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S. HRG. 114–192

S. 410, S. 1163, AND S. 1928

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

NOVEMBER 18, 2015

Printed for the use of the Committee on Indian Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

98–984 PDF WASHINGTON : 2016

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
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S. 410, S. 1163, AND S. 1928

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m. in room 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Barrasso, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN BARRASSO, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING

The CHAIRMAN. Good afternoon. I call this hearing to order.

Today we will examine three bills: S. 410, a bill to strengthen Indian education; S. 1163, a bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide flexibility and reauthorization to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages; and S. 1928, a bill to support the education of Indian children.

As our Nation honors and celebrates the heritage and culture of Native Americans this month, it is very fitting that today's hearing focuses on legislation that would help educate the next generation of Native Americans.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in the 2011–2012 school year, the national graduation rate reached "a profound milestone" with 80 percent of the students receiving a high school diploma. During the same school year, Indian students were the lowest achieving ethnic group to receive a diploma at a rate of only 67 percent.

High dropout rates, crumbling school facilities, recruiting educators to teach Indian children, and the list of challenges goes on. These are just some of the problems these bills are intended to address.

S. 410, sponsored by Senator Udall, would establish a program to help improve tribal and Bureau of Indian Education school facilities. This bill would create a joint oversight board between the Department of the Education and the Department of the Interior.

I will turn to Senator Udall for more details about this bill and the next one shortly.

S. 1163, sponsored by Senator Udall, and co-sponsored by Senators Franken, Heinrich, Heitkamp, Murkowski, Schatz, and Tester, would reauthorize and amend the Esther Martinez Native Languages Preservation Act Grant Program. The previous authorization expired in 2012.

Finally, S. 1928, sponsored by Vice Chairman Tester and co-sponsored by Senators Franken and Heinrich would establish Indian educator scholarship programs, loan forgiveness for qualifying educators who teach Indian children, and establish grants to assist educators with professional development and training.

Now I will turn to Senator Tester, Vice Chairman of the Committee, for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. JON TESTER, U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA

Senator TESTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this legislative hearing.

The legislation we are covering today is all Indian education-related. Every member of this Committee knows the challenges that face our Native children across Indian country.

I have said time and time again there is no stronger tool available to combat the disparities and challenges facing many tribal communities than education.

Throughout this Congress, I have introduced several pieces of legislation that look to improve the state of Indian education. Earlier this year, I introduced a bill to ensure that Native children can receive a culturally-relevant education by expanding Native language programs to better connect students with their rich heritage and help keep their traditions and culture alive.

The bill has already been reported out of this Committee. I want to thank the Chairman and my colleagues for that.

I have also introduced the Educational Programs for Indian Children Act to improve and expand before school, after school and summer school programs in Indian country so that Native students can keep engaging in enrichment activities even after the last school bell rings.

This bill is pending with the Committee on Agriculture.

I also introduced a bill to exempt Indian country from the harmful effects of sequestration which has detrimentally impacted Federal funding for Native education programs across the board.

Now one of the pieces of legislation on today's slate of bills is another one of my efforts to improve Indian education, the Native Educator Support and Training Act, otherwise known as the NEST Act.

This legislation aims to recruit and retain more teachers for Indian country and provide some much needed support for these dedicated professionals. It affords new scholarship opportunities for future teachers who know they want to work in Native classrooms.

It expands loan forgiveness programs for educators who are already working in Native communities so that the increasing cost of college will not stand in the way of any committed individual who wants to serve tribal communities as a teacher.

This legislation also recognizes that teachers need access to high quality professional development opportunities throughout their career. The bill supports expansion of the National Board certification and advanced degree opportunities across Indian country.

If we want to ensure that our children are getting qualified and capable teachers, we must begin by making college more affordable

and accessible to those who want to work in Indian country schools.

Getting high quality teachers into our Native schools is only one of the things we can do to improve the education our kids are receiving. Native children should have access to the same building blocks to success before they enter the classroom as their non-Native peers.

That is why earlier today I introduced a bill to streamline tribal early childhood programs at the Department of Health and Human Services. There are several funding streams that exist at HHS and this would break down the silent approach to funding for tribes.

In addition, this new bill provides supplementary funding to improve and expand tribal early childhood facilities and infrastructure.

Not only should we be providing the best possible education for our Native youth, it should be in the safest possible environment.

If we can work together to make these initiatives a reality, I believe that Indian country will have some of the tools they need to improve the conditions facing too many Native children and families across this country.

Education is the bedrock for all strong communities. That is why I am glad this Committee continues to prioritize this issue. As we move forward, I look forward to partnering with everyone on this Committee and all our colleagues in the Senate to ensure that Indian country has the resources and the capacity to continue a building more successful future.

I want to thank the witnesses today for being here. I look forward to your testimony.

Again, I would thank the Chairman for holding this legislative hearing today so we can get these pieces of legislation moving.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice Chairman.

Senator Udall?

STATEMENT OF HON. TOM UDALL, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Chairman Barrasso and Vice Chairman Tester. Thank you for holding this hearing on these three important bills today.

We want to do everything we can to ensure that the children in Indian country have the best education possible. We know this is just not the case and it has not been for years or for decades. That history is a painful one and we have not gotten it right yet.

We can and must do more for our children. That is why I introduced the Building Upon the Unique Indian Learning and Development Act. My bill calls for improved language immersion, education leadership pipelines for teachers and principals, and innovation for improving school facilities. We need to do all of this and more.

I look forward to hearing from Dr. Glenabah Martinez, a professor and Associate Dean at the University of New Mexico and an expert on American Indian education about how we can accomplish this.

Just to say a few words about the two New Mexico witnesses, Dr. Glenabah Martinez is a professor and Associate Dean at the University of New Mexico. She is going to testify today.

She was raised Taos Pueblo and taught high school social studies for 14 years before receiving her PhD. Dr. Martinez has conducted important research and published a book examining the state of Indian education.

Her unique perspective as a former high school educator and currently as a Dean of Education and Preparation and Development will be an asset to today's hearing.

Thank you for making the long trip from New Mexico.

We also need robust funding for Indian education for school construction, contract support, and administrative cost grants to help tribes build capacity to manage their own education programs.

Indian Country faces unique challenges, challenges of distance, infrastructure and capacity.

I am very happy today also to see the First Lieutenant Governor of the Pueblo of Acoma, Robert MoQuino. Mr. MoQuino has joined us today to discuss this critical issue.

He is a long-time tribal leader in New Mexico. I always look forward to my visits to his Pueblo of Acoma which is such a beautiful place, rich in culture, steeped in history and tradition. We are lucky to have the First Lieutenant Governor with us today. I am also eager to hear his testimony.

Let me say a word or two about the bills. My bill, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act provides grants to Native American language and educational organizations to help preserve dying Native languages in Indian country.

We know if you cannot retain the language, you cannot retain the culture. That is absolutely key. I hear that from Indian leaders over and over again.

I would ask my colleagues to look at these pieces of legislation and I very much appreciate their support.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Udall.

Would any other Senators like to make a statement?

STATEMENT OF HON. AL FRANKEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's hearing on Indian education and education legislation.

I am proud to co-sponsor Senator Tester's NEST Act and Senator Udall's Native American Languages Reauthorization Act. These bills are good steps toward providing Native Americans with quality instruction that is connected to their culture.

I apologize if I have to step out. We are holding the first meeting of the Education Conference Committee this afternoon.

I fought to include critical provisions for Indian country in the Senate bill to fix No Child Left Behind. Senator Murkowski and I worked together on amendments for immersion programs for American Indian and Alaska Native languages.

Education is vital to increasing the opportunities available to Native Americans. I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance the bills we are considering in this Committee and to also make sure that programs for Indian youth remain a part of the Education bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Franken.

Would any other Senators like to make a statement?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to welcome our witnesses here today: the Honorable Lillian Sparks Robinson, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.; the Honorable Robert MoQuino, First Lieutenant Governor, Pueblo of Acoma, Acoma Pueblo, NM; Dr. Glenabah Martinez, Associate Professor, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM; and Ms. Michelle Accardi, Director, State Policy and Outreach, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards from Arlington, Virginia.

I want to remind the witnesses that your full written testimony will be made a part of the official hearing record. Please try to keep your statements to five minutes or less so that we may have more time for questions.

I look forward to hearing your testimony beginning with Ms. Sparks Robinson. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF LILLIAN SPARKS ROBINSON, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Ms. ROBINSON. Thank you, Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester and members of the Committee.

It is my honor to testify before this Committee on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services on Native language preservation and maintenance.

I am a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, which is located in South Dakota. I serve as the Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans, which is part of the Administration for Children and Families at HHS.

We are pleased that this Committee is considering S. 1163, the Native American Languages Reauthorization Act of 2015 which reauthorizes the Native American language provisions of the ANA's authorizing statute, the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as well as the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act.

ANA's mission is to support Native American communities to be self-determining, healthy, economically self-sufficient, and culturally and linguistically vibrant.

ANA supports three program areas: Native American languages, environmental regulatory enhancement, and social and economic developments.

Since 2010, ANA has held two separate annual competitions for language projects. This year ANA intends to add an additional language competition to fund a place space demonstration that will address gaps in community coordination across the Native language educational continuum.

We believe that language revitalization is essential to continuing Native American culture and strengthening self determination. Research tells us that the use of Native American languages builds identity and assists communities in moving towards social cohesion and self sufficiency.

Native American values and traditions are embedded in language and there is growing evidence that Native language and culture act as protective factors against suicide and suicidal ideation, substance abuse disorders and other risky behaviors.

ANA funds opportunities to assess, plan and develop and implement projects to ensure the survivor and vitality of Native languages.

Over the years, ANA has funded many successful projects that have resulted in increased usage and fluency of Native languages. For example, Dakota Wicohan, a language program in Minnesota, trained over eight Dakota language apprentices to speak Dakota and receive language teacher certifications.

Their language levels increased by at least two levels and the apprentices gained relevant classroom teaching experience, and received language certifications from accredited programs.

Similarly, ANA assisted the Piegan Institute in Montana to improve the Blackfeet speaking ability of children enrolled at the Cuts Wood School. The project expanded upon the school's pre-existing full day immersion program by offering more learning activities outside of the classroom, including the Blackfeet Elder Committee collaborating with project staff and students on a radio project featuring Blackfeet language lessons.

As a result of this project, all 30 children enrolled at the school reached an advanced proficient level of Blackfeet.

Through ANA funding, the Native Village of Afognak in Alaska provided immersion instruction through teacher mentorship and instructional resource development. The project mentored 16 Alutiiq language teachers in a structured immersion model.

By the end of the project, 16 teachers received training and were better prepared to pass on the language. Two teachers were locally certified and all teachers increased at least one or two levels on an Alutiiq-adapted language scale.

The demand for funding under our Native language programs remains high. Based on grantee feedback, we believe that the authority to fund Native language projects for longer periods up to five years would result in increased sustainability of the gains made.

Grantees would have more time to build a community of speakers and language learners, strengthen partnerships, and secure additional funding as projects move beyond the initial planning and implementation stages.

Additional feedback from ANA grantees also indicates that lowering the required number of participating students from ten to five for language nests, and from fifteen to ten for survival schools, would allow more communities to apply.

Listening sessions and tribal consultation indicate that the extra investment in Native American language programs is critical to our communities. As demonstrated by research, Native language and culture fosters higher outcomes from Native youth due to lower levels of depression, increased academic achievement, and strengthened problem-solving skills.

When educational institutions recognize that Native culture and language are inherent strengths, we increase the self-worth and optimism of our youth. It is by going back to traditional, ancestral, indigenous ways of knowing based in culturally and linguistically

specific values and norms, that we believe Native American communities will thrive on their own terms.

Finally, as an administration, we are looking for ways to be more responsive to the needs of Native American communities, to develop and contribute to an evidence base for culturally and linguistically responsive programming and to develop with our partners culturally appropriate measurement tools and research and evaluation designs that inform policy and practice.

We are thankful for the continued support of this Committee and look forward to working with Congress to reauthorize the Native American Programs Act, including the Esther Martinez Native Languages Act.

I am happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Robinson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LILLIAN SPARKS ROBINSON, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and members of the Committee, it is my honor to testify before this Committee on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services on S. 1163, S. 1419, and other related matters involving Native language preservation and maintenance. I am a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, which is located in South Dakota. I serve as the Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans (ANA), which is part of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

ANA's mission is to support Native American communities to be self-determining, healthy, economically self-sufficient, and culturally and linguistically vibrant. We achieve our mission by providing discretionary grants, training, and technical assistance to tribes and Native American communities, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders. ANA supports three program areas: Native American Languages, Environmental Regulatory Enhancement (ERE), and Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS). We are pleased that this Committee is considering S. 1163, the Native American Languages Reauthorization Act of 2015, reauthorizing the Native American language provisions of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974 (NAPA), as well as the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act.

