

**OFFICE OF HEAD START
TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

**June 16, 2015
Sacramento, California**

Presented by
Blanca Enriquez, Director
Office of Head Start

Introduction

Pursuant to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Tribal Consultation Policy and Section 640(l)(4) of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, in 2015 the Office of Head Start (OHS) planned four Tribal Consultation sessions for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and families, taking into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting the delivery of Head Start services in their geographic locations.

OHS is committed to consultation with Tribes through which elected officials and other authorized representatives of Tribal governments have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input on the development of policies or regulations, the interpretation of existing regulations, or other policies or procedures that affect Indian Tribes. OHS is committed to seeking input from AIAN governing bodies, leaders, and individuals designated by Tribal leaders and incorporating the input into its decision-making process related to matters that affect Tribes and Region XI (RXI) AIAN children and families.

The 2015 schedule follows:

March 16, 2015	Albuquerque, New Mexico
June 16, 2015	Sacramento, California
July 30, 2015	Tulsa, Oklahoma
August 17, 2015	Billings, Montana

By Notice in the *Federal Register*, dated April 7, 2015, OHS notified RXI AIAN leaders of a Tribal Consultation for Tribes in RXI on June 16, 2015, in Sacramento, California, to be held in conjunction with the National Indian Head Start Directors Association Conference. The following report reflects comments and recommendations raised by RXI AIAN leaders and representatives, comments and responses from OHS, and areas discussed that require additional follow-up. (There will be separate reports for each Tribal Consultation listed above.)

Participants

Office of Head Start presenters: Fran Majestic, Director, Division of Program Operations; Captain Robert Bialas, Regional Program Manager, Region XI.

Additional OHS and national contractor staff participated in person or via conference call. See the Appendix for a list of these participants.

Tribal leaders and Tribal representatives: See the Appendix for a list of participants.

Introductory Remarks

Mike Richardson, Director of the Region XI (RXI) American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) National Head Start Collaboration Office, led the invocation. Captain Robert

Bialas, RXI AIAN Program Manager, and Tribal leaders introduced themselves, and Captain Bialas introduced Fran Majestic, Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS) Division of Program Operations. Ms. Majestic welcomed the Tribal leaders and representatives.

Captain Bialas emphasized that OHS Director Blanca Enriquez is committed to Indian country. The Director was required to be present in Washington, DC at the time of this Tribal Consultation. Captain Bialas introduced a video she had prepared for the consultation in which she discussed her interest in staff development and building the capacity of programs to support children and families.

Captain Bialas provided an RXI AIAN Head Start update. The RXI AIAN territory includes 26 states with 150 programs. There are 147 Head Start programs, three Early Head Start programs, and 55 programs offering both Head Start and Early Head Start. Annual funding for RXI in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 is \$215,000,000. Enrollment is funded for 24,000 children.

Captain Bialas and Ms. Majestic addressed RXI developments, training and technical assistance (T/TA) efforts, and the proposed Program Performance Standards:

- *RXI AIAN Team*: The team working on issues affecting RXI AIAN includes Tribal elders, Head Start programs, program specialists, FHI 360, Three Feathers, the National Indian Head Start Directors Association, the National Centers, and other collaborators. Sixteen program specialists for RXI travel from Washington, DC to programs throughout the country. The T/TA team from FHI 360 offers T/TA services to help programs succeed and coordinates with the program specialists. The team has been successful helping the programs develop capacity for high-quality education and services for children and families.
- *Designation Renewal System (DRS)*: Captain Bialas discussed DRS as it affects RXI AIAN programs and pointed out that there have been positive outcomes in the last 3 years. He noted that the *Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS)* require OHS to enter a consultation process with Tribes if one of seven conditions triggers the DRS process. After a DRS determination, a letter is issued to Tribal leadership followed by a call or onsite visit to discuss next steps. Tribes in DRS develop a Plan to Improve Quality (PIQ) to provide sustained correction of problems and improve overall program operations. The process is beneficial and helps programs to identify challenges and strengths, and develop policies and systems to improve systems and build capacity and quality. To date, all reevaluations scheduled following completion of the PIQ have been successful. Captain Bialas reviewed the status of the four cohorts of RXI programs in DRS and noted that Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) scores have risen across RXI. To date, no programs have had to be discontinued or to compete again for funding as the result of DRS. Captain Bialas also noted that the monitoring team identifies the lowest 10 percent of CLASS program scores nationwide, and that group of programs is placed

in DRS. There are programs in RXI that are identified for DRS solely for that reason.

