

**OFFICE OF HEAD START
TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

**March 7, 2016
Albuquerque, New Mexico**

Report

Presented by
Dr. Blanca Enriquez, Director
Office of Head Start

Introduction

As required by 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 2016 the Office of Head Start (OHS) planned three Tribal Consultation sessions for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and families. The consultations take into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting the delivery of Head Start services in Tribal 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 such input into its decision-making process related to all matters that significantly affect Tribes and Region XI (RXI) AIAN children and families.

The 2016 schedule follows:

March 7, 2016	Albuquerque, New Mexico
June 8, 2016	Arlington, Virginia
August 8, 2016	Airway Heights, Washington

By Notice in the *Federal Register* dated February 9, 2016, OHS notified RXI AIAN leaders of a Tribal Consultation for Tribes in RXI on March 7, 2016, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The consultation was planned to be held in conjunction with the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs' 35th Native American Child and Family Conference. The following report reflects introductory remarks by OHS and recommendations raised by RXI AIAN leaders and representatives. (There will be separate reports for each Tribal Consultation listed above.)

Participants

Welcome: Francis Tafoya, Vice-Chairperson, Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs

OHS presenters: Dr. Blanca Enriquez, Director, Office of Head Start, and Angie Godfrey, Regional Program Manager, RXI

Additional OHS and national contractor staff participated in person or via conference call. (See Appendix for a list.)

Tribal leaders and Tribal representatives participated in person or via conference call: (See Appendix for a list.)

Introductory Remarks

Mr. Francis Tafoya, the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs' Vice-Chairperson, from the Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico, opened the meeting and noted that the consultation was being held in conjunction with the 35th Native American Child and Family Conference of the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs. He welcomed Tribal leaders and noted that they will offer testimony.

Governor Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo, led the opening prayer. Following the prayer, Mr. Tafoya stressed the importance of Head Start students' becoming Tribal leaders. He mentioned that Governor Chavarria has been in office six times. Children should follow this model and become future leaders. Mr. Tafoya welcomed Ms. Angie Godfrey, RXI AIAN Regional Program Manager, and explained her background and involvement with Tribes. Ms. Godfrey introduced Dr. Blanca Enriquez, OHS Director.

Dr. Enriquez welcomed all participants, introduced herself, and expressed her appreciation for the invitation. She added that the consultation demonstrates respect for the importance of the nation-to-nation relationship of Tribal governments to the U.S. government. She is serving as a partner to the Tribes to assist young children and families. She added that Tribal Head Start programs are unique and culturally rich. She has learned that those located in rural areas face extreme challenges. Tribes in urban areas also are challenged. For example, many face undesired influences. She anticipated considering with the Tribes at the consultation how to create a better future for children. She stressed the importance of asking how best to create a positive and productive world for children, families, and staff. Dr. Enriquez noted that she brings 30 years of experience and collaboration to her role as Head Start Director. Her Head Start program had 30 centers and 800 staff. Fifty-five percent of the staff members were former Head Start parents. Now she is responsible for 1,600 grantees and 1 million children. She is committed to strengthening the program and helping Head Start reach the next level of high performance. Finally, she stressed the need to continue to build resources and strong partnerships. Dr. Enriquez introduced Ms. Godfrey to present information about RXI AIAN services in 2015 and 2016.

Ms. Godfrey said she was honored to attend the consultation. She mentioned that she had worked for 8 years on AIAN Early Head Start and that her experience with AIAN Early Head Start informed her other Early Head Start and Head Start work. She stressed that RXI AIAN includes a wonderful group of people and grantees.

Ms. Godfrey noted that she had reviewed the Tribal Consultation notes from 2015 and prepared a report for the Secretary's office. The reports include detailed responses and contributions. She noted that at this consultation, she will offer a short overview on RXI developments and training and technical assistance (T/TA) efforts. The OHS federal staff intends to take notes and listen to concerns. There will be testimony by phone as well. Ms. Godfrey also acknowledged OHS staff who were present, as well as consultant staff from Danya, Inc., and ICF International who conduct T/TA. (Refer to the Appendix.)

Tribal leaders and representatives introduced themselves.

Ms. Godfrey provided an overview of RXI AIAN activities and services. She said that the PowerPoint presentation would be shared electronically.