For fiscal year (FY) 2015, Congress appropriated approximately $46.5 million to ANA, which distributed approximately $40.5 million to Native American communities competitively. The President's FY 2016 budget request would fund ANA at $50 million. In addition to providing competitive grants, ANA uses its funding to provide training and technical assistance to Native American communities, as required by Section 804 of NAPA.

ANA believes that language revitalization is essential to continuing Native American culture and strengthening self-determination. Research tells us that use of Native American languages builds identity and assists communities in moving toward social cohesion and self-sufficiency. Native American values and traditions are embedded in language and there is growing evidence that that Native language and culture act as protective factors against suicide and suicidal ideation, substance abuse disorders, and other risky behaviors. Historical and contemporary conditions, including widespread and persistent poverty, have resulted in Native American peoples experiencing significant health disparities and some of the harshest living conditions in the United States. Remarkably, at the same time, Native American peoples have met such significant conditions with extraordinary abilities to survive, to overcome, and to draw from culturally and linguistically-based tools to not just survive, but to thrive. Native languages are among the most critical and meaningful of these tools. ANA encourages applicants to involve elders and other community members in determining proposed language project goals and implementing project activities because community connectedness appears key to sustaining successful Native language projects. ANA funding provides opportunities to assess, plan, develop, and implement projects to ensure the survival and vitality of Native American languages.

For over a decade, ANA awarded Native American language preservation and maintenance funds to eligible entities under the Native American Languages Act of

1992, but utilization of Native American languages continued to decline for a variety of reasons, including the English-only movement of many states in the mid-1990s to early 2000s, as well as the requirement for highly qualified teachers under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (commonly referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)). We believe the number of Native American language teachers diminished under NCLB due to a lack of valid teacher assessments in Native American languages. Specifically, the tools used to measure teacher quality did not adequately address the unique attributes necessary for Native languages education. The lack of teacher assessments validated with Native American populations or accommodating Native languages resulted in fewer Native American language teachers being able to obtain or maintain the appropriate teaching certification. In response to this dramatic and continued decline, Congress passed the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006. The law amended NAPA to specifically target grants for language immersion and restoration programs, two methods that have proven to be highly successful in creating fluent speakers who, in turn, revitalize, preserve, and maintain Native languages.

In 2014 and again in 2015, ANA partnered with the Department of Education and the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Education to host a Native American Languages Summit. During the first summit we were able to include presentation from the Smithsonian Institution and in 2015 our partnership expanded to include the Institute for Museum and Library Services, the National Science Foundation, and the National Endowment for Humanities as key Summit planning partners and presenters. This expanded partnership facilitated a connection with the Association for Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums, (ATALM), who provided support, including scholarships for non-federal participants to attend the Summit. Participants included federal staff, researchers, tribal language programs, ATALM members and others involved in Native American language revitalization efforts.

Building on the knowledge gained from the 2014 Native American Languages Summit, the goal of the 2015 Native American Languages Summit was to provide updates from the partners on their current efforts to provide support for Native American communities that are seeking to preserve and revitalize Native American languages. To the extent that there is a need for additional support in ensuring the livelihood of Native Languages, the Summit productively serves as a way to help institutions and agencies develop ways to better implement and fund coordinated evidence-based Native language instruction.

Over the years, ANA has funded many successful projects that have resulted in increased usage and fluency of Native American languages. For example, Dakota Wicohan is an ANA funded language program in Minnesota that trained over eight Dakota Language apprentices to speak Dakota outside of class and receive language teacher certifications. Their language levels increased by at least two levels on the Grotto/Fishman Scale. The apprentices gained relevant classroom teaching experience, and received language certifications from accredited programs. Due to the ANA funded project, the Dakota language can be heard in the local community outside the classrooms: in camps, at community activities, and even weekly radio broadcasts.

Similarly, ANA assisted the Piegan Institute in Montana to improve the Blackfeet speaking ability of children enrolled at the Cuts Wood School. The project expanded upon the school's pre-existing full day immersion program by offering more learning activities outside of the classroom. In addition, the Blackfeet Elder Committee collaborated with project staff and students on a radio project, producing and airing 12 hours of radio programming featuring Blackfeet language lessons and archived recordings of Blackfeet speakers. As a result of this project, all 30 children enrolled at the school reached an advanced proficient level of Blackfeet.

Through ANA funding, the Native Village of Afognak in Alaska provided immersion instruction through teacher mentorship and instructional resource development. The project mentored 16 Alutiiq language teachers in a structured immersion model. As a result of the project, the number of people who are learning and teaching the language drastically increased. By the end of the project, 16 teachers received training and were better prepared to pass on the language. Two teachers were locally certified and all teachers increased at least one or two levels on an Alutiiq-adapted language scale.

Since 2010, ANA has held two separate annual competitions for language projects, the Native American Language Preservation and Maintenance Program and the Esther Martinez Initiative (EMI). ANA's total investment in Native American language projects for FY 2010 to 2015 is approximately $78 million. Between 2006 and 2015, ANA received 998 applications for all Native American language projects. Of those, 116 applications were specifically for EMI projects, which ANA began com-

peting in 2010.[1] Interest in the EMI program continues to grow. In 2013, we reviewed 14 applications and in 2014 and 2015 we reviewed a combined total of 54 applications across our two Native Language program areas.

In FY 2016, ANA intends to fund one or more Native Language Community Coordination Demonstration projects to build upon the successes of ANA's short-term, project-based Native Language funding. This new effort is intended as a place-based demonstration that will address gaps in community coordination across the Native language educational continuum.

The FY 2016 budget request for the Administration on Native Americans included an additional $3 million to support the Generation Indigenous (Gen–I), an Administration-wide initiative launched in early 2015 that is focused on improving the lives of Native youth through new investments and increased engagement across the Federal Government. The budget request supports this initiative through investment in Native American language instruction, such as the Native Language Community Coordination Demonstration.

In addition, the FY 2016 budget request supports funding for Native language programs at an additional $2.5 million for an anticipated 12 new Native language Preservation and Maintenance grants, $1.5 million for an anticipated six Esther Martinez Native Language Immersion grants, and $1.5 million for an anticipated 4–6 new Native Language Community Coordination demonstration projects in addition to on-going Native Language continuation grants. This funding will more than ensure that ANA meets its target of $13 million in language awards.

The demand for funding under both the Preservation and Maintenance and Esther Martinez Immersion (EMI) Acts remains high. In addition, based on grantee feedback, we believe that the authority to fund EMI and Preservation and Maintenance projects for longer periods (up to five years, rather than the current three years) would result in increased sustainability of the gains made. Grantees would have more time to build a community of speakers and language learners, strengthen partnerships, and secure additional funding as projects move beyond the initial planning and implementation stages. Additional feedback from ANA grantees also indicates that lowering the required number of participating students from ten to five for language nests, and from fifteen to ten for survival schools, would allow more communities to apply.

Listening sessions and tribal consultation indicate that the extra investment in Native American language programs is critical to our communities. As demonstrated by research by Cornel Pewewardy and Patricia Hammer, Harold Sorkness and Lynn Kelting-Gibson, and Janine Pease-Pretty On Top, Native language and culture fosters higher outcomes from Native youth due to lower levels of depression, increased academic achievement, and strengthened problem-solving skills. When educational institutions recognize that Native culture and language are inherent strengths, we increase the self-worth and optimism of our youth. It is by going back to traditional, ancestral, indigenous ways of knowing based in culturally and linguistically specific values and norms, that we believe Native American communities will thrive on their own terms.

With respect to ANA's other program areas, the Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) program continues to be the grant program for which we receive the most applications. In FY 2015, ANA reviewed a total of 300 applications, 210 of which were for SEDS. Of these 210 applications, ANA was able to provide funding for 29 new awards at approximately $7.8 million. This provided funding for 14 percent of the applications received. This total included special initiatives like the Native Asset Building Initiative, Social and Economic Development Strategies for Alaska, and the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies grants that target ANA investment towards economic empowerment, but still within the framework of community-driven projects. Finally, ANA is always looking for ways to be more responsive to the needs of Native American communities, to develop and contribute to an evidence base for culturally and linguistically responsive programming, and to develop, with our partners, culturally appropriate measurement tools and research and evaluation designs that inform policy and practice.

We are thankful for the continued support of this Committee in achieving the ANA mission. We look forward to working with Congress to reauthorize the Native American Programs Act including the Esther Martinez Native Languages Act, which continues to receive appropriations. From a program administration perspective, reauthorizing NAPA as a whole would also provide an opportunity to comprehensively update program regulations, which is necessary for improved program oversight and accountability.

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[1] The Esther Martinez Initiative was enacted in 2006, but it was not its own funding category in ANA until FY 2008.

ANA looks forward to the day when all "Native Communities are Thriving," and we look forward to working with you to make that happen.
I would be happy to answer any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much for joining us. Thank you for your testimony.
Mr. MOQUINO.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT MOQUINO, FIRST LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, PUEBLO OF ACOMA

Mr. MOQUINO. [Greeting in Native language.]
Thank you Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and members of the Committee for allowing me to present this testimony on behalf of the Pueblo of Acoma.
The Pueblo of Acoma is engaged in an ongoing battle to save our language. As our elders tell us, as we lose our ability to speak our Acoma language, we are losing the very essence of our traditional cultural values.
At the beginning of time immemorial, the Acoma language, Keres, was given to the Acoma people by two spiritual mothers. These mothers also gifted us the core values of family, culture and tradition.
The Acoma language is essential for sustaining the culture and value of our people. Our existence, identity and those of future generations depends upon the continuation of our language.
For instance, without Keres, one cannot fully understand our creation story which explains that we were destined for Sky City. Our religious and cultural ceremonies are conducted in Keres.
Each year, our tribal leaders speak to the Acoma people at Sky City exclusively in Keres. Without knowledge of the language, our people cannot understand or participate fully in our culture and civic life.
At Acoma, we have not forgotten our language. We just do not use it. Therefore, we are focused on revitalizing use of our language within our community, including teaching Keres to our children in the local schools and developing and Acoma oral history curriculum.
We are also developing home study program that provides materials for home use intended to build among and encourage conversations between our elders and our youth.
We had an Esther Martinez grant that allowed Acoma development of a language nest for our smallest ones, ages birth to five. Seeing these younger children going to their language nest and hearing them learn to speak their native tongue to the elders brought joy to so many in our community.
However, this was limited by law to three years and the language nest had to be discontinued after funding ran out. Under S. 1163, this grant can be up to five years, something Acoma strongly supports.
The Pueblo of Acoma supports S. 410, S. 1163 and S. 1928 as important steps toward assisting tribal communities in their efforts to preserve, maintain and revitalize their Native language.
In particular, S. 1163 would reauthorize the ANA Language Grant Program. It would also lower the number of children required to form language nests and extend the duration of grants

up to five years. This added flexibility is important to enable tribes to design programs that best fit their needs.

We have had difficulties getting our Keres language teachers certified by the State of New Mexico. We believe that our elders are the best qualified to teach our language and pass on our cultural knowledge. Therefore, Acoma supports the expansion of programs to support Native language and culture in S. 410.

Acoma also supports the bill's exemption to Native language teachers from ESEA qualification requirements.

Finally, Acoma supports S. 1928 because it will encourage a younger generation to become Native language teachers. This is especially important as we are gradually losing our fluent elderly speakers.

In closing, I would like to thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony about our Aak'um'e Dzeeni, our Acoma language. Thank you for taking up these important bills to help us in our struggle against language loss.

These legislative efforts are important not just to Acoma, but to tribal people throughout the United States.

With that, can I say a few words in my Acoma language.

[Phrase in native language.]

Mr. MOQUINO. Translation, again, thank you for hearing me testify with our Acoma language.

With that, all my prayers and blessings go out to you and your families. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. MoQuino follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT MOQUINO, FIRST LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, PUEBLO OF ACOMA

"As we lose our ability to speak our Acoma language, we are losing the very essence of our traditional cultural values. All age groups need to demonstrate Acoma language use."—Acoma Antelope Clan Elders

Introduction

Thank you Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and Members of the Committee for allowing me to present this testimony on behalf of the Pueblo of Acoma. My name is Robert MoQuino, and I am the 1st Lieutenant Governor of the Pueblo of Acoma. I want to start by saying Guuwáátsíí. Guuwáátsíí is how we say hello in our Aak'um'e Dzeeni (Acoma Language), known as Keres. Guuwáátsíí is the word that we use to welcome someone into the Acoma world. So, I say Guuwáátsíí to each of you here today.

