tribe out there did have vocational rehabilitation program, that we did not have to have competitive grants to go after that. That's the way it ought to be.

So, given that, I want to talk to you about the consequences of not providing services in an Indian facility. And I'm going to use an example because we have built our healthcare system.

We are the fastest growing Indian healthcare system in the Portland area and have been for a few years now. And we do that by serving all people, not just our tribal members. And the vocational rehabilitation program is a huge piece of that. It's a very important piece and it makes a difference in a lot of Indian people's lives.

When we first started our health services programs one of the things that we did was we got a grant through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to bring mental health services into our primary care facility in conjunction with our vocational rehabilitation program and our chemical dependency treatment program.

And we started that in 2004 and the grant ran out in 2007. And we decided because the revenues coming in to support mental health services were not supporting the services, we decided that we would transfer that -- we had approximately 100 patients. We would transfer those to the state-funded mental health system.

And we worked with them to set up case managers, to facilitate the transfer, to try and facilitate appointments and follow-ups and coordination back with our primary care clinic.

We tried that system for 6 or 7 months. It failed abysmally. Our people were unable to access the system. Once they got into the system they had difficulties in receiving the services. They fell out of the system on a frequent basis. We had regression in their treatment. We had increased suicidal gestures. And in general not only did the people do bad if they didn't get into the system, the people that got into the system regressed and didn't do as well as they should.

And so we decided that even though it didn't pay for itself we had to fund mental health services. And our health board made the decision to fund that.

And now, quite frankly, we have more mental health treatment service providers than any one service component in all the services that we offer. It is that important and it's important also in the treatment of the vocational rehabilitation program clients.

The other thing that I want -- so the other thing, there's some conclusions that I made out of that.

And from a personal experience I would say our clients are better served in an Indian-operated system and will most likely fail dismally in large numbers in a state-run system. And I would say the vocational rehabilitation program is the same. They do not do well. They get rejected and do not do well accessing services there.

The other thing that I want to say is we as a landless tribe. I say landless, they took our lands away from us in 1855 and still have not given us our land back into trust. So, we technically meet the definition of a landless tribe, don't have a reservation.

We're providing services in our usual and customary areas, in our health service area. Our land into trust application is in part of our service area. And so we believe that we should not be penalized. We believe the intent of the law is to try to serve Indians and improve their lives, not to figure out how not to serve some Indians.

Lastly, I want to thank the Department of Education for their efforts to ensure the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services in the broadest sense, their efforts that they've had in the

past. In the broadest sense it's a lot about a law because this program helps and changes the lives and circumstances of many of our people nationwide.

We also want to thank you for engaging the tribes in consultation on these important issues.

My last point that I want to talk about is I would like to point out that the United States Government Accountability Office has not engaged in consultation with the tribes on this issue as required by the Executive order of the President of the United States.

The changes in interpretations they're trying to insert into the law and its administrative rules affect the lives of American Indian Alaskan people and should therefore require formal consultation with tribes before they're even proposed.

They should refer to their consultation policy and if one does not exist or cover this circumstance they should immediately enter into consultation with tribes regarding the development of consultation policy and engage the tribes in consultation on this important issue.

I want to thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to provide input on this important topic. I have more detail in my written presentation and some of the background information on some of the points that I discuss. Thank you very much.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. And I believe that concludes our tribal leaders consultation. So we will move right on into our public comment segment.

Once again, a couple of reminders. We do have a queue, a list of people who have signed up. We'll go in that order, take two from this list and then also take online questions as well.

And I would ask you to keep your comments to 3 minutes so that we can include as many comments as possible. State your name and where you're from because based on the list we ought to bring penmanship back. So I'll do my best to get the names right here. That was an unofficial comment.

But our first public comment comes from Jacquelyn Power if she's here. I do not see her.

And if you want to you can also line up to be prepared. Our second presenter here is Bill Mehojah. Okay, going once, going twice? I know these people, I saw them here but they're not available.

Okay, Lanor Curole.

MS. CUROLE: My name is Lanor Curole. I'm the program director for the United Houma Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Program in Louisiana. October will make 13 years.

Our program has done exceptional things in our community and I want to be able to share some information. As our vice principal chief shared we are a community that doesn't reside on a reservation.

One of the questions that the Department has asked is what's the impact to the individuals that are currently served. And the only way I know how to really tell that story is to share with you a story of one of our clients who's actually dually served both by us and by the state.

It's a young man and Dr. Finch, you're probably going to die. He's 23 and we've actually started working with him when he was 14. The state started working with him when they customarily would as a transition student at 16.

But I think the beauty of a tribal VR program is you know the people in your community, you know the conditions and things that are going on. And we definitely saw the family was struggling with the disability issues this young man was dealing with and felt that if we didn't intervene early we were going to be dealing with some much harsher situations later. So we started working with him at 14.

And for us it was really working with them as a family in setting some goals in where did they want to be and where did he want to be personally. So at that time period his mom had really kind of pulled him out of school because he had a lot of behavior issues. He's got several diagnoses, bipolar, he tends to socially isolate. At that point also had some learning disabilities and in the process of us working with him he's acquired another disability. He has a back injury so he's got some physical limitations as well now.

And so his goal is he didn't want to be home schooled. He wanted to be with other kids and so it was really kind of helping that family negotiate where does he need to be. And having conversations with both him and his mom and being able to do that.

And so for me, the recognition was really being able to start working with him of you've got to make this transition from a kid to a man. And you've got to work your way into manhood here.

And so our program has a disability awareness pow-wow that we do every year for the community. And so after our second year we asked him, and I think at that point he was probably 19, to be our head man. And I spent a lot of time as his counselor really talking with him about this is part of the transition for you. You're going from childhood to adulthood. And to have the community support him in that process.

The state typically calls him once a semester and just to check in, how's your grades, let's get a copy of your grades. Because of their financial limitations and a lot of their policies and procedures they've never paid for anything.

We've requested that they keep his case open because of situations like this. If our program is threatened what on earth is he going to have. And to be quite honest there are times I've had to really -- because he doesn't know and he doesn't understand why on Earth do we ask him to keep a case open with the state.

Because for us it's we don't know what may come down the line. We're discretionary and so we could be gone tomorrow which is extraordinarily scary. We're working with people and trying to help them change their lives. And to say we're working on helping you change your life and we could be gone tomorrow is not the firmest way to help us out as trust.

And so some of the issues, he has a tendency, he falls back in depending on his mom a lot. That's his social isolation. So in counseling and guidance with him I tell him I'm not going to have conversations with your mom. You have to call me, you're my client. And so his mom will call and she'll say this and I'll say tell him to call me. And that's the part of helping prepare him to be able to move forward.

And so last semester he faced some obstacles. He ran into some problems where his learning disabilities kind of caught up with him while he was in school. And his typical response typically

would be is I'm going to give up and I'm going to just jump into something else and I'm not going to face it.

And so for me the issue was I'm going to support you and you're going to learn how to develop the skills to address this.

Do I think the state would do that? No. No, I don't.

So, Dr. Finch, the VR goal at the end of this is yes, he will be employed. He will be employed.

But culturally for me the goal I work with him on is that he will be an employed independent man that can stand on his own and being able to support his community. And that's the difference of what we do.

And so, yes, the state can provide services but I really struggle with do they provide competent services that are equal to what we do. They don't understand the issues of his identity that we take the time to be able to do.

And so I want to thank you all so much and I appreciate them.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you very much. At this time we'd like to see who is in line online. Is there an operator who can give us the first online question? Comments? Going once, going twice?

OPERATOR: We do have one from Treva Roanhorse from the Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation. Please go ahead, your line is open.

MS. ROANHORSE: Hello?

MS. NORRIS: Hello, go ahead.

MS. ROANHORSE: I want to thank the Office of Indian Education, the White House Initiative on Indian Education and also Dr. Duncan also.

My comments will be regarding the work in Indian vocational rehabilitation regarding the definition of "reservation."

I want to say that -- I want to go ahead and give you some background information about where American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation came from.

Even prior to the amendments of the 1978 Rehabilitation Act, the Navajo Nation provided services, VR services to people through the discretionary grant and public funds.

Because of the Navajo Nation being so successful it provided the foundation for the 1978 reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act that established American Indian VR.

One of the reasons why American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program that was really worked on and put into the act was because there were no VR services being provided on the Navajo.

Navajo is in the tristate area of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. It provides the services for the tribe to operate and administer its own vocational rehabilitation program.

And in that act it was made as Part D Section 130. From 1980 to 1985 the Navajo Nation was the only public VR program in the country until in 1986 when other tribes such as Chippewa Cree were funded.

The reservation definition was added during the '86 reauthorization. In 1998 administrators and Native American Rehabilitation introduced 22 amendments. Of the 22 added into the amendment of the reauthorization and at that time it was changed to Part C Section 121.

The amendment also provided the strength of collaboration with the state rehab agencies that also became partnerships through a cooperative agreement.

Vocational rehabilitation is a partnership between the individual who has a physical or mental disability to achieve employment outcomes and enhance independence by offering comprehensive services and support. It empowers individuals with disabilities to achieve employment and independent living.

Part of the American Indian vocational rehabilitation criteria in vocational rehabilitation eligibility criteria is that the person has to be an enrolled member of the federal and state recognized tribe that resides on or near the reservation. And thus vocational rehabilitation would be used in providing the services.

Vocational rehabilitation, what's in Indian Country, it is not an assistance or a voucher type program. It provides opportunities and hopes of individuals with disabilities regardless of severity

to gain independence and maintain employment so they can be productive and live independently through culture-appropriate services.

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program provides those services because they understand the culture, the language and the way of life within their respective communities and reservation.

Presently there are 85 American Indian programs in 26 states and also across the country and in Alaska.

Now, I want to go through the three questions that Dr. Finch had talked about this morning.

What are the impacts of limiting eligibility to only tribes or consortia of tribes on reservations?

There are 586 recognized tribes , yet not all of these are designated land areas which help make up the process. If a strict interpretation of "reservation" is adhered to by RSA, the Rehab services administration some of the American Indian people would not have access to vocational rehabilitation services.

There are five American Indian programs that are currently funded that do not fall under the strict definition category of reservation and will lose funding if the RSA moves to that interpretation. And one of those programs was just addressed by Lanor Curole just now.

Then the other question is RSA is asking your opinion about what happens to clients from the five programs that will lose funding as they would not meet the strict statutory definition of reservation.

If the five funded programs lose funding there will be a severe disruption of services to 497 consumers from these programs as their tribes will be unable to serve them without federal assistance.

And then the state agencies go into areas where they can't serve the individuals. However, three or four of the states are currently under what they call the order of selection which means that they do not have enough funds to serve everyone.

In addition, there are significant cultural barriers that will tender many of these individuals who are eligible to receive services.

The state VR agencies are unable and unqualified to provide or facilitate health or wellness services such as traditional healing to American Indian consumers. Therefore, culturally appropriate VR services will cease in these communities.

It is difficult to describe the role that those five programs to the future of the communities if they are unable to serve tribal members and to understand the cultural language and the way of life.

The last question is how will this affect the pool of potential applicants for American Indian VR program.

As noted, the federal and state tribes who do not have a land base or may own land but do not choose to put such land in trust will be unable to apply for grants.

This type of change would impact 240 potential tribal applicants who are currently eligible to apply for VR grants. It will also negatively impact vast numbers, thousands of American Indians with disabilities who would qualify for services from those tribal VR programs.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you.

MS. ROANHORSE: There is one more thing that I'd like to add. The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program is one mechanism by which the Federal Government executes a portion of the trust obligation that it has taken upon itself with regards to Indian tribes.

The obligation is based on the sovereign status of tribal governments and the government-to-government relationship between two sovereigns.

The obligation under American Indian VR is to assist the tribal government to provide services to Indians within their territory, not the obligation to individual Native Americans anywhere.

Provide funding regardless of location of individual or status of the area to tribal sovereignty. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, ma'am. Okay. We appreciate your comments online and all participants.

Okay, we're going to continue with our in-person comments. And I'm going to read several names so that you can line up behind the podium. The next one is going to be Tony Hunt, then Shari Hughes, then Deborah Dennison, then Alberto Siqueiros.

Once again, if we can just limit our time speaking so that we can get as many comments as possible. Okay.

MR. HUNT: Thank you. My name is Tony Hunt. I am the tribal administrator for the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. And we have traveled a long ways to speak to you this afternoon.

We want to thank this panel for allowing us the opportunity to come and speak with you.

I met Mr. Mendoza, he may not remember me, about 2 years ago in Oklahoma City at the National Indian Education Conference. And he was talking about the initiative of gathering all of these entities together to look into Indian Country about education and different departments that affect the education of our children.

Let me thank you for this public forum that we're able to come. Because of this and just being a state-recognized tribe we have an opportunity to speak to you, not being able to speak to you as a federally-recognized tribe but as a state-recognized tribe.

I'm here in the question of the vocational rehab. Our tribe receives this grant. We've been administering it for over 6 years. I have two workers that would have a combination of 29 years in vocational rehab services. And they run our program. It has been deemed as one of the model programs in the nation.

And what I would like to just say here today is that it's been mentioned here about who should be served and in some language that narrows down talking about reservations.

And I was so glad to hear the chair of the Hopi Tribe I think is the name of it of speaking about that we are Indians everywhere. And that our state-recognized tribe even though we're not federally recognized we have federal programs such as the NAHASDA program, the light and heat program. And we have all these programs because we have been recognized as a state tribe and a tribe that is trying to serve our people.

Let me also say that my being here today, we just want to say to this panel that we feel like that it should be looked at as a program that is serving children and Native American children and adults also that for some reason or another that they need help in furthering their education. Ms. Celeste Hunt has a great story of one of the individuals that we have served. And we have helped them to become a productive citizen in society.

And I think that is the goal of all of our tribes is to help our children and our adults and our members to become productive citizens in society and not be looked down at but to be able to contribute to the society and be part of it.

So we ask this panel. We have written comments already submitted in, Mr. Mendoza, and we'll refer those to you in writing. And hope that you would continue to help with this language of being able to allow the state-recognized tribes and even those tribes that don't have reservation lands and land in trust. We've been trying to for years to get land in trust. We're trying again.

But again, you're dealing with a state government that runs its state and does not want you to do that. But we would hope that you would take these comments into consideration when they talk about excluding tribes that have been very successful in being able to help our children and our adults. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, sir. We appreciate you coming all the way to Arizona from North Carolina.

Our next public comment is Shari Hughes.

MS. HUGHES: Good afternoon. I would like to also thank everyone in the room. I think everyone in here is putting their time and their energy into being here and being strong advocates for our youth in education.

I want to address question 2 of the comments that are requested by RSA regarding tribes without a reservation being qualified to be able to have the vocational rehabilitation service. I'm sorry, I'm a little nervous. I wasn't going to do this till about an hour ago.

But I was sitting here and I was listening to Secretary Duncan and he said something that I just, I wrote it down. And it says, "Kids don't leave school because it's hard, they leave school because it's easy, because they're not engaged." And I just clicked.

And I in my former life was a schoolteacher. And I was fortunate enough to I actually ran the migrant education and bilingual education programs for the school district and was approached by the superintendent to work with three other people to try to investigate whether or not an alternative school would be a good move for the district. And of course I jumped on that.

And we did. We opened an alternative school. And we opened an alternative school because we had a 28 percent dropout rate in the eighth grade. We opened the school because kids were in trouble. They were into drugs and alcohol. They were troublesome in their regular, mainstream classrooms. They had horrendous home lives. One young man lived in his car in front of the school.

And the teachers and the staff at the public school didn't have the time, didn't have the -- and when I say time, they didn't not want to help them. They didn't have the time. They didn't have time to focus on them and give them the care that they needed.

They didn't have the time to take care of the fundamental necessities that they needed in order to have a good educational experience.

It's no different with my clients. If they are sent to the state VR system it's no different for my clients.

The state system does not have the time to put in that personal, face-to-face, I'm everything. They don't have the time to assess and address those internal cultural-- I should read this, I guess. I'm sorry. All the things that are underneath that we have to address first.

We don't put people into work. I can get any one of you a job this week. I can get you a job. We put our clients into sustainable employment where there's room for growth, where they get a decent wage, where they have a retirement, where they have room to grow. And we don't do that until they're taken care of in here and here.

The state can't do that, Tom. The state can't do that. So that is my comment in response to number 2. Thank you.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Online Operator, is there a second question?

OPERATOR: We have no comments at this time.

MS. NORRIS: Okay, thank you. Okay, one question there. I have Dr. Elvira Largie and then Albert Siqueiros and Dr. Joe Martin.

DR. LARGIE: Good afternoon. I'm Elvira Largie. (Native Language Spoken.) Welcome to the State of Arizona for those of you who have traveled many miles to come here to join us at this tribal consultation today. It's an honor and a privilege to stand before you to say that I do represent Rough Rock Community School, the first tribal grant school in Indian Country and throughout the country. I am very proud to say that we do promote language and cultural learning. We have a K-12 school. We are locally controlled by a governing board, and we have those board members here with us -- or a couple of board members here, and perhaps if you could give them the honor and also the privilege to offer some comments of their own.

As far as I'm concerned as an Indian educator, first and foremost a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, and just a daughter to my mother and my grandmother who's passed on and grandparents, I think that as Indian education leaders and educational leaders in this country we have to remember where we're coming from, where our dwelling -- our hogans are, our teepee grounds are, our mountains, our sacred areas. And then from that point in time we can educate our children so that they could go out and have a strong mind, a strong heart, and be strong people so that they could lead with that strength and that courage that our grandfathers -- our forefathers had in their homes, in their hearts, and their minds like I said.

But I think that achieving and gaining, making academic gains and test scores, what's really important is not to forget who we are as Indian people, our identity. I came before you today to express myself and introduce myself through my traditional plans. And I think that with the BIE and this sequestration that is in effect right now sometimes we forget about our little children who need a warm home to go home to, a warm place to be, food to eat.

And our parents are so involved into the daily rigors of survival. Earlier it was presented like some of our children are homeless. And sometimes we experience that ourselves too. And the transition of moving from school and community to community, the mobility is high and education as it is today does not meet our needs. It's got standards-based education, it's got -- you have to meet a certain average daily attendance. So we been conformed to those ways.

But again, like I said, I stand here proud to say that at Rough Rock Community School we have our elders, our grandparents, our forefathers and those teachings, the history of our people still exists and it's alive and well.

And I'd like to say that we'd like to also, along that same line, say that tribal education is important. Although there is public education charter schools, parochial education, our tribal education system is important, that local governance is important. And I think we need to keep that intact so that we can continue to enhance our Native tribes, their teachings and keep that sound and stable and strong.

With that, Debora, I'd like to ask if I could allow my board member to come up on behalf of Rough Rock Community School?

MS. NORRIS: I am sorry, everyone has had to have filled out the form to speak.

DR. LARGIE: It doesn't hurt to ask, right?

MS. NORRIS: We acknowledge that they're here and we're glad that they're here.

DR. LARGIE: All right, just a last note, just to say that we'd like to go on record from Rough Rock Community School, we do have an immersion program there and we value the support that all our political appointees and legislature and throughout the country, all the people that have helped us I just want to say thank you. We appreciate you and we appreciate your time here. (Native Language Spoken.)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Dr. Largie. Next we have Albert Siqueiros.

DR. SIQUEIROS: Thank you and hello, everyone. My name is Albert Siqueiros. I'm the superintendent of the Baboquivari Unified School District on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

And I'm here for a number of reasons. Number one to say that transformation is working at Baboquivari Unified School District. In January 2010 our governing board took the initiative to say enough to mediocre performance and results and determined that we were going to transform ourselves into a highly excelling school district.

No longer are we accept mediocre results. No longer are we making excuses for ourselves and for our children. But through a very tightly structured transformation effort that's taken a

systemic approach to changing the things in our school system, how we operate, how we teach and all the things that are critical to support the classroom are changing.

For example, we've taken this whole notion of -- pardon me, this concept of self-determination. All that's entailed in sovereignty and that our nation will self-determine its own direction. Taken that concept and applied it to our students, to our parents and our community, our teachers, our staff, our administrators and the Tohono O'odham Nation that we are going to transform ourselves and place education at its highest priority.

And to give you some examples of that in May of 2009 our graduation rate was way below 50 percent. I am honored and pleased to report that in May of 2013 we have reached that 80 percent mark of graduation.

I'm also pleased to report that in May of 2013 we had 30 of our students apply for higher education, 24 of them were accepted, currently 19 are enrolled in a 4-year university and/or community college, and a few of them are enrolled in a technical school.

And that may not seem significant in the broader picture but when you consider that we had 44 kids graduating this year, that's pretty significant. Over \$3 million in scholarship, some of merit-based, some of it need-based of course, but nonetheless those are huge numbers, an all-time high for us.

Typically we would get three or four kids that would apply. So you can see that transformation is working for us.

Secondly, the other example I want to give is that when you look at our transformation effort that really began 3 years ago that we see our highest academic achievement results in kindergarten, first, second and third grade because those kids have had the full benefit of our transformation efforts. We're still working very intently in all the grade levels to provide the correct level of intervention support to get our kids to be ready for whatever the state decides will be its next assessment.

But nonetheless the most significant part for us is not just high school graduation, but are they college- and career-ready. That's what it's about for us. I do want to add one quick component that we're working with the higher education in southern Arizona, with the Tohono O'odham Community College and in particular University of Arizona on a compact to academic success.

That implies the following, that any Baboquivari Unified School District graduate who agrees to a short set of criteria along with their parents will receive automatic admission to the University of Arizona with scholarship and/or financial aid and specific programs designed to support persistence and completion of the programs for my kids only. Now, that is groundbreaking stuff. So we are bridging those gaps, those opportunity gaps that exist for students.

I also want to mention two things about early education and all that that implies. I think nationally we've made a critical mistake and particularly with tribal lands and reservations.

The C should not be for cradle, the C should be for conception. Because we know all too well the unfortunate circumstances that occur when a woman whether she's 14 or 40, what may occur while that baby is in her tummy, if she's not getting that right prenatal care, that support. If there's substance abuse, if there's alcoholism, you know what I'm talking about. The community needs to wrap around that mom and give her all the necessary support so that child is born healthy.

We know what the brain research tells us. Before we get the kids in our public schools the brain is almost fully developed. It matters a lot what we do before we get the kids in our school. But I would suggest that the national agenda and the national tenor should address prenatal care and all that that entails.

Secondly, if we are to continue with these transformation efforts and because we were awarded a school improvement grant for two of our schools, one which completed its third year last year so the funding has ended, a second school whose funding will end at the end of this year, if we are to sustain those programs in light of the impending additional sequester cuts, something needs to happen if we're going to continue this work.

We're at a point right now that we are making a difference for the Tohono O'odham Nation that our things that we do matter a lot. Quality of life, economic prosperity and health and wellness of the Tohono O'odham Nation is at stake if we do not continue to provide these services.

And just one final thought which I remembered just as I was talking here is there is an equal access issue on tribal lands where the BIA has failed in its responsibility to maintain roads and the infrastructure. I cannot get kids to school on a regular basis during the monsoon in my part of Arizona. I know that in northern part of Arizona when the snow comes those roads are unpassable because of the poor condition. They are not maintained and that needs to be addressed as well. Thank you very much.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Alberto. Two words for you: Go Warriors. My school, graduated 25 years ago. Okay. I'd like to ask the operator if we have another comment queued.

OPERATOR: There are no comments at this time.

MS. NORRIS: Okay, no comments. Okay, thank you. In that case I'm going to read the next four in line here. It will be Dr. Joe Martin, Sara Mae Williams, Florian Johnson and Jacob Moore. So if you want to go ahead and line up. Okay, go ahead, Dr. Martin.

DR. MARTIN: Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you so much for all your hospitality. Those are great sandwiches, best sandwich I've had in a long time. That must be your sandwich. Thank you very much.

I currently serve as a professor at NAU in Flagstaff where I teach classes to train future principals and superintendents. I also serve as a special advisor to the president from the university where I deal with issues having to do with strategic planning, organizational development and also to work on tribal relations with the tribes that we serve through the university.

I also wear several hats, and one of those hats that I wear is serving as a coach for superintendents. The state has a really nice program where they provide experienced superintendents, experienced school administrators to work with folks that need some kind of help throughout the state, and also in the neighboring states as well. So I happen to be one of those coaches that was trained under the state department's program. So some of the things that we do is we go into these schools that are struggling and obviously some of those have to do with a school that has not made AYP for consecutive years. And some of the things that really stands out to you, because part of your job is to go in to assess what's going well, what's not going well. And you try to reason, you know, bring some reason as to why that might be the case.

I think that one of the things that really sticks in my mind is that when you compare good schools to not-so-good schools is that you have a lot of people who really care in those good schools. I mean they care so much that they'll do anything for those kids. They'll do anything for the people who are involved in that school system. And on the other side it's just quite the opposite. People are there for different reasons. They're not there for the kids. They're not there for the communities.

But over on this side, you can sense that kids know that someone really cares about them by the time they get to school. And you'll listen to some of the conversations that are going on amongst the kids, that I really like so and so. That's my teacher. My first period teacher, my second period teacher, I really like those people because they make me feel good.

And, most importantly, I think part of that is that you can see in the eyes of those kids how motivated they are to be at school, number one. Number two, to be able to pay attention and absorb everything that goes on in that classroom and then be able to talk about it in some constructive way. So to me that's real learning. That is learning. So it doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out why that's the case on this side and not so on this other side.

The other thing that I'm sensing also, and this goes back to some of the points that were raised by some of the tribal leaders here about wanting to see the doctoral program added to the Indian professional development program is that I think most of you have had a chance to run organizations at some time in your life. If you're involved in a family I think you run an organization.

But there is such a thing as content, and people side. To any organization that you go into there's content and there's a people side, right? The people side is where, as a leader, you go in and you assess to see the morale of those folks. You try to gauge the spirit. Is there a lot of potential learning? Are these folks really into what they're doing? Do they understand why they're there? And so on and so forth.

Some folks are really more immersed into the content side and that's how they lead, that's how they teach, content.

I think you already know and I'm teaching to the choir here that Indian kids react much more positive to the people side, right? People side. So I think that when we -- it's not easy to see when you look at the results. I just got through looking at the AIMS test results for the Arizona state department. They put out their test results for all schools, for public schools and BIE schools.

And I'm sorry to say that it doesn't look very encouraging for our state. In fact, it went down from the years past and it's gone down even more. So from my experience, but there are some growth areas. You see some growth areas in the state, different pockets of the country.

From what I know about those folks who run those schools I can see why that there's growth in some of those schools because I know those people. Some of them have taken classes from me and I know that they put a lot more emphasis on that people side than the content side.

So, I just want to reiterate with that little episode to suggest that I think what was recommended by our tribal leaders, that we should put a lot more emphasis. Because we have in the experience I've had at NAU so far, we've been fortunate, and I want to thank the Office of Education to award those grants to us. We've trained probably over 200 principals from NAU alone.

And when I look around the country at all Indian schools and some non-Indian schools I see a lot of our candidates. They're leading those schools. So we're pleased by that. A lot of them come back to us and they say, when will you be able to start a doctoral program. So I hope that you can take note from that.

I think there are a couple of resolutions that were passed from the NIEA convention, and I think, Joyce, you were there and saw the dialogue that was going on. That same resolution was also passed by NCAI, the National Congress for American Indians. So I think it's sort of working its way through the pipeline to hopefully get to your level at some point to be able to recognize that.

The last point I want to make is this, and this is also a very serious, a serious situation. Some of you know that, maybe there's only two people here know that, but I used to work at the Office of Indian Education back in the late seventies when Bill Demmert was the Commissioner.

One of the things that he had me work on, along with other folks, was help devise the proposal review process. How you evaluate proposals that come in from the field.

It's my understanding that that really has not changed quite a bit. That same review process that's been in place for all those years has not really changed a lot. It still follows the same format, the same kinds of procedures and so forth. But I just want to encourage you if you could to take some time to go back and evaluate that process if you would.

And here's why. I think it takes some special training to bring someone in that has a teacher training background. That means that they should have spent some time as a faculty member, they should have been experienced with running a teacher training program. So there's both the administration, the teaching side. To fully understand and grasp the merits of a good proposal.

Because the same argument can be raised with the administrative side. People who have the administrative background have also worked in a university environment and understand --

MS. NORRIS: Dr. Martin, can we --

DR. MARTIN: -- all of the things that need to go in there. So I would really highly encourage you to evaluate that, because what I'm seeing is that based on the comments that we get back, based on the comments we're seeing, there's a lot of indications that you have people that don't have the experience that are reviewing those proposals and then making judgments based on that. Thank you very much.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Sorry to cut you off. I know I'll hear the rest of that story. But we have a half hour left and about 10 people. So if we take 3 minutes apiece we should be able to finish everyone, so we just want to be respectful of each other's time. Sara Mae Williams.

MS. WILLIAMS: Sara Mae Williams, school board member, Baboquivari Unified School District. I also sit as the president-elect for the Native American Caucus on the National School Boards Association.

And one of the things that I wanted to say is that there's no greater investment that a tribe can make than investing in education. I know we're sitting here talking about funding from the Federal Government and from the state, but as we know those dollars are dwindling. And there's going to come a time when we have to think about what is most important to our communities.

And truthfully there are some things that don't even need dollars. We need to be able to sit down and talk to each other. As we all know on our tribal lands we have a number of educational entities and unfortunately we are not talking to each other. BIE is not talking to the public schools, public schools are not talking to the charters, and so on and so forth. Head Start is not talking to the preschools. And what that does is cause a lot of chaos and unfortunately who suffers the most but our children.

When we talk about tribal nations we want to see all of our children rise together. And yet when you look at the statistics that are out there you see this seesaw happening between the public schools and the charters and the BIE schools that are out there.

And yet there needs to be this ability for us to come together and really sit down and analyze what is most important for our tribal nations. Do we want to see our children succeed? Do we want to see our language and our culture preserved or whatever the word they're using now? And what is most important?

And just one thing to add about language and culture is that is it an institutionalized language and culture that we want to teach our children or is it a language and culture that is going to be something that the tribe comes up with together?

As a public school we are kind of left alone to say, okay, teach language and culture, and yet we've never even invested in the curriculum to teach that language and culture at a very high level. When we start to talk about Common Core that's coming into play, where does that language and culture curriculum fit within Common Core? When we haven't quite developed the books and all the materials that we need to make that happen for our communities.

And it is a very real question that we need to ask ourselves because, if we want to just teach language and culture and conversational that's a very different piece. So we have to really sit down and think about what is most important for our tribal nations as a whole.

Like I said, to me, yes it is funding. We took our impact aid dollars and rather than invest in large, massive structures where sports can happen we decided to say we're going to invest in student achievement. And as Dr. Siqueiros, our superintendent, said we went from a 39 percent graduation rate to an 80 percent graduation rate in a matter of 3 years.

But what it took and I will tell you this. And it wasn't me because I was not the school board member at the time. I came a year later. But it took them sitting down to say you know what? Enough to mediocre results. And it's time to say we want the best school that we could possibly provide for our entire nation. And it happened. And it's happening.

Unfortunately with the state scores for AIMS we're still considered a D school but I will tell you one amazing thing that happened. If you look at our grades individually you will see some of the most amazing growth that you've seen across the board. But unfortunately, according to the state we're still considered a D level.

But I will have you know that we are a fast-rising school. We see student achievement happening at a very alarming rate right now. We are going to improve and we are going to be one of

the best schools in the United States. And I want to continue to tell you guys to watch the things that we're doing. But I hope that what happens from this is that we start to take a look at all the need, that we start to make that investment and that we start to sit down and really talk about what is most important. Because right now that conversation is nonexistent. And if we're going to improve it's going to take all of us.

So egos need to be checked at the door and we need to sit down and talk about our kids. The most important thing for our Nations is our children. So thank you for your time and it's good to see everyone again.

MS. NORRIS: Good to see you too, thanks.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Florian Johnson. If you see me raising a finger it's to let you know you have a minute left. And it's my index finger if you can't see, so just to be clear.

(Laughter)

MR. JOHNSON: (Native Language Spoken). Greetings. My leaders, thank you for this opportunity to converse and listen to some of our concerns and then your updates in education and Indian education specifically. I'm Florian Johnson. I'm the Navajo curriculum coordinator at Rough Rock Community School. Recently somebody talked about -- or Mary Kim Titla talked about the quality of culture-based education and that's what I'm here to talk about.

There are a handful of successful indigenous language immersion schools in this country. Some of the well-documented schools exist on Navajo, in Hawaii, Alaska, Montana and Minnesota, where indigenous language speakers are creative. In addition to higher academic achievement and 100 percent graduation rates such as Nawahi in Hawaii, a laboratory school that is under the Hawaiian Language College of the University of Hawaii-Hilo.

Mary talked about the quality of culture-based education. We have a research group right now from those states that I named, that was led by the late Bill Demmert and now by Dr. Beaulieu from the University of Wisconsin.

The five areas of culture-based education that which the Rough Rock program and the (Native Language Spoken,) the Window Rock School District program, here in Arizona follows the five

areas of culture-based education. That is the use of indigenous language, culture-based curriculum, culture-based pedagogy, culture-based leadership and decision-making and cultural ways of assessing.

So currently these schools are collaborating in developing academic assessments in the indigenous languages. It makes sense to assess students in the core academic subjects in the language of instruction, their indigenous languages. These assessments are tested for reliability and validity and meet the standards of sound assessment.

These efforts need to be nurtured and supported by allowing these schools specifically aimed to revitalize and to maintain their indigenous languages to use these assessments in the indigenous language to measure and monitor academic achievement, such things as AYP.

In addition, additional funding to support continued research and the collection of data in this area is needed if improvements in Indian education is to be expected. Thank you for your time.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. I'm going to read the next four in order so you can line up. Jacob Moore, John Tippeconnic, Beth Hinton, Catherine Esquivel. Go ahead, Jake.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Mendoza, Ms. Silverthorne, tribal leaders, guests, thank you. And Mr. Mendoza and Ms. Silverthorne, thank you for coming out and spending time with us. I know that the work that you do is critical and time-consuming and we appreciate your role on the White House initiative.

With that being said my name is Jacob Moore. (Native Language Spoken) good afternoon. I am on the Arizona State Board of Education. I also serve on the WestEd board. I also do work for ASU in the office of public affairs. And I'll make this quick.

My previous experience as an intergovernmental affairs for Salt River has given me some background in terms of tribal relations, state relations and federal relations and how all of those kind of blur together at some point.

And I do want to reiterate for your big boss, for President Obama, this concern about the erosion of trust agreement and trust responsibilities. Vice Chairman Bush from San Carlos talked about the idea that there is this trust agreement. And whether it's sequestration, or some of these issues that it lends itself to that erosion, issues with Head Start and where we're seeing funding shift over to programs like Medicaid and Medicare that we participate in, we're losing out on that

relationship through BIE, IHS and all those programs that are part of that trust commitment. And we hope that we can maintain that and encourage the reestablishment of that relationship.

My second big concern was Race to the Top. Arizona was one of those states that had applied and didn't do well in the first round and missed out by five points in the second round.

The concern in terms of Department of Education and how it distributed \$4.35 billion was really on a competitive basis. And my biggest concern was that all those states that were funded were east of the Mississippi except for Hawaii, that there were no states west of the Mississippi that had received that money which was for -- to spur innovation and reform.

And so when we're fighting over crumbs in terms of the smaller amount of money there was a great opportunity there for Montana or Arizona or some of those states to be able to participate in that process and look at innovation and reform for our tribal communities that was a missed opportunity.

And I would hope that at some point in the future that we do have another opportunity to not just be on the margins but to take advantage of those larger pots of money that are available.

Those states that are looked at in terms of the cutting edge or the Blue Ribbon states around education are states like Massachusetts, who is considered to have the highest standard. Massachusetts is a total of 8,262 square miles. Maricopa County is 9,200 square miles. So even the county that we reside in now is much bigger than a state the size of Massachusetts. Arizona is 10 times bigger than Massachusetts and so our issues are different, our challenges are different. And at some point I hope that Department of Education would give us that opportunity to address our issues differently than what happens east of the Mississippi.

My last comment is about the challenges of Common Core. Being on the state board it's something that I've supported in terms of our increased standards. But again my concern is for our tribal students, our Native students and our tribal communities who struggle already.

We know that there's going to be an academic dip but I hope that we can provide additional resources not only for our students but for our teachers and our administrators as Common Core rolls out. And then, I would encourage greater collaboration between BIE and public schools and charter schools, parochial schools in terms of sharing data and information on our students, if you can help build those relationships, I know that's something you're probably working on.

I also applaud the support of the comprehensive centers in terms of additional money to support research around Indian education. And I also applaud your effort on the flexibility waiver to encourage states like Arizona to consult and collaborate with our tribal nations. Thank you for your time.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Jake.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Dr. John Tippeconnic.

DR. TIPPECONNIC: Good afternoon. My name is John Tippeconnic. I'm a member of the Comanche Tribe, also part Cherokee from Oklahoma.

I heard several comments about tribal colleges today. I'm a strong supporter of tribal colleges and was on the ground floor of establishing Comanche Nation College, the first tribal college in Oklahoma. And we're on the verge of being accredited very soon.

I am presently at Arizona State University. We have one thousand one hundred and I think seventy-eight Native students on campus. It's a high number for us. We're proud of that number. Many of the students are doing well and I can tell you they're a smart group.

But also, if we believe that the dropout rate is 50 percent, for every one of those students there's another student somewhere else who's not at ASU or not at another institution of higher education.

When I talk to the students that I teach, I ask them why are you here and why are those that perhaps you went to school with, not here. And the response I get is, someone was there for them. A parent, and oftentimes the mother, or a teacher, in other words an adult was there to support them along the way. That's critical I think is to make that connection adult to student. When I woke up this morning I was thinking about education as I always do. Luckily I didn't have a nightmare last night.

But I was thinking that education, you know, in the past education was used as a tool to change us, to eradicate language and culture. And it's interesting today we look at education to bring back, to revitalize, to renew language and culture, to renew who we are as Native people.

We look to education to promote those kinds of things, indigenous knowledge, including language and culture. We are preparing future leaders in Indian Country. They are the ones who will be the intellectual warriors that will sustain the concepts of tribal sovereignty, trust responsibility, our language and cultures, our histories, and be involved in implementation of the policy of self-determination.

More attention I feel needs to be devoted to the education of American Indians and Alaskan Natives. Indian education needs to be a priority at all levels. At the local level, at the tribal level, at the state level, at the national level, all levels.

I noted in the NAEYC report, which is in the packet, in their June 2013 report they recommended to Congress to elevate the importance of Indian education. I suggest the same needs to be done in the U.S. Department of Education and in every school in this country. The history of Indian education is one of fighting to be at the table, to be taken seriously and to receive a larger share of the resources. Oftentimes the larger programs receive higher priority and more attention than Indian education.

We all know that the education of Native students is very complex. There's no one way to address local situations. We know that one size does not fit all. It takes an effort that is holistic in nature and some of you referred to that. We need an integrated approach that takes into account what students bring with them to school, their family situations. And we need to build a capacity in our educators to meet those needs.

Education can no longer, if it ever was, be taken and act in isolation from the cultural, economic, social, health and legal factors that impact students and their families.

Leadership. Leadership can make a profound difference in education at all levels. We know that by experience and by research. But we also know that leadership can go the other way and make a negative difference.

I commend OIE for preparing American Indian and Alaskan Native principals and teachers. They are making a difference. But we need more. We need to make more of a difference.

More support, more resources are needed to make a greater impact. And I support the comment from the chairman from the Hopi Tribe and Joe Martin in recommending to OIE perhaps in a reauthorization to put back in a program for doctoral students, for Ph.D. students.

We know that today in education in the leadership world we need those credentials even for principals but certainly for superintendents. So I support that.

And I also think that there's one area, perhaps two areas in Indian education that I've noticed over time, and I've been involved a long time in Indian education, that we seem to have missed.

One area is the area of school counselors. We need a program I feel to prepare school counselors because they make a profound difference also in students. We still get those stories at the higher ed level from students who say my counselor said I was not college material. It's unfortunate that we do that.

And the other area I think that we miss the boat on oftentimes is the preparation and the involvement and the education of school board members. School boards are there, you know, they're charged with a certain responsibility. Oftentimes they do determine that policy. They look at our budgets, they hire, fire, those kinds of activities. And I don't think we do an adequate job of preparing them. It would be nice to see a program through OIE to support school board preparation or training.

The teacher-student relationship is a key relationship in education as we all know. That is where teaching is supposed to take place. That is where learning is supposed to take place. Other educators support this relationship.

I am hopeful that the move to Common Core standards gives teachers the flexibility and brings back the creativity and the innovativeness of teaching. It seems like No Child Left Behind has taken that away.

I also hope in the implementation that we'll find a strong place for Native education for all of our students. I also hope that we get back to the original intent of the Indian Education Act of 1972 to use a comprehensive approach in meeting the educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native students. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Dr. Tippeconnic. Beth Hinton. After Beth will be Catherine Esquivel, Dale Frederick, Jacquelyn Power, Bill Mehojah as far as we have time. Go ahead.

MS. HINTON: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Beth Hinton. I am currently the president of the Fort Thomas Governing School Board. I come from the San Carlos Apache Tribe and I'm here with my school superintendent.

First of all, I'd like to say that I come from the San Carlos Apache Tribe and earlier our vice chairman Dr. Bush forgot to mention our small school district because we are located so east of the reservation and our students are bussed home miles off the reservation.

First of all, Fort Thomas Unified School District is located 11 miles east of the San Carlos Apache Tribe with an approximate 94 percent Native American student population who reside in the town nearby in Bylas, Arizona.

A few years back parents of our school district expressed an interest in bringing back the school to our reservation since it's been over 50 years since there's been a school in our town. So our governing board at that time decided to build a school with 100 percent funding coming from impact aid. This was before the sequestration cuts and because of that it seems that our school will not be completed.

We had started out with the hopes of bringing a K-12 to our reservation and with all the cuts that happened we've had to cut back to a K-3 facility. My message here today is that we stop cutting these important funds that our Native American students are greatly benefitting from and especially little children from my reservation.

I was born and raised in Bylas and graduated school from Fort Thomas and went on to college and came back and decided to work with the Boys and Girls Club. And that's how I got affiliated with the kids. And hearing their little remarks about school lunches, you know, and bus routes home, and being bullied, that I decided to run for school board.

And a lot of times I get I guess misinterpreted of being a student at the school because I'm that age. But I'm here because I wanted to advocate on behalf of the small rural schools out there that you get lost in the midst with all these larger school districts. And that we really do need impact aid funding, especially for my school district. And I would hope that in the future that they would stop making cuts.

And I enjoyed listening to the comments of the tribal leaders earlier. And one day I hope to be seated in their seats and helping advocate for the kids too. So, thank you.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. Catherine Esquivel.

MS. ESQUIVEL: (Comment in Native Language). Thank you. It's nice to speak in front of an audience where I feel like we're a family from one side of the coast to the other side of the coast. Welcome to Arizona.

I wanted to say that in the early seventies, 1975, I was a student at Shonto Boarding School on the Navajo Reservation. And my first grade teacher was talking to us in English and we didn't understand what she was saying. And we looked at each other like what is she saying. And then she was asking us a math question and to solve the equation. We didn't know. And finally I just guessed and I raised my hand. I said 11. She goes that's right, you all are a bunch of stupid Indians. And that became my -- that was my mind-set for the rest of my life. I'm a stupid Indian.

And had she asked us in Navajo -- I could count past 30 in Navajo. I knew the constellations. They told us stories, when to plant, when to do different things. They told us our creation story, where we were from. But because we didn't speak English she didn't ask us.

I remember my older siblings and my older cousins trying to teach me English here and there. And so we'd be counting sheep and I'd be saying one, two, three, *dii, ashdla', hastaa*. And that was how I counted back then. And it stuck with me, the stupid Indian, throughout elementary school.

But I loved to read, I read all the time. High school I was taking advanced and honors classes. And I guess now they would be called AP classes. But in my mind I was still a stupid Indian.

And then I went to Haskell because my family forced me to apply. And I flunked out my first semester, or my first year actually. And yes, I remember your father, Mr. Mendoza. But I flunked out because I was a stupid Indian. You know, stupid Indians don't belong in college.

And then I went to a community college. And for the first time in my life I made a 3.4 GPA. And I actually studied. And then I thought why not go to a major university. So I applied and got into Brigham Young University. And I maintained a 3.4, 3.2 GPA.

By then I spoke three languages. I can read, write in the three languages and speak.

So one day I took an IQ test at the school. My IQ was 85. I was stunned. I knew what that meant to those who gave the test. But to myself I knew I was smarter than that. But it went back to being called a stupid Indian. But how was it that I was able to be at a major university with major scholarships and still have an IQ of 85?

And so when our state legislator was talking about AIMS and standardized tests they do not apply to Indian Country. They do not apply.

And at home I have three children and education began when I was pregnant with them. I sang to them. I tell them stories. When they were born they were familiar with those songs. They knew my voice.

And I am the primary educator. The mothers are the primary educators in Indian Country. In Flagstaff I serve on the Indian Education Committee.

A couple of weeks ago I learned that there are well over 2,000 Native American students predominantly Navajo and Hopi that are in Flagstaff. And across the board the absentee rate was very high, so high that on the average every single Native American student would have had 22 absences. It's alarming.

I don't know what the answer is. So I've been going to the ladies on the committee with me to find answers. And that's the kind of answer that comes from within.

And so I'd like to close with asking does the Great Father and his council understand the role that historical trauma plays in the high numbers of social ills in Native America? Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you. We have 3 minutes left so this has to be our last one. Go ahead, Dale, Dr. Frederick.

DR. FREDERICK: Good afternoon. I'm honored to be here. I wanted to thank all of you for coming and I'm very appreciative that you're here.

I have the honor of working in this community. I'm the superintendent of schools and the director of tribal education. My name is Dale Frederick. I'm an immigrant to here although I've

grown up and spent most of my life in Arizona. I'm Sac and Fox and Choctaw. I am also a blend. I have a little German in there somewhere, Frederick, you noticed.

I can only dovetail on what's been said here today because many things have been covered. I grew up in southern Arizona and I came from a very dysfunctional family and had a number of different men in and out of my life. And education was a door for me that was opened by teachers. And they refused to allow me to fail because I came from the background that you're not supposed to be here.

I want to reemphasize what we've heard about early childhood education. One of the significant experiences I've had is I've not only worked in Indian education, been in this community for 9 years and doing Indian education to some of the big systems I'm in but I've also had an opportunity to work in some of the big urban centers as a superintendent.

Issues are very much the same from back in the time when people started addressing how poorly kids were doing in urban education. There are many similarities, different cultures, different living conditions.

Poverty is a big significant one. Even though you're in this community and right now you're sitting in this community and you walk across the street from this community and you're in Scottsdale. So our kids live in rural or farther out urban environment on a daily basis. Our kids are influenced by multiple influences.

I've heard about charter schools, I've heard about BIE schools, I've heard about public schools. We're all of that. Our community made a decision in '96 to become a grant school, to take responsibility for running their elementary school.

They started a charter high school because at that time this community's dropout rate was over 83 percent and they figured we can't do any worse than that. And they've improved it since then.

Yes, under the new set of circumstances with the growing requirements we are a D school in this state, but we have a high mobility rate because we accept kids regardless. Fifty percent of our kids come and go annually. So whom we start with we may not have at the end of the year.

And that's a dynamic we live with. But if you get them and we keep them, we educate them and they graduate and they go to college and they do very well. We're going to have to put some things in place to accommodate that so we keep the doors open and we don't have a rec center, so we have a high school for our kids. Because our kids do it, but to meet the standards.

One of the things we have to do is we have to have common alignment between the schools. This community runs its daycare, Early Head Start, Head Start, CCDF, elementary school, high school and higher education as one unit under a division. So we have that continuum with a board that covers that, an autonomous education board. It can be done, decisions can be made.

Language as you heard this morning from the gentleman who led us in a blessing is a difficult one here because we have two distinct, different languages and cultures that we work with on an ongoing basis. Not one, but two. And getting the speakers in one of the communities, there may be only 15 speakers left alive. In the other community there are more. But coming to the table to bring language, because some people don't want their kids to be exposed to that. And some people don't want their kids to be exposed to this. So we're working on that. But it is a need and we're working on it. And we're going to continue. The funding needs to be in place and needs to be a priority.

Somebody mentioned the learning. The emotional IQ is just as important as the cognitive IQ. And if we're not working on both of those in tandem we're doing serious harm to our children. So we need to make sure that we're working. We need to make sure that the classroom and the school environment are dealing with both of those and we're dealing with them. Yes, there's a lot of dysfunction.

We talk about partnering. We need all of the agencies to be supporting what's going on in the schools. Where do we have the students for 6-8 hours a day on an ongoing basis from about 6 weeks old to high school? In those schools. And we need to have a focus on there to make sure that those partnerships are working and we're dealing with the dysfunctions from the families and have the support for there. We're dealing with the mental issues or the physical issues or the substance or the poverty.

You know, we talk about equal. Equality isn't the issue here, it's equity. When people have much less you need to bolster and make sure they're getting the ability to become equal. If you don't do that you have problems. So those need to be issues and the partnerships need to be in place.

There's a big difference between availability and accessibility. And many times we say oh, it's available. Well, it's not available if it's not accessible and people don't have the ability to get to it to be able to use it and be able to have it.

There has to be common alignment. I don't care what kind of school it is. I don't care whether it's a state school or a Bureau school or a charter school or anybody else's school. There has to be common alignment through the entire thing so that we're all having the same expectations, the same assessments, the same recognition, the same importance and the same focus on how we improve what children do.

And schools have to be designed for kids, not for the big people but for kids. And have an environment and a focus for kids. And that's something that many times is not done.

What I'll say is we're happy you're here. We need your support. We need the effort. We need -- the input you're getting here, we need it to be addressed. The reports that we've read are very important. Indian education needs to become a priority if we're going to make a difference, if we're going to make a difference. If that's the issue, that we want to make a difference then it needs to become a priority.

I want to thank you for your time and I want to thank you for being here today.

MS. NORRIS: Thank you, Dr. Frederick.

(Applause)

MS. NORRIS: Thank you to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community for hosting this event on your lands. We appreciate that very much.

We still had some folks who didn't get to comment because we ran out of time. Please understand that you are encouraged to go ahead and send your comments to our online format. And you can find this at www.edtribalconsultations.gov. And you will be able -- oh, .org, sorry. Edtribalconsultations.org. Org.

And you will be able to see all of the documents that were presented here but you will also be able to submit comments in written format for the next 30 days. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: For all of you who have stayed through this whole day it's been a day of a lot of good messages, a lot of important discussion. We thank you for staying and sticking this through with us.

It's a process where we will take back the information that you've provided. As you've just heard there will be an opportunity for written comments as well.

And as we were moving things forward I'd like to announce a couple of things that will be coming up in the very near future.

During the National Indian Education Association each year for the past 3 years we've had a technical assistance day. And that technical assistance day is a Department of Education-wide opportunity for information and sharing. As we hear questions and concerns from the group we try to make sure that we identify people and resources that you can be participants with and actually have some people with the expertise to answer some of your questions.

And so that's, again, the effort that we're going through right now to pull that technical assistance day together. That will be on October 30, Wednesday, the day before NIEA begins. So for anyone who can join us.

And we will be doing a video teleconference. So we have three rooms with video teleconference connections that are going to bring information from Washington, D.C. We're able to get a variety of people who we wouldn't be able to bring in person. The disadvantage is that they're there and we're here. But we will have a fourth room where the presentations will be the people that have come to NIEA to be able to be presenting to. So that's an opportunity coming.

All of the efforts that we are hearing today, thank you for the comments on the Ed 506 Form. That certainly is helpful information coming from people who are actually using the form. So thank you. Thank you. We'll continue to work on that.

We're continuing to do enhancements within the Title VII programs. One of the changes that is coming with the formula program is that we are looking back at the statute again. And culturally responsive education will become the overall goal of all of the objectives within the application format. That is a significant change from what it has been recently.

And it does honor back to the issue that we have heard time and again from consultation that culture matters, language matters, and it needs to be important to all of our programs.

So with that I think we've all had all that we can hear. Thank you for being here.

(Applause)

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you. At this time we'd just like to -- I think Joyce summed it up perfectly. And I couldn't add more on that than just thank you to our tribal leaders who took the time to be with us here today. Thank you to our departmental partners and our federal agency partners who were able to join us.

And especially our educators, our stakeholders. I know that's a sensitive word in Indian Country in general but I think you know what I mean. You're at the core of our communities regardless of what your role is. And I just really appreciate from the standpoint of our work at the federal level your support of us being able to prioritize these issues and have you communicate to us.

I can just reiterate what Joyce and everybody here said, that these concerns and comments don't fall on deaf ears and that we utilize this information in the course of our everyday activities and hope that we are developing a repository in the least of information that can continue to inform these conversations as we move forward in what amounts to the historic time that I hope I articulated adequately. And what we inherit from those of you who have been engaged in this work and continue to want to see these changes happening right away.

I want to take the time to just recognize Debora and thank her for the difficult role we put her in as a moderator and ask you to forgive her. She's a really nice person otherwise. And so just thank you to everybody for having us, especially our host tribe Salt River Pima-Maricopa. Just thank you for having us within your community.

And just look forward to our next iterations of our consultations. Again, just want to ensure that you all are signed up for our listserv through the website. We have an initiative Facebook page. Those of you who are all over that kind of stuff, like our Facebook page. Tag me.

(Laughter)

MR. MENDOZA: And make sure that we stay in communication with you all. And please consider us accessible in those ways.

Thank you so much. I want to point out our associate director of our initiative as an additional resource. Sedelta Oosahwee hails from the Cherokee and Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nations. I like to think we have Oklahoma and North Dakota covered respectively with her but she plays an integral role on our team.

Thank you to our contractors and everybody who made it possible for us to be here today. And I just want to especially acknowledge those who joined us virtually on our webcast. Thank you for utilizing that option with us and we look forward to continue to bring a multitude of options to have access to these kinds of conversations.

Thank you, everybody. If we can now hear from our Color Guard here. Please retrieve our colors.

(Color Guard Retrieval of Colors)

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you to our American Legion Post 84 from Gila River. Safe travels, everybody.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off the record at 3:44 p.m.)