- *CLASS™*: Captain Bialas shared RXI AIAN CLASS scores. He noted that part of his mission was to focus training on CLASS and school readiness due to low RXI CLASS scores. All RXI scores for CLASS have improved. In FY 2015, the RXI average Emotional Support score was 6.1948 with a threshold level of 4.0. Classroom Organization scores were over 6.0 with a threshold of 3.0. Instructional Support scores averaged 2.7386 with a threshold of 2.0. In addition, some RXI programs had perfect scores of 7.0; no other region had programs with perfect scores.
- *Communications*: Program specialists have continued to visit on site; OHS keeps in regular communication with programs; response time to Tribal queries has improved; and there is regular dissemination of new information. Captain Bialas has regular calls with AIAN organizations and consortia, including Northwest Indian Head Start Coalition and Alaska Head Start Directors. He has visited over 300 AIAN programs and will continue with site visits to programs.
- *FHI 360*: Ms. Yasmine Daniel Vargas, Director of RXI AIAN Head Start T/TA, introduced the T/TA team, stated that they have made over 5,000 site visits during their T/TA contract, as well as offering cluster training on CLASS and support for instructional practices, fiscal operations, and program governance. She noted that grantees made positive comments about the clusters and data boot camps. At the end of June 2015, there will be a 2-day training on an Office of Management and Budget circular. She is grateful she has had the opportunity to serve Head Start. Mr. Richardson also spoke and mentioned working with American Indian colleges across the county. He has served Tribes in 26 states and was on the road for 2 weeks of every month during the T/TA contract. He spent 50 percent of his time on building partnerships and collaborating with state partners. The Tribal colleges have excellent teaching and management staffs. Almost all of the colleges have early childhood programs and language specialties. When he visits Tribes, he observes the community first to gain a sense of how the Tribe is unique. He mentioned that each community and election process differ.
- *Data Boot Camp*: Jarma WRIGHTEN, National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning Regional Field Specialist, RXI AIAN, noted that it is important for grantees to understand data, particularly now that there are 5-year grant awards. No regions other than RXI have had boot camps on data. To date, there have been 10 data boot camps for RXI. The boot camps reached 112 grantees (of 150) and 432 participants. OHS will continue to ensure that programs receive training about data.
- *Health Literacy Institute*: This institute held by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) taught parents how to improve children's health. It was held for 2½ days in Washington, DC, and 27 grantees attended. All costs were paid and there was a \$1,000 travel stipend. Program specialists, grantee specialists, and directors also attended. Following the meeting, there has been continuous follow-up by UCLA to educate new parents who attended by sending them booklets, lessons, and other materials about health.

- *Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES)*: This survey began in 1997 but, for a number of reasons, did not include AIAN programs. Head Start staff met with the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to discuss including AIAN in FACES. A group met weekly on calls to collaborate on the survey and AIAN involvement. Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe Early Childhood Education Director, shared information about the survey. She explained that she had helped reach out to RXI Head Start directors for comments on the survey. Mathematica Policy Research was the contractor for data collection. In the second year, there were workgroups involving directors, and they considered the proposed surveys for families, teachers, directors, and center directors. The survey will begin in November 2015. Twenty-two RXI programs have been selected to participate, and 10 have gone through the approval process. Researchers have reconsidered some issues based on workgroup comments. The survey plan was presented at the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Council this winter. It is important that Tribal leaders remain interested in research. Ms. Haight stated that she hopes the study results provide an opportunity to change policy.
- *Head Start Health Managers Survey*: The survey of the characteristics of health managers, their priorities, and support for health services for AIAN is complete. OPRE is waiting for approval of the results from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Institutional Review Board. The survey results will be disseminated in 2015.
- *Facilities Report*: A RXI AIAN facilities assessment is required every 5 years. ACF agreed to do a complete assessment of RXI facilities for the new report. At this point 480 assessments have been accomplished and only 12 grantees are missing. The report will have a representation of centers across the country, and at least 500 will be included. Reviewers utilized the monitoring protocol for health and safety when collecting information. Staff conducting the survey included FHI 360, program specialists, retired contractors, and Danya. OHS hopes the report will provide Congress and Tribal leaders a true representation of the poor condition of Tribal facilities. Tribes will receive the final report.
- *New Funding Opportunity*: There are 14 grantees who have received expansion funding: eight are working with the Office of Child Care and six are conducting their own expansion. These grantees serve 700 children and families.
- *HSPPS Proposed*: Ms. Majestic said the proposed standards are to be announced on Friday, June 19, 2015. This is the first time the regulations have been completely overhauled in 40 years. They are readable, understandable, and streamlined and reduce bureaucracy. OHS is interested in what the community thinks and if they suggest replacing what is proposed. The proposed standards offer more flexibility and a full day for preschoolers as a standard. Also, they eliminate the formal home-based option for preschoolers and offer local options for communities. Programs are required to explain how their community needs are better met with the local options.

Comments of RXI AIAN Participants and OHS Responses

A. Tribal Consultations and Reports—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Wayne Johnson, Muscogee Creek Nation:* These meetings are referred to as consultations, and this implies two-way communication with a speaker and a listener. Listeners must hear what the speakers say and indicate some understanding of the issue. Why are some things unaddressed after consultations? Why is there no more funding for Tribal programs? Why are facilities unrepaired? What about transportation issues?
- *Brian Jason, Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of Michigan, Inc.:* Only a handful of leaders are present at this meeting, although there are 150 grantees with 118 Tribes. Perhaps the meeting could be coordinated with the National Congress of American Indians.
- *Genevive Jaramillo, Santo Domingo Tribe:* Choose locations for consultations where there are more Tribal leaders, and plan the meetings at major hubs. Do not hold the consultations in remote locations.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians:* She has attended consultations since 2008 and does not believe the sessions are productive or producing results in the early childhood community. Tribal grantees seek improvement and want to address funding issues. Though the Tribes appreciate consultation efforts, they expect a stronger consultation process that includes policymakers. They request that policymaking federal employees attend the consultations. When consulting with Tribal leaders, it is disrespectful not to have policy leaders present. The Tribe has submitted testimony at several consultations and wishes to see an annual report on actions taken in response to requests. There should be an agenda item that encourages a discussion and evaluation of the Tribal Consultation process. Consultations should represent a commitment to government-to-government relationships.
- *Robin Eagle, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:* She is the only one who can attend this consultation from her Tribe due to the schedule.
- *Jon George, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:* When will the Tribes hear about consultation outcomes from the federal officials? It is important that they be notified of the outcome of consultations such as what is implemented and whether funding will be increased.
- *Jennifer Oatman, Nez Perce Tribe:* How are Tribes going to voice concerns and receive action on concerns brought forward in the future? The Tribes seem to raise the same issues over and over. How do the issues they raise affect what OHS does?
- *Denise Padgett, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* There is short notice for consultations and no feedback on any decisions made as a result of the meetings.