The Importance of Indigenous Languages

The Pueblo of Acoma is engaged in an ongoing battle to maintain, preserve, and revitalize our native language of Keres. As one scholar has described, "[l]anguage loss in the United States is steady and pronounced. At the beginning of the twentieth century most American Indian people spoke their native tongues as a first or second language. By the end of the century, of some 300 original North American languages, just one-half were still spoken."[1] Today, experts predict that half of the over 6,000 languages currently spoken in the world will disappear by the end of this century if nothing is done to prevent the extinction of languages worldwide.[2]

Acoma is fighting against the tide of language loss because, as the elders of our Antelope Clan have stated: "As we lose our ability to speak our Acoma language, we are losing the very essence of our traditional cultural values. All age groups need to demonstrate Acoma language use." For the Acoma people, our language is inextricably intertwined with our cultural survival. At the beginning of time immemorial, Aak'um'e Dzeenii (Acoma Language) was gifted to us by Aak'um'e Hanu

[1] Charles Wilkinson, Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations 360 (2005).

[2] *See Endangered Languages,* UNESCO.ORG, *http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/endangeredlanguages/*.

(Acoma People) by our two spiritual deities (Spiritual Mothers) Iatiku and Tsi'tiwwshti naak'u. Along with Aak'um'e Dzeenii, they gifted us the core values of family, culture, and tradition. Aak'um'e Dzeenii is essential for sustaining the culture and values of the people. Our existence and identity—and those of future generations—depends upon the continuation of our language.

Language is the conduit by which our culture is transmitted. It is through our native language that we pass on to the next generations the Acoma world view and our traditional values. For instance, without Keres one cannot fully understand our emergence story, which explains that we were destined for Sky City. Without this language our young people cannot fully participate in their religious and cultural ceremonies. Every year, for example, our Governor gives an address at Sky City that is all in Keres, and without knowledge of the language our people cannot understand and participate in this important part of our culture and our civic life.

We are struggling to keep our language alive because without day-to-day use, our people are becoming less and less fluent in Keres. Our elders—invaluable language resources for our community—are passing on, taking with them the knowledge of generations. The need to pass Keres on to our young people has never been more urgent. We ask for your full support in helping us maintain our identity as Acoma people by helping us keep our language alive.

Acoma Language Programs and Initiatives

Our Aak'um'e Dzeeni (Acoma Language) Program Coordinator, Gregg Shutiva has stated that many Acoma Tribal citizens say that we are losing our language, but his response to that is that "we have not forgotten our language, we just do not use it." Our Acoma Language Retention Program (ALRP), therefore, seeks to revitalize and maintain the Acoma Keres language in our community, and it has been in operation for over a decade.

The ALRP focuses on teaching the Keres language to children through Keres language instruction in the local schools, including Laguna—Acoma Jr. Sr. High School, Cubero Elementary School, St. Joseph Mission School, and Sky City Community School. However, we sometimes have difficulty getting our Keres language teachers certified by the State of New Mexico. The experts and teachers in our Keres language do not always have the credentials required by the State. However, we believe that our community is best prepared to select persons qualified to teach our language and pass on our cultural knowledge.

The ALRP has also developed an Acoma Oral History Curriculum and various arts and crafts programs for youth as well as adults. Additionally, the ALRP offers three-week Keres language immersion camps in the summer for children ages 5–16. ALRP activities depend on Tribal appropriations as well as federal, state, and private grants.

Some of our grant-funded activities have had to be discontinued because of a lack of federal funding. For instance, Acoma received a $271,587 language preservation and maintenance grant from 2011–2014 from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA)—an Esther Martinez grant. This grant allowed Acoma to develop a "language nest" for our littlest ones—ages birth through 5. Seeing these youngest children going to their language nest and hearing them learn to speak their native language to their elders brought joy to so many in our community. However, this program had to be discontinued after funding ran out.

We recently applied for a renewal of the Esther Martinez grant to sustain our language preservation and maintenance efforts, but our application was denied. The denial letter stated that "[d]ue to the number of applications received and the demand for project dollars, ANA could not fund all eligible applicants." Our application was therefore "not selected for funding due to [ANA's] limited resources."

Currently, the ALRP is focused on building a Home Study Program. This program focuses on bringing the Keres language to the people in their own environments, where multiple generations and individuals with various levels of proficiency may all learn together. Our Home Study Program was launched in FY 2014 and served 27 entities—households as well as the staff of various Tribal programs. So far, this program has been very popular and is working to increase day-to-day Keres use, but additional funds are needed to sustain Acoma's innovative approaches to language revitalization.

Support for S. 410, S. 1163, and S. 1928

The Pueblo of Acoma supports the Native language provisions of S. 410, S. 1163, and S. 1928 as important steps toward assisting Tribal communities in their efforts to preserve, maintain, and revitalize their Native languages. In particular, S. 1163 would amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize the ANA grant program through FY 2020. This reauthorization is critical, as there are many

Native language programs in need of support. As the ANA's letter declining Acoma's application for Esther Martinez funding indicated, resources are extremely limited such that not all eligible applicants are able to receive these vital resources. Additionally, Acoma supports S. 1163's revisions to the grant program, which would lower the number of children required to form language nests and language survival schools and extend the duration of grants to up to five years. This added flexibility is important to enable Tribes to design programs that best fit their needs.

Acoma also supports the expansion of programs to support Native language and culture in S. 410. The bill's exemption of Native language teachers from Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA") qualification requirements and its mandate that states develop a licensure or certification process for Native language teachers. As stated above, Acoma has had difficulty getting Native language teachers certified in New Mexico public schools. Tribal standards and processes for selecting the individuals entrusted with passing on our Native languages—and with them, important aspects of our cultures and traditions—should be respected by states. S. 410 would also amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize appropriations for grants through 2019. This reauthorization is critical to providing Tribal language programs much-needed support.

Finally, Acoma supports S. 1928's provisions to support and train Native language educators. The bill would cancel loans for Native language immersion teachers and create a Native Language Teacher Training Program. As our communities are losing more and more fluent speakers as elders pass on, it becomes increasingly important that younger generations dedicate themselves to becoming fluent in their Native languages and becoming equipped to pass on these languages to others.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to say Dá'wáéh, which means thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony about our Aak'um'e Dzeeni, our Acoma language. And thank you for taking up these important bills to help us in our struggle against language loss. These legislative efforts are important not just to Acoma, but to Tribal people throughout the United States.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. MoQuino. We appreciate your testimony and those good wishes.

Thank you.

Dr. MARTINEZ.

STATEMENT OF GLENABAH MARTINEZ, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Ms. MARTINEZ. [Greeting in Native language.]

Chairman Barasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, my name is Glenabah Martinez. I am from the Pueblo Nation of Taos and the Navajo Nation. I am honored to be present today at your hearing.

I was born and raised at Taos Pueblo where I learned about my cultural and linguistic traditions through daily life. My parents and grandparents were instrumental in teaching me how to speak my Native language, how to conduct myself in ceremony and how to live in harmony with the earth.

I honor my grandparents and their wisdom as they guided their children and grandchildren to honor the integrity of our cultural sovereignty at Taos Pueblo and to set goals for academic achievement in western education without compromising our cultural foundation and core values as indigenous people.

On behalf of the College of Education at UNM, I appreciate the opportunity to present to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs our support of the BUILD Act. My testimony will focus on two components, on the language and cultural education component and teacher and administrator cultural competence of Native American learners.

Today, as this Committee reviews this vital and important Act, our hope is that this body will affirm its commitment to excellence in educational services provided for Native students, families, Native nations and leadership.

As stated prior by the two speakers here, we also support the reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Act because it is critical for tribal language initiatives that target early childhood populations.

While standard Federal programs such as Head Start have been the primary source of preschool and early childhood education, Native language maintenance has often been afforded less emphasis in those programs in the mistaken belief that earlier and earlier introductions to English will benefit our children.

In reality, it has resulted in those preschool generations at a loss for Native language development.

In retrospect, many Native tribes are now reconsidering how important it is for young children to establish a firm foundation in the Native language. This has moved an increasing number of them to initiate early childhood language initiatives.

However, as in school-based language programs, there is much needed support for continued professional development for preschool and early childhood educators.

A second component of the Act emphasizes the importance of tribal leaders and members to teach Native languages in schools. In New Mexico, we have the 520 Alternative Certificate that was established in 2002.

This process allows fluent speakers to teach Native languages in public schools. The tribe determines the proficiency of the Native language person who applies for the certificate and the State's Public Education Department follows the lead of the tribe in issuing this three year and nine year renewal certificate.

A critical aspect of this process is the training needed for speakers who have never taught language in a school setting. This is currently available to tribes in New Mexico through UNM. UNM offers these services as IHE and does outreach to all 22 tribal nations in our State as well as in others.

The third component of the bill seeks to allow standards assessments, classroom lessons and teaching strategies to be modified to accommodate diverse cultural and language learning needs.

New Mexico is a geographic site with 22 sovereign Native nations. Students in pre-K to 12 settings in our State can be found in both urban and rural settings attending a wide range of schools.

It is equally important to recognize cultural education that takes place within specific Native nations through active participation in culturally specific ceremonial life. This non-western centered education embarks centuries old knowledge and skills that pre-date European contact.

It is critical that curriculum instruction and assessment not only be culturally relevant but also be culturally sustaining.

The 13 Native faculty in the College of Education at UNM recognizes the urgency of preparing Native and non-Native teachers and administrators to provide Native students in New Mexico with a quality education.

It is in this context that we developed 21 student learning outcomes that pre-service teacher education candidates should meet in their programs of study for certification from early childhood to high school.

In conclusion, we make the following recommendations. One, we recommend that the BUILD Act provide for expansion of the Esther Martinez Act to include a specific focus on training support for early childhood teacher education programs.

Two, we recommend the BUILD Act provide the support for training collaborations between tribal nations and local tribal colleges and universities with faculty expertise and experience with Native language initiatives.

Three, we recommend the BUILD Act provide support for university-based teacher programs and initiatives focused specifically on developing teacher and administrator cultural competency in working with Native American students building teacher pipelines to attract Native American students into the teaching profession.

Finally, we recommend the BUILD Act support collaborative initiatives between tribes and local colleges of education to assist in technical assistance and capacity building.

I applaud this Committee and Senator Tom Udall for taking action on the quality of education Native American students, families and Native nations receive. I believe it is in this spirit of love for humanity that injustices can be addressed and corrected for our youth, families and indigenous peoples as a means of ensuring educational justice and equity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice Chairman for granting me this opportunity to speak to you today. I look forward to addressing any questions you or your Committee members may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Martinez follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GLENABAH MARTINEZ, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the College of Education at the University of New Mexico (UNM), I appreciate the opportunity to present to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs our support of S.410. The proposed legislation known as the BUILD Act will strengthen language and cultural education, the relationship between the Department of Interior and Department of Education, teacher and administrator cultural competence with Native American learners, access to resources for tribal schools, Bureau of Indian Education schools, and Native American students, and school facility innovation. My testimony will focus on two components of the BUILD Act: (1) Language and Cultural Education and (2) Teacher and Administrator Cultural Competence with Native American Learners. Today, as this Committee reviews this vital and important Act, our hope is that this body will affirm its commitment to excellence in educational services provided for Native students, families, Native Nations, and leadership.

PART TWO: LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

For Indigenous Peoples across the Western Hemisphere, this nation, and the state of New Mexico (NM), Native language and cultural education are critical elements in the concerted cultivation of the educated Native person. Drawing on extensive research with Native youth, families, and educators, Martinez (2010) identified four powerful discourses regarding the construction of the educated Native person: (1) The two worlds metaphor is a popular means of drawing distinctions between what counts as knowledge in the "whiteman's" and the traditional Indigenous world; (2) Cultural representations and signifying practices from the mainstream affect how Indigenous youth and their teachers construct an educated Native person; (3) Indigenous knowledge (content, values, language, and practice) are at the core of Indigenous youth constructions of an educated person;

and (4) Indigenous youth recognize the politics of what counts as knowledge. Collectively, they emphasize the point that the cultural production of an educated Native person is complex because of the intersectionality of not only race, class, culture, and gender, but also knowledge, epistemology, and worldviews. As Ladson-Billings (2000) notes, "epistemology is intimately linked to worldview" (p. 258).

Findings from the Martinez (2010) study were confirmed in the report *Indian Education in New Mexico, 2025* developed by a team of researchers and educators in 2010. Drawing on extensive research across the state of NM, the team identified eight forms of best practices. Two are particularly relevant to support of this legislation:

Schools that foster the Educated Native Person are those that,

- strengthen cultural identity by promoting and supporting strong Native American values, traditions, culture, and language at the local level;
- have native American adults from local communities who serve as role models and mentors to students;
- provide a foundation for life-long learning;
- create bridges to successful postsecondary opportunities by using college bridge programs and conducting summer visits on college and tribal community college campuses; and
- work with the tribal government to connect careers with community development....

