Strengthening Partnerships

for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Student Education

August 2004 Conference Proceedings

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

Division of State Services and Technical Assistance

The Division of State Services and Technical Assistance supports state education agencies in developing standards-based systems that enable all children to succeed. Initiatives of the division support improved methods for collecting, analyzing and using information for decision-making; development of assessment resources; creation of high-quality professional preparation and development programs; emphasis on instruction suited for diverse learners; and the removal of barriers to academic success. The division combines existing activities in the former Resource Center on Educational Equity, State Education Assessment Center, and State Leadership Center.

Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Student Education

CCSSO recognizes the importance of focusing attention on the educational needs and strengths of Native students through a concerted effort to improve academic outcomes. Commitment to high standards for Native American youth can successfully be achieved with meaningful partnerships among key stakeholders. The purpose of the initiative is to foster partnerships nationally, regionally, and within states that support the development of systemic state plans for Native American education.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Acknowledgements

3 Introduction

9 Federal Law

9 Federal Indian Law and Policy Affecting Native American Education

15 Native Partnerships

15 The Value of Genuine Partnerships from the Native American Perspective

17 Academic Performance

17 Improving Academic Performance Among Native American Children

21 Developing Partnerships

21 Developing and Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Education

25 Educational Challenges

25 The Challenge of Native American Education: Basic or Transformative?

29 Teacher Quality and Instructional Practice

29 Task Force Findings: Teacher Quality & Instructional Practice

31 Nana I Ke Kumu: Look to the Source

32 Getting Something Different: Simple Strategies for School Change

35 Parent and Community Involvement

35 Task Force Findings: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

37 "Working Together" Parent-Professional Collaboration

39 Literacy and Language Development

39 Task Force Findings: Literacy and Language Development

40 Culturally Responsive Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum

41 Diné Language Immersion: Impact of Heritage Language and Culture on Navajo Student Achievement

45 Early Childhood Education

45 Task Force Findings: Early Childhood Education

46 The Success and Effectiveness of the FACE Early Childhood Program

46 The Strengths of Literacy in the Indigenous First Language

49 Health and Safety

49 Task Force Findings: Health and Safety

50 "Ask a Question, Save a Life"

52 Partnership Building Between the SEA and Native Community: Lessons Learned in Oregon

55 Policy, Finance, and Systems Building

59 Conclusion

61 Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

69 Appendix B: Speaker Biographies

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- Melody McCoy, Native American Rights Fund
- Regis Pecos, New Mexico Leadership Institute
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Please note that terms used to identify native peoples—specifically the terms Native American and American Indian—may be used differently in each section of this document. This is a reflection of the variability across communities regarding self-identification. Because this document is a summary of remarks delivered by various members of the education community, the reader will find differences in the definition of terms used. We at CCSSO understand the concerns of Native American communities regarding the definition of differing groups and have decided to communicate the terms in this document as they were identified by speakers. For clarification, we encourage the reader to contact the specific presenter. Thank you.

Introduction

This project began in 2002 with a request for assistance from several chief state school officers from states with large Native student populations. The purpose of the initiative is to foster partnerships nationally, regionally, and within states that are designed to improve the academic achievement of Native students.

The Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Student Education project has provided state education agency (SEA) representatives, Native community representatives, and experts in the field of Native education the opportunity to come together to articulate concerns and deepen their understanding of best practices designed to enhance educational opportunities for Native students. The Council has engaged states in initial discussions to create a shared, broad vision around the systemic changes that will result in improved outcomes for Native students and the successful implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

CCSSO recognizes the importance of focusing attention on the educational needs and strengths of Native students through a concerted effort to improve academic outcomes. Commitment to high standards for Native youth can successfully be achieved with meaningful partnerships among key stakeholders. CCSSO is actively working with chief state school officers, state education agency representatives, Native and tribal leaders, and educational organizations in order to do the following:

1. Assist states in developing an internal systemic plan for Native education that is aligned to each state's school improvement strategy.
2. Build a mechanism for state agencies and other organizations to work across states and advance the goal outlined above.
3. Plan and convene networking meetings with those who can influence change in

the education of Native youth including chief state school officers, Native education leaders, and representatives from institutions of higher education and other organizations.

4 Draft a series of white papers which discuss how to build partnerships that can successfully implement promising practices in the following areas: teacher quality and instructional practice; policy, finance, systems building; parent, family and community; literacy and language development; early childhood education; and health and safety.

National Brain Trust

As a central part of this project, two national meetings were convened in order to foster relationships and initiate conversations about prominent issues facing Native American students. The first national meeting, *Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Student Education Brain Trust* was held April 9–11, 2003, in Denver, Colorado. This meeting was designed to create a forum for state education agency representatives to discuss issues and challenges associated with implementing NCLB and improving academic performance for Native children. Several stakeholders, including chief state school officers, academicians, and Native community leaders discussed a range of implementation challenges. Of equal importance was the range of best practice solutions presented by various practitioners and Native American presenters.

Brain Trust Objectives

1 to facilitate discussions among state education officials, Native American community leaders and experts in the field of Native American education

2 to deepen participants' understanding of best practices designed to enhance education opportunities for Native American students

3 to promote a beginning discussion of systemic changes that result in improved outcomes for Native American students

Brain Trust Sessions

The meeting was comprised of plenary presentations, moderated panels, best practice discussions, and small group consultations. The following major issues and concerns for Native American students were raised during the meeting sessions:

- Language and culture must be equally considered in local and state accountability and assessment efforts.
- Native students should be encouraged to embrace their language and culture.
- School buildings and facilities in disrepair need to be renovated.
- Reservation schools need solutions to the problem of 90% turnover rate and teacher shortages.
- Highly qualified teacher certification requirements must be addressed in relation to Native teacher aides in the village schools who are not certified.
- Money is needed from Congress for teacher professional development, security in schools, early childhood programs, alternative high schools, and culturally-related programs.

- Student issues for low school attendance rates need to be addressed.
- Native Americans should be included in all school reform efforts.

National Conference

The second national meeting was the *Strengthening Partnerships for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Student Education Conference*, which was cosponsored by CCSSO and the Educational Testing Service (ETS), and was convened at the Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine, Washington, on August 8–11, 2004.

More than 100 people attended, including representatives from 16 states, one extra-state jurisdiction, and 11 tribes. Other attendees included representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the National Education Association (NEA), the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), the First Alaskans Institute (FAI), the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the Tribal Education Departments National Assembly (TEDNA).

The conference, which was convened to further the goals established at the first meeting (held in Denver, Colorado, April 2003), was comprised of plenary sessions, panelist discussion forums on best practices, state team planning sessions, and expert consultations, which explored issues related to Native education and the following six topic areas: teacher quality and instructional practice; parent, family, and community involvement; literacy and language development; early childhood education; health and safety; and policy, finance, and systems building.

Conference Objectives

1. to share and learn about promising practices for improving the academic performance of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children in a manner that is congruent with tribal traditions, languages, and cultures while promoting the knowledge and skills required in contemporary society
2. to take steps toward developing and implementing a customized in-state strategy, which includes partnerships among relevant stakeholders, for closing the achievement gap for Native students. Such partnerships may be among chief state school officers, ED representatives, tribal education leaders, local education school officials, national Indian organizations, institutes of higher education, and others
3. to develop a greater understanding of the political relationships federally recognized tribal groups have with the federal government

Native Ceremony

Throughout the conference, a variety of Native cultural traditions were incorporated in order to honor Native American languages and customs. Daily blessings were provided each morning and before meals by one of the elders from a participating tribe, and the sounds of drumming and singing were heard at the opening ceremonies. The following tribal communities participated in the conference and support this initiative:

Acoma Pueblo, Blackfeet, Cheyenne/Arapaho, Chippeawa, Diné, Kaw, Klamath, Lummi, Navajo Nation, Nooksack, Oglala Lakota, Picuris Pueblo, Pojoaque Pueblo, Queleute,

Rosebud Sioux, San Ildefonso Pueblo, San Juan Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Skokomish, Spirit Lake Tribe, Taos Pueblo, Tesuque Pueblo, Tulalip, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, Ute, Wichita Nambe Pueblo, and Winnebago/Chippewa

Plenary Sessions

The following experts provided participants with information on the history, research, best practices, and promising programs related to Native children.

Melody McCoy, staff attorney at the Native American Rights Fund, discussed federal law and policy affecting Native American education. She provided an overview of the legal principles in federal law that govern the sovereignty of the 560 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in the United States.

Byron Mallot, president and CEO of the First Alaskans Institute, addressed the leadership role in developing partnerships within the current education infrastructure. He discussed his background and the educational experiences he had growing up in Alaska.

William Demmert, professor at Western Washington University, provided professional educators with information on the latest research on improving academic performance among Native American students.

David Beaulieu, professor for the Center for Indian Education at Arizona State University, provided examples of positive partnerships and relationships in Native education.

Lily Wong Fillmore, professor at the University of California, Berkley, discussed the dangers of language extinction in the Native community and the challenges facing Native American educators.

Breakout Sessions

The following six breakout sessions were designed to provide participants with research and best practices focused on particular topics that have major implications in the education of Native students.

Teacher Quality and Instructional Practice

Cynthia D. Prince, director of Teacher Professional Development at CCSSO, provided a research summary of the issues that are affecting Native American student achievement and suggested potential solutions to improve teacher quality and instructional practice.

C. Puanani Wilhelm, administrator of the Hawaiian Studies and Language Programs for the State of Hawaii Department of Education, described teacher preparation programs for Native Hawaiians that are being offered in Hawaiian communities.

Dawn Smith, principal of Warm Springs Elementary School in Warm Springs, Oregon, illustrated some simple processes and strategies that have more than doubled achievement for elementary students on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Central Oregon.

Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Robin Butterfield, Center for School Improvement, Bureau of Indian Affairs, provided a research summary of the best practices for engaging Native parents in the education of their students.

Chris Curry, executive director of Families Together and co-director of National Native American Families Together Parent Center (NNAFT) and Prairie Flower Reuben, conference coordinator at NNAFT, described the resources that NNAFT provides to families and the training provided to professionals and parents on developing collaborative relationships.

Literacy and Language Development

Jon Reyhner, professor at Northern Arizona University, provided an overview of the language and literacy issues facing Native students.

Denny Hurtado, program supervisor for Indian Education, Title I, Higher Education at the Washington Department of Education, discussed the importance of language development and its impact on Native students meeting Washington State Reading Standards.

Florian Tom Johnson, dual language and culture director, and Jennifer Wilson, federal projects coordinator at Window Rock Unified School District No. 8 Fort Defiance, Arizona, discussed how the Window Rock Unified School District No.8 in Fort Defiance, AZ, is leveraging NCLB and continuous school improvement (based on the National Study for School Evaluation and the Balridge Criteria for Educational Excellence) through the district's Core Principles for Learning. They also examined how Diné language and cultural values are incorporated with scientifically research-based strategies, state academic standards, and Navajo Nation cultural content standards for the development of a more effective Diné Language Immersion school.

Early Childhood Education

Cheryl Kulas, executive director of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, provided a research summary of educational models that focus on the development of literacy and skill development as the foundations for academic success.

Beverly Williams, director of the Department of Academic Programs in the Lower Kuskokwim School District in Bethel, Alaska, discussed the strengths of literacy in the indigenous first language.

Charlotte Begay, department head of the Early Childhood Program at Wingate Elementary School in Wingate, New Mexico, discussed the success and effectiveness of the FACE Early Childhood Program.

Health and Safety

Norbert Hill, executive director of the American Indian Graduate Center, identified current research, promising practices, potential partnerships, and potential funding sources for work in each of the six areas of concern: tobacco use, unhealthy dietary behaviors, inadequate physical activity, alcohol and drug use, inappropriate sexual behaviors, and behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence, including suicide.

Stan Holder, drug and alcohol prevention specialist at the Office of Indian Education Programs at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, discussed the disproportionately high levels of suicide in the Native American community. He also introduced a prevention model that can be utilized to reduce suicide and save lives.

Brad Victor, health specialist for Indian education at the Oregon Department of Education,

described the strong relationship that Oregon has developed between the SEA and Tribal/Urban Native community, including work in American Indian and Alaska Native State Education Plan revisions, curriculum revisions, Native Language Preservation and Instruction, SEA staff trainings, and health risk-prevention education programs.

Policy, Finance, and Systems Building

This session, moderated by Regis Pecos, chief policy advisor and legislative coordinator for the New Mexico House of Representatives and Sarah Scanlan, director of education for First Alaskans Institute, was designed to allow state leaders to discuss how they are building statewide educational systems that ensure all students are afforded a chance to achieve at the highest levels. The following state leaders participated in the session:

- Penny Bird, assistant secretary of education for Indian education, New Mexico
- Rick Melmer, chief state school officer, South Dakota Department of Education
- Rita H. Inos, commissioner of education, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Public School System
- Wayne G. Sanstead, superintendent of public instruction, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
- Trent Blankenship, superintendent of public instruction, Wyoming Department of Education

State Team Planning Sessions

Throughout the conference, teams of state representatives worked together to create customized state plans of action to improve Native education by building partnerships. State teams analyzed and discussed the following questions during their planning sessions:

- Where is our state now in terms of developing and implementing a plan for closing the achievement gap for Native students?
- What are the priority strategies within our state for educating Native students?
- Which stakeholders must we engage in order to be successful in empowering the academic performance of Native students?
- How will we improve on each priority strategy and move to an action plan for our state?
- What will we do in our state to continue this work over the next three months?
- What partnerships do we wish to pursue?

State Team Report Out

At the culmination of the conference, state team members reported on the work that was accomplished during the past two and a half days. State representatives reported on what actions they would take over the next three months, and what partnerships they wish to create to reach Indian youth.

Federal Law

Federal Indian Law and Policy Affecting Native American Education

Melody McCoy, staff attorney at the Native American Rights Fund, discussed federal law and policy affecting Native American education.

Tribal Sovereignty

Three fundamental principles of federal Indian law regarding tribal sovereignty have been recognized since the formation of the United States:

1. American Indian and Alaska Native tribes that are recognized by the federal government are independent sovereign governments, separate from the states and from the federal government.
2. Unless Congress provides otherwise, the sovereignty of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes generally extends over their federally recognized geographic territory (e.g., reservations, allotments, trust and restricted Indian lands, and other Indian country), including over the activities of tribe members, and, in many instances, the activities of non-tribe members within that territory.
3. The sovereignty of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes is inherent and exists unless and until Congress takes it away.

History of Federal Indian Policy

McCoy explained that until 1871, the U.S. entered into treaties on a government-to-government basis with hundreds of American Indian tribes. By most of the treaties, the tribes ceded millions of acres of land to the U.S. In exchange, the

tribes typically reserved lands not ceded. Only a few treaties have specific language about tribal sovereignty, but it is understood that treaties generally preserve the sovereignty of tribes over their reserved lands. Also, as part of the price for the lands ceded by tribes, the U.S. guaranteed tribes protection from states and non-Indians on the reserved tribal lands.