- *RXI AIAN Territory:* A map displayed which states have AIAN grantees. There are 150 AIAN grantees.
- *RXI AIAN Background:* There are Head Start only, Early Head Start only, and combination Head Start and Early Head Start grantees participating in 26 states. Total enrollment is 22,601. Funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 totals \$219,107,319.
- *Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Grants:* The partnerships and expansion grants affect 14 grantees; funded enrollment is 772.
- *RXI AIAN Team:* The team includes program specialists, grants specialists, a logistics support analyst, and a new program management analyst. Other partners are ICF International, which manages the RXI technical assistance contract, and Danya, which manages the monitoring contract. The National Centers are funded jointly by OHS and the Office of Child Care. They have worked hard to support the partnership of child care and the Tribal child care grantees.
- *New Funding Opportunities:* There will be a second round of EHS-CCP grants supported by \$ 3.5 million. She noted that Tribes have not applied for the EHS-CCP grants in the past. In this round, there is no priority for partnership; instead, there will be the same amount of points granted for partnership and expansion. The FY 2016 budget includes \$294 million to increase hours for enrolled children per day and during the school year. These grants will be announced in the spring. An information memorandum will be issued about the Cost-of-Living Adjustment when the amount is determined.
- *RXI Monitoring Data, Top Cited Areas of Noncompliance, Deficiencies, and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) program:* Reviews have been completed for 2015; completed reevaluations show improvement. There are two main areas of non-compliance: physical safety and criminal records checks. The top four monitoring deficiencies include code of conduct, criminal record checks, physical arrangements, and staff qualifications. The OHS goal is to ensure grantees work closely with the TA staff on these areas. RXI averages for CLASS scores are higher than national averages in emotional support and classroom organization. Instructional support analysis shows that both AIAN and national averages are low. Grantees in the bottom 10 percent will be placed into the Designation Renewal System (DRS). OHS is looking across all Regions at that issue. There has been discussion about CLASS appropriateness for Tribal programs. OHS is working on this issue.
- *Research Updates:* *A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start* has been issued, and the Executive Summary is available at this meeting. (The report is available online at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/aian/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf>.) The report represents several years of work. Many communities contributed. The goal is to use the report recommendations and work with Tribes. There also is a research project on the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) involving researchers from the Tribal Early Childhood Research Center, independent researchers, and Head Start directors. Their purpose is to collect data and observe classrooms.

- *Challenges Facing Grantees:* OHS hopes to learn more about challenges facing Tribal grantees and how OHS can support Tribal programs. There is ongoing work on CLASS, a fiscal initiative, a focus on fiscal operations, and how best to support staff qualifications. Enrollment and under-enrollment are systemic problems.
- *DRS Summary:* DRS is a 12-month process; cohort 4 will be completed in spring of 2016.
- *Facilities Assessments:* Tribal Consultation reports from 2015 stressed the need for facilities support. An assessment was conducted. At the time of the assessment, 151 grantees were providing services, and 147 were eligible for assessment (center-based). Among those grantees, there were 506 facilities, and 439 were assessed. Facility age and facilities affected by severe weather presented the worst problems. Facilities expert Bruce Chandler worked on assessments and priorities. A report to Congress has cleared OHS and is in clearance at the Administration for Children and Families. As a result of the assessment, OHS worked with ICF International to hire staff including Mr. Chandler and a fiscal facilities expert. They will support the 1309 process on Head Start facilities purchase, major renovation, and construction.

OHS knows children are a sacred trust. What OHS does is based on the vision Tribes have for their children and how OHS can best support that vision. Ms. Godfrey indicated the intent of federal officials to listen and learn at the consultation. Tribal leaders and representatives offered testimony about their concerns. This report is based on the issues raised by leaders at the consultation.

Comments of RXI AIAN Participants

A. Preservation of Language and Culture—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo:* Tribes want to live off the land and preserve who they are as native peoples. Without their language, children cannot say prayers or preserve their identity. Language is important to their character as a people. Though the Tribes are wealthy in traditions, values, and culture, they do not have financial resources.
- *Gil Vigil, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos:* Head Start must realize that the government has a trust responsibility because lands were taken from native people. The federal government agreed to provide resources and health services and to meet the needs of Tribes. The Tribe has forgotten their traditional ways and has a high risk of language loss. Unlike Japanese people, they cannot go to another country or location to reclaim their language. If it is lost, the language cannot be recovered. They want to retain their language. Children have lost their identity due to loss of language and culture, and it is clear that language preservation is important. For a language to survive, children need to start hearing the language even before birth. Culturally relevant programs are important for language and culture preservation. The Head Start set-aside should be used for language support.
- *Sharon Henderson Singer, Navajo Nation:* OHS should support culture and language so the Tribe can revitalize, preserve, and sustain their traditions.
- *Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* The Tribe has an issue with language. Their native tongue is spoken in homes, and many people are bilingual. It takes longer to learn English because the children are hearing a combination of English and the native

language at home. Ms. Tilousi would like to see both languages used in Head Start classrooms. She is interested in obtaining grants and wants to enhance children's language capacity