Schools that successfully advance Curriculum are those that,

- make curriculum relevant to Native students' lives, in multiple ways, by incorporating experiential learning techniques that bring meaning to local places, events and situations;
- integrate Native history, science and philosophy in all courses, for the benefit of all students;
- use information technologies, such as the internet, to direct self-learning and self-awareness;
- integrate textbooks and resources written by Native Americans that are more contemporary and provide for in-depth, critical reading and exchanges among students; and
- diversify learning activities in the arts, sports, and technical vocations. (pp. v-vi)

The best practices noted above are directly linked to the New Mexico Indian Education Act. New Mexico is unique in that it is one of a handful of states in the nation to legislate Indian education in public education.[1]

The New Mexico Indian Education Act (NMIEA) was enacted as policy in 2003. The Act is politically significant because of the potential power embedded in the

[1] Montana Indian Education For All; South Dakota Indian Education Act; Arizona Indian Education Act; Wisconsin Educational Act 31; Washington State House Bill 1495; Maine Revised Statute 4706

eleven-part statement of purpose.[2] Jojola, Lee, Alacantara, Belgarde, Bird, Lopez, and Singer (2010) provide a succinct description of the act:

> The *New Mexico Indian Education Act* (NMIEA) was passed in 2003 in an effort to ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments for Native students in public schools. The act sought to develop and implement positive educational systems; enhance the educational opportunities for students and aid in the development of culturally relevant materials for use in New Mexico schools; develop strategies for ensuring the maintenance of Native languages; increase tribal involvement and control; create formal government to government relationships between the tribes and state; and increase parental involvement in schools. The act also created an advisory council to oversee the Indian Education Act. The New Mexico Public Education Department, Indian Education Division contracted with the IESG to examine how well the schools were doing with regard to implementing the act. (p. 1)

A critical component of the New Mexico Indian Education Act addresses the importance of supporting Native American language maintenance and revitalization efforts.

Professor Christine Sims of Acoma Pueblo is my colleague at UNM. Professor Sims is a renowned scholar on Native language revitalization in research, curriculum, instruction, and policy. In 2003, Professor Sims submitted testimony to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee explaining the need for Native language survival:

> For indigenous people across this nation, the significance of issues related to language survival are inextricably entwined with cultural survival. For Native American communities the continuance of cultural values, traditions, native belief and governance systems are dependent on the continued transmission and use of native spoken languages. Unfortunately, for many native people this process has been seriously impacted by various historical factors that have attempted to destroy Native languages and cultures. This has included federal education policies and key events spanning the history of this nation and its treatment of America's original inhabitants. For some tribes, language loss has occurred to the degree that few or no speakers now exist. In other tribes, efforts to maintain and revitalize native languages and stem the pace of language shift are being seriously pursued through community-based and school-based language efforts.
>
> Native American language revitalization efforts in my home state of New Mexico are being implemented by some tribes utilizing community-based approaches to address the need for creating younger generations of Native language speakers. In these cases tribal members in their various capacities as fluent speaking elders, Native traditional leaders and parents have taken up the responsibility of Native language teaching and language renewal (Benjamin, Romero, & Pecos,1997; Blum-Martinez,2000; Blum-

[2] See the website: http://www.ped.state.nm.us/indian.ed/dl08/ARTICLE.23A.pdf for the entire text of the act.

Martinez, & Pecos, 2001). Some of these efforts have been supported in part by language grants from the Administration for Native Americans.

Among native language communities of the southwest, the phenomenon of language shift is increasingly evident although it varies from community to community in a state like New Mexico that includes 21 different tribes and six major languages. The need for language survival is becoming an issue of increasing concern, even among language communities where the native tongue is still being spoken as a child. Among the five major languages of the Pueblo Indian tribes, the Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Keres, and Zuni, languages have always functioned as the medium of spiritual and cultural life among the nineteen Pueblo Indian tribes that speak these languages. The Athabaskan languages spoken by the Apache and Navajo people are equally vital to the continuation of their cultural heritage. Yet, all are faced with the reality that language survival is threatened by tremendous socioeconomic, educational, and sociocultural pressures in today's society. While initial steps to strengthen and revitalize native language use have been pursued by various New Mexico tribes, the threat of language loss remains constant and warrants continued vigilance.

The uniqueness of Pueblo languages in our state reflects a history of some of the oldest and longest sustained cultures in this nation. Moreover, these languages have existed and still function primarily within a sociocultural and socioreligious community context (Blum-Martinez, 2000; Sims, 2001; Suina, 1990). As such, the oral tradition serves as the critical vehicle by which a community such as mine, Acoma Pueblo, maintains its internal sociocultural organization, its oral histories, cultural knowledge, and spiritual life ways. As well, the theocratic nature of our traditional governance system is dependent on speakers who can use the language in all its domains to encourage, to advise, to admonish, to pray, to guide, and to educate. To lose our language means that everything that is held together as a society will begin to unravel if the native language is lost among younger generations.

The implications of language loss are especially significant given this context where oral language use is still the basis of intergenerational cultural transmission and the foundation of tribal governance. Moreover, the erosion of native languages threatens to undermine the very core of spiritual belief systems that have been the foundation and stability of Pueblo societies through countless generations. The survival of these languages into the 21st century as oral based languages is a testimony to the resilience and wisdom with which tribal elders and tribal leaders have steadfastly refused to give up these languages, despite overwhelming pressures in the last century to abandon them. Their legacy and the future of young generations who will one day take their place and mine as leaders in our tribes will depend upon the steps we take today.

This testimony captured the critical importance then, in 2003, for supporting the passage of Senate Bill 575 and the amendments to the Native Languages Act of 1990

and 1992. At the present time, I understand that S. 410 is seeking to reauthorize the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Act.

Reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Act

On behalf of the College of Education at UNM, we support the reauthorization of this important Act. The reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Act is especially critical for tribal language initiatives that target early childhood populations. While standard federal programs such as Head Start have been the primary provider of pre-school and early childhood education, Native language maintenance has often been afforded less emphasis in these programs in the mistaken belief that earlier and earlier introductions to English will benefit our children. In reality it has resulted in most preschool generations at a loss for Native language development.

In retrospect, many tribes are now reconsidering how important it is for young children to establish a firm foundation in the Native language and this has moved an increasing number of them to initiate early childhood language initiatives. However as in school based language programs there is much needed support for continued professional development for preschool and early childhood educators, teachers and families about the efficacy and benefits of dual language education. There is a need for innovative approaches that will support the development of children's native language, as well as their cultural knowledge.

In New Mexico we have two such innovative efforts: the Keres Children's Language Center (KCLC) which is a Montessori School established three years ago in Cochiti Pueblo for 3-5 year old Cochiti children. In this school where Keres language is used as the medium of instruction, the children have made tremendous progress in learning the language and the teaching staff has added a Kindergarten and a First grade level to keep up with children's language progress. In Jemez Pueblo, the Tribal Council has mandated that their Head Start Program make the transition to a full Towa immersion program in order to maintain the Towa language among young children.

These are examples of new initiatives that tribes have implemented *but* they continue to need training and technical assistance support that will help them build their internal capacity to teach language and to support the long-term sustainability of these efforts in their communities. At UNM, the American Indian Language Center currently works with six different tribes on Early Childhood language efforts. This has been in response to a major absence of teacher training programs that have Native language development as a major focus.

We recommend for **Language and Cultural Education** that the **BUILD ACT provide** the ***expansion of the Esther Martinez Act to include a specific focus on training support for Early childhood teacher training program staffs and language speakers in collaboration with tribal colleges and universities that have faculty expertise in Native language development and early childhood education.***

Fluent Speakers Teaching Native Languages

A second component of language and cultural education in the BUILD Act emphasizes the importance of tribal leaders and members to teach Native languages

in schools. Through the efforts of Christine Sims, Carlotta Bird, and other advocates for the revitalization and maintenance of Native Languages in New Mexico, we have the 520 Alternative Certificate that was established in 2002 as a result of the NM Indian Education Act. This process allows fluent speakers to teach language in NM public schools. The tribe determines the proficiency of the Native speaker who applies for this certificate and the NM Public Education Department follows the lead of the tribe in issuing this three year and nine year renewal certificate.

A critical aspect of this process is the *training* that is needed for speakers who have never taught language in a school setting. This is currently available to tribes in NM through the UNM American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center. It is the only Center in NM presently offering these services as an Institution of Higher Education and does outreach to all 22 tribal nations as well as other tribes outside the state through its summer Native American Language Teachers' Institute, ongoing workshops and training. In order to support the continued growth and expansion of these school based language initiatives its important that there continues to be ample resources for training and technical assistance available to tribes.

We recommend for **Language and Cultural Education** that the **BUILD ACT** provide the ***support for training collaborations between tribal nations and local tribal colleges and universities with faculty expertise and training experience working with Native language initiatives to help continue the development and expansion of these efforts.***

Modification of Standards, Assessments, and Pedagogy for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

The third component of language and cultural education in the BUILD Act seeks to allow standards, assessments, classroom lessons, and teaching strategies to be modified to accommodate diverse culture and language learning needs. As indicated in the empirically-based reports and articles generated by Cajete (1997), Sims (2003), Jojola, Lee, Alacantara, Belgarde, Bird, Lopez, and Singer (2010) and Martinez (2015), it is clear that curriculum, instruction, assessment, and policy must be modified to serve the growing needs of an increasingly diverse K-12 Native American student population in states like New Mexico.

New Mexico is the geographic site of 22 sovereign Native Nations. Students in Pre-K to12 settings in our state can be found in both urban and rural settings attending schools that are tribally controlled, schools that are in transition from BIE to tribally controlled, schools in large urban areas, schools in cities and towns that are adjacent to reservations (also known as border towns), private and parochial schools, charter schools, and boarding schools. A Native American student in New Mexico, for example, can attend a public school in a district like Zuni Public Schools where Native Americans – mostly Zuni – are 99.2% of the total enrollment or attend a public school in a district like Albuquerque where 115 different American Indian/Alaska Native tribes comprise the 5.1% of total enrollment. In addition, it is equally important to recognize cultural education that takes place within specific Native Nations through active participation in culture-specific ceremonial life. This

non-western centered education imparts centuries-old knowledge and skills that predate European contact.

In a recent study conducted by Martinez (2015), she found that Native students who attended a high school in a border town in northern New Mexico navigated their way through the public school by balancing, and sometimes, compromising their values as Pueblo People with mainstream values embedded in public high school life. For example, being excused from school to participate in a range of cultural activities and ceremonial life was a point of contention for the students, their families, the leadership of the Pueblo Nation and the public school leadership. The following is an excerpt from Martinez's study:

> Researcher: So do you think the teachers know about the culture of your pueblo?
>
> Student #1: Kind of, but not really because they think that we just miss school to miss school sometimes, but we're not missing school to miss school. We're going out and doing our thing. So, but yeah, they need to be more understanding.
>
> Student #2: They don't really get what we do. Like how they were mentioning earlier this morning by saying that even if we attend religious doings or anything, they'll still mark you absent.
>
> Researcher: Is it an excused absence though?
>
> Student #2: Huh-uh. Like they used to, but then now they're just thinking that we're saying that just to stay out of school.
>
> Student #1: Yeah, like if I went up there they would have just marked me absent for no reason: "He didn't come to school just because he didn't come to school."
>
> Researcher: Even though you are getting an education about what we need to do up there.
>
> Student #3: Like last year they wanted from something from the Governor [from the pueblo] that we do have to do this.
>
> Student #2: Yeah, like they want proof from like the Governor and that's pretty crazy. Like they know about the main feast days. There ain't going to be school that day, but we have like other doings within that. They think that we just have only a certain doings that they know about, but they don't think about the stuff that we do in secret.
>
> Researcher: So if you guys *[participate in a multi-day ceremony]*, it's like a big hassle.
>
> Student #2: Like for that, they know about [it] so they'll excuse you for [it], but like if it's for *[other ceremonies or cultural obligations]* or anything like that, they won't understand and you can't tell them everything.

The ceremonial calendar of the Pueblo Nation referred to by the students in the study does not coincide with the academic calendars in public and private schools. This results in the necessity of students, staff, and faculty who are from the Pueblo Nation and who participate in the ceremonial life to be absent from school and work. More often than not, this is a major decision because absence from one – ceremony or school/work – will most likely result in some form of punishment at one extreme or missing out on an opportunity to earn a wage. Finally, it is important

to note that in the context of diversity among Native American students in New Mexico, it is important to acknowledge that there is a continuum of cultural and traditional experiences among Native youth. Some students enter school with a strong tribal specific linguistic and cultural foundation while others may not have any knowledge of his or her Native language and/or cultural traditions.