Tribal Consultations and Reports—OHS Responses

- Captain Bialas said he is interested in participants' thoughts about where to hold Tribal Consultations. He agreed that there is a need to discuss the consultation locations and adjust them as needed. He is interested in holding consultations where the Tribes advise they should be held. In Alaska, OHS schedules consultations when the leaders visit major cities from the villages.

- Captain Bialas said there is a process for the review of Tribal Consultation reports. OHS has decided to expedite reports internally, with a rapid review by him, Ms. Majestic, and a core team at OHS. This group will review, comment, and address issues raised. The report will be disseminated after the OHS Director approves it. He asked if the Tribal leaders would like to see a draft report.
- Ms. Majestic acknowledged concerns and said federal officials are listening to the issues even if they cannot solve the problems. Head Start is local, and Policy Council members are critical to the program.

B. Language Preservation and Cultural Immersion—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Brian Jason, ITC Michigan:* Language is being lost, and the immersion process is critical to preservation. Cultural teachers should be part of the community even if they do not have a degree, particularly since a study shows that a low percent of Indians speak their languages. Children need to be taught language early.
- *Genevive Jaramillo, Santo Domingo:* Santo Domingo language is alive and well, and the Tribe is integrating a language program. How is OHS going to support language development through the Information Memorandum on language? Credentialing language teachers means a federal agency is attempting to fit the Tribal language into the model of a universal language. Tribal languages are unique to each Tribe and culture and are not universal languages. If the federal government tries to teach culture, that will offend Tribes. OHS should embrace that fact. How will OHS support the integration of language that Santo Domingo is accomplishing?
- *Suzanne Wise, Wewinabi Early Education Center:* This is their fourth year of their immersion classroom. They want to train staff in a meaningful way. The quality of teachers in immersion is a big issue. Are there incentives to get a degree? What can the Tribe implement to support degree attainment by language teachers?
- *Jon George, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:* The Tribe is interested in immersion for language. This is how languages are learned by Tribal people. They rely on elders to teach their ways and look to grandparents for help.
- *Deborah Lee, Nisqually Indian Tribe:* The Tribe concurs with issues raised about cultural and language immersion.
- *Dana Wilson, Crow Tribe:* To support language and culture, teachers require skills. He supports education requirements for teachers. There must be efforts to improve the quality of Tribal life and the Tribal languages. He announced that there is an iPad app on his Tribal language.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S’Kallam Tribe:* The Tribe wants to offer immersion, but it is difficult because they only have three certified teachers on the reservation. She is happy to hear about programs offering language immersion.
- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* Ms. Padgette stated she believes that her Tribe’s own recommendations for quality teachers should be accepted by OHS.
- *Monica Sayad, Round Valley Tribe:* Their Tribe experienced language genocide, and they are trying to rebuild their language with the help of non-Native speakers who

are talented linguists. There are no Native speakers in her Tribe, and discussions of immersion highlight what the Tribe lacks.

Language Preservation and Cultural Immersion—OHS Responses

- Captain Bialas noted that the recent Information Memorandum (IM) [*Native Language Preservation, Revitalization, Restoration, and Maintenance in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs \(ACF-IM-HS-15-02\)*](#) encourages continuation of culture in classrooms with language education provided by elders. The IM demonstrates continued support from OHS leadership for language preservation and also provides resources. He noted that he is happy to see children speaking Native languages when he visits programs.
- Ms. Majestic noted that she appreciated the comments about language preservation.

C. CLASS and Designation Renewal System—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Genevive Jaramillo, Santo Domingo Tribe:* The Tribe is concerned about accountability and assessment. They also fear that as children speak the Tribal language more often, the use of their language may negatively affect CLASS scores. They want to be sure that when monitors assess them, they know the Tribal language or put down their pens. How is OHS planning to help them navigate systems of accountability through CLASS?
- *Suzanne Wise, Wewinabi Early Education Center:* It is important to find a culturally appropriate assessment for Tribes.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S’Kallam Tribe:* The intent of the CLASS tool and its non-validity for AIAN programs should be grounds for concern. She stated that she will continue to send that message.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians:* CLASS principles are not tested with AIAN populations. Therefore, CLASS reliability is suspect for the 0–5 population in RXI AIAN. There is inadequate training for CLASS reviewers on cultural competency. The expectation for achieving CLASS reliability is a challenge for Tribal grantees. The funds used annually for recertification take away from their budget for CLASS training. Also, CLASS is problematic as a trigger for DRS, and using the 10 percent trigger requires Tribes to wait to see where they stand for several months. This schedule leaves no time for professional development for teachers. The Tribe invested time and money on reliability training for teachers and addressed coding. In 2014, a Tribal team conducting their own program reliability tests scored the Tribe higher than CLASS reviewers. The Tribe asks OHS to establish a formal process to challenge CLASS scores. Also, OHS should ensure AIAN reviewers are masters in CLASS; low scores should be treated as areas of non-compliance; the 10 percent criterion should be eliminated; and OHS should identify and use professional reviewers who demonstrate knowledge of AIAN populations.
- *Monica Sayad, Round Valley Tribe:* The latest CLASS reviewer who visited her Tribe did understand Tribal ways. Because CLASS highlights cultural differences and is a trigger for DRS, the Tribe requests that CLASS be removed as a DRS trigger.

CLASS and Designation Renewal System—OHS Responses

- Ms. Majestic noted that to conduct CLASS there must be a certified reviewer who knows the dominant language. OHS recognizes that reviewers must understand the language spoken in the classroom.
- Captain Bialas said that if there is no speaker of the major language, CLASS observations will not occur. He added that OHS has a language specialist who has been traveling for 6 months to identify Tribal languages and will advise OHS.

D. Budget, Facilities, and Transportation Issues—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Rodney Morris, Omaha Tribe:* The Tribe wants every Tribe to have access to high-quality education. In February 2015, the President's FY 2016 budget proposal reflected on the negative impacts of sequestration. The proposed budget language suggested that cutting Early Head Start and Head Start funds is inadvisable because children lost access to critical early learning experiences due to sequestration. Mr. Morris observed that health and nutrition services are at the lowest levels since 2001. The President proposes to eliminate additional budget cuts in early care and education programs. The obstacle for Head Start is lack of funding. A window of opportunity for children will close if funding is not provided. There is a need for safe and healthy learning environments for children. Head Start is an investment in the future.
- *Julia Prusa, Omaha Tribe:* The Tribe has problems funding buses. There is no access to transportation, and fuel is costly. They tried for one-time funding for buses but did not succeed.
- *Thomas Shortbull, Oglala Lakota College:* There are unfunded mandates for Head Start, and Tribes are asked to do too much with few resources. Funding is needed to implement the over 1,400 performance standards. Head Start is a major challenge for the Tribe.
- *Wayne Johnson, Muscogee Creek Nation:* Why in a 5-year grant is the Tribe only funded for the enrollment they have presently? There are 39 Tribes in Oklahoma, and they pay the state \$11 million in compact funds. However, the funds may not be going to Indian education. The Tribes need a trust relationship with federal and state officials, but instead believe they are rowing the boat on their own and facing an uphill battle. They are concerned about continued funding, facilities, and the quality of transportation.
- *Suzanne Wise, Wewinabi Early Education Center:* She is speaking on behalf of the Chief Executive. There are 233 students in the Wewinabi program and 85 staff. The Tribe has picked up many costs including a language immersion room, day care, and buses. The Tribe wants to decide where their children are educated and wants them to be successful, kindergarten ready, and healthy. The Tribe does not want to beg the federal government for funds. Instead, with good government-to-government relationships, the parties should be able to discuss issues and find common ground.
- *Dana Wilson, Crow Tribe:* It is helpful to hear that the government sees each Tribe as unique. Head Start was part of the War on Poverty under President Johnson. However, poverty seems worse now than it was then due to use of drugs and the fact

that more children are having children. The social ills are worse now than they were then. Some places are harder hit than others. Funding should evolve with the times to meet needs. For example, the Tribe's building and furnace are old, and the Tribe needs funds to remedy those needs. He thinks enrollment is low because the facility is out-of-date and in disrepair and parents do not want to place their children in that setting.

- *Michael Sandoval, San Felipe Pueblo*: The Tribe concurs with the issues raised about underfunding, transportation, and buses. The Tribal government subsidizes what it can for the sake of the children, but there are not enough funds to correct problems. There is profit sharing with the state, but it is not clear what comes back to Tribe.
- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program*: Funding is a big issue for the program. They want to meet the special needs of children. Cutting out one bus saved \$60,000 per year. This step increased the participation of parents in Head Start. They received a small gas stipend each month and came to the program. Facilities require funds. It is clear that there is never enough money to help all programs. In California alone, there are 109 federally recognized Tribes. Where will funds for full-day, full-year operations come from?
- *Jon George, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde*: The Tribe is lucky to have a summer program and needs a full-year funded program. He suggests offering incentives for programs with outstanding reviews by providing them with permanent funding.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S'Kallam Tribe*: The Tribe knows that expansion funds will be issued at the end of the year in the amount of \$5 million. Many Tribes need quality funds and cannot expand service until they are able to augment what was lost when funds were cut. They have asked for an accounting of what happened to funds that were cut. They know it is important to move forward and to expand. The Tribe is interested in funds for full-day preschool.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians*: It is important to provide new regulations to define a process for redistribution of relinquished funds for the purpose of increasing enrollment, improving facilities, and making other needed changes. The regulations should establish a process for redistribution of AIAN-relinquished funds to AIAN programs only. Facilities need renovation, and Tribes want OHS to help them apply for funding.
- *Steve Guerro, Alamo Navajo School Board*: He noted that Congress has funds and Tribes do not. In his area, Tribes run school health clinics, administer programs, provide community service, and offer early childhood education. There are 72 programs and 350 employees, and the Tribe must know and understand federal, state, and local government laws.
- *Jennifer Oatman, Nez Perce Tribe*: There are too many unfunded mandates for Head Start.

Budget, Facilities, and Transportation Issues—OHS Responses

- Ms. Majestic related that, using data gathered to determine the effects of sequestration, OHS was able to quantify how many children lost service. When they explained to Congress that 57,000 children were affected, lost funds were restored.
- Captain Bialas said that RXI lost only 300 children's slots due to sequestration. Because programs refused to cut slots, the enrollment numbers did not decrease significantly. When one-time funding is provided, there is fast turnaround on decisions based on emergency needs.
- Ms. Majestic noted that OHS attached a cost analysis to the HSPPS that will be issued on Friday, June 19, 2015. Congress will examine that analysis when determining future funding.
- Captain Bialas noted that the U.S. Congress allocates funding for Head Start children. OHS hopes that Congress will examine the facilities assessment and make funds available to correct problems. Presently, OHS issues one-time funding in August or September of each year. This offsets unspent funds.
- Captain Bialas said the \$5 million for expansion this year is derived from programs that relinquished operations. OHS will issue a Funding Operations Announcement (FOA) on birth-to-5 expansion, but these funds are not for quality enhancement.
- Ms. Majestic said that Congress makes decisions about 5-year grants. For programs with long histories without non-compliances, OHS uses a screening tool to determine the scope of the next monitoring review called the HSKI-C. Only one out of five of those receiving this screening were required to have a full monitoring review.
- Captain Bialas said that the facilities study covers only RXI AIAN programs. He has suggested a webinar for RXI regarding Section 1309 of the HSPPS on facilities requirements.
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E. Teacher Qualifications and Compensation—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Thomas Shortbull, Oglala Lakota College:* Teacher salaries are a problem. The minimum wage to live and meet needs is \$11–15 per hour. He has recommended to his board a minimum wage of \$11 per hour, and this has been implemented. However, graduates with early childhood degrees move to the school systems. To retain them, we must offer a competitive salary. People stay in Head Start due to their dedication even without a livable income. If there is more federal funding for Head Start, it should be diverted to salaries.
- *Robin Eagle, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:* Teacher salaries are too low. It is hard to keep Native teachers in Head Start.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S'Kallam Tribe:* She asked OHS to continue offering waivers for teacher certification. She also noted that a local college is offering a credential that is equal to the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ and provides credit toward an early childhood degree. The credential is acknowledged by the state, and there is fast turnaround to attain it.
- *Steve Guerro, Alamo Navajo School Board:* Some of their teachers do not yet have degrees.

- *Wayne Johnson, Muscogee Creek Nation:* In Oklahoma, they can teach in schools to earn credit and certify their own teachers. However, teachers leave Head Start when they earn degrees because they do not receive adequate salaries.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians:* She asked OHS to continue teacher certification waivers. To support teacher and aide qualifications, the Tribe has obtained a reduced tuition rate at a local college, approves 6 hours of educational absence each week, and offers scholarships. However, it is difficult to retain the teachers with degrees. To pay student loans, teachers must seek higher paying jobs. Although there is some funding for tuition fees, there is not enough to support all higher education needs. All of this burdens the budget. The Tribe also has a limited pool of qualified people who apply for teaching positions.

F. **Health, Disabilities, and Mental Health—RXI AIAN Participant Comments**

- *Jon George, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:* It is important to address disabilities. Are Head Start programs partnering with behavior health services? Note the broad fetal alcohol effects in Tribes. Their children need accommodations in the first grade for this problem.
- *Deborah Lee, Nisqually Tribe:* She was happy to hear the remarks about disability services. Mental health services in Head Start show a gap, too. Tribal families do not take advantage of mental health services because the services are not culturally appropriate. In some cases, it appears that there is more success using spiritual people than Eurocentric mental health staff. Would OHS allow Tribal programs to access medicine people and spiritual healers? It may be better for children if Tribes can provide that type of mental health service and remain in compliance.
- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* Mental health services are almost nonexistent in her area. She had not heard about healers as an option. Not everyone is traditional, so a blend of services is a good option. There is a serious drug and alcohol problem in her area. This type of serious problem affects the entire life of the child.
- *Robin Eagle, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:* She agreed that mental health issues should be addressed.

Health, Disabilities, and Mental Health—OHS Comments

- Ms. Majestic said that there are many efforts to meet with states about children with disabilities. Although OHS lost core staff in this area, there is now a new effort to partner with special education and to find gaps in disabilities services. It is well known that intervention in the early years is key. Parents of children with these issues need advocacy skills.
- Captain Bialas said he is aware of programs that integrate both services: traditional and other. He has not seen the use of solely traditional services.
- Ms. Majestic encouraged meeting attendees to make comments about mental health services when commenting on the proposed regulations posted at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standrds/hsp/np/np.html>.

G. Policy Council Term Limits—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Brian Jason, ITC Michigan:* Term limits for parents on Policy Councils are limited to 3 years. This does not make sense. The terms should be 5 years or longer so parents can make a serious commitment.
- *Genevive Jaramillo, Santo Domingo Tribe:* She was engaged in the Policy Council and not allowed to stay active after her term expired. She supports reexamining term limits.
- *Robin Eagle, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:* She spoke in favor of extending Policy Council terms and mentioned grandparents raising grandchildren who want to serve.
- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* She agrees that term limits for Policy Councils should be lengthened.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians:* Policy Council terms should be extended. If programs are serving children birth to five years of age, the terms should reflect this span. The HSPPS should allow Council members to serve 1-year terms for at least five years.

H. Parent Participation—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Jon George, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:* It is important for parents to participate. Can there be any mandates for parent participation?
- *Dana Wilson, Crow Tribe:* Parent involvement is critical.
- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* Can parent participation in Head Start be made a requirement? Those who most need to engage may be the most dysfunctional parents.