- *Sherry Johnson, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate*: Culture, tradition, and native language are issues and areas where they need support. The Tribe is trying to develop a model for teaching language. Mike Richardson, Director, AIAN National Head Start Collaboration Office, is helping them by suggesting resources to preserve native language; they need more technical assistance options and language training. They also need funding to fully develop native language programs with onsite training by expert language trainers. Revisions to the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* should be made to address immersion programs. She is looking forward to reading the tribal language revitalization report.
- *Kerry Venegas, Hoopa Valley Tribe*: The Tribe appreciates the language and cultural alignment efforts. This is the second year of the Hoopa language grant, which is connected to standards for progress and school readiness. The changes are good for students.
- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe*: Tribes have culture and language departments but not enough time in each classroom to teach well. A lot of children are learning now, and this is the benefit of having expanded hours.
- *Carol Coho, Ramah Navajo*: The tribe benefitted from an elder Navajo teacher who taught children their language. They want funding to pay for other elders to visit their classrooms and to purchase books in the Navajo language.

B. CLASS and DRS—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo*: There are school readiness and CLASS issues for Tribes. Teaching native languages seems to affect CLASS scores. For example, native children are taught not to talk back to adults. This affects CLASS assessments. In addition, reviewers not from native communities have no knowledge of Tribal culture. The reviewers seem to believe that the children should behave like students who have been raised in urban areas.
- *Gil Vigil, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos*: We must develop our own programs with assessments that are culturally relevant and not based on what is taught in the east. Mr. Vigil provided an example of a child who was asked to choose a photo of a moccasin. She picked a photo of a boot like the type of shoe her Tribe wears, instead of a photo of what westerners consider a moccasin. The Tribe wants to test children based on what they learn in their Tribe.
- *Sharon Henderson Singer, Navajo Nation*: CLASS is a good tool for teachers, but there should be an alternative assessment tool for Tribes. The Tribe knows it is successful with children. The data show strong emotional support and, like the rest of society, they are working on instruction.
- *Mario Garcia, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: Their main concern is the need for alternative assessments to use in classrooms offering language immersion. Tradition and culture are the backbone of their education; children are taught through storytelling.
- *Arzie Hogg, Gila River Indian Community*: School readiness is a lofty goal that the Tribe wants to attain. They are interested in identifying systems and methods to measure

quality, and they believe CLASS is a good guide, but they have concerns about CLASS and how observations are conducted. Their programs did well, and they were in compliance based on a review. However, they were placed in DRS due to the 10 percent threshold, and it took 1 year to find out about DRS after their observation. The Tribe wants to avoid this type of punitive measure. They recommend that if a program meets *Head Start Program Performance Standards*, the Tribe should not be placed in DRS. They recommend eliminating the 10 percent threshold. Furthermore, they suggest that all CLASS observers be trained in the cultural specifics of Tribes. They further suggest that the lower 10 percent should be considered noncompliant, not deficient, and these findings of noncompliance should be followed by a reevaluation.

- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe*: CLASS was a useful tool for teachers. Results should be delivered sooner; it should not take 1 year. The teachers need the data.
- *Genevieve Jaramillo-Padilla, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: The Tribe serves 214 families. She reported that she has witnessed success at a transition to kindergarten celebration involving 800 families as well as successful students who began in Head Start who succeeded at the Southwest Polytechnic Institute. Their determination and grit helped them succeed. One Head Start teacher reported that a CLASS monitor asked the teacher to speak more English. The Tribe is trying to reintroduce their lost language, and so they told Danya that the teacher's speaking more English would not be appropriate. When there was a new CLASS assessment scheduled, Danya did make efforts to prepare for the assessment. When they learned there was full immersion in the program, they postponed the assessment because they did not have an interpreter. The Tribe wants to be assessed and stressed that elders can assist with assessments.
- *Mario Garcia, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: CLASS is a good tool, but the Tribe needs funds to meet Head Start requirements. They need more training for staff to help students meet goals.