PART THREE: TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE WITH NATIVE AMERICAN LEARNERS

Pedagogy is the art of teaching. As a former high school teacher for over 15 years, associate professor of teacher education in the field of secondary social studies education, K-12 curriculum writer, Associate Dean of Educator Preparation and Development, and educator of Native American Studies at a state juvenile detention center, I am a firm believer of the critical importance of the connection between cultural competence and academic achievement for Native students. Cultural competence speaks to the engagement of educational leadership, faculty, support-staff, community leaders, students, the state (local, state and national), and families in acknowledging community cultural wealth. Yosso (2005) developed a six-part Cultural Wealth Model that educators can employ in framing their interaction with students.

1. Aspirational capital: The ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. Linguistic capital: The intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style.
3. Familial capital: Those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition.
4. Social capital: Networks of people and community resources.
5. Navigational capital: Skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind.
6. Resistant capital: Those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality. (pp. 77-81)

Through this model, Yosso provides guidance to school districts and colleges of education that prepares K-12 educators in culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy. A culturally competent educator and administrator will recognize the integrity of the cultures represented in their schools. Specifically for Native People, this is particularly important because of the unique political relationship that we have as sovereign Nations.

The College of Education at the University of New Mexico is unique among Research I universities across the nation because of the number and quality of Native tenure-track and tenured faculty.

- Glenabah Martinez (Taos/Navajo): LLSS and Associate Dean
- Christine Sims (Acoma Pueblo): LLSS and American Indian Language and Policy Center
- Lorenda Belone (Navajo): Health Education and Exercise Science (HESS)
- Carlotta Bird (Kewa): American Indian Language and Policy Center

- Greg Cajete (Santa Clara Pueblo): Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) and Chair of Native American Studies Program
- Terri Flowerday (Lakota): Educational Psychology
- Joy Griffin (First Nations Blackfoot): HESS and Special Assistant UNM Division of Equity and Inclusion
- Cathy Gutierrez-Gomez: Early Childhood Multicultural Education (ECME)
- Tyson Marsh: TEELP
- Robin Minthorn (Kiowa): Teacher Education, Educational Leadership and Policy (TEELP)
- Shawn Secatero (Navajo): TEELP
- Vincent Werito (Navajo): LLSS

Native faculty in the College of Education is an active group who meet on a regular basis to address the preparation of Native and non-Native students for professions in Education.

In 2015, the faculty met for two days and engaged in thoughtful, critical dialogue about the preparation of teacher candidates. Our rich experiences as Indigenous men and women, educators, and scholars guided a discussion that has been at the forefront of Indigenous Peoples since the early periods of colonization and the introduction of Western education as a colonizing tool. Greg Cajete provided us with a paper that he authored in 1997, *Strategy to Incorporate Native American Content into College of Education Programs*. The intended audience of this paper was UNM's College of Education.

> Two primary factors have fundamentally changed the role of New Mexico Indian Tribes in the education sector. They include:
>
> 1. The State of New Mexico's educational obligations to New Mexico Indian Tribes, which are currently being re-negotiated or otherwise redefined. The new roles for education will be difficult to meet for a relatively inexperienced state government and the University of New Mexico College of Education Faculty without adequate training or the development of a proper understanding of pertinent issues.
> 2. The State of New Mexico and Tribes through the New Mexico State Department of Education and the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education are engaged in a process that is expected to redefine the relationship between New Mexico Tribes and the State of New Mexico....
>
> A variety of new skills and knowledge are required to help New Mexico educators meet the needs and challenges of these new roles. New Mexico Tribes require people who can develop infrastructure, broker the creation of culturally appropriate partnerships, and help their communities understand how to meet their new responsibilities. New Mexico schools serving Indian populations require people who can effectively interact with New Mexico Tribes and help to establish parent and community obligations to New Mexico Indian Tribes. (p. 1)

In a review of the current status of Indian Education in New Mexico, it appears that the major points identified by Greg Cajete in 1997 are still relevant in 2015.

Furthermore, according to the New Mexico Public Education Department's Indian Education Division, the number of American Indian teachers in New Mexico has decreased from 631 in school year 2007-2008 to 579 in school year 2009-2010. In the College of Education, there is a serious underrepresentation of Native American pre-service teacher education students in secondary education at the University of New Mexico. Drawing from the College of Education's Research and Information Management database the following information is evidence of the low numbers of Native American students in both programs but markedly in secondary education:

Semester	Elementary		Secondary	
	American Indian	American Indian Only	American Indian	American Indian Only
Fall 2010	43	39	9	9
Spr 2011	34	29	8	6
Fall 2011	37	31	6	6
Spr 2012	42	33	5	5
Fall 2012	43	36	6	4
Spr 2013	32	26	4	2

Note: Not census data, but point-in-time only
Note: The column labeled "American Indian" includes students who have selected American Indian and one or more races/ethnicities. The column labeled "American Indian Only" selected only the American Indian race category.
Note: Only baccalaureate students enrolled and registered at the ABQ campus are included, and have an Elementary or Secondary Education program selected, for the given semester.

Native faculty recognizes the urgency of preparing Native and non-Native teachers and administrators to provide Native American students in New Mexico with a quality education. It is in this context that we proposed a list of twenty-one student learning outcomes that pre-service teacher education candidates should meet in their programs of study for certification from early childhood to high school.

1. Knowledge of twenty-two Indigenous Nations in New Mexico, Arizona, & Utah
2. Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples in the Southwest
3. Knowledge of various Indigenous language families
4. Awareness of unique political status of sovereign Native Nations
5. Knowledge of legal/educational aspects of sovereign status: e.g., New Mexico Indian Education Act, policies, treaties
6. Awareness of intersectionalities e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
7. Awareness of geographic location e.g., urban & rural
8. Awareness of the continuum of cultural and traditional experiences among Indigenous youth/students
9. Knowledge of the impact of historical trauma and colonialism
10. Knowledge of white privilege and social justice

11. Awareness of Indigenous epistemologies and ways of knowing and being (disposition)
12. Recognition of the role of elders, families, community, and culture of Indigenous children
13. Recognition of the centrality of spirituality and ceremonial life in Indigenous communities/cultures
14. Knowledge of Indigenous philosophies as it relates to education
15. Knowledge of decolonization and the role of education in decolonization
16. Knowledge of Indigenous methodologies (pedagogies and research e.g., story telling and participatory action research)
17. Knowledge of demographic shifts that contribute to the complexity of learning
18. Awareness of protocol in working with Indigenous families and Nations
19. Knowledge of the fluidity of educational structures and systems e.g., BIE, contract, tribal, charter, public
20. Knowledge of professional requirements e.g., licensure, dossier, NES, etc.
21. Knowledge of persistence of P-20 education and mitigating factors

The report and twenty-one student learning outcomes were presented to the College of Education's Curriculum Consensus Committee (CCC) in October 2015. The report was seriously considered by the CCC and the programs of educator preparation – early childhood, special education, physical education, elementary education, and secondary education – in revising the scope and sequence of curriculum for teacher candidates. We are currently engaged in identifying ways that the student learning outcomes can be embedded in existing educator preparation courses and field experiences.

The College of Education at UNM is actively addressing the creation of a pipeline of students from secondary and post-secondary settings to professions in teaching, administration, research, and health policy. The following initiatives are representative of the commitment Native faculty have made to improving American Indian Education in New Mexico:

- **The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center** established in 2008 by Dr. Christine Sims to provide Native Nations in New Mexico with technical assistance in program planning, language curriculum development, public advocacy on language issues. In addition, the Center trains Native language speakers to prepare and teach their Native language through on-site and on-campus workshops. The Native American Language Teachers' Institute (NALTI) is another initiative of the Center that provides a one-week intensive professional development session in second language learning principles, language immersion strategies, and language curriculum planning. A recent special project directed by the Center is the *The Early Childhood Pueblo Language Project (2012-2014)* and the *NM Tribal Language Resource Project* (WKKF Funded) aimed at support for language immersion initiatives for children 0-8 years of age, through mentoring of community members in language teaching and resource development. The Center is also engaged in active language native initiatives in New Mexico including: The Language Immersion Nest at Cochiti Pueblo, the Towa Language Immersion in Walatowa

Head Start (Jemez Pueblo), the Keres Children's Language Center (KCLC) Montessori School at Cochiti Pueblo as well as language inclusion in some tribal Head Start or Early Childcare programs.

- **The American Indian Educator Mentor Program** was recently established by Dr. Christine Sims and Dr. Glenabah Martinez in 2015. The program is a two-year initiative providing support for New Mexico American Indian undergraduate students pursuing a teaching degree in elementary or secondary education. The purpose is to increase the number of NM American Indians teaching in New Mexico public schools and provide a support network that will enable individuals to successfully complete teacher preparation programs.
- **The Early Childhood Transformational Action Group (TAG) at San Felipe Pueblo** is guided by faculty in ECME and LLSS including Dr. Cathy Gutierrez-Gomez and Dr. Christine Sims. The goals of this group are to establish an authentic collaboration with our San Felipe colleagues, to facilitate educator capacity within the San Felipe community, to learn by co-engaging in praxis with students and cooperating teachers, and to discover new levels of responsivity and attunement to diversity in our student teachers for serving families of New Mexico.
- **The Early Childhood Program at Isleta Pueblo** is directed by Dr. Cathy Gutierrez Gomez. She has been providing professional development to the Isleta Head Start Program since 2011. The program is designed according to program and classroom staff needs. It includes seminars on topics such as best practices, cultural responsiveness, classroom and behavior management and addressing individual professional development needs. In addition the program provides academic advisement and support for those seeking degrees in early childhood education.
- **The Promoting Our Learning & Leadership and Empowering Our Nations (POLLEN) program** is directed by Dr. Shawn Secatero and it is designed to enhance educational leadership skills and knowledge for Native American teachers who aspire to be district and school administrators. Courses in this program include Native American leadership and administrator licensure content.
- **The Native American Educational Leadership (NALE) Ed.D. Cohort Initiative** is directed by Robin Minthorn. The purpose of the NALE cohort is to enable UNM COE, TEELP and the educational leadership program to address the specific needs within the tribal and broader Native American educational leadership needs in New Mexico. NALE will demonstrate UNM's commitment to the Native American tribal and urban communities needs surrounding Indian education. The intentional curriculum and program development will look to address the unique needs of the communities across the P-20 pipeline while increasing the number of Native American administrators across the education spectrum in New Mexico, nationally and internationally.
- **The Indigenous Research Lab (IRL)** is directed by Dr. Terri Flowerday and was created in 2014. It is a new research lab in the College of Education at UNM. The Indigenous Research Lab (IRL), housed in the Educational Psychology Program,

has Native American faculty and graduate students working together on research projects that increase awareness of Indigenous issues in education. The goal of the IRL is to support Native American graduate students in their development as researchers, and to serve Native communities through research projects that address educational needs in Native American schools. The lab explores the ways in which the unique sociocultural history and environment of Indigenous people of America impact current issues in education and research. More specifically, research in the IRL examines how language, culture, and identity affect teaching and learning, motivation, and achievement for Native students.

- **The Family Listening/Circle Program: An Intergenerational Family Prevention Program** is directed by Dr. Lorenda Belone and Dr. Nina Wallerstein. The program is designed to focus on addressing community wide substance use/abuse challenges through enhanced child-family communication and coping skills utilizing traditional dialogue, indigenous languages, and empowerment approaches.

We recommend for ***Teacher and Administrator Cultural Competence With Native American Learners that the BUILD ACT provide:***

- ***Support for university-based teacher preparation program initiatives focused specifically on developing teacher and administrator cultural competence in working with Native American students; building teacher pipelines to attract Native American students into the teaching profession; provide incentives to build cadres of Native American teachers who have a vested interest in staying in their communities and preparing the next generation of tribal leaders, scholars, and educators.***

- ***Support for collaborative initiatives between tribes and local Colleges of Education to provide TA and capacity building that will assist them in successful planning and implementation and operation of their own schools, prepare and train tribal education leaders and administrators who can contribute to making significant improvements in the educational learning environments of their schools and communities.***

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION

The focus of my life's work as an educator, researcher, and curriculum writer has been centered on diversity and the education of Indigenous Peoples. My approach to teaching, conducting research, and work with educators at UNM and across the state and region is grounded in critical educational studies and motivated by a spirit of love and compassion. I was born and raised at Taos Pueblo where I learned about my cultural and linguistic traditions through daily life. My parents and grandparents were instrumental in teaching me how to speak my Native language, how to conduct myself in ceremony, and how to live in harmony with the earth.