Parent Participation—OHS Comments

- Ms. Majestic said there are opportunities for parents to participate. Family service workers and teachers get to know the parents, and parents partner with teachers. The fact that Head Start offers these relationship-based opportunities and supports in local programs makes it unique.

I. Performance Standards—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Denise Padgette, Howonquet Early Learning Program:* She noted that 60 days to comment on the regulations is a short time period. She also suggested that there be a version of the standards indicating where changes have been made.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe:* There were many experts convened to look at the HSPPS. How many AIAN experts were at the table?
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians:* Are cuts in HSPPS going to be identified by OHS?

Performance Standards—OHS Comments

- Captain Bialas suggested that all participants read the regulations and comment concisely and clearly.
- Ms. Majestic offered to find out about AIAN participation.

- Ms. Majestic said the standards have been completely rewritten and streamlined. Information will soon be available, and OHS encourages programs to examine the proposal and comment.

J. Miscellaneous—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Thomas Shortbull, Oglala Lakota College: Competition for Enrollment:* They have 12 classrooms for early childhood and are competing with other early childhood settings. This affects enrollment.
- *Wayne Johnson, Muscogee Creek Nation: Competition for Enrollment:* It does not make sense to have a partnership to count children who should have been counted and included in Early Head Start previously. Tribes should not be competing with other early childhood settings.
- *Bridgett Sorenson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Continuous Eligibility:* The Tribe would like to see continuous eligibility from Early Head Start to Head Start. Current eligibility requirements undermine this continuity. When over-income families do not qualify for continuous eligibility, and if they cannot get child care, they may lose their employment. In order for programs to sustain progress, there must be continuity of services.
- *Brian Jason, ITC Michigan: Training Materials:* Only one training package was sent to the intertribal association, and they need additional materials so all of their programs can participate in training.
- *Jaclyn Haight, Port Gamble S’Kallam Tribe: Training and Technical Assistance and Grant Reviewers:* She is concerned about provision of T/TA if the contract is not awarded by the end of the month. Does OHS have a plan in place to partner on T/TA? The Tribe was pleased to receive comments on their grant application without requesting them. However, they were saddened to see that some reviewers did not understand Tribal government and criticized the Tribe for not having a specific structure in place. OHS should ensure that they have grant reviewers who understand the Tribes by training the reviewers. She is aware that some of her peers completed training, but they were not called to review RXI grants.
- *Anne Suggitt, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Conversion:* Ms. Suggitt noted that programs cannot merge two Head Start slots to equal an Early Head Start slot due to teacher ratio requirements.
- *Brian Jason, ITC Michigan: Information on Monitoring Reviews:* After monitoring, a program was told that monitoring reviewers would not provide information for discussion with the Program Director about findings. Obtaining this information is important to the program for professional development and goal setting. They advised their Program Specialist and emailed the Federal Team Leader about this problem.

Miscellaneous—OHS Responses

- *Competition for Enrollment:* Captain Bialas commented that it is a challenge to meet current enrollment requirements because of competition with pre-kindergarten. He had asked a program about their community assessment, and they had said that there was a need for service from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. When the program changed their

schedule and offered longer days, all families who had left came back to Head Start. This demonstrated how best to serve children. Conversation is important.

- *Competition for Enrollment:* Ms. Majestic noted that brain research showed the need to spread resources to meet the needs of other young children. It is important to maximize what is available and partner to get the right services for children.
- *Training Materials:* Captain Bialas asked that ITC Michigan let OHS know what training materials are needed. Staff will forward the materials.
- *T/TA Contract:* Captain Bialas said that the current contract ends on June 30, 2015. Applicants have been reviewed, and the decision about a new contract is pending with a government agency. If there is no choice by July 1, 2015, the Tribes will be notified of next steps.
- *Federal Monitoring Reviews:* Captain Bialas explained that the reviewers do not declare that a program is in or out of compliance after a review because there is additional review and quality assurance of the findings. In some cases, evidence presented is insufficient for a finding. He understands the program's frustration.

Conclusion

In closing, Captain Bialas acknowledged the time and effort of Tribal leaders and other Tribal representatives in attending and participating in this meeting. He also thanked Ms. Majestic for attending and for her contributions. Mr. Richardson offered a closing prayer.

Summary of Recommendations and Action Steps

The following is a summary of recommendations and requests from AIAN participants followed by OHS responses and action steps resulting from the Tribal Consultation discussion.

RXI AIAN Participant Recommendations

Tribal Consultations

- *The Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of Michigan, Inc.* suggested that the consultation be coordinated with the National Congress of American Indians.
- *Santo Domingo Tribe* suggested choosing locations for Tribal Consultations where there are more Tribal leaders and planning meetings at major hubs. They advised against holding the consultations in remote locations.
- *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians* requested that policymaking federal employees attend the consultations. The Tribe also wishes to see an annual report on actions taken in response to requests. There should be an agenda item that opens a discussion and evaluation of the Tribal Consultation process and a commitment to the government-to-government relationship.

Language Preservation and Immersion

- All speakers supported language immersion and using Tribal teachers who may not have degrees to instruct their children.

CLASS and DRS

- *Santo Domingo Tribe* expressed concerns about children speaking Native languages during CLASS assessments and asked that OHS help them navigate CLASS systems of accountability.
- *Wewinabi Early Education Center* asked for a culturally appropriate assessment for Tribes.
- *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians* asked OHS to establish a formal process for challenging CLASS scores. Also, they asked that OHS ensure AIAN reviewers are masters in CLASS and that OHS treat low CLASS scores as areas of non-compliance not deficiencies, eliminate the 10 percent criterion, and identify and use professional reviewers who demonstrate knowledge of RXI AIAN populations.
- *Round Valley Tribe* requested that CLASS be removed as a DRS trigger.

Budget, Facilities, and Transportation Issues

- *Howonquet Early Learning Program* asked OHS to explain where funds will come from for full-day, full-year operations.
- *The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde* suggested offering incentives for programs with outstanding reviews by providing them with permanent funding.
- Most Tribes expressed an interest in funding for facilities and transportation, and in replacing funds lost through funding cuts.

Teacher Qualifications and Compensation

- The Tribes asked for funds to raise teacher salaries in order to retain qualified teachers and requested that OHS continue to grant waivers for teacher certifications.

Health, Disabilities, and Mental Health

- *The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde* want to address disabilities and the need for children to have accommodations for fetal alcohol syndrome. They asked about Head Start partnerships with behavioral health services.
- *Nisqually Tribe* asked if OHS would allow Tribal programs to access medicine people and spiritual healers.

Policy Council Term Limits

- *ITC Michigan* said Policy Council terms should be 5 years or longer so parents can make a serious commitment to the Council.
- *Santo Domingo Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and Howonquet Early Learning Program* support reexamining term limits for Policy Councils.
- *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians* wants to extend term limits for Policy Councils. The speaker noted that if programs are for children birth through five years of age, the HSPPS should allow five 1-year terms.

Parent Participation

- *The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Crow Tribe, and Howonquet Early Learning Program* suggested greater parent involvement and asked if OHS could mandate parent participation in Head Start.

Performance Standards

- *Howonquet Early Learning Program* suggested that there be a version of the standards indicating where changes have been made and a comment period longer than 60 days.
- *Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe* asked how many AIAN experts contributed to the standards revisions.
- *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians* asked if changes in performance standards would be identified by OHS.

Miscellaneous

- *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Continuous Eligibility:* The Tribe would like to see continuous eligibility from Early Head Start to Head Start.
- *ITC Michigan: Training Materials:* Only one training package was sent to the intertribal association after training. They requested that additional materials be sent so that staff in all of their programs can be trained.
- *ITC Michigan: Information on Monitoring Reviews:* The Council asks that monitoring reviewers provide information about the review to the program director when the review concludes.
- *Port Gamble S'Kallam Tribe: T/TA Contract and Grant Reviewer Training:* The Tribe asked OHS plans for T/TA if a contract is not awarded when the current contract expires. They also suggested that OHS train grant reviewers to better understand Tribes.

OHS Responses and Action Steps

Tribal Consultations

- OHS is interested in participants' thoughts about where to hold Tribal Consultations and agrees that there is a need to adjust locations to meet Tribal needs. OHS is interested in holding Tribal Consultations where the Tribes suggest they should be held.
- OHS has decided to expedite Tribal Consultation reports. The reports will go through internal review rapidly and will be disseminated after the OHS Director approves them. If approved at OHS, a draft report will be sent to Tribes for comment.

Language Preservation and the IM

- OHS recently issued an IM, [*Native Language Preservation, Revitalization, Restoration, and Maintenance in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs \(ACF-IM-HS-15-02\)*](#), to encourage continuation of culture in classrooms with language education provided by elders. The IM demonstrates continued support from OHS leadership for language preservation and also provides resources.

CLASS and DRS

- OHS requires that there be a certified reviewer who knows the dominant language during CLASS observations. CLASS observations will not occur if there is no speaker of the major language.
- OHS has hired a language specialist who has been traveling for 6 months to identify Tribal languages, and she will advise OHS.

Budget, Facilities, and Transportation Issues

- OHS attached a cost analysis to the HSPPS scheduled to be issued on Friday, June 19, 2015. Congress will examine that analysis when determining funding.
- OHS hopes that Congress will examine the RXI AIAN facilities assessment and make funds available to correct problems. Presently, OHS issues one-time funding in August or September of each year based on an assessment of applications. These funds offset unspent funds in RXI.
- The \$5 million for expansion in 2015 is derived from funding from programs that relinquished operations. OHS will issue a FOA on birth-to-5 expansion. These funds are not for quality enhancement.
- Ms. Majestic said that Congress makes decisions about criteria for 5-year grant awards. For programs that demonstrate a long history of good performance, OHS uses a screener to determine the scope of the next monitoring review. Only one out of five programs using this type of screener was required to have a full monitoring review.
- The facilities study includes only RXI AIAN programs.
- OHS is considering a webinar for RXI programs to clarify Section 1309 of the HSPPS on facilities requirements.

Health, Disabilities and Mental Health

- There are many efforts to meet with states to discuss children with disabilities. Although OHS lost core staff working in this area, there is now a new effort to partner with special education and to find gaps in disabilities services.
- OHS is aware of programs that integrate both traditional Tribal mental health services and those from other providers. Tribes should provide comments on this topic when examining the proposed rule.

Parent Participation

- OHS offers opportunities for parents to participate. Family service workers and teachers get to know parents, and parents partner with teachers help their children.

The fact that Head Start offers these opportunities and supports in local programs makes it unique.

Performance Standards

- OHS will communicate about AIAN participation in developing revised standards.
- The standards have been completely rewritten and streamlined. OHS will be offering information about the content and encourages programs to comment.

Miscellaneous

- *Training Materials:* OHS will send training materials to ITC Michigan as soon as the Council identifies which materials are needed.
- *T/TA Contract:* The current contract ends on June 30, 2015. Applicants have been reviewed, and the decision about a new contract is pending with a government agency. If there is no choice by July 1, 2015, the Tribes will be notified about next steps.
- *Federal Monitoring Reviews:* OHS explained that federal monitoring reviewers cannot discuss their findings after reviews. The reviewers do not declare that a program is in or out of compliance after a review because there is additional review and quality assurance of their findings.

Tribal Consultation Participants

Federal Staff and National Contractors

Last Name	First Name	Position	Organization
Bialas	Robert	Regional Program Manager, Region XI (RXI)	Office of Head Start (OHS)
Daniel Vargas	Yasmine	Director, RXI American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start Training and Technical Assistance	FHI 360
Ferrick	Kaitlin	Head Start State Collaboration Office Director	Department of Education, State of Michigan
Gardner	Valerie	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Henderson	Phyllis	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Little	Tracie	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Majestic	Fran	Director, Program Operations Division	OHS
Natrall	Marie	Sr. Writer/Training Specialist	National Resource Center, ZERO TO THREE
Richardson	Mike	Director, AIAN National Head Start Collaboration Office	FHI 360
Stringer	Terri	Training Manager	Three Feathers Associates
Walker	Cynthia	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Waukechan	Laura	Board Member	National Indian Head Start Directors Association
Wrighten	Jarma	Regional Field Specialist	National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning
Wyatt	Donald	Senior Program Specialist, RXI	OHS

RXI AIAN Tribal Leaders and Representatives

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Aguilar	Kenneth	Lieutenant Governor	Santo Domingo Tribe
Andrews	Carmen	Program Director	Spokane Tribe
Bear Ribs	Carmelita	Head Start Council	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Belleau	Ann	Head Start Director	Inter-Tribal Council (ITC) of Michigan, Inc.
Bishop	Vikki	ECE Program Manager	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Calabaza	George	Tribal Leader	Santo Domingo Tribe

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Charlie	Melissa	Deputy Director	Fairbanks Native Association Head Start 0-5
Christnot	Joan	Head Start Director	Oneida Tribe
Coriz	Stanley	Tribal Official	Santo Domingo Tribe
Dayson	Brian	Policy Council Chairman	ITC Michigan
Derry	Karen	Economic Developer/Operations Manager	Karuk Community Development Corporation
Eagle	Robin	Tribal Council Member	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
Eningowuk	Patricia	ELC Director	The Suquamish Tribe
George	Jon	Tribal Council Member	The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Guerro	Steve	Board President	Alamo Navajo School Board
Haight	Jaclyn	ECE Director	Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
Harvey	Denise	Tribal Council Member	The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Hasbrouck	Colleen	Early Childhood Development Director	Fairbanks Native Association Head Start 0-5
Hisatake	Kirsten	Program Director	Warm Springs Tribe
Jacobus	Christina	Head Start Manager	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
Jaramillo	Genevive		Santo Domingo Tribe
Jason	Brian	Policy Council Chairman	IT C of Michigan
Johnson	Wayne	Secretary of Education and Training	Muscogee Creek Nation
Kalama	Tatem		Warm Springs Tribe
Lee	Deborah	Director	Nisqually Indian Tribe

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Lopez-Whiteskunk	Vivian		Pascua Yaqui Tribe Head Start
Maki	Marci	Program Director	Chehalis Tribe
McKechnie	Laura	Education/Disabilities Supervisor	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Morris	Rodney	Tribal Leader	Omaha Tribe
Nakai	Carlos		Havasupai Tribe
Naone	Dr. Kanoe	Chief Executive Officer	Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture (INPEACE)
Nickelboy	Carol		Ojibwe Tribe
Oatman	Jennifer	Director, Early Childhood Development	Nez Perce Tribe
Padgette	Denise	Vice-Chair	Howonquet Early Learning Program
Paykins	Robert		Chickasaw Nation
Prusa	Julia	Director, Omaha Tribe Studies	Omaha Tribe
Razote	Norma	Deputy General Manager	Tulalip Tribes
Rhinehart	Albert	Program Director	Central Council of the Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes
Rhinehart	Vincent		Central Council of the Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes
Rhinehart	Nila		Central Council of the Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes
Ridenour	Jill	Deputy Director	Tanana Chiefs Conference
Sandoval	Arlene	Program Director	San Felipe Pueblo
Sandoval	Michael	Tribal Council Member	San Felipe Pueblo
Sayad	Monica	Head Start Director	Round Valley Tribe

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Shortbull	Thomas	President	Oglala Lakota College Head Start/Early Head Start
Shuey	Debra	Education Systems Planner	Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Smith	Gloria	Head Start Director	Intertribal Council of Nevada
Sorenson	Bridgett	Tribal Council Member	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Suggitt	Anne	Early Childhood Programs Manager	Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Tenorio	Kerwin	Tribal Leader	Santo Domingo Tribe
Tom	Denise		Nez Perce Tribe
Webster	Jennifer	Council Member	Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
White Temple	Patricia	Child Development Director	Nez Perce Tribe
Willey	Mary	Site Coordinator	Fairbanks Native Association Head Start 0-5
Wilson	Dana	Vice Chairman	Crow Tribe Head Start
Wise	Suzanne	Commissioner of Education	Wewinabi Early Education Center