C. Facilities—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo*: Tribal facilities for education are degraded. They are interested in data about the facilities survey to support requests to the U.S. Congress for appropriations.
- *Gil Vigil, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos*: Their facilities have aged. They have two programs to administer. They want to place a new school next to the elder center, but the problem is funding to build the school. Flexible funding should be allowed to support construction. They need facilities so the children can be taught in good environments.
- *Peter Garcia, Jr., Ohkay Owingeh Tribe*: Their education facility is close to 50 years old. Funding is never available for improvement. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools do not have funding either. For example, an old BIA school burned years ago and was never rebuilt. The Tribe used its own Tribal funds to rebuild that school because it was so badly needed. Receiving the report about Head Start facilities is important because Congress will soon be addressing future budget years.
- *Bernadette Goodluck Todacheene, Navajo Nation*: She thanked other leaders for voicing their opinions, which overlap with her Tribe's concerns. She is proud of her grandson who was a Head Start student and is now succeeding in kindergarten. The Tribe needs new or upgraded facilities. Their buildings are 30–50 years old. They are seeking help

based on the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996. They learned that some of that money goes back to the federal government instead of being spent.

- *Arzie Hogg, Gila River Indian Community:* This is his first testimony. He comes from one of over 20 Tribes in Oklahoma. Most of the Tribe's 20,000 members live on the reservation, and the Tribe is striving to create members who are competent on and off the reservation. He mentioned social problems, isolation, and extreme poverty. They are trying to offer members a holistic foundation that includes both traditional and nontraditional values. Four of their seven districts offer early childhood education. Two of their four centers were rebuilt with community funds, and two centers need to be rebuilt due to health and safety concerns. The buildings are over 15 years old. The Tribe wants OHS to assist with moving educational services to more up-to-date facilities. In 2014, they heard about the facilities study and today learned there are results. They request that there be funding opportunities to improve AIAN educational buildings for Head Start. They want to avoid crises and help other grantees obtain funding that supports construction.
- *Edmond Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* In order to testify, he traveled over 500 miles to represent this remote Tribe located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Their educational facility is getting old, and they need a building. There is not much room to expand, and the population is getting larger.
- *Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* It is expensive to live in this Tribe. They must travel half a day to shop and get materials. Building a facility costs triple what it would elsewhere. They recognize that other Tribes face the same challenges and want to work on resolving this. Each community is unique.
- *David Martinez, Jr., Ramah Navajo:* The program operates in four mobile trailers at a main campus with 45 students. Families live in homesteads on dirt roads. The elevation is high, and there are cold nights and mornings. Students must go outside to use a bathroom. Some units leak because the area has monsoons and deep snow. The Tribe needs new buildings and a fire alarm system. They have smoke detectors, but their sprinklers are outdated and hard to replace.
- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe:* There is no funding for facility improvement or rebuilding, and the Tribe is outgrowing buildings. The buildings are 50 years old, so their infrastructure is poor.
- *Jerome Kasey, White Mountain Apache Tribe:* Facilities are needed by the reservation. To meet the needs of children, the federal government should help Tribes maintain and improve facilities. Without facilities, they can do nothing.
- *Mario Garcia, Santo Domingo Pueblo:* The Tribe needs playground equipment as part of their facilities and believes funding should be allocated for that need.

D. Income and Poverty Guidelines—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Arzie Hogg, Gila River Indian Community:* OHS should meet the needs of working families and recognize that there are no options for early education in Tribal communities. This means that children in families who are over-income will not be ready for kindergarten. It is important to collaborate with Tribal communities on this issue. Federal poverty guidelines are not applicable to their communities. There is a higher cost

of living in rural areas and, therefore, higher pay for entry-level positions. He recommended evaluating federal poverty guidelines for rural areas and empowering Tribes to make early childhood education available to all preschool children.

- *Edmond Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* Some children are declared ineligible because their families earn high wages in the summer months in seasonal jobs. Incomes are high because the cost of goods is high.
- *Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* This year, five families could not qualify to attend Head Start because they were over-income. The Tribe wants to waive the financial requirement. Their site is remote, and the children should be able to attend Head Start. The Tribe wants to work with OHS to address this so they do not have to turn away students who are over-income.