My grandparents, Annie and Joe Sunhawk Sandoval shaped this spirit of love and compassion that I have held throughout my work in education thus far. Throughout my life, I heard my grandfather talk and pray about love and compassion for humanity. He taught his grandchildren to seek the goodness in people and to let love and compassion guide our life's work. My grandmother also emphasized the importance of love in one's work with youth. My grandparents were students at Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) at the beginning of the twentieth century when deculturalization and "Americanization" were at the core of their educational experiences. In my grandmother's stories about life at SFIS, she spoke of formation marching before sunrise and speaking our Native language in secret with other girls from our pueblo at Taos. When I told her that I was unsure if I had chosen the right profession during my first year teaching at Rio Grande High School in 1985, she said to me in our Native language, "Just love them. Show your love to your students and let them know that you are there because you love them." Given the political, social and economic conditions of the early twentieth century when Native Americans in New Mexico were not U.S. citizens until 1924 and did not have the right to vote until 1948, I realize the enormity of the significance of cultural survival and the determination to preserve autonomy in all aspects of life as Indigenous Peoples.

I applaud this Committee and U.S. Senator Tom Udall for taking action on the quality of education that Native American students, families, and Native Nations receive. I believe it is in this spirit of love for humanity that injustices can be addressed and corrected for our youth, families, and Indigenous Peoples as a means of ensuring educational justice and equity. Thank you Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice-Chairman for granting me this opportunity to speak to you today. I look forward to addressing any questions that you or the committee members may have.

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Doctor Martinez.
Ms. ACCARDI.

STATEMENT OF MICHELLE ACCARDI, DIRECTOR, STATE POLICY AND OUTREACH, NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

Ms. ACCARDI. Thank you, Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester and distinguished Committee members for the opportunity to speak on the Native Educator Support and Training, or NEST, Act.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a proud supporter of the NEST Act. My name is Michelle Accardi and I am a National Board Certified Teacher.

For fourteen years I was a special education teacher in Albuquerque, New Mexico's public schools. I also had the privilege of working with students as a teacher and consultant at two Bureau of Indian Education-affiliated schools on the Laguna and Zia Pueblos in New Mexico.

In November of 2011, I became the Director of State Policy for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in Arlington, Virginia.

In my office in Arlington, I have a picture of my last class in Albuquerque that rests alongside a small piece of pottery. The pot was a farewell gift from Douglas and his grandparents. Douglas was a Native American student that I worked with for three years.

He had faced many hardships in his young life and was being raised by his grandparents. As much as they wanted to keep him close to his family and their roots in their tribal community, his special needs could not be adequately addressed by the teachers there. They made the difficult choice to bring him to live in Albuquerque.

I am proud to say that I was able to work with Douglas and help him to make great progress in his reading, math, and social skills. I still smile when I think of the jokes he loved to tell and how excited he would get when he had the joy of telling his grandmother that he had done well on a lesson.

It breaks my heart when I think about how much he missed by not being in the community that he loved and not learning his traditions, culture, language, and family. Native families should not have to relocate to find the best teachers for their children.

As I work at the National Board to develop initiatives and policies to bring more Board-certified teachers into the classrooms that need them most, I see the butterfly pattern on that small pot and think of Douglas.

I thank you for the opportunity to discuss the National Board Certification and our outreach to Native American educators and educators who teach Native American students, and why the NEST Act is critical for expanding these efforts.

The National Board is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of the teaching profession for the benefit of all teachers and all students. The National Board's rigorous certification process defines, develops, and assesses quality teaching, with a proven connection to improved student learning and achievement.

Similar to the professional boards in the fields of medicine, architecture and engineering, National Board Certification assures the public, parents, families, and communities, that the teachers who

educate our children are experts in their field and have the skills to help all students learn.

Two critical components of Board certification are reflective practice and collaboration among peers, family and community to improve student learning. As I went through the process, I developed a laser-like focus in identifying what did well and what I could improve the next time to make sure my students' learning advanced.

More than a decade of research from across the country confirms that students taught by board-certified teachers learn more than students taught by other teachers. The positive impact of having board-certified teachers is even greater for minority and low income students.

Unfortunately, currently there are only approximately ten board-certified teachers in BIE-affiliated schools nationwide. In contrast, as of November 2015, more than 110,000 teachers across the Nation have achieved board certification, including 152 in Montana, 585 in Wyoming and 969 in New Mexico.

We all know the tremendous struggles faced by Native American students and that students at BIE schools historically have lower graduation rates and lower scores on national and State assessments than their counterparts in many public schools.

To help address these inequities, in 2014, the National Board began a partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education designed to make board certification the norm among BIE teachers. More specifically, this projects aims to support the BIE in reaching its goal of 1,000 board certified teachers in BIE-affiliated schools by the year 2020.

Any plan to grow the number of NBCTs serving Native students must address the challenges and context of the schools themselves while recognizing the logistical, pedagogical and cultural advantages of having students taught by members of their community.

This project will support BIE-affiliated teachers in the development and validation of their knowledge and skills, setting a clear pathway towards board certification.

The BIE is currently funding candidate support, bonuses for certification completion and salary increases for teachers who achieve certification. The BIE is also funding mentoring and support for candidates for board certification.

Professional development of existing staff supported by resources from the National Board is a critical strategy in this work. The initiative provides support to increase the instructional capacity of those teachers who are not yet eligible or ready for certification.

For instance, the National Board is providing teachers in BIE schools with access to videos and reflective papers of board-certified teachers through a newly-launched ATLAS online library.

After the first year of the project, I am happy to report that more than 350 teachers in BIE-affiliated schools have begun their journey to board certification. The work is off to a promising start.

The NEST Act is critical to accelerating these efforts and expanding their impact on teachers and students. The National Board is particularly pleased that the bill provides support for teachers to pursue board certification and recognizes teachers who have achieved certification through additional compensation.

The bill, in addition to promoting board certification among teachers in BIE-affiliated schools, helps to strengthen teaching and learning in tribal schools and other schools with high concentrations of Native American students.

On behalf of the National Board, I thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding these critical issues and I am happy to take any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Accardi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELLE ACCARDI, DIRECTOR, STATE POLICY AND OUTREACH, NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

Thank you Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and distinguished committee members for the opportunity to speak on the Native Educator Support and Training, or NEST, Act. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a proud supporter of the NEST Act.

My name is Michelle Accardi and I am a National Board Certified Teacher. For fourteen years I was a special education teacher in New Mexico in the Albuquerque Public Schools. I also had the privilege of working with students as a teacher and consultant at two Bureau of Indian Education affiliated schools (BIE schools) on the Laguna and Zia Pueblos in New Mexico. In November of 2011, I became the Director of State Policy for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in Arlington, Virginia.

In my office in Arlington, I have a picture of my last class in Albuquerque that rests alongside a small piece of pottery. The pot was a farewell gift from Douglas and his grandparents. Douglas was a Native American student that I worked with for three years. He had faced many hardships in his young life and was being raised by his Grandparents. As much as they wanted to keep him close to his family and his roots in their community, his special needs could not be adequately addressed by the teachers there. They made the difficult choice to bring him to live in Albuquerque. I am proud to say that I was able to work with Douglas and help him to make great progress in his reading, math, and social skills. I still smile when I think of the jokes he loved to tell and how excited he would get when he was able to tell his grandmother that he had done well on a lesson. I am still sad when I think of how much he missed by not being able to stay in the community he loved, learning his traditions, culture, language, and family. Going and visiting home every few weekends simply was not the same. Native families should not have to relocate to find the best teachers for their child. As I work at the National Board to develop initiatives and policies to bring more Board Certified teachers into the classrooms that need them most, I see the butterfly pattern on that small pot and think of Douglas.

I thank you for the opportunity to bring you information about National Board Certification and our outreach to Native American educators and all educators who teach Native American students—and why the NEST Act is critical for expanding these efforts.

For 25 years, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has been at the forefront in establishing the highest measure of teaching excellence. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of the teaching profession for the benefit of all teachers and all students. The National Board's rigorous certification process defines, develops, and assesses quality teaching, with a proven connection to improved student learning and achievement. National Board Certification assures the public—parents, families, and communities—that the teachers who educate our children are experts in their field and have the skills to help all students learn.

More specifically, National Board Certification is an advanced credential which indicates that a teacher demonstrates high levels of content and pedagogical knowledge and skill for their specific area of teaching. Similar to professional boards in the fields of medicine, architecture, and engineering, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has established the standards and assessments to measure what effective teachers should know and be able to do in their classrooms. Board Certified teachers provide evidence that they are lifelong learners who are able to translate their knowledge to students.

Reflection is at the center of everything that a Board Certified teacher does. Every lesson can be improved, every child can learn more tomorrow. The certification process requires that teachers not only submit video of their teaching, but detailed analytic papers explaining their evidence that they are meeting the standards and re-

flecting on what they can do better. As I went through the process, I developed a laser-like focus on identifying what I did well and what I could improve the next time to ensure my students learning advanced. If I expect my students to improve every day, I must always be seeking ways to improve as their teacher.

Board certification emphasizes collaboration among peers and family and community engagement. Board-certified teachers develop relationships with the family members, community leaders, and other teachers and professionals who support that student. They also seek to collaborate with other expert teachers in their school to improve student learning, analogous to the natural and common consultations among medical specialists working with the same patient.

More than a decade of research from across the country confirms that students taught by Board-certified teachers learn more than students taught by other teachers. A study mandated by Congress and conducted by the National Research Council reached this conclusion in 2008 in its comprehensive review of studies of National Board Certification up until that time.[1] Estimates of the increase in learning by students of Board-certified teachers average an additional one to two months of learning gains.[2] The positive impact of having a Board-certified teacher is even greater for minority and low-income students.[3]

Earlier this year, two separate groups of independent researchers released new studies finding Board-certified teachers are more effective at advancing student learning than non-Board-certified teachers.[4] To cite one of those studies, researchers Dan Goldhaber and James Cowan focused on Washington State: "Board-certified teachers are more effective than non-certified teachers with similar experience."[5]

Unfortunately, currently, there are only approximately 10 Board-certified teachers in BIE-affiliated schools nationwide. In contrast, as of November 2015, more than 110,000 teachers across the nation have achieved National Board Certification, including 152 Board-certified teachers in Montana, 585 Board-certified teachers in Wyoming, and 969 Board-certified teachers in New Mexico.

We all know the tremendous struggles faced by Native American students and that students at BIE schools historically have lower graduation rates and lower scores on national and state assessments than many of their counterparts in public schools.

To help address these inequities, in 2014, the National Board began a partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education to help teachers in BIE-affiliated schools become Board certified. The effort overall is designed to make Board Certification the norm among BIE teachers. More specifically, this project aims to support the BIE in reaching its goal of 1,000 Board certified teachers in BIE schools by the year 2020. Such a magnitude of accomplished teachers would constitute a critical mass leading the learning of BIE students to high levels.

Any plan to grow the number of NBCTs must address the challenges and contexts of the schools themselves. For the BIE, the challenges of rural schools coupled with the logistical, pedagogical, and cultural advantages of having students taught by members of their community lead to a clear principle guiding this project's work. This project will support BIE teachers in the development and validation of their knowledge and skills—setting a clear pathway toward Board certification.

The BIE is providing funding for candidate fee support, bonuses for certification component completion and salary increases for teachers who achieve certification. The BIE is also providing funding for mentoring and support of candidates for National Board Certification.

In addition, the initiative provides support to increase the instructional capacity of teachers who are not yet eligible or ready for certification. For instance, the Na-

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[1] National Research Council, *Assessing Accomplished Teaching: Advanced-Level Certification Programs* (Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2008).

[2] Strategic Data Project (2012). SDP Human Capital Diagnostic: Los Angeles Unified School District. Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University.

[3] LCavalluzzo, L.C. (2004). Is National Board Certification an effective signal of teacher quality? The CNA Corporation; D. Goldhaber and E. Anthony, "Can teacher quality be effectively assessed?" *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 89, no. 1 (2007): 134–50.

[4] J. Cowan and D. Goldhaber, *National Board Certification and Teacher Effectiveness: Evidence from Washington* (Bothell, Wash.: The Center for Data and Research, University of Washington, 2015), *http://www.cedr.us/papers/working/CEDR%20WP%202015–3__NBPTS%20Cert.pdf; L. Cavalluzzo et al., From Large Urban to Small Rural Schools: An Empirical Study of National Board Certification and Teaching Effectiveness* (Arlington, Va.: CAN Analysis and Solutions, 2015), *https://web.mail.comcast.net/service/home//?auth=co&loc=en__US&id=400532&part=2.*

[5] J. Cowan and D. Goldhaber, *National Board Certification and Teacher Effectiveness: Evidence from Washington* (Bothell, Wash.: The Center for Data and Research, University of Washington, 2015), *http://www.cedr.us/papers/working/CEDR%20WP%202015–3__NBPTS%20Cert.pdf.*

tional Board is providing teachers in BIE schools with access to videos and reflective papers of Board-certified teachers through a newly-launched ATLAS online library. By fostering a dialogue among all 4,000 BIE teachers and supporting teachers in their pre-service and early-career development, the initiative builds a self-sustaining culture of professional learning and peer support. Professional development of existing staff, supported by resources from the National Board, is a critical strategy in this work given the difficulty BIE faces in attracting teachers and principals to remote locations.