In 1871, Congress passed a law forbidding future treaty making with Indian tribes. The obligations of existing treaties, however, were expressly left unimpaired. Thus, today, Indian treaties continue to constitute a major source of federal Indian law.

After 1871, the federal government continued to deal with Indian tribes by agreements, statutes, and acts that have legal implications similar to treaties. From 1871 to 1934, most of the acts of Congress provided for the acquisition, allotment, and opening to ownership by non-Indians of remaining Indian lands. These land acts are known as Allotment and Cession Acts, Homesteading Acts, and Surplus Land Acts. Often the acts were directed at specific tribes, but there was also the comprehensive General Allotment Act passed in 1887.

These land acts affected most tribes and were successful in reducing Indian land holdings from 138 million acres in 1887 to 48 million in 1934, a loss of 90 million acres. The acts were justified by strong assimilationist policies and a desire to abolish tribal sovereignty and cultures. Today these acts continue to be used as the primary vehicles for divesting or limiting tribal sovereignty.

In the 1930s, the policies of allotment and assimilation were seen as failures and were repudiated by the federal government. Federal law and policy generally acknowledged tribal sovereignty, but the federal government moved away from collaborating with Indian tribes on a tribe-by-tribe basis. Comprehensive federal Indian legislation replaced treaties, agreements, and tribe-specific acts. However, some federal laws, primarily those of the 1940s and 1950s, such as Termination Acts and "Public Law 280," were still directed at specific tribes or groups of tribes.

Some of the leading modern federal Indian laws that are generally viewed as being favorable to tribal sovereignty and cultures include

- Indian Reorganization Act of 1934
- Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975
- Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990

Federal Indian Education Laws and Policy

Federal laws and policies have had an enormous impact on Indian education. First and foremost, they have directed which sovereign—tribal, federal, or state—has primary governance over Indian education. Generally, the course of history has been as follows:

- From the 1800s through the 1920s, federal laws and policies stripped control of Indian education from tribes, and transferred primary control of Indian education to the federal government.
- From the 1920s until the 1970s, federal laws and policies transferred control of Indian

education from the federal government to the states and their public schools.

- Since the 1970s, federal laws and policies have allowed for tribes to regain some control of Indian education from what they have lost by the previous laws and policies.

Tribal, Federal, and State Control

Prior to contact with non-Indians, tribes had total responsibility for educating their members. Although each tribe is different, it was generally through family, clan, and community systems that tribal children were given daily and continuing instruction in survival, social, and spiritual skills, relations, and values. Tribal education processes, content, and goals were effective as evidenced by thriving tribal cultures and economies.

After the formation of the United States of America, the federal government assumed primary responsibility for Indian education. In treaties, the federal government agreed to provide education for tribes as part of its payment for the land ceded by tribes. Authorizations for annual congressional appropriations for Indian education began in 1802.

The treaty provisions on education were addressed largely by the establishment of hundreds of federal Indian boarding and day schools located on and off Indian reservations. These schools primarily provided technical and vocational training in agriculture or the industrial arts. The government also contracted with religious denominations to provide education for Indians.

As early as 1917, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs was of the view that state public schools, not the federal government, should meet most of the Indians' education needs. This view was driven largely by assimilationist and economic goals. Federal law and policy began to reduce the federal role in Indian education. Primary responsibility for the formal education of Indians was transferred from the federal government to the states. Many of the federal boarding and day schools were closed; other school properties were conveyed to the states.

In exchange for educating Indians, the states insisted on federal funding. The Johnson O'Malley Act of 1934 authorized the secretary of the interior to contract with states for, among other things, the education of Indians. The Impact Aid Law of 1950 authorized federal payments to public schools that serve children residing on Indian lands that are exempt from state property taxation. With the exception of some remaining federal Indian schools, the federal role in Indian education became primarily financial. Control of education standards, policies, and teaching methods for tribal students was vested in the states.

By the 1960s, the progress and treatment of Indians in the public schools was under review by the U.S. Senate. A Senate report noted that Indian students had disproportionately high illiteracy and dropout rates, and that the public schools largely ignored their needs and cultures. For these problems, the report primarily blamed federal Indian policy, which did not allow Indian control of or participation in education. Simply put, state public schools were not required—nor did they choose—to involve tribes or Indian

parents in education or to offer schooling that addressed tribal needs.

Part of the federal response was laws such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and the Indian Education Act of 1972. These laws recognize that Indians and other disadvantaged students have special academic needs. They generally provide for discretionary grants to those public schools that wish to address these needs. In exchange for federal funding, the schools typically must allow some input by Indian parents into the discretionary programs.

Another significant change came in 1970, when President Nixon announced a new Indian Self-Determination Policy. Congress turned this policy into law in 1975 with the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Since the 1970s, federal Indian education law and policy has emphasized Indian self-determination and tribal control. This is reflected in many statutes:

- Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975
- Impact Aid Amendments of 1978
- Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978
- Tribally Controlled School Grants Act of 1988
- Native American Language Act of 1990

These modern federal Indian education statutes allow tribes to operate schools and education programs formerly run by the federal government, or they support tribes in setting up new learning institutions such as tribal colleges and universities. Some of the laws allow a measured amount of tribal input into federal programs including programs that serve Indian students in the public schools. Current federal Indian education policy generally is to help tribes achieve greater control over and involvement in their formal education, whether the education is provided by the federal, state, or tribal government.

In the ESEA reauthorizations of 1988 and 1994, Congress authorized appropriations for Tribal Education Departments (TEDs). Congress envisions TEDs as facilitating tribal control in education through planning and development, coordination, and administrative and technical support of education standards, policies, and laws for all schools and education programs within tribal territorial jurisdiction. Although Congress has yet to make appropriations for TEDs, there are today over 110 TEDs serving tribal students nationwide. In the most recent ESEA reauthorization, NCLB, there are 15 provisions that expressly mention TEDs or tribal education laws.

Nevertheless, in 1991, the United States Department of Education (ED) deemed American Indian and Alaska Native tribes "nations at risk." Among the report's recommendations was that the federal government "promote legislation that will require public and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools to include the participation of tribes, Native communities, and parents of Native children in the development, implementation, and evaluation of local, state, and federal [education] plans."

Today there are about 500,000 tribal students in this country. Ninety percent of them attend state public schools, even on or near Indian reservations. Ten percent of them are served by schools

operated by the BIA, or by tribes under contracts or grants with the BIA.

Current State Indian Education Laws

- At present, at least 35 states have some law on Indian education.
- Sixteen states have laws on Native languages in public school curricula and/or certification of teachers of Native languages.
- Pathbreaking laws such as the New Mexico Indian Education Act of 2001 go far beyond what federal law requires in terms of putting tribes on par with the state in terms of governance of education planning, policy, and curriculum and standards.
- Four states require the teaching of tribal sovereignty in their public school curricula: California, Maine, Montana, and Wisconsin.

More information is available at www.tedna.org.

Native Partnerships

The Value of Genuine Partnerships from the Native American Perspective

Byron Mallot, president and CEO of the First Alaskans Institute, addressed the leadership role in developing partnerships within the current education infrastructure. He emphasized that Native Americans should be proud of their sovereignty and what the federal government has done to recognize and be responsive to their needs as Native Americans. He also cautioned that there is a need to be mindful of the history that underlies the recognition.

Organization

The First Alaskans Institute is a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to help develop the capacities of Alaska Native people and their communities to meet the social, economic, and educational challenges of the future, while fostering positive relationships among all segments of our society.

The Alaskan Native Policy Center was established by First Alaskans Institute to enable Alaska Natives to be informed about, to be involved in, and to have impact on the social, economic, and policy issues that affect indigenous peoples. The Policy Center's current focus is on education and leadership issues and the socio-economic status of Alaska Native peoples.

Projects

- "Our Choices-Our Future": this project is an analysis of socio-economic data on the status of Alaska Natives.
- Alaska Literacy Programs Research Project: the Policy Center is working in

conjunction with the First Alaskans Institute Education Initiative to develop a literacy research project to gain a baseline of literacy programs in Alaska

- Alaska Native K–12 Education Indicators 2004: the Alaska Native Policy Center is in the process of updating the Alaska Native K–12 Education Indicators report

Partnerships

Mallot emphasized the importance of individuals who educate Indian children. Since educators are on the frontline of interaction, they can influence change for all students in their classroom. Educators are integral partners since they are directed, motivated, and impacted by policy, programs, and curricula that have been established by policymakers.

In addition, efforts from organizations like the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) must be included in the movement to include Indian education in school improvement.

Challenges

- Native children are not in school every day.
- Native children feel a sense of not belonging.
- Native children feel a sense of injustice.

Mallot explained that these challenges have affected Native children in powerful ways. He cautioned that it will continue to affect succeeding generations, if we do not respond to this. It is not their problem. It is our problem. We must begin in education. Native children must know who they are at the very onset. They are clan members, tribal members, Native community members, and family members with a powerful sense of who they are that reaches back in history, into tradition, language, culture, values that have withstood challenges and will continue to withstand whatever comes. This perseverance has created an opportunity to build a wonderful future. We will make progress in profound ways."

Mallot concluded, "This meeting is a foundation for coming years and generations of Native children."

More information is available at www.firstalaskans.org.

Academic Performance

Improving Academic Performance Among Native American Children

William Demmert, professor at Western Washington University, provided professional educators with information on the latest research on improving academic performance among Native American students.

Demmert opened his presentation with a discussion of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1985 & 1995). He explained how this has a bearing on the way Native American students should be taught in school. Traditionally, family members were the primary teachers of young children. Failure was not allowed. Demmert cites the following as reasons for failure in contemporary society:

- lack of continued direct participation and monitoring of the educational process by many family members
- loss of language development (as a key to intellectual development)
- deterioration of skills and knowledge necessary for our cultural and social well being
- drastic change in spiritual and economic situations (Indian Nations At Risk, 1992)

Environmental Influences

Demmert cited the following environmental influences as being linked to the academic success of Native students:

1. high quality parenting (the degree to which a youngster is provided an enriched, warm, and responsive learning environment that includes appropriate control and discipline over children, are closely associated with both higher first grade reading and mathematic skills)

2 high quality childcare environments (stimulating activity and nurturing as reflected in high quality parenting)

3 high quality first-grade classrooms (with a focus on literacy instruction, evaluative feedback, instructional conversation, and encouraging child responsibilities) (NICHD, 2004)

Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey

In addition, Demmert provided research that yielded information about a study which is currently in its fourth year, that provides preliminary data on Native students. The ED sponsored study is a five year look at children entering kindergarten. Findings thus far include:

- Native American children start school with significantly lower reading, mathematics, and general knowledge achievement scores than the other groups (statistically significant for reading achievement and only statistically significant for mathematics and general knowledge when compared to Whites).
- According to the information gathered in this study, multiple risk factors (the number of factors that are evident in a young child's environment) account for the highest and lowest predicted scores.
- Rural students score lower on average than urban students.
- 70 percent of Native students live in rural areas.
- Native students do as well or better than African and Hispanic Americans academically by grade four.
- Family characteristics account for about one-half of the achievement gap between White and Native Americans; the remaining gap seems to be accounted for by characteristics outside the family and associated with the wider community (i.e. social capital—poor, usually rural environments) (Grissmer, Demmert et al., 2004).

Research Literature

Demmert explained that there is formal evidence that culturally based education (CBE) programs, with strong Native language programs influence a youngster's academic, social, and cultural, development including an individual's identity in a positive way (Demmert, 2001; Demmert & Towner, 2003).

Six Critical Elements of CBE (Demmert & Towner, 2003)

1 recognition and use of Native American (American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian) languages (this may include use bilingually, or as a first or second language)

2 pedagogy that stresses traditional cultural characteristics, and adult-child interactions as the starting place for one's education (mores that are currently practiced in the community, and which may differ community to community)

3 pedagogy in which teaching strategies are congruent with the traditional culture as well as contemporary ways of knowing and learning (opportunities to observe, opportunities to practice, and opportunities to demonstrate skills)

4 curriculum that is based on traditional culture, which recognizes the importance of Native spiritu-

ality, and places the education of young children in a contemporary context (e.g., use and understanding of the visual arts, legends, oral histories, and fundamental beliefs of the community)

5 strong Native community participation (including parents, elders, other community resources) in educating children and in the planning and operation of school activities

6 knowledge and use of the social and political mores of the community

Demmert emphasized that there are a number of areas in which states can focus as they strive to improve academic achievement for Native students.

Critical Priorities

- Build a strong language base among young children in a cultural context, as a key to improving academic performance. This may be done in more than one language.
- Broca's area of the brain is known as the speech center. When a young person learns more than one language simultaneously, the second, or additional other language, uses this part of the brain. Later in life, another part of the brain is used, and it takes more brain work to learn the second or other languages (Ackerman, 2004).
- Build partnerships among the university, the school, and the local community with a focus on teacher competence in pedagogy, content area, and the ability to work with the community served by the school (including the recruitment and training of more Native American teachers).
- Build a comprehensive school curriculum that is culturally based and promotes language development in both the Native language and English early, and that provides the literacy base so critical to improved academic performance.

CREDE Principles

An excellent model for high standards in teaching can be found in the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) website (http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/). The CREDE principles include the following:

- teachers and students working together
- developing language skills in all curriculum
- connecting lessons to students' lives
- engaging students with challenging lessons
- emphasizing dialogue over lecture

Conclusion

This "blueprint" for improving academic performance of Native youth includes an emphasis on creating early environments for young children that will promote development of a youngster's many intelligences; social and cultural mores associated with identity and contemporary priorities; and strengthening partnerships important to improving schools and schooling. This blueprint will be modified and strengthened as part of a national colloquium designed to focus on finding and funding the best research available for improving academic performance. We must expand our current knowledge on the best ways to improve the academic performance of Native students.

More information is available at www.wce.wwu.edu.

Developing Partnerships

Developing and Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Education

David Beaulieu, professor for the Center for Indian Education at Arizona State University, provided examples of positive partnerships and relationships in Native education.

Intergovernmental Relations

Beaulieu opened his presentation with a short description of the unique aspects of American Indian education. He explained that it takes place in a complex inter-governmental arena involving federal, state, and tribal governments, which can cause problems, but also provides great potential for policy options that are not available to other groups. We need to work together in those areas to enable change.

Population of Indian Students

- relatively small: 500,000 Indian students
- diverse geographically
- diverse culturally
- isolated in rural areas
- isolated communities
- isolated as individuals in urban school districts

Beaulieu explained that Indian education focuses uniquely on language and culture issues. The reason for this is twofold. It is a primary focus of what is to be

included in educational programs and is a strategy for improving achievement.

Schooling

This is a relatively new concept for Indian children. Children were not formally sent to school until the 1930s, so in many communities, there is often a disconnect between what people think of as education and what is considered schooling. This provides an opportunity for partnerships in terms of our definition of education. We have the chance to include the aspirations of communities for the education of Indian children and what actually occurs in school.

Factors That Mitigate School Reform

- staff mobility—35% turnover rate for teachers
- student mobility—students transition between schools even in the same school year
- limited knowledge—not in terms of best practices, but where it can be applied in the classroom
- limited education potential—what are the needs of Indian students
- linguist and cultural needs—tribes need to define cultural and linguistic priorities
- pace of change—influence of the external commercial culture and the impacts on youth over time

Interrelated Areas for Partnership

Beaulieu suggested four interrelated areas that would provide partnership opportunities. He emphasized the importance of partnering with existing services in local areas which are discussed below:

1. Intergovernmental: high degree of complexity and unique policy vehicles
   - Example: Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Indian Education is an initiative between the state and tribal governments. Seven new pieces of legislation emerged from this initiative such as Tribal School Equalization, which provides state money to tribal schools, and the Joint Tribal State Commission, which is considering bringing public education on the reservation or the creation of an all Indian school district in Minneapolis.
2. Community and school: redefine boundaries between communities and school districts; provide context to curriculum development
3. Human services and health programs: focus on wellness of young people in school
4. Developing translation and development structures: create and institutionalize structures necessary to bring best practices to classrooms on a sustained basis; create relationships to universities and research
   - Example: National Education Association (NEA) has made an effort to focus on Native teachers; there are 17,000 NEA members who are in the Native American Caucus.
   - There are 1200 newly trained American Indian teachers from professional development programs for ED during the last four years.

Factors of Government Relations in Indian Education

Beaulieu discussed five areas that appear to be important to a discussion of federal, state, and tribal government relations in Indian education. These areas have a major impact on the development of strategic partnerships in Native student education.

Partnership Education Issues

American Indian students attend schools operated by three different governments often in the same communities and reservations. Students often transfer from one system to the other and within each of these systems. Beaulieu posed the following questions:

- What are the ideas for ensuring that when Indian students transfer from one school system to the other that their unique needs will be met?
- Are there issues related to the transfer of records?
- Can we use technology?
- Are there ways of collecting student educational data in a region?

Congruency of Standards

Beaulieu explained that all school systems are involved with standards-based reform including the alignment of assessments. As a result, there is a need to promote congruency of standards and assessment affecting the education of American Indian students in all types of school systems. Beaulieu posed the following question:

- Are there ways in which tribal schools can influence state school systems and vice versa while maintaining the unique aspect of learner outcomes for Native students?
  - Example: Minnesota's American Indian Learner Outcomes Team is a group of Native educators recommended by tribal governments and approved by the state to focus on the development of graduation standards and content standards affecting Native Americans.

Advice Structures

All federal efforts for Indian education require some form of parental and tribal input into the design and /or operation of this program in state schools, advised Beaulieu.

- What are ideas for strengthening the cooperative relationship between Indian parent and community representatives in the development and operation of programs for American Indian students?
- What are the ideas, which seem appropriate at the local school-district level and statewide level?
- How does one structure the advice that school districts receive from various entities within a school community?
  - Example: Minnesota created a law that made advisory committees mandatory regardless of the receipt of federal funds. The advisory committee received specific responsibilities on what to advise school districts on regarding the development of programs impacting Indian students.

Equity and Resources

Beaulieu described a school economy that is based on the Impact Aid that students bring into a

school district. Certain schools cost more to operate because of their isolation, the need to provide for public services, and transportation. Also, there must be recognition for the cost of culturally based education both in terms of resources and professional development. The equity question in Native education is different than simply determining whether the same amount of resources is available from school to school or system to system. There is a cost to culturally based education and an obligation to provide such an education to American Indian and Alaska Native students.

- Do we have sufficient resources for Indian education in each system at an operational level?
- How do we define equity when it comes to Indian education?
- Is the interaction of federal and state funding in public schools providing an equitable level and variety of resources?
- Are their issues related to Indian students' access to all available resources and programs to meet their needs?

Infrastructure Needs

Beaulieu discussed creating a governmental center stage that is geared toward organizing intergovernmental relationships within various jurisdictions. He explained that within reservation areas, there is a need to develop the governance capacity of tribal governments to promote a regulatory framework supportive of the needs of Indian students. He also emphasized the sharing of good ideas. Most of the good practices and creative ideas in Indian education are happening in Indian school settings, and these ideas are often isolated and unshared.

- What are the ways of sharing the ideas that are working among all the various schools systems?
- Those of us who work in the field of education in Washington, DC, need to be made aware of the good practices and ideas which are being applied in the schools.

Beaulieu concluded with the notion that although the framework of the possibilities is common, the ideas as they pertain to American Indian children need to be discovered and discussed locally and regionally.

More information is available at www.coe.asu.edu/elps/edlead.php.

Educational Challenges

The Challenge of Native American Education: Basic or Transformative?

Lily Wong Fillmore, professor at the University of California, Berkley, discussed the educational challenges facing Native American communities.

Fillmore began by discussing the growing tension between the educational goals of communities and the goals of society. She asked the following questions:

- Who gets to decide what is necessary and desirable in the education of children?
- What should children understand and know in order to play the kind of roles that they need to fill as adults in their communities and in the larger society?

She cautioned that without educational reform, many indigenous languages will no longer be spoken in the next 25 years. Current emphasis is on English in classrooms and curricula, which excludes the Native language.

Fillmore explained that language and cultural renewal is crucial to the existential survival of communities. These goals cannot be ignored if educators are preparing today's youth to be functional within their communities and within society as a whole.

Research from Mary Eunice Romero, Conchiti Pueblo and Arizona State University

Native students who were identified as unpromising, low-achieving learners in school were recognized by the community as leaders with promise. It appears that the school did not see these special gifts due to their rigid standards. Furthermore, students rejected a system which did not accept them and their talents. Fillmore questions whether people were operating with different standards in two different worlds.

Research from W.G. Demmert, Western Washington University

- Native children perform better and are more inclined to view school positively when their language is embraced.
- Students are inhibited when a one-size-fits-all method is used for teaching and learning.
- Children find it easier to acquire the skills necessary when efforts are made to incorporate the local knowledge and resources of children's families and communities.
- The best programs for Native children are ones that are founded on partnerships between communities and schools.

Fillmore argues that the two sets of concerns from the school and the community are not incompatible. Also, that society's goals for Native children can be achieved only in partnership with communities and by recognizing and honoring the community's own education goals. Finally, without such partnerships, educational goals will be attained mostly at a basic level.

Often what children learn in school does not have much relevance to their lives outside of school in their own community. Learning is inert when you have to put aside the biggest part of yourself to learn in school. These days, education is a lifelong commitment.

According to Fillmore, educators need to utilize the skills that children bring to school, and emphasize the skills needed to deal with the schools' curriculum. Educators need to expand rather than replace resources that children bring to school. These include language, ways of learning, and the kind of knowledge brought to school.

Transformative Education

Transformative education expands the worldview and critical faculties of the learner. It is education that opens the learner to the possibilities of knowledge gained from various experiences. Transformative education allows educators to expand the curriculum of the home and community into books, resources, interactions with others, and self-driven investigation. It is education that enables learners to integrate what is new and learned at school with what is learned at home. Education is not kept separate; it is integrated into a real system of understanding, learning, problem solving, and living.

Academic Learning

According to Fillmore, many children come to school speaking some form of English. Educators need to embrace this and build on it rather than categorize and replace it with a school variety. Language enrichment should be taught rather than language remediation. One way is to emphasize academic English rather than English as a Second Language. This helps children acquire the academic language skills that are necessary for literacy and learning at school. Therefore, children learn academic English as well as subject matter skills.

The following questions focus on the type of language that is learned in school:

- Do students have the kind of vocabulary that will enable them to express their ideas precisely?

- Do students have the kind of grammatical structures that figure uniquely in text materials? This includes the structural devices for organizing ideas into logical arguments.

Instructional Approaches

Thoughtful, engaged teachers are needed to structure the acquisition of this language. Educators are integral in providing access to academic language which will allow students to become literate. Teachers must draw students' attention to the specific language used in texts even before they have learned to read those texts themselves.

Critical Skills

- Children should assume that things in a text should make sense.
- Children must take responsibility for understanding.
- Reflect critically on experiences in order to look for hidden meanings and to look for connections and patterns.

Research from Susanne Chapin & Kathy O'Connor, Boston University

Project Challenge

Project Challenge is a collaborative math education program in the Chelsea, MA, schools. Susanne Chapin, a math educator, and Kathy O'Connor, a linguist from Boston University, conducted the research with 4th and 6th grade students of all backgrounds.

- The goals of the study were
  - to identify potentially gifted students from minority groups,
  - to promote math learning that is typical of kids who are talented math learners,
  - to solve problems,
  - to gain more sophisticated understandings of the problems they are working on, and
  - to develop the use of academic discourse needed to explain their reasoning and strategies for solving problems.
- 283 students were studied over the three years of the study.
- 2/3 of studied students were labeled English language learners and were from mostly Latino backgrounds.
- The approach was to teach math by emphasizing it as a sense- making activity to help children take responsibility and ownership for their understanding of math.
- The test measures were the Math Aptitude Test, California Achievement Test, math subtest of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, and Discourse Analysis of students' language performance in explaining the problems.

According to Fillmore, results from the first year indicated that in 1998, 5 percent of the students in the study were described as superior and very superior in math proficiency. This percentage increased to 19 percent in 1999 after only one year.

Fillmore concluded by emphasizing the importance of collaboration between culture and communities. It is a fact that in educating children, our schools are cultivating new ways of thinking and attitudes about learning which may be at odds with the views of their communities. Therefore, if the goal in educating Native American students is to enable them to participate fully in all of their worlds, then a real partnership between families, communities, and state and local educational officers is needed. It would be the first of many steps in the journey to transform the way we educate children in our diverse society.

Teacher Quality and Instructional Practice

Task Force Findings: Teacher Quality & Instructional Practice

Cynthia D. Prince, director of teacher professional development at the Council of Chief State School Officers, provided a research summary of the issues that are affecting Native American student achievement and suggested potential solutions to improve teacher quality, to reduce teacher turnover, and to provide teachers with professional development needed to be effective in meeting the needs of Native students.

Prince began by stating the issues that states, districts, and schools are struggling with in terms of teacher quality.

Issues

- Academic achievement of Native American students is among the lowest of all student subgroups.
- Two of the underlying reasons are that there are fewer highly qualified, effective teachers, and there are ineffective instructional practices.
- Schools that serve Native students often suffer from high teacher turnover.
- Most teachers and principals are not adequately prepared to work with Native students.
- Very few teachers and principals are Native American.
- Isolation makes it even harder to get needed training.

Potential Solutions

- Make schools that serve Native students more attractive to teachers by providing incentives, improved working conditions, and specialized training.
- Increase the number of Native American teachers and principals.
- Improve the preparation of all teachers and principals so they are effective with Native students.
- Bring training to teachers.

Prince discussed several areas where states can focus their efforts in order to increase achievement.

To be effective with Native students, teachers need to know how to

- Connect instruction and students' language, culture, and history.
- Develop the language and literacy skills of students whose first language may not be standard English.
- Adopt teaching practices best suited to students' learning styles.
- Set behavioral expectations and manage classrooms in culturally appropriate ways.
- Work effectively with parents.

How states can ensure teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge

- Develop state standards and curricula
  - Example: Washington state worked with tribes to develop a Native American reading curriculum.
  - Example: Utah has a social studies standard that requires students to learn about Utah's development including Indian contributions and tribe history.
- Define teacher certification and licensure requirements
  - Example: Alaska requires all teachers to complete coursework in Alaska studies and multicultural education to be certified.
- Offer teacher recruitment and incentives
- Inform preservice teacher preparation
  - Example: The state of Minnesota has rules that require teacher preparation programs to include content about American Indian tribes.
- Require and provide professional development

Examples of Programs that have been created to recruit and train Native teachers

- Sapsik'walá Program, University of Oregon
- Oksale Native Teacher Preparation Program, Washington State University and Northwest Indian College
- Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaska Schools (PITAS), University of Alaska Southeast at Juneau
- Big Horn Teacher Projects, Montana State University, Billings and Little Big Horn College

Examples of Programs that have been created to train all teachers to be effective with Native students

- University of Minnesota at Duluth
- Rural Educator Preparation Partnership (REPP), University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Examples of schools and districts providing effective professional development

- Warm Springs Elementary School, Warm Springs, Oregon
- American Indian Magnet School, St. Paul, Minnesota
- Chugach School District, South Central Alaska

Prince concluded by examining the characteristics that these programs have in common. She found that partnerships with higher education, families and communities, and philanthropy were established to get teachers the training and support they needed. In addition, states and districts were flexible with accountability. Leadership was also extremely important. Good teachers demanded strong, effective principals. Professional development was also utilized as part of a larger reform strategy. Furthermore, culturally appropriate curricula were created along with culturally compatible instruction and behavior management.

More information is available at www.ccsso.org.

Nana I Ke Kumu: Look to the Source

C. Puanani Wilhelm, administrator of the Hawaiian Studies and Language Programs for the State of Hawaii Department of Education, described teacher preparation programs for Native Hawaiians that are being offered in Hawaiian communities.

Demographics and Background

She opened her presentation with demographic background information for the state of Hawaii.

- 23 percent of Hawaii's total population is Native Hawaiian.
- There are a total of 239,655 Hawaiians.
- 67 percent of Hawaiians are a mix of other ethnic groups.
- 31 percent of children are under five years old.
- 36 percent of children are newborns.
- 64 percent of Hawaiians live on O'ahu.
- Hawaiians exist in all geographic areas, but the highest concentrations are in rural areas.
- Hawaiians comprise 26 percent of the general school population.
- Concentrations of Hawaiians are as high as 40 percent in some schools.
- Hawaiians make up to 90 percent of the special education population in some schools.
- All schools under No Child Left Behind "Planning for Restructuring" have high Hawaiian population

- The State of Hawaii makes up one school district.
- There are 25 charter schools.
- There are14 identified culturally-based charter schools.
- There is a move toward community-based school councils.
- There is a statewide teacher shortage.
- There is increased recruitment from out-of-state.

Quality Education

Wilhelm shared some experiences from teaching in the immersion school, and she explained some of the essential elements of quality education for Hawaiian students:

- Education should be based on and foster positive relationships.
- Education should be relevant. It should link Native knowledge and understanding with other types of knowledge.
- Education should be place-based toward a global perspective.

Teacher Training

Wilhelm also discussed some elements of teacher training programs that support Native education:

- recruitment, support, and training of Native teachers
- balance of both Native understandings and "western" academic content and skills
- differentiation of location where future teachers are and where they will teach
- utilization of "place" as the foundation for cultural and academic development
- emphasis on Hawaiian content knowledge for all teachers trained in Hawaii

Wilhelm cited several programs that provide exemplary Native Hawaiian teacher training:

- Kaho'iwai
- Kahuawaiola
- Halau Wanana
- Wai'anae cohort
- Immersion cohort

Wilhelm concluded by discussing the characteristics of Native Hawaiian teacher training. She emphasized that there is personal support through all phases of the program. In addition, all aspects of teacher training are infused with Hawaiian cultural practice. Furthermore, Hawaiian cultural experts are utilized within modern teaching methods courses. Finally, training occurs where it is needed, not only in university buildings.

More information is available at http://www.k12.hi.us/~hslps/.

Getting Something Different: Simple Strategies for School Change

Dawn Smith, principal of Warm Springs Elementary School in Warm Springs, Oregon, illustrated some simple processes and strategies that have more than doubled achievement for elementary students. Ninety-nine percent of the students

are Native American and mostly from the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in central Oregon.

Demographics

Smith began by describing the demographics for Warm Springs Elementary School in central Oregon.

- the school is currently K–4
- next year they will be K–5 with approximately 400 students
- unemployment on the reservation is 60 percent, which makes a high percentage of students who receive free and reduced lunch
- 98 percent of the students are also classified as limited English proficient
- 18 teachers of which 2 are community members
- 12 educational assistants of which 8 are community members

School Priorities

Next, she explained the priorities that the school and community chose to focus on 10 years ago. In order to raise student achievement, the school needed to find funds for the following priorities:

- language issues
- aligned curriculum
- summer program
- all-day kindergarten
- research-based core programs
- ongoing assessment

Other priorities that were deemed important included the following:

- teacher retention
- attendance
- parent involvement
- student behavior
- community buy-in
- visible leadership/goals

Securing Funding

Smith explained that she went to the school council for leadership, direction, and planning to find the funds needed for Warm Springs Elementary School. The following steps were taken to secure funding for the school priorities:

- applied for and was granted school wide Title I status
- ESL designation from Oregon Department of Education (DOE)
- lobbied at the district level to receive the funds granted from DOE
- sought exposure in news about programs
- received grants from PacifiCorp/Reading First
- formed tribal partnerships, which include early childhood education, Head Start, casinos, museums
- sought regional resources such as Northwest Regional Laboratories and Lewis and Clark College

Program Implementation

Once the needs were identified and the funding was secured, the programs needed to be put in place under the guidance of the school council. First, Lewis and Clark College provided on-site language training, including instructional strategies, possible programs, and multicultural issues. Also, all-day kindergarten and a summer academy were implemented. Grade level teams and curriculum alignment/shared planning were also developed. Grade level teams worked together to create year long plans to align curriculum. In addition, research-based programs were implemented such as Reading Mastery, which are supplemented by other instructional programs that are geared toward the students' background and enriching vocabulary. Assessment programs are also utilized where teachers input data on a daily basis so that students can move at their own pace. Assessment data allow for differentiated instruction. Finally, a school improvement specialist is available to consult with teachers and help run all of the instructional programs.

Successful Strategies

In conclusion, Smith discussed some strategies she has used in order to deal with educational challenges:

- attendance: AYP has not been met for two years due to many absences for American Indian traditional events. Smith used the reservation radio station to communicate with the community so that this was not a surprise to anyone. Families appreciate the honesty and realize that their children are getting a good education.
- parent and community involvement: solicit suggestions from parents on school policies.
  - monthly attendance: once a parent suggested a monthly recognition of attendance, the school was able to implement the idea; students were rewarded for year-long attendance, but not for monthly attendance;.
  - coming week newsletter: teachers send home a weekly guide to what is being taught in the schools; it also contains specific strategies for how it will be taught. This provides parents with the tools to teach their children if they miss school.
- student behavior: there is a behavior curriculum that each teacher is responsible for teaching to all students; it is available on the Warm Springs website.
- teacher retention: challenges should be mentioned in advance to all teachers; the teacher retention at Warm Springs is excellent.
- teacher preservice/inservice: collaborations on how to teach Native American children are in progress in Oregon.
- leadership: it is important to have shared leadership throughout the building.
- vision/mission: "Take the challenge and make it happen." We made our vision and mission strong and prevalent throughout the school.

More information is available at www.whitebuffalos.net/warmsprings/.

Parent and Community Involvement

Task Force Findings: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Robin Butterfield, Center for School Improvement, Bureau of Indian Affairs, provided a research summary of the best practices for engaging Native parents in the education of their students.

Butterfield began with information about the potential and challenges of parental involvement. She emphasized that the central concept to effective parental involvement is that it has to be a high priority. She cited research that shows that parents really need to be involved in their children's education at the one-on-one level. This is the area where changes in achievement can be seen. Parents have to be better supporters of learning with their own children, and they need to change the interactions that they have with the classroom teachers. There are some good models at the lower grade levels, but they are less likely to be found at the higher grades. It seems that parents disengage with interactions with their children at the very time when they need strong role models and directions.

Butterfield discussed the following classifications of parent involvement.

- General Involvement
  - A parent may help as a teacher's aide once in a while, working on a curriculum committee or school board.
- Support for Learning
  - Direct parental involvement affects student achievement, increased attendance, graduation rates, increased motivation, attitude toward school, higher self-concept, and reduction in behavior problems.

Issues in Public Education Faced by Parents and Communities

Butterfield discussed the history of American Indian education and presented some of the issues that parents and communities have faced as they have dealt with public education. For example, there have been cycles of mistrust and miscommunication between Indian parents and educators. Parents are mistrustful of the motives of teachers and administrators. Also, there is an abundance of negative information being sent home to parents about their children, which makes parents feel alienated from educational institutions. In addition, many parents are unsure of their role in relation to learning. They have been removed from the school setting, so they are uncertain how to help their children. Furthermore, parents are often unskilled when it comes to supporting their children. There is also the belief that it is the educators' job to teach children.

Key Principles for Effective School and Parental Engagement

According to Butterfield, there are seven key principles for developing parents' ability to provide support for learning:

- Work to establish meaningful two-way partnerships and participatory power-sharing among parents, families, communities, and schools (as opposed to one way, hierarchical relationships).
- Value Native American peoples' knowledge, skills, culture, language, and institutions to the extent that community members play teaching roles in the school and non-Native school staff makes an effort to learn Native ways and language. This includes valuing Native ways of learning, which are often more observational and less verbally-based than Western ways.
- Establish the school as an authentic hub of the community and the locus of advocacy services for children so that students, parents, and community members come to school for multiple reasons.
- Provide skill-building opportunities for parents to become more effective as tutors and in other roles that support student learning.
- Provide physical and psychological space for parents and community members within schools.
- Establish sustained, authentic, wide, and deep outreach programs that inspire and increase parent and community involvement.
- Native parents and communities share school leadership in matters at the heart of schooling, such as curriculum, instruction, and schedule.

Model Best Practices

Butterfield concluded by referencing several exemplary projects.

- Early childhood initiative: Family And Child Education (FACE) and Baby FACE programs. More information on this family literacy program can be found at www.oiep.bia.edu/
- Family Math and Family Science programs
- Education on the Go

More information is available at www.ccsso.org.

"Working Together" Parent-Professional Collaboration

Chris Curry, executive director of Families Together and Co-Director of National Native American Families Together Parent Center (NNAFT) and Prairie Flower Reuben, conference coordinator at NNAFT, described the resources that NNAFT provides to families and the training to professionals and parents on developing collaborative relationships.

Reuben opened the presentation with background information on the NNAFT Parent Center, which is a federally funded parent training and information center responsible for outreach to tribal families. This includes resource identification and collaboration to meet the diverse needs of children with disabilities and their families. The parent center promotes partnerships between parents of children with disabilities and the school personnel who serve them.

Building Trust

Reuben explained that the intent of the project is to impact the climate of trust between families and schools. Lowering this barrier through training and gaining trust of community members will have a long term impact on the health of family-professional relationships.

Issues

Reuben discussed the following issues that are addressed by this project:

- the under and overrepresentation of Native American students in special education
- dissatisfaction by parents with their understanding of, and involvement in, special education decision making
- lack of training of non-Native professionals
- reluctance of some parents to use special education services
- self determination by local communities

The Community Friends Program

NNAFT conducts workshops to train people to be Community Friends. Community Friends work with local families to inform them of the educational rights of their children. The Community Friends program is based on the proven successes of the Family and Child Education (FACE), Parents as Teachers, and Parent to Parent programs. The program is based on the way the people interact, is efficient, and also has long-term impact.

Training

- Each Community Friend receives training from a NNAFT Area Coordinator.
- The NNAFT main office will work with any group to help set up a training.
- It is a single two day training for 20–50 parents of children with disabilities first and professionals second.
- Anyone can call the NNAFT office and sponsor a training or see if there is a training in their area that they can attend.
- Community Friends learn how to be an advocate and help families build partnerships with schools.

- Community Friends learn about the law and how it protects children with disabilities.
- Community Friends learn about resources—national, regional, state, and local.

Responsibilities

1. Community Friends disseminate information to families in their communities.
2. Community Friends support families at school meetings.
3. Community Friends conduct community forums.

NNAFT Workshops

Reuben concluded with additional information on the NNAFT workshops that are available:

- Working with Challenging Children
- Teaching to Reach All Children
- Working Together

Reuben emphasized that programs like Community Friends can be altered and used as models for other states and districts as an excellent model for developing the involvement of parents and families of all Native children.

More information is available at www.nativefamilynetwork.com.

Literacy and Language Development

Task Force Findings: Literacy and Language Development

Jon Reyhner, professor at Northern Arizona University, provided an overview of the language and literacy issues facing Native students.

Research Review

Reyhner discussed reading research and recommendations for teaching Native American children. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics' Nation's Report Card: Reading 2000, 4th grade students who read more for fun, had more kinds of reading material in the home, watched less television, and whose parents had higher incomes were much better readers than students who read less for fun, had fewer reading materials in the home, who watched more television, and who lived in poverty.

In addition, the 2001 Reading and the Native American Learner Research Report concluded, "Current research suggests that the relatively low level of academic success among American Indian elementary and secondary school students, as a group, is largely the result of discontinuities between the cultures and language of these students' homes and communities and the language and culture of mainstream classrooms. American Indian students also tend to perceive academic success as offering few extrinsic rewards, and they are likely to view learning much of what is necessary to succeed academically (such as the standard language and the standard behavior practices of the school) as detrimental to their own language, culture, and identity."

Recommendations

Finally, Reyhner cited recommendations from Dr. Sandra Fox, Oglala Sioux educator:

- Use reading materials that relate to children's lives to help them understand that literature is experience written down and that it is interesting to read.
- Strengthen and expand children's language abilities by providing them many opportunities to have new experiences, to learn new words, and to practice oral language in English and in their Native language.

More information is available at http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/AIE/.

Culturally Responsive Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum

Denny Hurtado, program supervisor for Indian Education, Title I, Higher Education at the Washington Department of Education, discussed the importance of language development and its impact on Native students meeting Washington state reading standards.

Hurtado discussed a research report, titled Reading and the Native American Learner, that was prepared by Joe St. Charles and Dr. Magda Costantino at the request of the state of Washington's Indian Education Office.

Findings

- There was very little research on Native Americans and reading.
- The "boarding school" education experience is still being felt today.
- Cultural differences exist in the classroom; not all students will raise their hands to answer questions. Some students take time to process.
- Sociolinguistic discontinuity exists; students have underdeveloped vocabularies.

In addition, Hurtado discussed the Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum that was co-directed by Dr. Magda Costantino and Denny Hurtado.

Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum

- K–2 reading curriculum
- interdisciplinary curriculum
- 20 schools in Washington are currently using this curriculum
- not a stand-alone reading curriculum; it is meant to be a supplemental reading curriculum
- teacher-friendly
- training video accompanies the curriculum
- curriculum is aligned with state standards based on the latest research and best practices
- content can be infused into any reading curriculum
- three thematic units: The Drum, The Canoe, Hunting and Gathering
- 22 books were written and illustrated by Native Americans for this curriculum
- curriculum, teacher guides, and books are on CD-Rom, and there is a training video available

- teachers may download the books from the CD-ROM
- imbedded in the curriculum is a heavy infusion of family and parental involvement

More information is available at www.evergreen.edu/ecei/projects/rais/htm or Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indian Education Office, 360-725-6160.

Diné Language Immersion: Impact of Heritage Language and Culture on Navajo Student Achievement

Florian Tom Johnson, dual language and culture director, and Jennifer Wilson, federal projects coordinator for Window Rock Unified School District #8 Fort Defiance, Arizona, discussed how the Window Rock Unified School District No.8 is leveraging NCLB and continuous school improvement through the district's Core Principles for Learning. They also examined how Diné language and cultural values are incorporated with scientifically research-based strategies, state academic standards, and Navajo Nation cultural content standards for the development of a more effective Diné Language Immersion School.

Demographics

Jennifer Wilson opened the presentation with demographic information about Fort Defiance:

- located on the Navajo Nation
- K–12 public school
- 3000 students from five different communities
- 200 teachers
- 7 schools including Diné Language Immersion School
- school improvement models used for district-wide improvement are the National Study of School Evaluation Model for continuous learning and Baldridge Educational Excellence model. These models were combined to form the district model: Core Principles for Learning. The theme is "Embracing change for student learning."

Six Core Principles for Learning

- exemplary curriculum, instruction and assessment
- exemplary student performance
- exemplary staff performance
- strong parental and community relations
- safe, efficient, and supportive school environment
- efficient and supportive learning operations

School Structure

Wilson also explained that Window Rock has hired a director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as part of the support for district change. Under that supervisor, there is a team of three school improvement specialists that focus on assessment and data, district-wide improvement plans, and professional development. There are also deans of instruction and a math and a reading coach at each school site.

Navajo Education

Johnson provided a historical context for what the Native American forefathers considered to be education:

- teachings from the home
- teachings for ceremonial purposes

Johnson explained that the Navajo educational system is based on the four directions: east, west, north, and south. In addition, significant milestones of life are translated into benchmarks for education. Teachings accompany each of the following milestones:

- wedding
- pregnancy
- birth
- first laugh
- first word
- first step
- puberty

Navajo Language Shift

Johnson also described the Navajo language shift for two different areas on the reservation during a 10 year period. These results are for children who were entering kindergarten. Also, English speaking did not mean English proficient on the state designated English language assessment.

Fort Defiance (Urban)

1979

89% Navajo speakers

11% English speakers

1989

3% Navajo speakers

97% English speakers

Rock Point (Rural)

1989

98% Navajo speakers

2% English speakers

1999

3% Navajo speakers

97% English speakers

District Diné Language Programs

Parents have a choice of two language programs that they can enroll their children in at school:

- Diné Language Immersion Program is taught in Navajo.
- English Language Program is taught in English, but includes aspects of the Diné language and culture program.

Goals of Diné Language Immersion

- maintain/revitalize the Diné language
- increase English language acquisition and English language proficiency
- increase student academic achievement in state standard content areas (math, reading, writing)
- increase the high school graduation rate and the number of students who pursue higher education
- ensure the continued right of Native American children to receive instruction in their languages, regardless of "English only" state mandates
- meet federal and tribal requirements for Native American language programs

Wilson discussed how the implementation of both Arizona's English-only policy for language instruction and the Diné Language Immersion Program can be challenging. Teachers seek not only to meet federal and state requirements to sustain English language development programs, but also to meet the tribal responsibility to foster competence in Navajo language skills and knowledge of Navajo culture.