E. Budget, Nonfederal Share, and Transportation Issues—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo:* Challenges include expensive transportation. Funds are needed to support transportation costs. If children cannot get to centers, the parents may un-enroll them. The Tribe believes that OHS should increase the Early Head Start set-aside and hopes more funding will become available in the future.
- *Gil Vigil, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos:* Funding has always been an issue for the Tribe, and it is hard to prioritize goals because everything seems equally important. The nonfederal share requirements should be revised and relaxed, not just waived.
- *Peter Garcia, Jr., Ohkay Owingeh Tribe:* Every year there are new regulations that are not supported with funding. The Tribes must find ways to comply. If there are mandates, there should be funds to support them. The Tribe does not have the funds to pay for mandates. For example, now driver training behind a wheel is required. The Tribe has concerns about transportation. Their school bus is old; they have been promised a new bus for 5 years. This is important. Parents who must drive their children to Head Start are paying for expensive gas and also need to get to their jobs. Since Congress is setting the budget for 2018–2019, appropriating additional funds for Tribes must happen soon.
- *Sharon Henderson Singer, Navajo Nation:* The Tribe needs funding. They have the same funding they have had for the last two decades. They are in a remote area and struggle. Transportation is an issue. They have close to 100 buses that go many miles, and some are 25 years old. Children are on the buses 45 minutes to 1 hour each way. The Tribe is asking OHS to set aside funds to ensure the health and safety of children.
- *Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* The Tribe must budget a large cost for transportation due to its remoteness.
- *David Martinez, Jr., Ramah Navajo:* They have unpaved roads that take a toll on buses. Maintenance costs are high as a result.
- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe:* Their number one problem is funding. There is not enough money to support services.
- *Jerome Kasey, White Mountain Apache Tribe:* There is not enough funding to comply with the federal regulations. There is a great need for buses.
- *Genevieve Jaramillo-Padilla, Santo Domingo Pueblo:* The Tribe is under pressure and always concerned about funding. They need more financial support. She asked why

services of mental health providers are not considered part of the 10 percent nonfederal share.

- *Trina Martine, Ramah Navajo*: She is a parent who has high priorities for her children. She spoke in support for additional funding for programs and partnerships.

F. Teacher Qualifications, Training, and Compensation—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo*: It is challenging for the Tribe to retain teachers. They leave Head Start for higher paying jobs in the public school system. The Tribe has a waiting list for early childhood services. They want to use their resources to maximize help for children and to support children by identifying challenges and finding solutions. Although the Tribe agrees that teachers should obtain a B.A. degree, the degree requirement should be tied to additional funding to support education. There also should be a professional development plan in place for staff.
- *Gil Vigil, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos*: There is a requirement for teaching degrees, but the teachers are not compensated well and go elsewhere. To keep the teaching staff, they must be compensated in the same way they would be in the school system. The teachers are from the community, and many started at the level of aide or bus driver and advanced from those positions. The Tribe wants to retain them and pay a good salary.
- *Peter Garcia, Jr., Ohkay Owingeh Tribe*: Teachers who receive their degrees are not compensated properly. They leave for better salaries. Head Start mandates that some staff acquire associate of arts degrees and others acquire bachelor of arts degrees. This education requires funding.
- *Sharon Henderson Singer, Navajo Nation*: A highly qualified workforce is needed for Head Start, but Tribes cannot compensate teachers at the same level as public schools.
- *Bernadette Goodluck Todacheene, Navajo Nation*: The Tribe supports the needs of staff for adequate pay and education.
- *Sherry Johnson, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate*: The Tribe cannot compete with the salary scales of the public school system. Raises have been approved for their school system recently, and certified teachers do not apply to Head Start. Those who are hired are mandated to get education, and meeting the requirements for a 4-year degree to be certified is difficult. Early Head Start requires a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or early childhood degree. Teachers are handling all teaching responsibilities and also are mandated to attend college classes. This is a hardship for them, and programs do not have funds to assist staff in attaining degrees. Teachers cannot take courses while on duty, there is no higher education program on the reservation, and access to a 4-year program is a barrier that cannot be overcome. The benefit of degrees is not realized when teachers who earn an A.A. can get jobs in the school system at salary levels not supported by OHS funds. The Tribe is always advertising for staff, and there is a revolving door and time spent training new staff. Teacher retention is an issue due to the low pay. The Tribe recommends forming a task force to work on these challenges. They also recommend requiring an A.A. for Head Start teachers with encouragement to obtain 4-year degree. This would not burden staff and programs. She believes they can manage that requirement at their programs.