In short, the project is creating an expectation and a pathway for teachers in BIE-affiliated schools to achieve certification, which includes support and resources for achieving this goal.

After the first year of the project, I'm happy to report that more than 350 teachers in BIE-affiliated schools have begun their journey towards board certification and are regularly participating in mentoring sessions led by Board-certified teachers to increase their instructional capacity, ultimately benefiting the students in these schools.

This work is off to a promising start. The NEST Act is critical to accelerating these efforts and expanding their impact on teachers and students. The National Board is particularly pleased that the bill provides support for teachers to pursue Board certification and recognize teachers that have achieved Board certification through additional compensation, both of which encourage more teachers to strengthen their teaching so it meets the profession's high standards. The bill, through promoting Board certification among teachers in BIE-affiliated schools, helps to strengthen teaching and learning in tribal schools and other schools with high concentrations of Native American students.

On behalf of the National Board, I thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding these critical issues and I'm happy to take any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Accardi.

We will start questioning at this time and I would like to turn to Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Lieutenant Governor MoQuino, you mentioned in your testimony that Acoma had some difficulty getting Native language teachers certified by the State of New Mexico. Can you tell me more about the barriers you have encountered and how these barriers impacted students?

Mr. MOQUINO. We have had issues within the State of New Mexico because, as I mentioned, our elderly are the ones who speak fluently and that is who we look up to. The State wants them to go back to school to get a certified teacher certificate.

We get comments from our communities of why do I have to go back to school to get a certified teacher certificate? Do they teach that class in Keres? I say, no, they do not. They say, why do we have to go back to school to get certified to teach our own Native language? That is the issue.

Senator UDALL. They are telling the elders who have spoken this language sometimes for 70 or 80 years that they have to go back and get a degree in order to learn how to teach the language to the younger people?

Mr. MOQUINO. Exactly.

Senator UDALL. That is a big barrier.

Mr. MOQUINO. Yes, it is.

Senator UDALL. We have to work on that. We really have to work on that one.

You were the beneficiary of an Esther Martinez grant at the Acoma Pueblo. This grant allowed you to develop a language NEST only to be shuttered when the funding was withdrawn as you mentioned in your testimony.

Mr. MOQUINO. Right.

Senator UDALL. Can you tell us a little more about the importance of that program and the progress it was making?

Mr. MOQUINO. Sure. The language NEST is we get a lot of our young kids to learn and teach our traditional culture and language from birth on up to five years old. As I mentioned, that is very beautiful to hear a younger kid growing up saying in our Native language, as I mentioned, Guuwáátsíí, hello.

We want our kids to learn that language as we grow up. As tribal administration, in this position, we encourage our young men to learn the language because you never know when they might be in this position.

That is how we encourage them. We would like that language NEST from Esther Martinez to keep going forward. That is what we see within our community with the people up at Acoma.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. MoQuino, for those comments.

Turning now to Dr. Martinez, you have been spearheading some very innovative efforts at the University of New Mexico to recruit and retain more Native educators in New Mexico.

Can you talk a bit more about the American Indian Educator Mentor Program and other initiatives that seem to be working?

Ms. MARTINEZ. This is one of about 13 programs. What we have here is in the written testimony but the mentor program was recently established by Dr. Christine Sims. We are the CPIs of this project. It has ECMC private funding. We only have funding for two years.

With this project, we will be able to provide stipends. We cannot provide scholarships but we can provide stipends for people seeking certification in the secondary area in the STEM fields as well as history, language arts and physical education.

We are hoping to attract young people who are maybe in their junior or senior years and may be working on a degree in biology, history or math and tell them about the great love of teaching and talk about the contributions they can make to society. That is one of the grants we have.

Native faculty at the College of Education are all former practitioners, whether we were counselors, teachers or administrators. Our mere presence in the College of Education, you can see I look pretty Native, but to see someone like that on faculty and know they are pursuing research, like Terri Flowerday with the Indigenous Research Lab, that we are really trying hard to recruit and retain Native students at the graduate and under graduate level.

Senator UDALL. You have a career's worth of experience in teaching and Native education. Have you seen improvements over this time or do you think the current state of education for Native students is worse than a decade ago?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Quantitatively speaking, if you look at the dropout rates and proficiency rates on high stakes testing, I would say statistically we are not improving. Part of that can be attributed to the modifications in part to ELL, English language learners, the fact that there are very little modifications, if any, in that area.

Qualitatively, I would say that you probably have a growing number of Native educators who are very attentive to the needs of Native youth. For example, I work with incarcerated Native American youth at a State run detention facility. These are maximum

security youth who hopefully will leave the facility or maybe go on to an adult facility.

The qualitative element of that is to teach Native studies and talk about sovereignty, optimism and history, like Alcatraz and things of that sort, to see them and how they view their lives and how they begin to see themselves not as an individual fighting against many negative challenges but empowering themselves through knowledge.

Qualitatively as an educator, I can see a difference when you talk to them about issues related to them in not only a culturally relevant way but in a culturally sustaining way, honoring who we are as Native people.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

Thank you to all of today's witnesses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Udall.

Senator Franken, I think you are next.

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for your testimony.

Promoting Native American languages is not just about the language itself, it is also about the history interwoven into that language or with that language. Lieutenant Governor MoQuino called it "the conduit by which our culture is transmitted."

That is why bills like Senator Udall's that support the vitality of Native languages are so important.

We have seen and heard from your testimony the benefits of instruction in Native languages. In some schools where indigenous language is the primary language of instruction, we have seen improved graduation rates and better college enrollment rates than in schools where Native American students are taught only in English.

Beyond the academic benefits, there are significant cognitive, psychological and cultural benefits from the American language immersion programs. That is why I fought to include language in the K through 12 education reauthorization that will create language immersion programs in Indian country.

Dr. Martinez, let us start where you left off. What are the key benefits that you and other researchers have identified to Native language immersion and instruction programs?

Ms. MARTINEZ. One the primary benefits is that it establishes a strong cultural, linguistic foundation for Native youth to navigate later on as they go through elementary, middle school and high school education.

Especially in New Mexico, we have a range of students, some youth who have a very strong cultural and linguistic foundation, like myself. I grew up hearing the language and learning about ceremony as part of my being raised at Taos Pueblo.

Youth who have primarily grown up in urban areas, cities and so on, who may be a combination of many different tribes, maybe half Native and half African-American or half Hispanic, oftentimes because they are in an urban setting, it is very difficult for them sometimes to understand their identities because they do not hear the language around them all the time.

Social media is full of language. The English language is a hegemonic device. It is very much out there. It is everywhere around you. The difficulty then is to try to teach a language and maintain it on a daily basis so it is not just something where you know the alphabet and can identify objects but it becomes part of the way you view yourself and the world.

Senator FRANKEN. This is for anyone. We have talked a lot about cultural trauma. Is there a connection between learning your language, your cultural language and a healing of that trauma?

Ms. MARTINEZ. I will defer to someone else. Maybe Mr. MoQuino would like to address that?

Mr. MOQUINO. To answer that, yes, there is a very strong healing within our own language and just talking to people. Kids who get in trouble, as administrators, we go to schools, as I mentioned. We tell them to continue their education and be good. We use the three R's. I do not know if you know the three R's. It is not reading, writing and arithmetic.

It is respect, responsibility and reflection. Respect your school, respect your teachers, respect your parents, respect yourself. Have responsibility for yourself, the things you do at school and at home and everyplace else in your tribal culture. Reflection, look at yourself in the mirror. Who do you see?

That is what we encourage. It inspires our younger kids to really think it over and say yes, those are very healthy, healing type words we like to hear both in English and in our Native language at Acoma.

Senator FRANKEN. Dr. Martinez, I only have about 20 seconds left but do you want to answer that?

Ms. MARTINEZ. I was going to say yes. If you want, I can send you some research on that which does show a direct link between healing from historical trauma and cultural language programs because there is data out there.

Senator FRANKEN. I would love to see that. We will make sure you get my contact information.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Heitkamp.

STATEMENT OF HON. HEIDI HEITKAMP, U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA

Senator HEITKAMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Building on what Senator Franken discussed, I think we would all like to see that because we are all in this process of trying to figure out what is the new dynamic, where have we failed so spectacularly when you look at the numbers in terms of growth and opportunity, in terms of pride and respect and responsibility and reflection.

I think several of us on this Committee, including Senator Franken and myself, have come to believe that in order to restore or really begin to grow, we need to do a little more of that reflection. We need to be responsible for the reflection. Language is a big building block, a big foundational part in understanding who people are as they try to either put back their life or grow a different life than what they have seen around themselves.

I want to reflect on language programs in two ways. Number one is quality and sustainability. I think Senator Franken gave me a quick look when you said only 10 teachers in the BIE system today are in fact certified. We find that to be less than appropriate, less than responsible behavior.

Yet we have this conflict with language programs where we do not necessarily want to make that certification a barrier to developing that building block of restoration of language and rebuilding culture.

This is for anyone. I will tell you that the elders in my communities in Indian country frequently are concerned sometimes with the language programs because the language that is being taught does not reflect what they have learned.

Who is the better keeper than an elder and someone who basically spent the great part of their life speaking the language? How do we balance those two issues which is the need for qualified with board certification, as you pointed out in terms of outcomes, but also taking a look at how this is truly different, language programs are truly different? How do we balance that?

I will ask you, Ms. Robinson. How do you bridge that gap when you look at the programs for which you are responsible?

Ms. ROBINSON. It certainly is a difficult balance. I have to say looking through the bills and hearing some of the witnesses today, one of the methods that has proven to be effective is for the State or the board certification process to work with the tribe so that the tribe is able to do an alternative certification of these elders who are in the classrooms working with the teachers.

One of the projects I mentioned in Montana was the Cuts Wood School and talked specifically about elders working with the teachers in the classroom and increasing the proficiency level of Native languages for 30 students. I believe New Mexico has alternative certifications.

One of the things we promote or support under ANA is for tribes to work with local education agencies or SEAs to figure out how to determine the best people are to be in the classroom to do Native language teaching.

Senator HEITKAMP. Ms. Martinez, you seem to be nodding your head. Do you believe that this alternative process that has been adopted will, in fact, take care of the problem as I see it which is we want people who truly know the language to be the teachers of the language?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes. My colleague, Dr. Christine Sims and I have worked on this program. We do have an alternative education certification program. It has been very successful.

As an example, we have the Keres Children's Language Center, the KCLC, which is a Montessori school located in Cochiti Pueblo for children between the ages of three and five years old. Trisha Moquino was one of my former graduates. She is a founder of this school.

They have worked successfully in using the Keres language as a Native instruction and now they have added a kindergarten and first grade to continue that instruction.

Another example of this is Jemez Pueblo at Walatowa. The tribal council has mandated that their Head Start program make the

transition to full Towa immersion program in order to maintain their Towa language system.

The same thing has been happening at my Pueblo of Taos where we have the Tiwa Baby Program and the Head Start program.

Senator HEITKAMP. Do you feel comfortable that in all those programs the language being taught is, in fact, the historic and cultural language?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It is because of the people who teach and the program that Christine Sims runs.

The concern is that we need to have further support. I was just telling a friend of mine that a lot of this work we do pro bono. We use a lot of our own resources. It would be great if we had some kind of funding source to continue this work.

Senator HEITKAMP. Mr. Chairman, may I be indulged with one additional question?

The CHAIRMAN. Please do.

Senator HEITKAMP. That is sustainability. Obviously there are not enough resources to cover all the programs that want these resources. I think a number of you have suggested extensions or looking at a longer period of time.

I think we have to say what additional stress does that put on additional tribal entities that would like to see access to these programs which will not get access if we extend the time period.

Ms. Robinson, how do you respond to the concern about sustainability of these programs and how can we extend these resources?

Ms. ROBINSON. We share the same concerns about sustainability. It breaks our hearts when we hear that we funded an Esther Martinez program at Acoma that was doing well but once the project period was over, they were no longer able to continue operation of the program.

Five years, while it would make a difference, we realize there is still a lot to do. ANA, unfortunately, is not designed to do long term, sustainable types of programs but more so short term projects.

I think the NEST is one way to begin to take a look at how we can incorporate more long term, sustainable programming, looking at the Department of Education, the Department of Interior and the projects they have and how they are supporting and promoting Native languages.

I think ANA is there to help with teacher certifications, curriculum development and do a lot of the supplemental and additional activities that need to be done but we are not I think the proper source to do the long term sustainability.

Senator HEITKAMP. I think that is right but I think the question is when do we see a program at that level where it then can launch independently or launch into BIE programming or into public school programming? That is my concern.

My concern is we have picked an arbitrary number and it may not be enough to prove the fact that we want these programs to be sustainable and we can achieve different outcomes if they are.

Ms. ROBINSON. I am excited that this year we are going to be doing a different competition or an additional competition that is taking a look at the continuum of education across the community.

What we are hoping will come as a result or an outcome is there will be long term, sustainable educational programming in the Native languages starting at the early childhood level, going through K through 12 and through higher education.

It is five years initially. It is a demonstration project so it will be a cohort. We will be providing extensive, intensive and focused training and technical assistance, treating these grants as cooperative agreements. We will be working with them regularly.

We will convene them regularly to help develop what data should be collected, what rigorous evaluation would look like, how we will measure success, how to standardize procedures that seem to be working and how to really build an evidence base.

Hopefully after that five years, we will be able to do another five years. Again, we understand that this is sort of piecemeal but we are hoping to be able to show at the end of the first five years that we can build this sustainability if we put the initial investment first.

Senator HEITKAMP. I have just a final comment. We hear this all across the board, whether it is substance abuse programs, additional programs for housing which is we have these kind of new starts where we start something and we never see it through. We have to figure out the sustainability piece of this.

My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the extra few minutes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Heitkamp.

I was going to ask Dr. Martinez if she could supply us with that information both you and Senator Franken asked for? We will insert it as part of the official record of today's testimony.

Ms. MARTINEZ. On trauma, language and cultural policy? Okay.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Robinson, according to your written testimony, the number of Native American language teachers diminished under No Child Left Behind due to a lack of valid teacher assessments in Native American languages.

The testimony highlighted one grant your agency awarded which trained language apprentices to receive language teacher certifications. The apprentices then gained relevant classroom experience.

What has the Administration for Native Americans done to increase, in the long run, the number of Native language teachers in schools since the passage of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act?

Ms. ROBINSON. The way the Esther Martinez and all of our programs are designed is that they are community-driven. It is a community approach and it is the community that is prioritizing what they would like to do with regards to Native languages.

We have highlighted and promoted model programs including a master apprentice which was highlighted in our testimony as well as other techniques to help teachers become immersion language teachers and then be certified.

It really depends on the pool of applications that we receive and how they are reviewed by their peers. We have a peer panel review. Once it comes to us, it is really just a matter of saying yes to the funding.

Because we do not have the grasp we would like in terms of how many applications are received that are specifically focused on professional development and certification of teachers, we want to take a look now to see how many applications come in specifically for that reason and how we might be able to do a better job of providing additional support specifically for those types of applications for grants.

The CHAIRMAN. The Native American Programs Act has been on the books for about 40 years. It requires you to collect and disseminate information related to the social and economic conditions of Native Americans. You are also required to submit an annual report to Congress about the conditions.

Could you help the Committee understand how the language programs in these bills will help to address the social and economic conditions you have been evaluating in these reports?

Ms. ROBINSON. We are taking a look now at emerging research and some of the research mentioned earlier which suggests Native language which is intrinsically tied to Native culture certainly serves as a protective factor for risky behavior and behaviors that are not ideal for young people, students and communities to live healthy lifestyles which in turn leads to economic and social conditions of not just that individual but of that family, that community or that tribe.

We are looking now at the data we have with regard to what language programs have we funded, what improvements have we seen with regard to what the language programs are reporting to us in terms of the outcomes they determined for themselves and how that relates to what we hope will be overall increased social and economic conditions.

We are taking a look again at revamping how we are reporting that information to Congress so that it is a useful tool and not just a thick document that puts everything in there and is hard to navigate.

We are very interested in your feedback and the feedback from others in terms of additional information they would like to see in that report.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. MoQuino, the Pueblo of Acoma has a language retention program. It is funded by the tribe and by other sources. The program teaches the tribal languages in local schools and hosts language immersion summer camps.

I was wondering if you could share with the Committee how this program has positively impacted student academic achievement and other benchmarks for success?

Mr. MOQUINO. The language program is funded within our own tribal appropriation funding. It inspires and we like to encourage our kids to learn our language at a very young age which will help them both in our traditional culture and as we call it, the outside world.

That is why we like this program. We want support from within the administration to keep it growing because, as I mentioned, we are losing our language. We are. We are not inspiring our young ones to learn the culture, the language.

Besides that, we rely on our elders. Our elders are the ones who are very, very traditional, very fluent and that is where we go back

to. We like to get them involved a lot. It is hard to get them to attend these language nests which there is no more language nest.

To me, as I mentioned, we inspire our young ones to learn the culture, learn the language so they can fully understand how the system, the culture and traditions work.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Accardi, the Bureau of Indian Education blueprint for reform contains several recommendations to reform Indian education. One of the recommendations suggested that your organization partner with the Bureau to help teachers pursue teacher certification.

The goal would be to reach one thousand board certified teachers in the Bureau of Indian Education schools by 2020.

I am a board certified orthopedic surgeon and worked closely with the Department of Education of Wyoming and the people who are working on board certification. I think it is a very important part of any educational system.

Since the partnership has begun with the Bureau of Indian Education, can you talk about what progress has been made to increase standards for teachers who are language instructors and generally how things are going with the certification process?

Ms. ACCARDI. One of the aspects of the project that really has exemplified the partnership between the Bureau of Indian Education and board certified teachers would be the WoLakota Project in South Dakota where they have a board certified teacher who is working alongside with the tribal elders collecting the stories and creating a curriculum that then goes back into the classrooms so that the teachers are able to use the stories and language of the elders as part of their ongoing, daily lessons whether they are working with math or social studies. They are promoting the language of the children's culture.

Having the board certified teachers there really helped that project to be able to hone in on the specific curriculum points that needed to be enhanced and also made it very comfortable for the elders who may not have had a lot of experience in a classroom to know there was a board certified teacher there to help them through the instructional hurdles that might happen along the way without requiring them to get additional certifications other than own language and culture.

In terms of the projects nationwide, as I stated we have had about 350 teachers who have started. The first sets of scores for the teachers will be coming out in the next few weeks.

One part of the project with which we are very pleased is the Bureau is not only providing bonuses for the teachers as they complete each of the four components of board certification but they have also come to them with a message that this is a journey of growth so they will be able to provide additional instruction, additional mentoring and will pay for any required retakes.

It is not a project that is here and will be pulled immediately if they are not immediately successful.

We are very committed to the fact that you cannot parachute in people or projects to these locations and schools and expect lasting success. The children of our first nations will continue to be last until we build projects that begin in the community and come back to the community.

As we expand our work, we are very hopeful we will be able to reach the tribal colleges and begin working with pre-service teachers, begin working with high school students so they see becoming a teacher in their tribal community as a career that is just as honorable and respected as being a doctor or lawyer.

That is where we see lasting sustainability as we increase the number of board certified teachers to help these students along that journey.

The CHAIRMAN. I think it is a terrific program. I encourage you to continue along that route.

Thank you

Ms. ACCARDI. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any additional questions? If there are no more questions for today, other members may also submit written follow up questions to you for the record.

The hearing record will be open for two weeks.

I want to thank each of you for being here as witnesses today.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:25 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEIKI KAWAIʻAEʻA, DIRECTOR, KA HAKA ʻULA O KEʻELIKOLANI COLLEGE OF HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI AT HILO

S. 1928 The Native Educator Support and Training Act (NEST Act)

Aloha Senators Barrasso and Tester,

On behalf of Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language at UH Hilo, I humbly submit testimony in response and strong consideration for the NEST Act. As a background, Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College has a charge from the State of Hawaiʻi to focus on education with primary impact on Native Hawaiians and other Native American peoples. To our knowledge, we are presently the only tertiary education institution in the United States that is fully operating preschool through doctorate education through the medium of a Native American language. Our student body consists primarily of Native Hawaiians, but also include American Indians, Alaska Natives and other indigenous peoples. We are also part of a larger consortium and coalition of programs in Hilo that results in many educational professionals as visitors to our programs here.

Visitors typically spend most of their time at our P–12 laboratory school Native language medium/immersion site Nāwahīokalaniʻōpuʻu (Nāwahī) with some 400 students enrolled. Since our first high school graduation in 1999 we have had an 87 percent immediate enrollment into college from high school and not a single drop out. The students at Nawahi School are over 95 percent of Native Hawaiian ancestry and approximately 70 percent from free and reduced lunch backgrounds. Their teachers have been trained and certified by our College here with the curriculum of the school developed and produced under the leadership of the College, including individuals who have graduated from our master's and doctoral programs focused on indigenous language revitalization and education through such languages.

Our work is based in the science of linguistics as well as the careful alignment of academic programming with indigenous worldviews and cultures.

The positive outcomes of Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani in providing successful education to Native children through their endangered ancestral language have not come with considerable struggle. That struggle continues as the educational approaches of our College do not easily fit into mainstream organizational structures of mainstream funding opportunities. We are very much in support of S. 1928 as the goals of the NEST Act have the potential to serve Native American communities, including many who have visited us and continue to work with us. This bill is important as it provides critical support for the recruitment, preparation and ongoing development of Native educators who are needed to meet the needs of existing preschool to secondary Native language education, as well as to assure program growth. Attaining high levels of cultural, linguistic, and professional proficiency of each Native language teacher is essential. This requires the demonstration of language and culture knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, academic content knowledge and cultural and professional disposition to develop the cultural competence and academic achievement of students. Many of these requirements are additional to "normal" teacher preparation requirements for new teachers in mainstream English-medium schools and require specialized, distinct preparation and ongoing development.

We also feel that a few modifications of the bill will make it stronger. The following are our recommended changes:

1. First we recommend that, except for cases specifically relating to existing programs, e.g., the Bureau of Indian Education, the term Native American be used throughout the bill. Such a change is especially important for those parts of the bill that deal with education in and through Native American languages. The Native American Languages Act of 1990 uses the inclusive term "Native American" and its inclusive approach has played a major role in the high level of cooperation among initiatives involving Native American languages since then.

2. Second we recommend that the preparation of teachers include attention to training in the delivery of content areas, e.g., language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, through Native American languages and the heritage of those languages. Such attention to a range of academic fields including STEM and STEAM will provide teacher candidates with a holistic approach when combined with training in Native American languages and in appropriate education pedagogy.
3. Title I: Educator Assistance
   a. p. 5, 14 (I) Advanced Study—Revise: . . .leading to initial teacher certification or an advanced degree in early childhood, elementary, secondary education, school administration, or Native language/culture education. . .
   b. Strongly support comprehensive scholarship funding package that covers tuition, educational expenses and a monthly stipend, all of which will become an excellent recruitment strategy and incentive. This is greatly needed to assist fulltime study and on-time completion. Currently, the availability of financial aid for graduate level programs is difficult to obtain.
   c. p. 16, 23 (1) . . .for recruitment and placement of preschool, elementary. . .
   d. Specify priority of fulltime employment within high need area,, i.e. Hawaiian language immersion (pp 16–17)
4. Third, we recommend that in Sec 381 (d)(1) (A) and (B) there be included opportunities to train program administers and developers, with the suggested wording being:
   (A) Development of a new Native American immersion and language teacher training program that leads to state or tribal teacher program administrator, or program developer certification or an advanced degree in early childhood, elementary, secondary education, language program administration, or Native language/culture education.
   (B) Support and expansion of an existing Native American immersion and language teacher training program that leads to state or tribal teacher, program administrator, or program developer certification or an advanced degree in early childhood, elementary, secondary education, language program administration, or Native language/culture education.
   (C) Fourth, we recommend that provisions for the use of distance education, telecommunications, and summer institutes be especially supported to allow teacher, program administrator and program developer candidates from remote communities the opportunity to participate in the benefits of the NEST Act while also working in their home communities during the regular school session.
5. Finally, we encourage that program also include a new (E) after Sec. 381 (d)(2)(D) as follows:

   and; (D) other activities that have the potential to further strengthen education through Native American languages and the ability of communities to sustain programs and schools taught through Native American languages.

We extend our mahalo to Senators Tester, Franken and Heinrich for introducing this important bill as it supports the recruitment, preparation and ongoing development of Native educators who are needed to meet the needs of existing preschool to secondary Native language schools, as well as to assure the program growth. We urge that it be passed with appropriate amendments as suggested above.

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