More information is available at www.wrschool.net.

Early Childhood Education

Task Force Findings: Early Childhood Education

Cheryl Kulas, executive director of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, provided a research summary of educational models that focus on the development of literacy and skill development as the foundations for academic success.

Research Findings

Kulas discussed the importance of family, language, culture, and environment to Native education:

- Language is the key to academic performance.
- Traditional or indigenous languages are crucial to the child's ability to achieve.
- Culture shapes how we observe the world and is closely combined with our own experiences.
- Development of a strong language base is established by age three.
- Preschool programs are needed.

Exemplary Program Features

- revitalization conservation of indigenous languages and cultures
- strong leadership
- enduring partnerships with community

- strong teacher professional development and engagement
- strong parental involvement and supportive administrations

More information is available at www.ccsso.org.

The Success and Effectiveness of the FACE Early Childhood Program

Charlotte Begay, department head of the Early Childhood Program at Wingate Elementary School in Wingate, New Mexico, discussed the success and effectiveness of the Family And Child Education (FACE) Early Childhood Program.

Demographics of Wingate Elementary School

- K–8
- enrollment of 700 students
- 98 percent of student population is Navajo

Family And Child Education (FACE) Program

This program is divided into three components:

- The first component serves ages 0–3.
- The second component serves children ages 3–5.
- The third component is an adult education program.

Begay discussed the areas that she addressed with staff in an effort to improve Native student achievement. She focused on the following areas:

- community support
- parent involvement
- programs that are socially, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for children
- ongoing professional development
- effective leadership

Vital Findings about the FACE Program

Eighty percent of adults report that FACE helps their children in the following ways:

- prepares them for school
- increases their self confidence
- increases their verbal and communication skills
- increases their interest in learning
- increases their interest in reading
- helps them get along better with others
- in terms of NCLB, FACE students score significantly higher on standardized tests of reading than children who do not participate in the program
- in terms of NCLB, FACE students score significantly higher on standardized tests of mathematics than children who do not participate in the program

More information is available at http://www.oiep.bia.edu/.

The Strengths of Literacy in the Indigenous First Language

Beverly Williams, director of the Department of Academic Programs in the Lower Kuskokwim

School District (LKSD) in Bethel, Alaska, discussed the strengths of literacy in the indigenous first language.

LKSD Demographics

LKSD is located in Bethel, Alaska, the largest community in western Alaska. It is Alaska's largest rural school district, and it is comprised of 21 village schools as well as three schools headquartered in the city of Bethel.

- 240 teachers serve over 3,000 K–12 students of mostly Yup'ik Eskimo background.
- One-fourth of the district's certified teachers are Yup'ik, the largest percentage of indigenous teachers in any Alaskan school district.
- 85 percent of students are considered float students. They have a primary home language other than English, but not all of them speak Yup'ik. They have the linguistic heritage, they are limited speakers in terms of English proficiency and academic proficiency.
- Majority of children come from extremely low income levels.
- Geographic isolation can help keep the language alive, but it hinders children as they do not have access in the community to standard English speakers.

LKSD Mission

The mission of the LKSD is to promote the indigenous languages of the region as well as to ensure equitable, culturally-appropriate, and effective educational opportunities for all its students, thereby enabling them to succeed in a rapidly changing world. It also seeks to ensure the development of English for both social and academic purposes.

Academic Programs

Williams described how the programs go beyond just teaching the language in order to incorporate many aspects of local traditions and culture. Furthermore, the Yup'ik language and culture programs rely on community input and support.

- The LKSD academic program is in both Yup'ik and English.
- The Yup'ik curriculum is aligned with the state performance standards.
- The assessments are aligned with the state performance standards along with the English curriculum.
- Yup'ik language development programs: using Native language to acquire academic skills in English; children develop their literacy skills in Yup'ik and develop their oral skills in English. Phonemic awareness transfers.

More information is available at www.lksd.org.

Health and Safety

Task Force Findings: Health and Safety

Norbert Hill, executive director of the American Indian Graduate Center, identified current research, promising practices, potential partnerships, and potential funding sources for work in preventing certain health risk behaviors of American Indians.

For children to thrive, they must be both healthy and safe. This extends beyond physical health and safety to encompass psychological, cultural, and intellectual health and safety. Hill explained that these constructs include the idea that children have "permission to be brilliant" and that their heritage and culture are an integral part of the educational environment. It also means that the schools they attend must be physically safe and welcoming places that invite children to be active learners. As experience and data tell us, this is not the case for too many of our Native American youth.

Demographics

Hill explained that issues of health and safety for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children are extremely complex as

- approximately 2.5 million people self-identified as solely AI/AN in the 2000 Census
- another 1.6 million people indicating "partial" AI/AN status

Hill urged educators to look beyond the data to families, tribes, communities, schools, and the young people themselves.

Research

Many of the policy and research articles acknowledge the piecemeal nature of data at national, state, and community levels. We must also ask if the survey instruments, psycho-educational measures, or sociological technique used to capture these data among the majority culture are culturally competent to collect the same information for AI/ANs.

Hill explained that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the nation's public health agency, has stated that there are six priority health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems in the U.S. These behaviors, often established during childhood and early adolescence, are

- tobacco use
- unhealthy dietary behaviors
- inadequate physical activity
- alcohol and other drug use
- sexual behaviors that that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infections
- behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence including suicide

More information is available at www.ccsso.org.

"Ask a Question, Save a Life"

Stan Holder, drug and alcohol prevention specialist at the Office of Indian Education Programs at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), discussed the disproportionately high levels of suicide in the Native American community. He also introduced a prevention model that can be utilized to reduce suicide and save lives.

Holder opened his presentation with background information on the Center for School Improvement for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

- 184 schools and dormitories in 23 states
- 3 categories of schools
  - Bureau operated schools with federal employees
  - Public Law 100-297 grant schools who receive grants under the guidance of a tribally authorized school board
  - Public Law 93-638 schools where funds are contracted under the same configuration to operate the school

Center for School Improvement

Holder explained that the Center for School Improvement has the responsibility of providing the following services under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- provide early childhood services in FACE and Baby FACE programs
- provide training in programmatic applications across geographic areas
- operate under the various tribal and state configurations

Holder discussed the negative socialization that has affected Native children in the community

and the home, which is a result of the void due to colonialism and the control of Europeans. The constructs that traditionally held up in the community that were a part of the teachings of Native elders from early childhood do not exist anymore. Until the teachings are revitalized and reestablished, dysfunction in the community will be ongoing. Through negative socialization young people are being taught to be angry, to have a low self-value, to be involved in high-risk behavior, and at times to take their own lives.

Holder mentioned that the suicide intervention model will be used to train specialists in programs nationwide. Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) is an aggressive model that encourages people to ask questions.

Rationale of QPR

- Designed as a citizen outreach action: gatekeepers are citizens in each community who are in the best position to detect persons who are thinking or in the ideational phase of a suicide plan.
- Enhance general awareness about suicide through public education.
- Teach the average non-professional citizen the warning signs of suicidal thinking and behavior.
- Teach three basic intervention skills that can help avert the tragedy of suicide.
- Increase the confidence and competence of Gatekeepers and first finders to make interventions and referrals.
- Increase knowledge about community resources and how to access and use them.
- A less obvious goal of QPR is to help people deal with their denial about suicide and enable them to talk freely about this subject.

Objectives of QPR

- Increase baseline knowledge about the roles of depression, other brain disorders and chemical abuse in suicide.
- Increase the number of suicidal people of all ages referred for intervention and treatment.
- Decrease the number of suicide attempts and completions.

Holder explained that QPR is not intended to be a form of counseling or treatment. It is, however, intended to offer hope and awareness through positive action in the community.

Suicide Clues and Warning Signs

Holder also described some of the suicide clues and warning signs. He explained that all signs should be taken seriously because the more prominent they become, the greater the risk. Behavioral clues include

- any previous suicide attempt
- acquiring a gun or stockpiling pills
- co-occurring depression, moodiness, hopelessness
- putting personal affairs in order
- giving away prized possessions
- sudden interest or disinterest in religion
- drug or alcohol abuse, or relapse after a period of recovery
- unexplained anger, aggression, and irritability

Situational clues include

- being fired or being expelled from school
- a recent unwanted move
- loss of any major relationship
- death of a spouse, child, or best friend, especially if by suicide
- diagnosis of a serious or terminal illness
- sudden unexpected loss of freedom/fear of punishment
- anticipated loss of financial security
- loss of a cherished therapist, counselor, or teacher
- fear of becoming a burden to others

Holder discussed the benefits to the QPR model. Since it is aggressive, there are questions that can be asked in order to intervene.

Less Direct Approach

- "Have you been unhappy lately?"
- "Have you been very unhappy lately?"
- "Have you been so very unhappy lately that you've been thinking about ending your life?"
- "Do you ever wish you could go to sleep and never wake up?"

Direct Approach

- "You know, when people are as upset as you seem to be, they sometimes wish they were dead. I'm wondering if you're feeling that way, too."
- "You look pretty miserable, I wonder if you're thinking about suicide."
- "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

Training Materials

Holder concluded by describing a set of compact discs for training and staff development that the Center for School Improvement created over the past two years for BIA schools. There are five CDs which each contain two training modules. Each CD contains Native Americans and situations that are typical in the Indian community. After each module, there is a posttest with remediation. Once the module has been completed successfully, a certificate prints out that ensures completion of the training.

More information is available at www.qprinstitute.com.

Partnership Building Between the State Education Agency and Native Community: Lessons Learned in Oregon

Brad Victor, health specialist for Indian Education at the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), described the strong relationship that Oregon has developed between the state education agency (SEA) and Tribal/Urban Native community, including work in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) State Education Plan revisions, curriculum revisions, native language preservation and instruction, SEA staff trainings, and health risk-prevention education programs.

Legislation

Victor described the Oregon AI/AN Education State Plan. The plan includes 11 state educational goals, which were revised and detailed by members of the statewide Indian Education Council. The goals support the policy of the ODE and the philosophy of the American Indian/Alaska Native communities and the Indian Student Bill of Rights.

Goals

1. ODE will promote effective education for AI/AN children.
2. Educational programs shall be developed to address the educational needs of all AI/AN children in Oregon.
3. Consistent with the mandate of the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century, ODE shall adopt a policy that encourages strong partnerships with AI/AN parents, tribal and community leaders, and school districts. As partners, these local groups shall have an opportunity to provide input to school districts regarding programs for AI/AN students.
4. With the advice of the Oregon Indian Education Council (OIEC), ODE shall develop data gathering systems to obtain and disseminate uniform and comprehensive data on AI/AN students in public schools.
5. ODE, the superintendent of public instruction, and the Oregon State Board of Education, as mandated by SB 103, will require that all teachers, counselors, administrators, and other ancillary personnel in the public school system shall be knowledgeable of and responsive to the AI/AN students and shall support the ODE strategies to address their needs.
6. Every school district in Oregon shall be encouraged to implement AI/AN curriculum and instructional materials. Oregon school districts should select historical and contemporary AI/AN curriculum and instructional materials that are culturally specific, and age and developmentally appropriate. These materials should be infused throughout the curriculum.
7. ODE shall identify, develop, and implement non-biased and culturally appropriate assessment instruments to determine achievement levels for AI/AN students.
8. ODE staff, with the advice of the OIEC, shall develop comprehensive high-quality early childhood education programs to meet the needs of students.
9. AI/AN students shall have equal access to participation in all programs offered in the public schools of Oregon.
10. ODE shall identify innovative and research-based strategies for reducing the AI/AN student dropout rate in Oregon and shall recommend their implementation.
11. The State Board of Education shall support the State Board of Higher Education policies and practices which ensure that AI/AN students are provided equal access and opportunities for higher education in the state.

In addition, the plan contains specific strategies and staff responsibilities outlined for each goal. It concludes with acknowledgements to the partners

who assisted with the creation and revision of the education plan.

Victor concluded his presentation by discussing the importance of developing trust in order to form partnerships with the Native community. He explained that mentors and sponsors are also a good resource for finding out about meetings and events hosted by the Native American community.

More information is available at www.ode.state.or.us.

Policy, Finance, and Systems Building

This session, moderated by Regis Pecos, chief policy advisor and legislative coordinator for the New Mexico House of Representatives, and Sarah Scanlan, director of education for First Alaskans Institute, was designed to allow state leaders to discuss how they are building statewide educational systems that ensure that all students are afforded a chance to achieve at the highest levels.

Participants

- Penny Bird, assistant secretary of education for Indian education, New Mexico
- Rick Melmer, cabinet secretary, South Dakota Department of Education
- Rita H. Inos, commissioner of education, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Public School System
- Wayne G. Sanstead, superintendent of public instruction, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
- Trent Blankenship, superintendent of public instruction, Wyoming Department of Education

Penny Bird of the New Mexico Department of Education

emphasized the importance of educators collaborating with the elders in Native communities as they address the academic needs of students. Bird also discussed the legislation that New Mexico has enacted which has made Indian education a priority in the state.

Indian Education Act

Bird highlighted aspects of the legislation that are aimed at increasing educational

opportunities for Native students in New Mexico. As related to teacher quality, New Mexico is focused on increasing the number of Native American teachers who are working with students. They have made funds available to assist Native American educational assistants to become teachers and funds for Native American teachers to become administrators. There are also funds available for any teacher working in a school serving Native students to obtain endorsements in bilingual education, English as a second language education, reading, or special education.

Language and Culture Act

Pertaining to preservation of Native languages, funds have been allotted to this purpose and resources have been given to tribes so that they can work within their community.

Recent Statewide Activities

There was a successful Native American language symposium in June 2004.

Rick Melmer of the South Dakota Department of Education began by describing the importance of building relationships and getting to know communities in order to address the educational needs of Native American students.

Demographics

Melmer described the demographics of the state of South Dakota:

- 13.7 percent of youth under the age of 18 are American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN)
- South Dakota ranks second in the U.S. for AI/AN youth under age 18; Alaska ranks first
- 9 tribes reside in South Dakota

Recent Statewide Activities

- A Native American Summit was convened in April 2004. Approximately 100 educators set goals and priorities in the following areas: teacher recruitment and training, health and safety, technology connection, research policy for center for Native American Studies, and curriculum support in math and reading.
- Brochures have been developed that inform teachers about culture; these have been sent to all South Dakota schools.
- A contract has been secured with Teach for America that has enabled 18 college graduates to teach in Native American schools for two years.

Rita H. Inos of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Public School System began by discussing the questions that educators and policymakers should think about as they educate children:

- What should children know?
- What should children be able to do?
- What should children care about?

Statewide Priorities

High student performance in literacy

All children must achieve literacy. Assessment is used to identify students' language, needs, and experiences.

- How are these areas articulated in the context of teaching or learning reading?
- Who are the teachers?
- How do teachers embrace the needs of children?
- Are parents or communities involved in education?

Quality personnel

Administrators, counselors, and teachers are important to the educational process. Certifications are in place to measure the effectiveness of personnel.

Recent Statewide Activities

October 2004 Strengthening Partnerships for Chamorro and Carolinian Student Education Summit was convened in October 2004. This was a critical gathering of both government and non-government partners.

Wayne G. Sanstead of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction explained how North Dakota was striving to serve Native students in public, tribal, and BIA schools. Recently, 21 of 23 schools identified for improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in North Dakota were Native schools.

Demographics

ß North Dakota ranks as one of the top 20 states with a significant enrollment of Native American student populations in the country.

- There are students enrolled in BIA, tribal, and public schools in the state.
- Native American students constitute approximately 8.9 percent of the total enrolled student population.
- By ethnicity, Native American comprises the second largest group of students in North Dakota.

Sanstead explained that for many of these students the dominant culture of public school is incompatible with their own cultures and languages. As a result, this can cause challenges for Native American students in the school environment. Furthermore, socio-economic issues affect achievement scores, dropout rates and, school transfer rates. Therefore, North Dakota has made Native American education a high priority in the state.

Recent Statewide Activities

- The second annual First Nations Day was held October 2004. The day was created by the State Legislature to recognize the sovereignty and contributions of tribes in the state.

Trent Blankenship of the Wyoming Department of Education began by discussing the demographics of Native students in Wyoming. The Native American student count including institutions and schools is 4,142.

Statewide Initiatives

- to improve reading achievement by working with districts to get reading programs into the schools and to assist in their efforts to work with the Native American Indian, Alaskan and Hawaiian Educational Development Center in Sheridan, WY.

- to begin universal pre-school for the reservation. For the first time in Wyoming state and reservation history, the seven districts that serve Native American reservation students have formed a consortium to provide all children from 0–5 years old with preschool and educational training for parents and children both. This is scheduled to begin in fall 2005.

Recent Statewide Activities

- a literature issue book for all 3rd graders
- a National Native American People's Center in collaboration with Stanford University and New Whales in New Zealand that focuses on teaching indigenous students

Native American Task Force

In November 2004 during the CCSSO Annual Policy Forum in South Carolina, several chief state school officers united to create a Native American Task Force. The task force is designed to allow chiefs and deputies the opportunity to share state activities, programs, and policies that focus on increasing the academic achievement of American Indian students. In addition, task force members prioritized technical assistance needs that frame the CCSSO's scope of work. The membership and work of the task force is ever evolving. The following superintendents are currently members of the Native American Task Force:

- Rick Melmer, South Dakota
- Patricia Hamamoto, Hawaii
- Marilyn Howard, Idaho
- Linda McCulloch, Montana
- Douglas Christensen, Nebraska
- Keith Rheault, Nevada
- Wayne Sanstead, North Dakota
- Rita Hocog Inos, Northern Mariana Islands
- Terry Bergeson, Washington
- Trent Blankenship, Wyoming

More information is available at www.ccsso.org

Conclusion

The second annual conference on Strengthening Partnerships for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Student Education provided a unique opportunity for state, district and school representatives to work together as a team to create customized state action plans. Approximately 100 participants attended meeting sessions on relevant topics that were suggested by a steering committee of Native leaders and educators. Along with plenary session speakers, experts in the following fields gave presentations and provided feedback to participants designed to inform their state strategies for improvement and partnership opportunities: teacher quality, parent involvement, language development, early childhood education, health and safety, and policy.

An analysis of the conference evaluations indicates that the majority of participants found the meeting topics relevant to their needs. Furthermore, they rated the quality of information shared as excellent.

Participants expressed interest in convening a third annual conference. Many recognize the importance of continuing the dialogue in order to bring back to the forefront the critical issues and tasks that still must be addressed in order to close the academic achievement gap for Native students. Furthermore, as a culminating event, state teams prioritized their immediate next steps necessary to meet their vision for Indian student education. Prior to a third annual conference, the Council of Chief State School Officers intends to support states' progress in implementing action plans and in initiating partnerships to further Native student education.

As the closing speaker on the final day of the conference, Lily Wong Fillmore stressed the importance of merging modern educational goals with the renewal of the language and culture of Native communities. She stated, "If the goal in educating Native American students is to enable them to participate fully in all of their worlds, then a real partnership between their families, communities, and state and local education officials is needed."

Second Annual Conference

Strengthening Partnerships for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian Student Education

August 8-11, 2004 ♦ Semiahmoo Resort
Blaine, Washington

Expected Outcomes:

1. To share and learn about promising practices for improving the academic performance of American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian, American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian children in a manner that is congruent with tribal traditions, languages, and cultures while promoting the knowledge and skills required in contemporary society.
2. To take steps towards developing and implementing a customized in-state strategy, which includes partnerships among relevant stakeholders, for closing the achievement gap for Native students. Such partnerships may be among chief state school officers, U.S. Department of Education representatives, tribal education leaders, local education school officials, national Indian organizations, institutes of higher education, and others.
3. To develop a greater understanding of the political relationships federally recognized tribal groups have with the federal government.

Sunday, August 8, 2004

1:00-5:30 PM	**Registration**	**Semiahmoo Foyer**
5:30-7:30 PM	**Reception Sponsored by Educational Testing Service**	**Orcas**

Blessing, Drum Ceremony, and Opening Remarks

Vince Penn, Queleute Tribe

G. Thomas Houlihan, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers

Michael Nettles, Vice President of Policy Evaluation And Research, Educational Testing Service

Victoria Vasques, Deputy Under Secretary and Director, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education

Monday, August 9, 2004

7:30 AM	**Registration**	**Semiahmoo Foyer**
7:30-8:30 AM	**Breakfast**	**Cypress**
7:30-8:30 AM	*** Breakfast for Chief State School Officers, Deputies and Tribal Education Leaders**	**Orcas**
8:30-9:00 AM	**Opening Session**	**Blakely**

*** Invitation only**

Blessing, Drum Ceremony, Welcome, and Announcements

George Adams, Nooksack/Lummi Tribe

G. Thomas Houlihan, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers

Michael Nettles, Vice President of Policy Evaluation And Research, Educational Testing Service

Victoria Vasques, Deputy Under Secretary and Director, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education

9:00–9:45 AM **General Session** **Blakely**

Federal Law and Policy Affecting Native American Education: The Origins and Rebuilding of Partnerships

Melody McCoy, Attorney, Native American Rights Fund

Objectives of the session:

- To provide an overview of the legal principles in federal law that govern the sovereignty of the 560 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in this country
- To describe the history of federal Indian policy

9:45–10:15 AM **General Session** **Blakely**

The Value of Genuine Partnerships from the Native American Perspective

Byron Mallott, President/CEO, First Alaskans Institute

Objective of the session:

- To discuss the leadership role in developing partnerships within the current education infrastructure

10:15–10:30 AM **Break** **Semiahmoo Foyer**

10:30–11:30 AM **General Session** **Blakely**

Improving Academic Performance Among Native American Children

William Demmert, Professor, Western Washington University

Objective of the session:

- To provide professional educators with information on the latest research on improving academic performance among Native American students

11:30–12:00 PM **General Session** **Blakely**

Introduction of State Team Planning Sessions

Pat Stone, Director, Native American High Performance Learning Communities

12:00–1:15 PM **Lunch** **Cypress**

Blessing, Lunch, and State Team Session 1

TOOLS 1 & 2



Objectives of State Team Session 1:

- Teams members, facilitators and recorders will meet for the first time.
- Team members will also assign themselves to attend different Breakout Sessions after lunch.

1:15–1:30 PM **Transition to Breakout Sessions**

1:30–4:00 PM **Breakout Sessions** **Breakout Rooms**

TOOL 2



Objectives of Breakout Sessions:

- Each discussion will be preceded by a brief summary of the research followed by examples of best practices in each area. Questions to be answered include: What are the best practices? Where and how are they being implemented? How can they be replicated?
- Participants will have the opportunity to attend two of the three breakout sessions on Monday and Tuesday.

BREAKOUT 1

1:30–2:45 PM **Session 1. Teacher Quality and Instructional Practice** **Saltspring**

Research Summary
Cynthia D. Prince, Director, Teacher Professional Development, Council of Chief State School Officers

Best Practices
Kana i ke Kumu: Look to the Source
C. Puanani Wilhelm, Administrator of the Hawaiian Studies and Language Programs, State of Hawaii Department of Education

Getting Something Different- Simple Strategies for School Change
Dawn Smith, Principal, Warm Springs Elementary School, Warm Springs, Oregon

Objectives of the session:

- To describe information about teacher preparation programs for Native Hawaiians that are being offered in Hawaiian communities
- To illustrate some simple processes and strategies that have more than doubled achievement for elementary students on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Central Oregon

2:45–4:00 PM **Session 2. Parent, Family, and Community Involvement** **Saltspring**

Robin Butterfield, School Reform Coordinator, University of Idaho

Best Practices
"Working Together" Parent-Professional Collaboration
Chris Curry, Executive Director of Families Together and Co Director of National Native American Families Together Parent Center (NNAFT) and **Prairie Flower Reuben**, Conference Coordinator, NNAFT

Objectives of the session:

- To focus on research and best practices for engaging Native parents in the education of their students
- To describe the resources that National Native American Families Together (NNAFT) provides to families and the training to professionals and parents on developing collaborative relationships

BREAKOUT 2

1:30–2:45 PM — **Session 3. Literacy and Language Development** — **Saturna**

Jon Reyhner, Professor, Northern Arizona University

Best Practices

Culturally Responsive Northwest Native American Reading Curriculum
Denny Hurtado, Program Supervisor, Indian Education, Title I, Higher Education, Washington Department of Education

Diné Language Immersion: Impact of Heritage Language and Culture on Navajo Student Achievement
Florian Tom Johnson, Dual Language and Culture Director, and **Jennifer Wilson**, Federal Projects Coordinator, Window Rock Unified School District #8 Fort Defiance, Arizona

Objectives of the session:

- To discuss the importance of language development and its impact on Native students meeting Washington State reading standards
- To discuss how the Window Rock Unified School District No.8 in Fort Defiance, AZ is leveraging No Child Left Behind and continuous school improvement (based on the National Study for School Evaluation and the Baldridge Criteria for Educational Excellence) through the district's *Core Principles for Learning*
- To examine how Diné language and cultural values are incorporated with scientifically research-based strategies, state academic standards, and Navajo Nation cultural content standards for the development of a more effective Diné Language Immersion school

2:45–4:00 PM — **Session 4. Early Childhood Education** — **Saturna**

Research Summary
Cheryl Kulas, Executive Director, North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission

Best Practices

The Strengths of Literacy in The Indigenous First Language
Beverly Williams, Director, Department of Academic Programs, Lower Kuskokwim School District, Bethel, Alaska

The Success and Effectiveness of the FACE Early Childhood Program
Charlotte Begay, Department Head, Early Childhood Program, Wingate Elementary School, Wingate, New Mexico

Objectives of the session:

- To examine educational models that focus on the development of literacy and skill development as the foundations for academic success

BREAKOUT 3

1:30–2:45 PM — **Session 5. Health and Safety** — **Victoria**

Norbert Hill, Executive Director, American Indian Graduate Center

Best Practices
"Ask a Question, Save a Life"
Stan Holder, Drug and Alcohol Prevention Specialist, Office of Indian Education Programs, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Partnership Building Between the SEA and Native Community: Lessons Learned in Oregon
Brad Victor, Health Specialist, Indian Education, Oregon Department of Education

Objectives of the session:

- To bring awareness to the disproportionately high levels of suicide in the Native American community and introduce a prevention model that can be utilized to reduce suicide and save lives
- To identify current research, promising practices, potential partnerships and potential funding sources for work in each of the six areas of concern: tobacco use, unhealthy dietary behaviors, inadequate physical activity, alcohol and drug use, inappropriate sexual behaviors, and behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence, including suicide
- To describe the strong relationship that Oregon has developed between the SEA and Tribal/Urban Native community, including work in AI/AN State Education Plan revisions, curriculum revisions, Native Language Preservation and Instruction, SEA staff trainings and health risk-prevention education programs

2:45–4:00 PM — **Session 6. Policy, Finance, and Systems Building** — **Victoria**

Mexico House of Representatives

Penny Bird, Assistant Secretary of Education for Indian Education, New Mexico

Rick Melmer, Chief State School Officer, South Dakota Department of Education

Rita H. Inos, Commissioner of Education, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Public School System

Objective of the session:

- To discuss how state leaders are building statewide educational systems that ensure that all students are afforded a chance to achieve at the highest levels

4:00–4:15 PM — **Break** — **Semiahmoo Foyer**

4:15–5:15 PM — **State Team Session 2** — **Team Rooms**

TOOLS 2 & 3



Objectives:

- Teams will report and reflect on what they learned from the breakout sessions.
- Vision for All Students in Our State: Where is our state now in terms of developing and implementing a plan for closing the achievement gap for Native students?

5:15 PM — **Adjourn**

Dinner on your own

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2004

7:30 AM	**Registration**	**Semiahmoo Foyer**
7:30–8:30 AM	**Breakfast**	**Cypress**
8:30–9:00 AM	**Opening Session**	**Blakely**
	Blessing and Introduction to Day 2 **Julia Lara**, Deputy Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers	
9:00–11:30 AM	**Breakout Sessions (repeated)** **See previous page for list of speakers and session objectives**	**Breakout Rooms**

BREAKOUT 1

9:00–10:15 AM	**Session 1. Teacher Quality and Instructional Practice**	**Saltspring**
10:15–11:30 AM	**Session 2. Parent, Family, and Community Involvement**	**Saltspring**

BREAKOUT 2

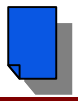
9:00–10:15 AM	**Session 3. Literacy and Language Development**	**Saturna**
10:15–11:30 AM	**Session 4. Early Childhood Education**	**Saturna**

BREAKOUT 3

9:00–10:15 AM	**Session 5. Health and Safety**	**Victoria**
10:15–11:30 AM	**Session 6. Policy, Finance, and Systems Building**	**Victoria**
	NOTE: Session 6 has the following new speakers:	
	Wayne G. Sanstead, Superintendent of Public Instruction, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction **Trent Blankenship**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Wyoming Department of Education	
11:30–11:45 AM	**Break**	**Semiahmoo Foyer**
11:45–12:15 PM	**General Session**	**Blakely**
	Developing and Strengthening Partnerships for Native American Education **David Beaulieu**, Professor, Center for Indian Education, Arizona State University	
	Objective of the session: O To provide examples of positive partnerships and relationships in Native education	
12:15–1:15 PM	**Lunch**	**Cypress**
	Blessing and Lunch	

1:15–2:15 PM	**State Team Session 3**	**Team Rooms**
TOOLS 2 & 4	**Objectives:**	
	O Teams will report and reflect on what they learned from the breakout sessions. O Priorities, Policies, and Partners: What are the priority strategies within our state for educating Native students?	
2:15–3:15 PM	**State Team Session 4**	**Team Rooms**
TOOL 5	**Objectives:**	
	O What are the priority strategies within our state for educating Native students? O Action Planning: Which stakeholders must we engage in order to be successful in empowering the academic performance of Native American students?	
3:15–3:30 PM	**Break**	**Semiahmoo Foyer**
3:30–4:15 PM	**State Team Session 4 (continued)**	**Team Rooms**
	O How will we improve on each of the priority strategies and move to an action plan for our state?	
4:15 PM	**Adjourn**	
	Dinner on your own	

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2004

7:30–8:30 AM	**Breakfast**	**Cypress**
	Blessing and Introduction to Day 3 **Julia Lara**, Deputy Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers	
8:30–9:30AM	**General Session**	**Blakely**
	"The Challenge of Native American Education: Basic or Tranformative?" **Lily Wong Fillmore**, Professor, University of California, Berkley, California	
9:30–9:45 AM	**Transition to State Team Rooms**	
9:45–11:30 AM	**State Team Session 5**	**Team Rooms**
TOOLS 6 & 7	**Objectives:**	
	O Immediate Next Steps: What will we do in our state to continue this work over the next 3 months? O What partnerships do we wish to pursue?	
11:30–12:15 PM	**State Team Report Out**	**Blakely**
12:15–1:30 PM	**Lunch**	**Blakely**
	Blessing, Lunch, and Closing Remarks	
1:30 PM	**Adjourn**	

Appendix B: Speaker Biographies

David Beaulieu

Dr. David Beaulieu is the director of the Center for Indian Education, a professor in the Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies Education and editor of the *Journal of American Indian Education in the College of Education*, Arizona State University. He is the former Electa Quinney Professor of American Indian Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Education. The position honors pioneering educator Electa Quinney, Stockbridge-Munsie American Indian recognized as Wisconsin's first "public school" teacher.

Beaulieu is the president elect for the National Indian Education Association and member and secretary of the board of the congressionally established National Foundation for Excellence in Native Education.

Beaulieu, an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, White Earth Reservation, has been director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Indian Education serving from 1997 to 2001. His work at the Department of Education focused significantly on the development and implementation of the Executive Order on the Education of the American Indian and Alaska Natives signed by President Clinton, August 1998.

Before becoming director of the Office of Indian Education, he was appointed by Governor Arnie Carlson to serve as the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights from 1991–1996, and was the first American Indian to be appointed as a commissioner in state government. Beaulieu, who earned his doctorate in education administration from the University of Minnesota, served on the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, and has written extensively about Indian education.

He was also vice president of Sintè Gleska College, Rosebud, South Dakota, which is the first tribally chartered Indian-controlled college to achieve accreditation at the bachelor and master's degree granting level. In his role as vice president he lead the effort the developed the college to accreditation at the bachelor degree granting level and initiated the first American Indian teacher-training program at a tribal college. He was involved in a system-wide evaluation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' funded schools. He is the former Minnesota State Director of Indian Education. In that capacity he developed Minnesota's Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Indian Education that lead to the passage of seven new state statutes related to Indian education.

Charlotte Begay

Charlotte Begay is currently the department head of the Early Childhood Program at Wingate Elementary School in Wingate, New Mexico. She is the former coordinator of the Family and Child Education Program where she organized various family related activities, and she previously taught all areas of curriculum at Wingate Elementary.

Begay received her bachelor of science degree in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico, and she is currently an Educational Leadership master's candidate at Western New Mexico University.

In February 2003, Governor Bill Richardson appointed Begay to the State of New Mexico Child Development Board. She has received several outstanding educator awards, and in 2002, Begay was awarded the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award.

Robin Butterfield

Robin Butterfield has over 30 years of educational training and experience. Butterfield has extensive education experience including teaching; writing curriculum such as the Indian Reading Series Teacher Manuals, Indians in Oregon Today (Fourth Grade Social Studies supplement), and the Effective Practices in Indian Education Curriculum Monograph; developing policy at the state and national levels, such as the Statewide Indian Education Plan for Oregon; serving in leadership capacities on the Oregon Indian Education Association, as president, and the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) board of directors; and providing hundreds of teacher and staff workshops on topics of effective educational practices for American Indians and Alaska Natives, are only a few of her accomplishments. Butterfield recently received a Presidential Appointment to serve on the National Advisory Council for Indian Education from the U.S. Department of Education.

Butterfield has worked at the building level, the district level as director for the Salem-Keizer Title IX Indian Education Program, the state level as the Indian Education/Civil Rights Specialist for the Oregon Department of Education (11 years), the regional level as the staff of the N.W. Regional Educational Laboratory, Research and Development for Indian Education Program (8 years), and the Regional Indian Education Technical Assistance Center at Gonzaga University, and the national level with NIEA, and the board of directors for the ERIC Clearinghouse on rural education and small schools.

A single parent of three children, Butterfield has also developed a highly successful leadership program for Indian youth. She has authored articles and publications on topics of Indian Education, multicultural education and parental involvement. She is a member of the Winnebago/Chippewa tribe.

Chris Curry

Chris Curry is the executive director of Families Together and co-director of the National Native American Families Together Parent Center. NNAFT provides parents trainings on special education law.

Prior to this, Curry held a position at Washington State University as the director of the Center of Supportive Education, a statewide training program to promote inclusive education in preschool, elementary, and secondary programs in Washington State.

Through Families Together, she now creates positive learning environments for children with diverse needs by providing technical assistance and training to schools and parents on using positive supports, adapting curriculum, and parent involvement. She has an extensive background in working with students with autism, multiple disabilities, and severe behavioral problems.

She has been a teacher in a preschool classroom and elementary classroom for children with severe disabilities. For the past five years, she has consulted in many Head Start programs providing technical assistance and training to teachers and staff.

William G. Demmert, Jr.

Dr. William G. Demmert, Jr., (Ed.D., Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1973) currently serves as a professor of education at Western Washington University. As part of his university duties, he is working with the RAND Corporation on a review of the research literature on the education of Native America, and an analysis of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data targeting Native American students. In addition, he works with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory as a partner on a review and assessment of the quantitative research available on the influences of language and cultural programs on the education of Native American students.

Professor Demmert served as a member of the Independent Review Panel created by the U.S. Congress to undertake a national assessment of Title I, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments (ESEA), and other federal programs in the U.S. Department of Education, 1995–2001. He was appointed by the U.S. Department of Education (along with former Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell) as co-chair of the Indian Nations At Risk Task Force and served as the primary writer for the *Indian Nations At Risk Task Force Report* published October 1991 by the U.S. Department of Education. He served as the first U.S. Deputy Commissioner of Education, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Office of Education, 1975–1976; the director of Indian Education Programs, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1976–1978; and as the commissioner of education, State of Alaska, 1987–1990.

Dr. Demmert's international activity is extensive and includes serving as a co-chair of a coalition of the Ministers of Education in northern nations, and he has helped plan and implement a series of education seminars in Alaska, Finland, Greenland, Northern Quebec, Norway, Nunavut Territory, Russian Federation, Sweden, and the Yukon Territory in Canada. These seminars focus on ways to improve educational opportunities for indigenous students in the far north. Professor Demmert also works with a number of Native American schools, organizations, and tribes on ways to improve schools and schooling for Native American students. Most recently, Dr. Demmert has worked with the Ministry of Education in Greenland as an advisor and overseer of their school reform effort in elementary and secondary education, as well as in restructuring their university system.

Major publications and reports include:

1 Demmert, William. (1995) Indian nations at risk: An educational strategy for action, Laura I. Rendon, Richard O. Hope and Associates, Editors, Educating A New Majority, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, pp. 231–262.

2 Demmert, William G., Jr. (1999). Indian Education Revisited: A Personal Experience, Journal of American Indian Education, Volume 38, Number 3, Special Issue 1.

3 Demmert, William G., Jr. (2001) Improving Academic Performance Among Native American Students: A Review of the Research Literature, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV, (http://www.ael.org/eric/demmert.pdf).

4 Demmert, William G., & Towner, John C., (2003). A Review of the Research Literature on the Influences of Culturally Based Education on the Academic performance of Native American Students, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland Oregon. (http://www.nwrel.org/indianed/cbe.pdf).

Norbert S. Hill, Jr.

Dr. Norbert S. Hill Jr., Oneida, is executive director of the American Indian Graduate Center. Originally from Wisconsin, he has devoted his professional career to helping Native Americans rebuild Indian communities, primarily through education.

Hill was the assistant dean of students at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and the director of the American Indian Educational Opportunity Program at the University of Colorado. He also served as the executive director of American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) for 15 years in Boulder, Colorado, before joining the AIGC staff in June 2000.

Hill has been awarded two honorary doctorates in engineering and law. He holds an M.S. in guidance and counseling, and a B.S. in sociology/anthropology, both from the University of Wisconsin. He has been awarded three fellowships: Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C.; Community Builder Fellow with HUD; and Rockefeller Foundation Fellow.

Hill serves on numerous boards including the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, chair and board member of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), and has authored publications on education issues for Native Americans. He was

the founder and publisher of *Winds of Change* magazine, a publication of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES).

Stanley R. Holder, Sr.

Stanley R. Holder Sr. is a Wichita Tribal member and a former vice president of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. He is a state, national, and internationally certified alcohol and drug counselor. He has an associate's degree in psychology, a bachelor's degree in psychology with a criminal justice minor (cum laude), and a master's degree in behavioral sciences (cum laude). He is a member of PHI THETA KAPPA and PHI KAPPI PHI national academic honor societies. He has over 20 years of experience in the field of tribal and community educational, behavioral, drug and alcohol, and mental health program development and operation. He is currently employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs, Center for School Improvement as the drug and alcohol prevention specialist to oversee Title IV Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs.

G. Thomas Houlihan

Dr. G. Thomas (Tom) Houlihan is the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), a nonprofit association dedicated to the improvement of education located in Washington, DC, which represents the nation's chief education officials and state education agency personnel throughout the nation.

Houlihan previously served as President/CEO of the North Carolina Partnership for Excellence and senior education advisor to Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina. A former teacher, principal and superintendent, Dr. Houlihan was the first educator in history to hold cabinet level status in a North Carolina governor's administration.

In his role as a national advocate for children, Houlihan serves on numerous boards and commissions. He serves on the board of directors for the Center for State Scholars, the National Center for Education Accountability, and is the national chair of the State Leadership Initiative created by The Wallace Fund. In addition, he serves as chair of the Friday Institute for Educational Improvement at North Carolina State University and is on the National Board of Visitors for Indiana University. Houlihan has also recently been appointed by U.S. Commerce Secretary Donald Evans to the board of overseers of the Malcolm Baldrige Awards program, and is currently the only K–12 educator to hold such an appointment.

Houlihan is a frequent speaker/consultant, as well as an author of three books and over 200 professional and news media articles. He is a former "Superintendent of the Year" in North Carolina and was one of four finalists for "National Superintendent of the Year." He has also been honored by his alma mater, Indiana University, and from Phi Delta Kappa for leadership and contributions to education.

Houlihan received a B.S. in history and psychology from Indiana University, an M.Ed. in guidance and personnel services from North Carolina State University, and an Ed.D. in administration and curriculum from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Denny Hurtado

Denny Hurtado is a member of the Skokomish Indian Tribe, a resident of the Skokomish Reservation, and the vice-chairman (and former chairman) of the Skokomish Tribal Council. In addition, he is the program manager for Indian Education/Title I/Community Outreach within the office of superintendent of public instruction. He received a bachelor's degree in social science and a lifetime secondary teaching credential from the California State University at Sacramento. He received a master's degree in school administration from the California State University at Humbolt.

He has been in his current position at the office of superintendent of public instruction since July 1996. Before accepting this position, Hurtado was director of Upward Bound at The Evergreen State College for nearly seven years, and from 1978 to 1992, he was a commercial fisherman and teacher.

Florian Tom Johnson

Florian Tom Johnson currently serves as the dual language & culture director for the Window Rock Unified School District. In this capacity, Johnson evaluates, plans, and implements the Diné Language & Culture Program for kindergarten through 12th grade. The program complies with the Navajo Nation, state, and federal regulations by developing a vertically aligned standards-based (AZ & Navajo Nation) quarterly curriculum and assessment.

Cheryl M. Kulas

Cheryl M. Kulas is currently director of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, 2001–2004. Past experiences include President; Parent Advisory Council, Turtle Mt. Head Start Program; Director of a Title IV Indian Education Act Program; Director of a Native American Early Childhood Education Center serving children 0–4; Title VI—Training and Technical Assistance Center—Trainer. She served as director of Indian education in the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction from 1988 – 2001, consultant to the U.S. Office of Indian Education, Improving American Schools Act; North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, on diversity issues, subcommittee member and trainer, Midwest Regional Center for Drug Free Schools; advisor to the former Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (currently a member of the Advisory Board of the Midwest Regional Center for Research, Education, and Learning (McREL).

In North Dakota she has served on a state interim legislative committee on Indian jurisdiction, member of the North Dakota Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission, and adjunct professor in Indian studies. She is a former member of the board of directors of the National Indian Education Association (1999–2002), and current partner on the Native American Mathematics Teaching and Student Achievement Partnership Project, McREL.

She earned a B.A., from the University of North Dakota, and a master's degree in political science/American Indian studies at the University of Arizona, Tucson. She has been Ford Foundation and Bush Leadership Fellows.

Kulas is an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Nation of South Dakota and a descendent/member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa of North Dakota.

Julia Lara

Julia Lara is the deputy executive director of the State Services and Technical Assistance division of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Prior to this position, she was the acting director of the Resource Center on Educational Equity. Lara oversees the high poverty schools initiative, an initiative that builds the capacity of SEAs to more effectively implement the provisions of the ESEA Title I law and other federal programs that target children in low performing, high poverty schools. Particular emphasis is placed on identifying best practices for improving achievement outcomes for limited English proficient students and students with disabilities.

Lara coordinates the work of the State Collaborative on Student Standards and Assessments LEP Project, which focuses on the development of tools and resources that are likely to increase the inclusion of English language learner (ELL) students in statewide assessments. Lara also oversees the Immigrant Students and Secondary School Reform Project. The intent of this project is to strengthen the capacity of state education agencies and districts to improve delivery of educational services to English language learners enrolled in high schools undergoing reform. Lara has conducted background research on issues of interest to the Council such as teacher quality; equity considerations in math and science education; and Native American student education.

Lara has a B.A. from Middlebury College, Vermont, an M.A. from Columbia University of New York, a certificate of Latin American Studies from Columbia's University & School of International Affairs, and a Ph.D. from George Mason University.

Byron I. Mallott

Byron I. Mallott was born and raised in Yakutat, Alaska, the ancestral home of his mother's Tlingit Indian clan. He has been active in both the public and private sectors in Alaska since 1965, when he was elected mayor of Yakutat at age 22. In various capacities, he has served every governor since statehood, including Governor William A. Egan, in whose cabinet he served as the first commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. Currently, Mallott is president and CEO of the First Alaskans Institute.

Prior to his current post, Mallott served as executive director of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation from 1995 until January 2000. Additionally, he was appointed to the Fund's board of trustees in 1982 by Governor Hammond, and served a total of eight years as a trustee under three successive governors. He chaired the corporation for three terms.

Over a 20-year period (1972–1992), Mallott was variously a director, chairman, and president and chief executive officer of Sealaska Corporation, the largest of the 12 land-based regional corporations formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. During his tenure, Sealaska established a shareholders' Permanent Fund and a corporate investment portfolio with total holdings in excess of $100 million. Mallott served as a director of the Seattle Branch board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco for six years, and served in 1999 on the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

Mallott's additional business experience both in Alaska and nationally is extensive. He has been a director of five commercial banking institutions, and was a founding director of the Alaska Commercial Fisheries and Agriculture Bank. Since 1982, he has served as a director of Alaska Air Group, parent company of Alaska and Horizon Airlines. From 1986 through 1988, Mallott served on the board of the National Alliance of Business.

His years of public service, in addition to those appointments previously listed, include his election as mayor of the City and Borough of Juneau, a term of service as president of the Alaska Federation of Natives, and an appointment by Governor Knowles as co-chair of the Commission on Rural Governance and Empowerment.

Mallott is clan leader of the KwaashKiKwaan clan of the Raven tribe of Yakutat and serves on the board of directors of Sealaska Corporation. He is married to Toni Mallott who teaches elementary grades in the Juneau School District. Together they have raised five children.

Melody L. McCoy

Melody McCoy joined the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) as a staff attorney in 1986. At NARF, McCoy works primarily in the areas of jurisdiction in Indian country, tribal rights in education, tribal trust funds, and tribal intellectual property rights.

McCoy is a past co-chair of the Federal Bar Association's Indian Law Conference, 1990–1992. She was a member of NARF's Litigation Management Committee from 1992–1995.

McCoy received her undergraduate degree from Harvard University (1981) and law degree from the University of Michigan (1986). She is admitted to practice law in Colorado and Massachusetts. She has practiced before all levels of tribal and federal courts, including arguing a case before the U.S. Supreme Court. McCoy is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

Michael T. Nettles

Michael Nettles is vice-president for policy evaluation and research and the Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation and Research at Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. He has a national reputation as a policy researcher on educational assessment, student performance and achievement, educational equity, and higher education finance policy. His research covers such issues as educational access, opportunity, attainment, the consequences of education for various population groups in the U.S., state and national assessment, educational funding policies, and educational testing of students at all levels of education. His publications reflect his broad interest in public policy, student and faculty access, opportunity, achievement, and educational assessment at both the K–12 and post-secondary levels.

He was a professor of education at the University of Michigan from 1992 until 2003. From 1996 to 1999, Nettles served as the first executive director of the Fredrick D. Patterson Research Institute of the United Negro College Fund. In that role, he published the three volume *African American Education Data Book series and Two Decades of Progress*—the most comprehensive books of facts about the educational status and condition of

African Americans in the U.S. ever produced. And he served as vice president for assessment for the University of Tennessee System, Knoxville, Tennessee, and as assistant director for academic affairs at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in Nashville. Nettles' first tenure at ETS was in the last half of the 1980s.

Nettles chairs the Social Justice Action Committee of the American Educational Research Association. He recently completed his tenure as member of National Assessment Governing Board where he has served as a vice chair. He also was a member of the College Board of Trustees where he chaired the College Board Research and Development Committee.

A native of Nashville, he received his B.A. in political science at the University of Tennessee, master's degrees in political science and in higher education, and a Ph.D. in higher education from Iowa State University.

Regis Pecos

Regis Pecos is a member of Cochiti Pueblo where he was born and raised. He has been a member of the tribal council for 27 years. He has served two terms as Lieutenant governor and one as governor.

Pecos is the product of the Bernalillo Public Schools. Since seventh grade, it involved an hour and 15 minute bus ride one way. Upon graduation, he attended Princeton University and graduated with honors in 1977. He is currently finishing his doctoral program at the University of California, Berkeley.

Pecos served for 18 years as New Mexico's chief executive of the State Office of Indian Affairs under five governors. He is presently the chief policy advisor and legislative coordinator for the speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

He served two terms as an elected member of the Bernalillo Public Schools Board of Education and also served for 15 years on the Board of Education for Santa Fe Indian School with 12 years as the president. Santa Fe Indian School during that period became the first Indian school to receive the U.S. President's Award of Excellence in Education. In 1999, Pecos became the first American Indian to ever be appointed to serve on Princeton University's Board of Trustees.

In 1996, he co-founded the New Mexico Leadership Institute, which he currently co-directs. The Institute is devoted to cultivating young leaders and scholars with a commitment to their communities. It also serves as a convener of leaders at all levels for frank and honest discussions on issues challenging tribal communities. It has formal relationships with Harvard and Princeton Universities.

Pecos has been the recipient of New Mexico's Distinguished Public Service and New Mexico's Jefferson Award for significant community contributions.

Cynthia Prince

Cynthia Prince is director of teacher professional development for the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Her primary responsibility is to help states meet the new teacher quality requirements of No Child Left Behind, particularly in high-poverty, low-performing schools. She heads CCSSO's State Teacher Quality Network

and is assisting with a U.S. Department of Education-funded evaluation of state implementation of the accountability and teacher quality provisions of No Child Left Behind. She also publishes three CCSSO newsletters to disseminate research-based information and best practices to state education leaders on teacher quality, reading and writing, and language, culture, and equity.

Before coming to CCSSO, Prince served as issues analysis director for the American Association of School Administrators, where she developed and administered surveys of local school superintendents and analyzed strategies to attract and retain high-quality teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools. Other previous positions held include coordinator of program evaluation for the Connecticut State Department of Education; chief of research, evaluation, and statistical services for the Maryland State Department of Education; and associate director for analysis and reporting for the National Education Goals Panel in Washington, D.C. Prince has evaluated bilingual education programs in California and Connecticut, and she has written two books and numerous reports and articles on teacher and principal quality, hard-to-staff schools, education reform, and education and language policy.

She completed her undergraduate degree at Northwestern University and her graduate work at Stanford, where she earned master's degrees in education and linguistics, and a Ph.D. in education with a concentration in language, literacy, and culture.

Prairie Flower Reuben

In October 2001, Prairie Flower began working for National Native American Families Together Parent Center, a federally funded program that provides training and information to parents of children with disabilities. She has a deep interest in individuals with disabilities because she has a brother who received special education services and an uncle who is developmentally disabled.

She currently holds the position as conference coordinator for NNAFT and has coordinated 50 trainings for 36 tribes across the nation where 350 Community Friends have been trained to be available to parents with information on IDEA and related special education laws. She has also established a Native American Training and Information Network, a yearly conference bringing people together from different government agencies, and people who provide training to parents on education issues to address issues that affect our children disabilities in our sovereign nations.

Jon Reyhner

Dr. Jon Reyhner is professor of bilingual multicultural education in the Department of Educational Specialties at Northern Arizona University where he has also served as the coordinator of the Bilingual Multicultural Education Program. Previously, Reyhner served as associate professor of education at Montana State University-Billings, where he also coordinated an Indian Bilingual Teacher Training Program for a time. Before coming to Billings, he taught junior high school for four years in the Navajo Nation and was a school administrator for 10 years in

Indian schools in Arizona, Montana, and New Mexico. His long-term interest is improving the education of American Indian students. He served as a commissioned author for both the U.S. Government's Indian Nations at Risk Task Force and co-authored recently the research review for the Government's American Indian/Alaska Native Research Group.

Reyhner has written extensively on American Indian education and Indigenous language revitalization. He is co-author of *American Indian Education: A History* (2004) and *Language and Literacy Teaching for Indigenous Education* (2002), co-editor of *Nurturing Native Languages* (2003), *Indigenous Languages Across the Community* (2002), *Learn in Beauty: Indigenous Education for a New Century* (2000) and *Revitalizing Indigenous Languages* (1999) and editor of *Teaching Indigenous Languages* (1997), *Teaching American Indian Students* (1992), and *Effective Language Education Practices* (1990). He has also written over 30 book chapters and journal articles. He was a facilitator at the First Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium at Northern Arizona University in 1994 and co-chaired the Fourth and Eighth Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposia at Northern Arizona University in 1997 and 2001. He currently is the coordinator for the Symposia Steering Committee and maintains the Teaching Indigenous Languages web site at http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html.

Reyhner has edited a column on Issues in Indigenous Education for NABE News for the past decade and also served a decade on the editorial board of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. He has also served on the Multicultural Advisory Board for McDougal Littell and as a reviewer for the *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Choice*, *Education Review*, *Language & Education*, *Anthropology & Education*, Cambridge University Press, *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, *History of Education Quarterly*, *American Educational Research Journal*, National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, University of Oklahoma Press, Lawrence Erlbaum, Longman, *American Indian Quarterly*, *Teaching Education*, *Journal of American Indian Education*, and the *Journal of Professional Studies*. He has also given over 100 workshops, presentations, and speeches at regional, national, and international conferences.

Sarah Scanlan

Sarah Scanlan was born in Fairbanks, Alaska, and raised in Kotzebue by her mother and extended family. She was influenced by several wonderful teachers, including Emily Ivanoff Brown and Ron Hogan. Currently, she is education director for the First Alaskans Institute. Previously, she was an executive for NANA Regional Corporation for 23 years from 1976–1999 worked and managed almost every department, including shareholder relations and communications, regional operations, human resources, and corporate affairs. Sarah has worked on contract for tribal organizations including AITC, Maniilaq, and a village IRA, and another Regional Corporation, primarily in strategic planning, and facilitating and planning annual meetings since 1999.

Scanlan has served on a number of volunteer boards, committees and councils during the past 25 years, including the Tundra Times Board, World Eskimo/Indian Olympics, Workforce

Investment Boards, Vocational/Technical Education, YWCA, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, Business Education Compact, Alaska Native Heritage Center, South Central Native Educators Association, Reinventing Schools Coalition, Get Out the Native Vote, KNBA Fundraising, Commonwealth North Workforce Development Study, Anchorage Women's Political Caucus.

Scanlan graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks with a B.S. in business administration.

Dawn Smith

Dawn Smith has been the principal of Warm Springs Elementary (WSE) for the past 10 years. In 2003, she received the Oregon National Distinguished Principal Award.

She began teaching at WSE in 1974 as an intern and was hired in 1975 as a first grade teacher. She has worked in the building ever since.

Smith is a member of the Klamath tribe of Oregon. She is married with two children, all of whom are Warm Springs tribal members.

Victoria Vasques

Victoria Vasques is the deputy under secretary and director of the Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education. In this position, she serves as the principal point of contact within the federal government for Indian education and for the 32 tribal colleges and universities across the nation.

Vasques has more than two decades of experience in education and American Indian issues, having served as executive director of the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, director of Indian Affairs at the Department of Energy, as an education program specialist in the Office of Indian Education, on the President's Commission on Indian Reservation Economics, and on the presidential commission on the HIV Epidemic in the Reagan administration. Her experience with Indian issues outside the federal government includes serving as a technical assistant specialist at the National Congress of American Indians, and as tribal liaison at The Committee for the 50th Presidential Inaugural.

Vasques received her bachelor of science degree from California State University at Fullerton, and then went on to receive teaching credentials from the University of California at Irvine. She is part Diegueno of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, Valley Center, California, and was named American Indian Woman of the Year in 1986. She is also a member of the Decade Society, a non-profit organization of young Washington-area professionals dedicated to supporting local charities involved in areas such as literacy, health care, child safety, after-school enrichment, and education.

Brad Victor

Brad Victor is the HIV-STDs prevention coordinator and health specialist for Indian education at the Oregon Department of Education. He began working with the Oregon Native community at the request of Oregon's superintendent of public education, Susan Castillo, in 2001.

Victor has 23 years of teaching experience at the middle, high, and university levels. He developed the TRENS (Teaching Risk-reduction Education

for Native School-age youth) peer educator program. Victor is a team member for the revision of Oregon's American Indian/Alaska Native State Education Plan, and he is the lead for the Oregon Native Language Preservation and Instruction Partnership Project.

Puanani Wilhelm

Puanani Wilhelm is a Native Hawaiian whose ancestors are from the island of Maui. She is also the granddaughter of a picture bride who met her husband when she came to Hawaii to join him on the sugar plantation. She was one of the first two Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers who started the program in 1987.

Wilhelm is currently the administrator of the Hawaiian Studies and Language Programs in the State of Hawaii Department of Education. She is the mother of a second grader at the Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Anuenue, the K–12 Hawaiian Language Immersion School in Honolulu.

Beverly Williams

Beverly Williams was trained as a Spanish and English teacher with a bachelor's degree in education from Central Washington University and a master's in adult education from Washington State University. She taught Spanish, English, and ESL for over 15 years in Washington and Alaska, served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nicaragua, Central America, and Peace Corp Trainer in Ponce, Puerto Rico. Since moving to western Alaska, she has worked for the Lower Kuskokwim School District as an ESL Teacher Trainer from 1987 to 1991; Bilingual Curriculum Coordinator, 1991–1997; and Director of Academic Programs, 1997–2004.

During her tenure, she has had the opportunity to help develop the district's Yup'ik literacy program, worked with staff in the local publication of Yup'ik books to support the primary literacy program, developed the Yugtun primary math program, created integrated thematic units based on elders values and traditions, and worked at developing an English language program specific to the needs of Yup'ik children.

Her goal as director, and the goal of her department has been to work with an outstanding staff to bring together knowledge, research, and best practices in the areas of second language acquisition, literacy education, early childhood education, brain research, the education of indigenous children, learning styles, as well as differentiation of instruction to provide the best education possible for the children in the Lower Kusokwim School District.

Jennifer Wilson

Jennifer Wilson is the federal projects coordinator for the Window Rock Unified School District located in Fort Defiance, on the Navajo Nation, in Arizona. She works in all aspects of the district-wide reform effort entitled 'Embracing Change for Student Learning.' The primary focus is on the alignment of federal and state programs and services for students to the districts mission, vision, and core principles for learning. This includes analysis of NCLB and other policy/legislation to ensure implementation best meets the needs of the Navajo students served by the district.

Lily Wong Fillmore

Lily Wong Fillmore has been on the faculty of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley since 1974. She is a linguist and an educator; much of her research, teaching, and writing have focused on issues related to the education of language minority students. Her research and professional specializations are in the areas of second language learning and teaching, the education of language minority students, and the socialization of children for learning across cultures.

Over the past 35 years, she has conducted studies of second language learners in school settings on Latino, Asian, American Indian, and Eskimo children. Her research and publications have focused on social and cognitive processes in language learning, on cultural differences in language learning behavior, on sources of variation in learning, and on primary language retention and loss. She has conducted research in Yupik villages along the lower Yukon River in Alaska examining the language resources of students grades K–12, and has directed a UC Berkeley doctoral program for American Indian leaders in several pueblos in New Mexico. She is currently examining the language demands of high stakes testing, especially of examinations for high school graduation.