- *Kerry Venegas, Hoopa Valley Tribe*: There is no higher education on the reservation to allow degree completion on time.
- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe*: The Tribe needs funds for professional development of teachers. Also, their salaries are not high enough.
- *Jerome Casey, White Mountain Apache Tribe*: OHS should increase funds to pay for training to certify teachers.
- *Mario Garcia, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: The Tribe believes in the importance of supporting teachers and helping them attain degrees.
- *Genevieve Jaramillo-Padilla, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: The Tribe is losing Head Start teaching staff to public schools. They are interested in obtaining more funds for salaries for teachers. Teachers also need good Internet connections so they can submit assignments and reports for classes. The Tribe is working with their information technology department on this problem.
- *Trina Martine, Ramah Navajo*: The Tribe has a problem retaining teachers due to low pay.

G. Enrollment and Service Gap—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Sharon Henderson Singer, Navajo Nation*: Navajo Nation is a super-grantee, and its program has been in existence for 50 years. However, they are not serving enough children. Presently they serve only 16 percent of children ages birth to 5.
- *Arzie Hogg, Gila River Indian Community*: It is important to increase enrollment. A total of 19 percent of their children from birth to 5 years are served by Head Start, 16 percent are served by other partners, and 65 percent have no services. There is some funding for birth-to-3 enrollment, but there is a great need to increase enrollment for children ages 3–5 years so that 3-year-olds can transition from Early Head Start. Four-year-olds have the greatest need to be ready for school, but there is no funding to increase the number of available slots.
- *Kerry Venegas, Hoopa Valley Tribe*: The California state public schools are enrolling 4-year-olds in transitional kindergarten, and this has caused problems because the schools are unprepared to teach these children. This is a problem for the Tribe and appears to be a Tribal sovereignty issue for Tribes because their children are going to the school districts and then lack support on culture and language. The partnership with the Tribe and school has not been thought through. The trend has been to move 4-year-olds to schools and expand Early Head Start. Also, funding for Early Head Start applies to home-based programs and does not compensate teachers in center-based programs. Therefore, the center-based teachers cannot accommodate the needs of parents and families. Also, there is a gap in service when Early Head Start children cannot enroll in Head Start. Parents are upset, and children are disrupted.
- *Unidentified speaker, Santo Domingo Pueblo*: This is the largest pueblo in New Mexico, and there is a waiting list for preschool. The Tribe is working with New Mexico State to expand classrooms for Head Start. There are 11,000 people in the Tribe.

H. Mental Health Services—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *David Martinez, Jr., Ramah Navajo:* The Tribe needs mental health services, including early identification and referrals for treatment. Their center is far from the city and the main Navajo reservation. The local clinic is not able to meet mental health needs, and the Tribe needs funding and assistance.
- *Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe:* Like other Tribes, they have mental health challenges due to the conflict between keeping traditions and adapting to a western way of living. They lack mental health resources. Head Start children do not receive assessments on time and act out when they move on to public school. The Tribe needs resources to assess children and get them the help they need early.
- *Trina Martine, Ramah Navajo:* The Tribe needs child mental health services.

I. Miscellaneous—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Full-Year Requirement—Kerry Venegas, Hoopa Valley Tribe:* The full-year requirement causes conflicts with Tribal ceremonies. The Tribe has an obligation and responsibility to have ceremonial dances. When they have to shut down Head Start for this reason, this creates an attendance issue. They want to be responsive to their community, and they lost many members recently. Out of respect to the community, they celebrate these persons, and this makes it hard to keep the center open.
- *Parent Involvement—Kerry Venegas, Hoopa Valley Tribe:* It is difficult to fill the Policy Council because parents do not want to spend time away from work or family.
- *Curriculum—Jerome Kasey, White Mountain Apache Tribe:* Tribes should be able to develop their own curricula.
- *Code of Conduct—Peter Garcia, Jr., Ohkay Owingeh Tribe:* Parents need a code of conduct. Some parents do not respect Tribal jurisdiction.
- *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)—Bernadette Goodluck Todacheene, Navajo Nation:* The Tribe is asking OHS to work with CCDF at the national level to help the Tribe meet requirements. The Tribe wants to coordinate with that program. There were meetings in the State of Washington, but there are issues preventing coordination.
- *Eligibility for Wards of the Court—Arzie Hogg, Gila River Indian Community:* When parents cannot raise children, the children become wards of the court. Mr. Hogg recommended creating a new category of Head Start-eligible children who are wards of the court. He added that there is a need to offer mandatory training for parents and grandparents that teaches them how to communicate and provide positive environments.
- *Child Care—Carletta Tilousi, Havasupai Tribe:* The Tribe asked for assistance exploring funding for child care for 2-year-olds.
- *Grants Process—Juanita Plenty Holes, Ute Valley Tribe:* There is a lack of communication in the Head Start grants process. When the Tribe needs to make revisions, they hear about the problems too late and require more time to make changes.

Conclusion

Dr. Enriquez and Ms. Godfrey thanked everyone for their comments, and said they will take them back to OHS and begin to work on integrating them into the work of OHS and Region XI.

Mr. Tafoya thanked Tribal leaders and members for attending. He expressed appreciation to Dr. Enriquez and Ms. Godfrey.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations from AIAN participants.

RXI AIAN Participant Recommendations

Preservation of Language and Culture

- Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council wants OHS to use the set-aside to support language preservation.
- Navajo Nation wants OHS to support culture and language so the Tribe can revitalize, preserve, and sustain their traditions.
- Havasupai Tribe would like to see both English and the Tribal language used in Head Start classrooms to enhance children's language capacity.
- Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate requested funds for fully developing native language programs with expert onsite training, and revisions to the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* to address immersion programs.
- Ramah Navajo requested funding to support elders teaching the native language and to purchase books in the Navajo language.

CLASS and DRS

- Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council wants to assess children based on what they learn in their Tribe.
- Navajo Nation suggested there be an alternative assessment tool for Tribes.
- Gila River Indian Community recommended not placing Tribal programs in CLASS if the programs meet *Head Start Program Performance Standards*, eliminating the 10 percent threshold as a standard for deficiencies, training CLASS observers in the cultural specifics of Tribes, and considering Tribes in the lower 10 percent noncompliant instead of deficient. Following this finding of noncompliance, OHS should conduct a reevaluation.
- Ute Valley Tribe recommended delivering CLASS findings earlier.
- Santo Domingo Pueblo suggested using Tribal elders to conduct assessments and offering more training for staff so they can help students reach their goals.

Facilities

- The following Tribes and communities recommended that funds be provided to build or renovate facilities: Santa Clara Pueblo, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos, Ohkay Owingeh Tribe, Navajo Nation, Gila River Indian Community, Havasupai Tribe, Ramah Navajo, Ute Valley Tribe, and White Mountain Apache Tribe.
- Santa Clara Pueblo, Ohkay Owingeh Tribe, and Gila River Indian Community recommended providing Tribes with the results of the facilities assessment.
- Santo Domingo Pueblo suggested that funding be provided for playground equipment.

Income and Poverty Guidelines

- Gila River Indian Community recommended evaluating federal poverty guidelines for rural areas and waiving poverty guidelines to allow Tribes to make early childhood education available to all preschool children in their communities.
- Havasupai Tribe suggested waiving the Head Start financial requirement for Tribal families so they do not have to turn away students with over-income families.

Budget, Nonfederal Share, and Transportation Issues

- The following Tribes and communities asked for more funds and said current funding is inadequate to meet needs: Santa Clara Pueblo, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos, Ohkay Owingeh Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Valley Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribe, Santo Domingo Pueblo, and Ramah Navajo.
- Santa Clara Pueblo recommended that OHS increase the Early Head Start set-aside.
- Eight Northern Indian Pueblos recommended relaxing the nonfederal share requirements.
- Navajo Nation asked for funds to be set aside to ensure the health and safety of children.
- Santo Domingo Pueblo suggested that the services of mental health providers be considered part of the 10 percent nonfederal share.

Teacher Qualifications, Training, and Compensation

- The following Tribes recommended more funding to support degree attainment, increased teacher salaries, and professional development: Santa Clara Pueblo, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos, Ohkay Owingeh Tribe, Navajo Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Ute Valley Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribe, Santo Domingo Pueblo, and Ramah Navajo.
- Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate suggested forming a task force to work on these challenges and recommended changing requirements for Head Start teachers. They suggested that Head Start teachers be required to attain an A.A. degree with encouragement to obtain a 4-year degree.

Enrollment and Service Gap

- Navajo Nation and Gila River Indian Community recommended increasing enrollment and providing more slots to prevent a service gap for Early Head Start students seeking placement in Head Start.

Mental Health Services

- Ramah Navajo recommended providing funding and assistance for mental health services; the local clinic cannot meet their needs.
- Ute Valley Tribe requested resources for early mental health assessments of children ages birth to 5 years.

Miscellaneous

- *Curriculum—White Mountain Apache Tribe:* The Tribe suggested that it be allowed to develop its own curriculum.

- *Code of Conduct—Ohkay Owingeh Tribe:* The Tribe suggested that a code of conduct be developed for parents.
- *CCDF—Navajo Nation:* The Tribe requested that OHS work with CCDF at the national level to help the Tribe meet requirements for CCDF.
- *Eligibility for Wards of the Court, Parent Training—Gila River Indian Community:* The Tribe recommended creating a new category of eligible children for Head Start who are wards of the court. The Tribe also suggested mandatory training for Head Start parents and grandparents to teach them how to communicate and provide positive environments for children.
- *Child Care—Havasupai Tribe:* The Tribe asked for help exploring funding for child care for their 2-year-olds.
- *Grants Process—Ute Valley Tribe:* The Tribe asked for better communication about the Head Start grants process.

Tribal Consultation Participants

Federal Staff and National Contractors

Last Name	First Name	Position	Organization
Curtis	Jennifer	Program Specialist	ICF International (ICF)
Enriquez	Blanca	Director	Office of Head Start (OHS)
Godfrey	Angie	Regional Program Manager, Region XI (RXI)	OHS
Howard	Lula	Program Specialist	OHS
Kindred	Rhonda	Training/Technical Assistance Director	ICF
Moore	Frances	Staff	National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning
Pretlow	Vikki	Program Specialist	OHS
Richardson	Mike	Director	American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) National Head Start Collaboration Office
Schultz	Janet	Monitoring Specialist	Danya, Inc.
Strickland	W. J.	Supervisory Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Wyatt	Donald	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS

RXI AIAN Tribal Leaders and Representatives

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Aguilar	Yvette	Head Start Director	Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos
Aguino	Howie	President, Board of Education	Ohkay Owingeh Tribe
Amrine	Tanya		Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
Antone	Phyllis	Education Standing Committee At-Large Representative/Tribal Council	Gila River Indian Community

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Black Wolf	Darrell	Program Governance Manager	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Blake	Richard	Chief Judge	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Carter	Michael	Senior Assistant General Counsel	Gila River Indian Community
Chavarria	J. Michael	Governor	Santa Clara Pueblo
Chavez	Virginia R.	Zuni Tribal Councilwoman	Pueblo of Zuni
Coho	Carol	Board Secretary/Tribal Representative	Ramah Navajo
Curley	Alberta	Policy Council	Ramah Navajo
Ferris	Diana	Council	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Garcia	Mario	Tribal Official	Santo Domingo Tribe
Garcia	Peter	Councilman	Ohkay Owingeh Tribe
Gnas	Kassg	Head Start Director	Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
Hogg	Arzie	Council Member/Education Standing Committee Chair	Gila River Indian Community
Jaramillo-Padilla	Genevieve	Director, Early Child Learning Center	Santo Domingo Pueblo
Johnson	Sherry		Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
Kasey III	Jerome	Tribal Council	White Mountain Apache Tribe
Korb	Angel	Director	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Lavzelere	Leola	Director, Head Start	White Mountain Apache Tribe
Martine	Trina	Policy Council	Ramah Navajo

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Martinez	Joline	Director	Ohkay Owingeh Tribe
Martinez, Jr.	David	Board President/Tribal Representative	Ramah Navajo
Mascarenaz	Margaret	Program Manager, Early Head Start and Head Start	Pueblo of Laguna
Masten	Misty	Education Specialist	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Nells	Cynthia	Acting Early Childhood Director, Head Start	Ramah Navajo
Oatman	Jenny	Director, Early Childhood Development Programs	Nez Perce Tribe
Peshlakai	Priscilla	Family/Health Services Specialist	Ramah Navajo
Plenty Holes	Juanita	Vice Chairwoman	Ute Valley Tribe
Powell, Sr.	Carlos	Director, Head Start	Havasupai Tribe
Prusa	Julie	Program Director	Omaha Tribe
Romancito	Kathleen	Director, Head Start	Pueblo of Zuni
Salcido	Isaac	Tribal Education Director/Tribal Representative	Gila River Indian Community
Schank	Char	Division Director	Southern Ute
Singer	Sharon Henderson	Tribal Leader	Navajo Nation
Tafoya	Francis	Head Start Director	Santa Clara Pueblo
Tenorio	Jude	Policy Council Chair	Santo Domingo Tribe
Tilousi	Carletta	Council Member	Havasupai Tribe
Tilousi	Edmond	Vice Chairman/Tribal Representative	Havasupai Tribe

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Todacheene	Bernadette	Head Start Governing Body	Navajo Nation
Toya	Lana	Early Childhood Program Manager	Pueblo of Jemez
Tso	Jonathan	Facility Safety Officer	Navajo Head Start
Venegas	Kerry	Designated Tribal Representative	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Vigil	Gil	Executive Director	Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc.