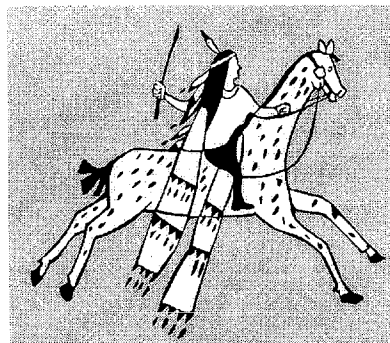


**Regional Partnership Forum Report
Executive Order 13096
American Indian and Alaska Native Education**



**Summary of Proceedings
&
Participant Recommendations**

A joint report of the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Interior
Indian Education Programs

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About this Report

This document is a summary of proceedings from nine regional partnership forums held pursuant to Executive Order 13096, signed August 6, 1998. The forums and this report were a joint effort of the Office of Indian Education in the U. S. Department of Education and the Office of Indian Education Programs in the U. S. Department of Interior/ Bureau of Indian Affairs. OIE staff member Lorraine Edmo and BIA/OIEP staff member Charles Geboe compiled the report. Gwen Shunatona, of ORBIS Associates, Washington, DC, also contributed to writing this report.

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Regional Partnership Forum Report Executive Summary

Executive Order 13096

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the U.S. Department of the Interior cosponsored a series of nine regional partnership forums from August 1999 to May 2000 in various selected geographic regions of the United States. The agencies announced the forums, invited interested individuals and held the forums in locations that would be easily accessible to those stakeholders who might be interested in attending. Locations and dates of all nine regional forums are listed below.

REGION	STATES	DATE	LOCATION
Navajo	NM, AZ, UT	Aug. 24-25, 1999	Window Rock, AZ
Northern Plains	MT, ND, NE, SD, WY	Sept. 28-29 1999	Rapid City, SD
Lower Midwest	AR, KS, MO, OK	Oct. 14-15, 1999	Oklahoma City, OK
Great Lakes Upper Midwest	MN, WI, MI	Nov. 15-16, 1999	St. Paul, MN
Northwest	ID, WA, OR, Alaska	Nov. 18-19, 1999	Tacoma, WA
West	CA, NV, NM, CO	Jan. 25-26, 2000	Phoenix, AZ
South & Eastern Tribes	NY, NC, ME, AL, MA, CT, FL	Feb. 1-2, 2000	Arlington, VA
State & non-federally- recognized Tribes	NC, VA, MD, AL & Others	May 9-10, 2000	Raleigh, NC
Alaska Natives	Alaska	Mar. 29-30, 2000	Anchorage, AK

Key education decision makers participated in the regional partnership forums. These included: tribal chairpersons, state governors; tribal education department representatives, chief state school officers, State Indian Education directors, tribal college presidents, tribal school board association members, regional line officers for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), BIA agency school board presidents, state legislators, superintendents and administrators from BIA-funded schools, including tribal grant and contract schools, other Federal agency representatives and technical assistance center staff members from the various regional centers that serve American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

As a result of these forums, the agencies received oral comments from approximately 650 individuals and organizations regarding their concerns about the education of Native children. Forum facilitators recorded the concerns of the meeting attendees and then transcribed those proceedings into forum transcripts.

Upon reviewing the transcripts from the nine regional partnership forums, a number of major topics emerged under the following broad topical areas.

- *Culture-Based Curriculum and Instruction*
- *Quality of School Personnel*
- *Supportive Services for Students and Family*
- *Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems*
- *Community and School Partnerships*
- *Early Childhood Issues*
- *Research Development*
- *General Recommendations*

This report describes the major recommendations and strategies that were discussed at each forum. A brief overview is provided on each forum and a summary of the major themes. A list of Federal Interagency Task Force members, a copy of Executive Order 13096 and an acknowledgement listing is attached at the end of this report.

Throughout this report, American Indian and Alaska Native people are also referred to as "Native" or Native American. Forum participants used all of these references to identify American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Background on Executive Order 13096

Executive Order 13096 on American Indian and Alaska Native Education ("The E.O."), signed August 6, 1998, affirms the unique political and legal relationship of the Federal Government with tribal governments and recognizes that the Federal government has a special historic responsibility for the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students. President Clinton established six goals through this Order. These are:

- (1) Improving reading and mathematics;
- (2) Increasing high school completion and postsecondary attendance rates;
- (3) Reducing the influence of long-standing factors that impede educational performance, such as poverty and substance abuse;
- (4) Creating strong, safe, and drug-free school environments;
- (5) Improving science education; and
- (6) Expanding the use of technology in the education of Native children.

To meet these goals, the E.O. required implementation of a number of Federal activities designed to address the fragmentation of government services to pre-K-12 American Indian and Alaska Native students and the complexity of intergovernmental relations affecting their education. The development of regional partnership forums was a key activity designed to solicit comment and subsequent action from the field on specific approaches to best meet the goals of the Executive Order. Other activities include a school pilot site initiative involving nine public and BIA-funded schools that are receiving technical assistance from cooperating federal agencies. A third major activity is the development of a research agenda for Indian education that included sponsorship of a national research conference held in May 2000 in Albuquerque, NM. The American Indian and Alaska Native Education Research Agenda was approved by Education Secretary Rod Paige in November 2001.

A fourth activity is the dissemination of a Federal Resource Directory on funding sources available to public and Bureau-funded schools. Federal agency officials have decided to use the *Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance* as the interim directory because it is sent to all federally recognized tribes in the country and is updated on a regular basis.

Purpose and Focus of Regional Partnership Forums

The regional partnership forums brought together representatives of Federal, State and tribal governments to discuss and consider ways in which to collaborate in the provision of educational services to American Indian and Alaska Native students and to share ideas and innovations affecting the improvement of education services to Native students.

By identifying areas in which continuing discussion and collaboration are apparent, the forums were intended to initiate a conversation that would continue after the forums concluded. The Federal government could facilitate ongoing discussions and engage state-based education organizations and State, tribal, and national Indian organizations into the discussion on collaboration. Representatives of these groups were included in the planning process and in the forum discussions.

Forum participants felt there is a significant need for ongoing collaboration, the development of partnerships and information sharing among all the governments involved in providing educational services to American Indian and Alaska Native students.

The forums were held to solicit feedback on promising educational practices and approaches from a wide spectrum of American Indian and Alaska Native practitioners, policy makers and other knowledgeable individuals. Participants were asked to focus on practices and approaches that would result in maximum opportunities for sharing of information, assisting schools, developing partnerships, and coordinating intergovernmental strategies. In addition, participants were asked to consider the impact or contribution of such practices and approaches towards attainment of the goals of the Executive Order.

At the nine regional forums, Education and Interior Departments held more than 25 focus group discussions. Agency representatives and facilitators met with more than 650 individuals representing public and BIA-funded schools and tribal colleges. Those in attendance included teachers, administrators, OIE project directors, state legislators, parents, chief State school officers, state Indian education directors, tribal council members and directors of tribal departments of education, school board members, tribal college presidents and at least one State governor.

*Overall Summary Recommendations
Regional Partnership Forums Conducted Pursuant to
Executive Order 13096*

At each forum, participants were asked to make recommendations reflecting consensus on how to improve Indian education over the next several years. Each forum ranged in size from 50-120 individuals. Participants were asked to meet in several groups that were facilitated by forum organizers. In the groups, they discussed and narrowed their concerns to the top five or ten suggested topics and identified strategies for addressing each recommendation through intergovernmental collaboration.

A summary discussion is provided after each major crosscutting theme.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

This topic primarily focused on collaborative arrangements between tribal, State and Federal educational systems to enhance the control, direction, and financial accountability of schools serving American Indian/ Alaskan Native students. It also addressed ways that these same governmental entities might work together to improve achievement levels of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

Recommended intergovernmental strategies included: partnerships between tribal and statewide school board associations for training and mentoring in such areas as joint roles, responsibilities and ethics issues; partnerships between tribal education entities and school districts to establish complementary educational policies and practices, board training regarding education standards, tracking, promotion, and common student data systems. Also, tribes within boundaries of public school systems could participate in comprehensive planning with the local educational agencies (LEAs) as a means to clarify roles and responsibilities.

A promising approach cited was the development of Tribal Education Departments (TEDs) and tribal education codes. Tribal education codes can guide and detail the relationships and responsibilities of tribes and state and local educational agencies.

General concerns under this topic included the need to clarify jurisdictional issues regarding State accreditation authorities, and checks and balances, so that tribal entities clearly understand roles and responsibilities. Improved data collection, funding, facilities, communications, and tribal representation on boards and state commissions were frequently mentioned.

Community and School Partnerships

This topic or concern centered on strengthening the mutual capacity of American Indian and Alaska Native communities and the schools to promote success for American Indian/Alaskan Native learners. A number of best practices were cited in this regard including the Statewide planning process for Montana. This process calls for "culturally-congruent" reform.

Ideas for intergovernmental collaboration included designating Title IX program activities as integral components of state plans for rigorous, culturally based curriculum, especially at the secondary level where tribal communities can help students earn graduation credits. Also, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) could host State or regional conferences on effective school reform models to integrate efforts of Title IX, Johnson O'Malley (JOM), and tribal education offices with school districts.

Participants at all forums were concerned with the mental and physical health of students and their families. To address these concerns, they recommended establishing home-school information centers for parents in community settings and developing partnerships between schools, vocational programs, and local tribal and economic development projects to improve alignment between school and work programs.

A recommended intergovernmental strategy is to partner school systems with for supporting students and families. The Indian Health Service (IHS) and other State and Federal social service programs could provide comprehensive wellness education from early childhood through high school levels. A second recommendation is developing tribal-State reciprocity agreements on minimum-age rules for meeting formal graduation requirements.

Virtually all forum participants expressed a need for more active parent involvement in the children's' education and the need for more effective methods to involve parents in their children's schools. Suggestions were made for regular academic classes for parents and for allowing students to tutor parents who may lack academic skills. Concerns were raised about the lack of parent knowledge about the school system and academic subject matter, dwindling resources relative to the rate of youth social problems, and the lack of information on effective practices, resources, and organizations

Participants expressed general concerns about the need to clarify jurisdictional issues regarding state accreditation and governing authorities so that tribal entities clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Improved data collection, funding, facilities, communications, and tribal representation on State boards and State plans were also prevalent concerns.

Other overall recommended practices included creation of year-round schools and alternative schools, improving student record transfer systems, and developing policies that support greater autonomy of BIA grant and contract schools. Also, States need to be made aware of Federal mandates for interagency consultation with Indian tribes. Finally, there is a need for more after-school learning centers for access by tribal community members.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

The lack of culturally relevant curriculum and instruction was a concern mentioned in nearly all forums. Participants recommended promotion of tribal language and culture and local tribal history instruction in schools with large numbers of Native students. This should start with early childhood programs.

A local intergovernmental strategy could be organizing a network of early childhood programs and human services programs to address common issues. Programs such as Head Start, Even Start, Family and Child Education (FACE) Programs, Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) Programs and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs could be included. Tribal Education Department codes could be used to monitor the progress of program networking. Another strategy could be for States to work with tribes to develop a cultural value statement or vision for the schools that would be shared with all teachers, students, and parents. Tribes need to work with State and federal jurisdictions to mandate, through a tribal standard, the need to learn about tribal governments and their geography, history, and economics.

Quality of School Personnel

Virtually all forum participants raised concerns regarding teacher preparation, teacher professional development, recruitment and retention of quality personnel, standards for teachers with regard to tribal cultural knowledge, academic content area knowledge, and effective culturally sensitive instruction. The need for high-quality training of other school personnel was emphasized; for example, high school counselors should be better trained to provide quality guidance to Indian students.

Participants made recommendations for addressing these concerns that included establishing community support programs for teachers who are new to Indian communities; expanding partnerships between tribal colleges and mainstream four-year institutions for recruitment and preparation of Indian teachers, and professional development that incorporates learning styles, academic content knowledge, and culturally-imbedded instruction.

Intergovernmental strategies suggested included establishment of joint LEA and State educational agency (SEA) offices for teacher standards and practices for Native education as a central point of coordination to improve teacher quality.

Research and Development

A major crosscutting concern was the need for more federally sponsored research on achievement levels of American Indian and Alaska Native students. There is a lack of current baseline data on American Indian students. One recommendation was for a research advisory committee for federally funded research made up of representatives from tribes, government research agencies, and Native research practitioners. This committee could also provide advice on data collection needs and identify avenues for sharing information with all schools that have American Indian and Alaska Native students. Participants suggested that individuals doing research on Indian populations need to follow tribal research protocols whenever possible. (LMW Forum).

Participants also recommended better dissemination of existing research findings that would be readily available to educators, parents, and "others." They called on the U.S. Department of Education to open and expand research activities that can yield current, accurate data on the conditions of Indian families and schools serving large Indian populations.

At several forums participants suggested establishing a web site for tribal and public schools to showcase best practices in education. Also, there was a call for locating Native language and curriculum materials that may have been developed for OIE projects in the 1970s and 1980s that could be shared with Indian tribes and schools today.

General Recommendations

Participants made recommendations on the lack of computer technology and access to the Internet, as well as on ways to share information with the community and region through use of technology. Recommendations for improving access included establishing a Federal-State partnership to set minimum standards for technology infrastructure in schools serving large Indian populations, and for tribes, the Federal government, and States to enter into agreements to use these schools as Internet access points for information dissemination to the community.

Promising practices noted were five tribally run distance-learning centers on the Navajo reservation that serve a large clientele. It was felt that more information could be shared among Navajo schools through a web site on best practices and curriculum instruction. Participants expressed ongoing concerns about the limited availability of computer hardware and infrastructure for Internet access on some remote reservations, particularly at Navajo.

Participants at several forums urged the Federal Government to continue the work of the Federal Interagency Task Force that oversees implementation of E.O. 13096. Participants emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration, consultation, tracking, and assessment of strategies to achieve Indian education goals. They also recommended that the U.S. Secretary of Education take the lead and direct the 15 Federal agencies, mentioned in Executive Order 13096 to assess their agency budgets, initiate data collection activities, and develop recommendations on ways to increase funding for Indian education programs. The issue of inadequate funding for all Indian Education programs was raised at each and every forum.

Finally, most participants agreed that activities started, as part of Executive Order 13096 should continue under a new Administration.

Summary of Navajo Partnership Forum
August 23-24, 1999
Window Rock, NM

Navajo Nation's Division of Education hosted the first Partnership Forum in August 1999 at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Arizona. Approximately 120 participants participated in the forum including tribal grant and contract school board members, managers of tribal education programs, public and tribal school superintendents, Federal agency officials, State education representatives, parents, and representatives of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF).

Because of the large land base and population of the Navajo Reservation, officials of the Office of Indian Education (OIE) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) decided to hold the first regional partnership forum on the Navajo Reservation. Spanning a four-state region, the Navajo Reservation covers over 25 million acres of land. The 1990 U.S. Census counted more than 225,000 Navajo tribal members. Some of the nearly 100 BIA-funded schools on the Navajo Reservation are operated through grants or contracts to tribal school boards. And a large number of Navajo students attend public schools located on or near reservation lands.

The Navajo Division of Education, a major division of the Navajo Nation Tribal Government, houses twelve programs. These programs include Head Start, Johnson O'Malley, Higher Education, Rural Systemic Initiative, Adult Education, Employment and Training, and several other programs. Invited to participate in the Navajo Partnership Forum, all of the managers for these programs participated in the two-day meeting.

Process for Making Recommendations & Strategies at Navajo

The initial process for securing recommendations from participants at Navajo differs from that used at subsequent forums. Since Navajo was the first of nine regional partnership forums, there was no established model for soliciting recommendations. The Navajo forum process was designed in a manner that asked participants to develop intergovernmental recommendations by focusing on the six goals of the Order. Participants were asked to go through a four-step process in identifying promising practices and effective methods with the six goals in mind, and to make recommendations for intergovernmental collaboration on educational services.

The forum lasted for nearly two days with participants breaking out into four separate work groups to develop recommendations for intergovernmental collaboration. On the second morning, participants regrouped and a reporter, designated by each group, was asked to report the recommendations to the general assembly. This process generally

worked well. The first day's forum agenda also featured a presentation on the "Legal and Political Aspects of Indian Education," given by Melody McCoy, attorney with the Native American Rights Fund, Boulder, Colorado. This presentation highlighted the historical relationship of tribal governments to federal and state governments. Ms. McCoy provided information on unique principles of Federal Indian law and a history of Federal education laws and policies pertaining to American Indians and Alaska Natives, and current collaborative efforts by Federal, State and tribal governments aimed at improving Indian education. Ms. McCoy's presentation was featured at all nine partnership forums.

Opening and closing comments were provided by the Directors of the Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Indian Education Programs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Department of Interior.

Discussion on Major Themes and Concerns

This report highlights the major themes raised by participants at the Navajo Regional Partnership Forum. Discussions ranged from individual student concerns to issues of systemic reform. From these discussions common topics emerged and are summarized below.

Collaboration among Diverse Education Systems

Participants identified a number of promising approaches to assist Navajo schools that included targeting "E-rate" funds to Navajo schools, Arizona and New Mexico's Consolidated School Reform Plans, and the Dine College partnership with Arizona State University (and other colleges) to improve educational attainment. Some recommended collaborations included: creation of year-round and alternative schools; improving the student record transfer system; development of a memorandum of agreement with the U. S. Department of Energy to work with Navajo schools; and development of a policy supporting greater autonomy of grant and contract schools relative to the BIA schools.

The Navajo Education Technology Consortium was cited as strength of the Navajo Educational System. The Navajo Nation has received a major technology grant to develop curriculum at all grade levels and there is a strong complement of parental involvement and infusion of Navajo culture as well as a networking component.

Several promising practices were noted including five tribal distance-learning centers on the reservation that allow for information sharing to a larger audience. Participants felt there could be more information sharing on best practices and curriculum through a web site which might be shared by tribal and State government personnel. Schools could be given information on best practices and "model" programs on a common

web site that all schools could access in a timely manner. Another recommendation was to connect all schools on the Navajo reservation through a network to share information. A concern was voiced about the limited availability of computer hardware and infrastructure for Internet hookup in remote areas of the Navajo reservation

Participants also recommended school facilities and transportation improvements; the need for stronger enforcement of regulations by Federal officials; and, developing consistent policies and mandates from the Federal agency level. There was a call for more on-site technical assistance from OIE and the State Education offices for local school districts.

Community and School Partnerships

Participants addressed the need to support the social, emotional, and academic development of students and to increase rates of secondary and postsecondary completion. A promising program cited was the Northwest Indian Education Consortium of northern New Mexico. This is a consortium of 12 BIA and public schools that work in cooperation with the New Mexico State Department of Education to address the multifaceted challenges facing students and families. The Leupp and Pinon, Arizona Schools parent information and training programs were mentioned as well as Holbrook and Chinle's Safe and Drug Free program approaches.

The following were cited as promising approaches to better inform the community about school activities:

- Establishment of home-school information centers within community centers;
- Highlighting educational issues in local newspapers and radio segments;
- Ongoing training of counselors and school administrators to improve communications;
- And establishment of a certified school counselor program specific to American Indian students

However, lack of avenues for improving parental involvement and knowledge of the school system along with dwindling resources relative to the growing rate of youth social problems, were voiced as overriding concerns. Some participants expressed the need for information sharing possibly through an Office of Indian Education (OIE) newsletter on promising practices, and a resource directory that would list resources and organizations. Regular regional meetings were suggested to address health-related issues, a possible multi-team agency approach by the schools, the health department, and law enforcement officials.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Participants identified promising programs such as "Roots to Wings" for basic skill instruction; resources such as the Navajo Nation curriculum web site, and practices such as cooperative learning as examples that should be continued. In addition the inclusion of Navajo, as a foreign language, at postsecondary institutions was cited as a promising practice.

Forum participants expressed concerns about the lack of culturally and locally relevant curriculum materials that can be used in the schools. A strong need was expressed for a tribally controlled clearinghouse for curriculum materials that could be shared across the Navajo Reservation. They recommended development of reading and math models based on culturally relevant disciplines to make curriculum more appealing to the students.

Quality of School Personnel

Participants cited the need for more American Indian teachers and staff to work in the school systems on the Navajo Reservation and in border towns of the reservation. A strength noted at Navajo has been the availability of teacher education programs to train more Navajo teachers such as the Dine College Education Program that partners with Arizona State University (ASU) and has strong support for continuation among forum participants. It was also suggested that teacher training and professional development programs need to be aligned to student performance and consultants might be brought into schools to help with professional development. Higher salaries were recommended for teachers who work with Indian students both on and off-reservation. Navajo participants also suggested the National Defense Scholarship Program be reopened whereby teachers are paid a stipend or receive salary increases if they attend this summer institute.

All agencies are encouraged to financially support staff development programs throughout the school year. For example, there could be shared staff training among all education-related personnel from schools, school board associations, and the Navajo Division of Education. Navajo educators felt that all high school counselors should be better informed and trained to provide quality guidance, perhaps through establishment of a certified school counselors program tailored for working with Indian students. They also recommended that professional development activities be conducted for all school staff four times a year in areas such as testing and assessment, working with limited English proficient students, and curriculum and instruction.

Several participants suggested quarterly, regional training sessions for the counseling staff from all schools on the Navajo Reservation, whether schools are public,

tribal contract or grant or BIA-funded. A networking system for counselors and administrators was another recommendation made by participants as well as a review of teacher certification, because, it was noted, some teachers are not qualified to teach and lack basic skills.

General Recommendations

One participant suggested that the BIA establish an entity that can properly evaluate and advise tribal contract and grant schools on governance issues. This office should be separate from the regular BIA line offices that currently monitor these programs. Navajo participants also agreed that there should be equitable financial resources for all schools on the Navajo Reservation, whether they are public, BIA operated or tribal grant or contract schools.

Northern Plains Partnership Forum
Rapid City, South Dakota
September 28-29, 1999

The Northern Plains Regional Partnership Forum was held September 28-29, 1999 in Rapid City, South Dakota. The forum included a five-state area made up of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Approximately 120 participants attended including tribal grant and contract school board members, managers of tribal education programs, public school superintendents, administrators of tribal contract and grant schools, tribal college presidents, federal agency officials, State department of education representatives, parents, representatives of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF).

The Northern Plains region is home to 25 tribes and 17 tribally controlled community colleges. The Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education works with 132 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in this region serving 48,000 American Indian students. The BIA provides funding to a number of tribal grant and contract schools in the Northern Plains and still operates a number of on and off-reservation boarding schools. There are hundreds of public school districts in this region that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education for programs such as Title IX Indian Education formula grants, Safe & Drug Free Schools, Title I for the Disadvantaged, and other Education Department programs.

South Dakota Governor William Janklow spoke to the forum participants to voice his concern about low performing schools in his State. Governor Janklow had just returned from a national meeting of State governors focused on school reform. He was alarmed by recent student achievement reports from South Dakota schools that showed that eight of the nine lowest performing schools in the State were on Indian reservations. Governor Janklow discussed the need for accountability on the part of teachers, parents, students, administrators, and school board members. He said that all have a responsibility to try to work towards raising the achievement levels of students who are performing far below the state and national average on achievement tests and on SAT scores. The Governor said he was concerned that many of the students going to elementary and secondary school in South Dakota will likely not have an opportunity to go to college since they are doing so poorly in school. He said, "There's no tomorrow for a kid whose been cheated on his education today."

He said the message that he wanted to bring to the meeting is that Federal dollars are important but we all have a responsibility to use the money for education in the best way. He asked that South Dakota forum participants and federal organizers work with him to try to deal with the education concerns that were identified and to develop an

agenda that all could work on to improve the education of American Indian children in his state. He said he has learned from experience that parental involvement is extremely important. Those schools that are doing well in the state are doing so because of community leadership. He called on educators and others at the meeting to start making a difference in education and said he was open to meeting with federal and tribal representatives to see how they could work together to improve education in South Dakota.

Process for Making Recommendations & Strategies

The initial process for obtaining recommendations from participants at the Northern Plains forum and subsequent forums was different from that used at the Navajo forum in August 1999. At the Northern Plains forum, participants were asked to identify their overall concerns about Indian education and discuss how they might address the goals of the Executive Order. After developing a "laundry list" of concerns, participants had to narrow these concerns to the top five or ten and then identify strategies for accomplishing each recommendation through intergovernmental collaboration.

The forum lasted for a day and a half with the participants working in three separate work groups to develop recommendations for intergovernmental collaboration and to identify best practices. On the second morning, participants regrouped and designated a reporter to record and provide a report on group recommendations to the general assembly. This process seemed to work well and was used for the remaining seven regional partnership forums.

Opening and closing comments are provided officials of the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Interior.

Summary of Major Themes

This report highlights proceedings from the Northern Plains Regional Partnership Forum, in Rapid City, South Dakota. Discussion at the forum ranged from supportive services for students and family to quality of school personnel. Cross analysis of all forum discussions resulted in a synthesis of six broad topics that are discussed below.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

Participants discussed the need to strengthen the overall governance capability of BIA-funded schools by requiring minimum education standards for service on school boards and establishing partnerships between local tribal and State school board associations for training and mentoring purposes on roles, responsibilities, and ethics. As

a way to address this need, measures are needed to hold local, tribal, state, and national leaders accountable for achieving the goals identified for the education of Indian children.

One promising practice noted is the need to continue development of Tribal Education Departments (TEDs) along with tribal education code development. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe has been especially successful in development of its tribal education department and education code. It was suggested that the Rosebud education model could be used by other tribes in the region and nationally since tribal education codes can guide and detail the relationships and responsibilities of tribes, States and local school districts. They can also improve on school board checks and balances.

Another promising practice cited for States in the region is to follow Montana's lead in developing a manual for educating State legislators on tribal sovereignty. In addition to this, every state is encouraged to develop a statewide plan for Indian Education to be done in collaboration with tribes. Aimed at meeting the educational needs and improving the academic achievement levels of Indian students, intergovernmental collaboration was encouraged in developing comprehensive education plans between local school districts and tribal governments. In doing this, tribes can then assess their role in the development and oversight of education programs, plans, and budgets. All government authorities could identify common grounds for collaboration and policy making through development of a comprehensive plan.

Community and School Partnerships

One of the most pressing needs in the Northern Plains region is job creation and economic development. Participants discussed the need to develop job opportunities that will encourage students to continue their education beyond high school. A strategy to accomplish this goal might be to establish a local network of federal, State, and tribal representatives who have a specific mission to develop bridges between education and economic development for creation of youth job opportunities. States and tribal governments need to advocate for partnerships between schools and local economic development efforts that might employ tribal graduates, according to participants.

A promising practice noted could be to align vocational education, school-to-work, and higher education programs with tribal economic development initiatives and projects for the purpose of nurturing work ethic, job experience, and business education. Along this same vein educators are encouraged to network and establish relationships with tribal economic development planners, business owners, and others to encourage business education in the schools. Likewise, all governmental entities are urged to weave economics and business with education from preschool through higher education.

Some participants encouraged tribes to view education as a tribal responsibility in addition to being a trust responsibility of the Federal government. They urged tribes to

mandate through tribal standards the need for schools to teach about tribal structure, tribal geography, and tribal history and treaties. Written articulation agreements between states and tribes were mentioned several times as a way to obtain improved cooperation between groups.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Participants identified the absence of culturally relevant curriculum as a concern and they recommended promoting tribal language and culture as a responsibility of the schools and tribes. They urged Tribal governments to consider mandatory standards and requirements in tribal education codes for all of those who have a stake in the schools. This includes the Federal government, States and tribes who could incorporate a cultural value statement as part of the vision statement for the schools. They felt that tribes and schools could jointly develop strategic plans to focus on how to implement language and cultural education from pre-K through postsecondary education. Tribal Colleges should get increased support for their efforts to implement Native language and cultural programs.

A recommended intergovernmental strategy could be to create a network of early childhood and human services programs to address issues, resources, and action plans for interagency collaboration. Noteworthy programs identified to include in such a network included Even Start, Healthy Start, Head Start, Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) Program, the Family and Child Education (FACE) Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and School- to-Work programs. Tribal education departments could use existing codes to monitor progress of program networking.

Participants felt that tribes should mandate through tribal standards the need for their own members to learn about tribal government, geography, history, treaties, and other resource topics of their tribes.

Quality of School Personnel

On the topic of teacher training and preparation, participants suggested strategies for improving the quality of instruction in schools. Among these were:

- Identification of quality indicators that assess the effectiveness of teachers of Indian students;
- Expanding teacher-training initiatives between tribes and schools;
- Increasing community leadership skills through teacher training programs;
- Increasing the focus on team teaching;
- Requiring Native language and cultural instruction;
- More Indian teacher training programs and;

- Creating better financial incentives to reward and retain good teachers of Indian students.

Research and Development

Participants discussed the need for better dissemination of existing research findings and for greater accessibility to research findings by educators, parents, and others. Participants called on the U.S. Department of Education and other Federal agencies that conduct research on Indian populations to open up grant competitions to them and expand research activities that will yield current, accurate data about the current status of Indian families and communities and schools. They recommended that Federal research reports be more user friendly.

Participants also noted that more data is needed for decision-making purposes at the local level regarding special education, adult education, and other programs; schools should solicit feedback (report cards) from parents on how well their child's school is doing in order to promote better communication between schools and parents; and a web site could be developed between tribal and public schools to showcase best practices in education. Another recommendation was that Native language and curriculum materials developed for OIE projects in the 1970s and 1980s should be recovered and shared with American Indian tribes and schools.

General Recommendations

Northern Plains Indian educators urged the Federal government to continue the work of the Federal Interagency Task Force on E.O. 13096 that supports ongoing collaborations, consultations, tracking and assessment of strategies to meet Indian education goals.

Demonstration or model projects could be developed involving Federal, State, tribal, and local partnerships focused on the following topics:

- Transitional students;
- Congruency of standards;
- Effectiveness of advisory groups;
- Certification of education professionals;
- Equity in education funding;
- Research, data collection and;
- Communication to the field and engagement of community services

They further urged all governmental entities to build on the efforts of NIEA, NCAI, NACIE, and others to create a national "Indian Education Blueprint" that is regularly monitored at different education-related conventions and meetings throughout the year.

American Indian educators should explore the creation of other formal and informal networks to serve as “think tanks” for new ideas, new partnerships, and new paradigms for Indian education in the 21st Century, according to delegates.

**Lower Midwest Partnership Forum
Oklahoma City, OK
October 14-15, 1999**

The Lower Midwest Partnership Forum was held October 14-15, 1999 in Oklahoma City, OK a day before the annual convention of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA). Dr. David Beaulieu, director of the Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education and William Mehojah, deputy director, BIA Office of Indian Education Programs, welcomed participants. Ms. Melody McCoy, attorney with the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), in Boulder, CO once again provided an overview on "The Legal and Political Aspects of Indian Education."

Participants came from the states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri. In School Year 1999-2000, there were an estimated 112,000 American Indian students served by the Office of Indian Education in these four states. The state of Oklahoma had 365 grantees in school year 1999-2000. Census figures from 1998 estimated the American Indian population in Oklahoma at 263,000. There were only forty-one representatives at the Lower Midwest Partnership Forum; the number was low due the start of the NIEA convention that was hosted by the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education (OCIE). Many Title IX program directors, tribal education directors, and school administrators who had planned to attend the forum were also involved in the planning and organizing for the convention.

The following section contains a summary of concerns and recommendations received at the Lower Midwest Partnership Forum. Discussions ranged from the need for culture based curriculum to teacher training programs. Many of these concerns were similar to those raised at other forums. A summary of the forum discussions follows.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Participants recommended that state teacher preparation programs should ensure truthful and accurate representation of tribal history in their training programs. They offered the following strategies intended to accomplish this recommendation:

- Program development to fund partnerships between tribal colleges;
- Urge colleges and universities to develop appropriate local tribal histories;
- Require teacher education candidates in colleges with high populations of Indian students to take an American Indian/history culture course;
- U.S. Department of Education should join NIEA in cosponsoring a conference on curriculum development and invite representative textbook writers, curriculum specialists and Blue Ribbon Schools as presenters;

- Local parent committees should advocate for more accurate depiction of Indian history and culture.

Collaboration Among Diverse Educational Systems

Participants recommended requiring all school districts to provide multicultural sensitivity training for all faculty and staff and that schools should actively recruit qualified Indian teachers and other personnel in school districts with larger populations of American Indian and Alaska Native students. One suggested strategy was to develop partnerships among schools, parents, tribes, and business, industry, health and social service agencies for active recruitment of qualified American Indian teachers and other school personnel.

Community and School Partnerships

Another recommendation was to try to increase the community involvement in the education of young people through a clear definition of roles and responsibilities of all of those involved in the community, including parents, students, tribal leaders, school personnel, law enforcement personnel, and others.

In order to address this recommendation, participants called for more active involvement by Indian parents on the parent committees; getting tribal elders to assist with Native language and culture classes; adding more teachers to Indian advisory committees; asking tribal education staff to provide information on scholarships and tribal education plans to the community; improving youth involvement through the development of Indian youth councils, and raising funds for mentorship programs.

Participants identified the need for more computer hardware and software in the schools as well as the need for training and access to the Internet. To address these needs, they recommended establishment of minimum standards by Federal and State governments for education technology. They also suggested that tribes, Federal agencies, and States enter into memoranda of agreement and form partnerships to use schools as Internet access points for Indian communities.

Research Development

Lower Midwest Partnership Forum participants agreed that there should be more accurate data gathering of education statistics on American Indian and Alaska Native learners, and that the Federal government needs to be more accountable in its research and data collection on Indian people. Participants recommended development of a federal research institute dedicated to American Indian and Alaska Native education.

Strategies to accomplish these recommendations included: mandating Indian representation in Federally funded research with oversight provided by an advisory committee, whose nominations for committee membership could come from NIEA, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), tribes, OERI, the Census Bureau, and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This committee could function as a clearinghouse for research on American Indians and Alaska Natives and secure funding from the public and private sectors. Data collection activities for this committee might include development of a minimum set of core data elements that could be shared with public and BIA-funded schools, tribal and private schools serving Indian students, and SEAs and tribal education departments.

General Recommendations

Participants at the Lower Midwest forum, like participants at other partnership forums, raised the need for more funding of education programs serving Indian people, such as Title IX, Johnson O'Malley, employment and training, and native language programs.

Great Lakes Regional Partnership Forum
St. Paul, MN
November 15-16, 1999

The Great Lakes Regional Partnership Forum was held November 15-16, 1999 in St. Paul, Minnesota. There were 60 participants at the forum including representatives of tribal education departments, public and tribal school board members, school administrators, staff and parents, higher education staff. The National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and the Native American Rights Fund also had representatives present.

There are a total of 35 federally recognized tribes in the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education works with 164 local education agencies (LEAs) in this region, serving 39,000 American Indian students. The BIA provides funding to twelve tribal grant and contract schools in the Great Lakes area with the BIA regional office also serving eastern North Dakota.

The Great Lakes forum lasted a day and a half with the participants breaking out into several separate work groups to develop recommendations for intergovernmental collaboration and to identify best practices. Forum participants reported their recommendations to the general assembly on the second day. This process was used for all forums with the exception of the Navajo Nation Forum, in which discussions centered on the goals of E.O. 13096. Current collaborative efforts by federal, state, and tribal governments aimed at improving Indian education were also presented. Federal Indian education program directors were present and gave opening remarks and NARF attorney Melody McCoy provided a presentation on the legal history of Indian education.

The following report highlights recommendations from the Great Lakes Regional Partnership Forum. At all of the forums, discussions were far ranging and spanned individual student concerns to issues of systemic reform. There were six broad topics discussed at this forum. A summary of the forum topics follows.

In identifying factors that impede American Indian and Alaska Native students' educational performance, participants labeled their discussions as goals, strategies, and objectives.

Collaboration Among Diverse Educational Systems

Great Lakes forum participants made the following recommendations under this topical category.

- There should be more information sharing about the role of Tribal Departments of Education (TEDS) vis-à-vis Indian education programs and public schools.
- Tribes should review Federal laws and regulations that govern cooperative agreements between BIA/tribal and public schools and remove impediments, such as the “no double count” rule, which don’t meet school, student, and community needs.
- There is a need for more comprehensive planning and accountability among school districts, Federal programs, States, and tribes regarding funding and financial resources meant for American Indians.
- Tribes should review Federal and State privacy laws to see if restrictions on the release by schools of Indian records can be revamped to allow tribal education departments to receive information.
- School districts should also try to ensure Indian students are physically, emotionally, and psychologically healthy to maximize their learning opportunities.

Strategies identified by participants to implement these recommendations included:

- More holistic testing of students coming into the school system;
- Ensuring that Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE) are addressed as possible health issues among Indian students and that diagnostic measures are included;
- Governing jurisdictions should look at ways to address education of children within the criminal justice system, including juvenile centers;
- School boards and tribal government representatives could work to assist with development of education infrastructure within tribal governments, i.e., tribal education codes for tribal education departments;
- Explore relationships with other tribal government components such as tribal juvenile programs, tribal juvenile courts and social services in order to address truancy, abandonment and neglect;
- Assess the role of parent advisory committees for their effectiveness.

Participants also recommended implementation of national initiatives to develop parent-based, early childhood education programs.

In order to implement this recommendation, they urged States to create a stronger commitment of resources for early childhood education; assess transition issues between pre-school and kindergarten through second grades; Create more flexible funding of school foundation monies in order to direct more funds to early childhood

education, and explore the Family and Child Education (FACE) model for broad implementation in Indian schools.

Great Lakes forum participants urged intergovernmental collaboration in development of comprehensive education plans that bring together Federal, State and local resources to achieve Native education goals outlined in the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force Report of 1991.

Strategies to implement these recommendations included:

- Exploring relationships and transition issues among pre-school, K-12 and postsecondary education levels including school board members, administrators, parents, teachers and students in the process;
- Bringing tribal elders, community members and others into the school to discuss integration of Native language and culture in the classroom;
- Identifying education goals and standards, learner outcomes, and appropriate measures of student centered outcomes;
- Identifying ways to jointly address accountability and goal attainment in the schools.

Community and School Partnerships

In order to strengthen parent, school and tribal government partnerships, participants recommended:

- Adoption of the "Minnesota Model" that requires annual submission of a resolution of concurrence or non-concurrence within school districts;
- Provision of adequate funding levels for programs serving Indian students;
- Requiring all student enrollment forms to have individual ethnic identification/eligibility that can assist school districts in accurate counts for American Indian students;
- Utilizing parents and tribes for the development of cultural programs; and, ensuring that all school programs and expenditures are accessible for Indian students, not only the programs but also the funds designated for Indian education programs.

Participants cited the following promising practices currently being used in the schools: parent assistance programs to strengthen parents' role in their children's education including resources, literacy programs, general education degree opportunities, family recreational programs, early childhood family education programs and reading programs within the home from birth to lifelong learning.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Participants suggested that tribes set clear policies on language use and urged schools to try effective implementation of a tribal language curriculum. A central clearinghouse and web site devoted to language and culture preservation was also recommended.

Strategies to implement these recommendations are:

- Conducting relevant research on the issue;
- Establishing a Blue Ribbon Committee to review and rate best practices;
- Establishing culturally-relevant criteria and conducting culturally appropriate evaluations;
- Establishing a clearinghouse for resources and materials in each State to assist schools and teachers to meet student academic and cultural needs especially where there is limited staff.

Participants set a goal that by the year 2010, every American Indian student should demonstrate mastery of English, math, science, history, geography and other necessary academic skills. The following strategies were recommended to assist in meeting this goal:

- Assess current testing for accuracy and appropriateness in measuring academic "mastery;"
- Create a broader understanding among teachers about education goals and standards;
- Implement in-service training that is interdisciplinary and incorporates Native language and culture;
- Tribes should encourage and work towards increasing the numbers of Native teachers in the schools;
- Schools should create stronger evaluation mechanisms to assess what is happening in the classrooms;
- Schools should expand resources for utilization of tutors bringing together school and government representatives to create an action plan for "convergence of resources."

Quality of School Personnel

Participants felt there is a need for widespread intergovernmental strategic planning to identify and assist Indian students who will make good teachers and who will

commit to teaching in public and tribal schools serving Indian communities. To accomplish this need, the Federal government's coordination role, could be used to involve State teacher training programs and prioritizing this need in Federal and State loan programs.

In addition, tribal colleges could possibly conduct joint in-service training for BIA and tribal and public school teachers and develop joint in-classroom projects. By the year 2005, it was suggested that colleges and universities be required to develop curriculum that prepares teachers to work effectively with a variety of cultures.

The following are recommended implementation strategies:

- Have school boards and parents collaborate to assure stronger advocacy about what teachers will know and do to demonstrate competencies;
- Schools should integrate a stronger leadership skills component in teacher training curriculum bringing in other tribal programs to assist with teacher training;
- Colleges, universities and schools should provide pre-professional experiences for prospective teachers;
- Teacher unions should examine their roles to strengthen the teaching profession;
- Schools should assume a stronger role in advocacy for teaching professions and for recruiting teachers.

Research Development

Participants urged Federal education representatives to identify best practices in research from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) the Office of Indian Education (OIE), and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE).

Strategies for implementation of this recommendation include:

- Evaluating the effectiveness of preservation, revitalization, and promotion of Native language and culture;
- Evaluating the integration of National Indian Education Association (NIEA) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) into interagency agreements;
- Encourage the new Administration to adopt the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement (CFIEPS) to improve Federal interagency coordination, promote collaboration and assist tribal governments in meeting the unique educational needs of their children, including the need to preserve, revitalize, and use Native languages and cultural traditions.

General Recommendations

Great Lakes forum participants also urged Federal and State governments to provide optimum educational services and opportunities to all American Indian students from birth to lifelong learning by ensuring that adequate funding levels be provided for Indian education programs.

Northwest Regional Partnership Forum Report
November 18-19, 1999
Tacoma, WA

Participants invited to the Northwest Regional Partnership Forum were from the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. A few representatives came from the state of Montana, as they were not able to attend an earlier forum in Rapid City, SD. The Northwest forum included many Title IX program directors, parents, directors of tribal departments of education, some tribal council representatives, and a few school superintendents from states outside of Washington. The forum took place at the same time as a statewide school superintendents meeting in Seattle, WA, prohibiting many public school administrators from attending.

There are a total of 42 federally recognized tribes in these states and a number of non-federally recognized tribes as well. The U.S. Department of Education's formula grant program funded nearly 100 Title IX projects in the three-state area for a combined Indian student population of nearly 32,000 during the 1999-2000 school year.

William Mehojah, deputy director of the BIA's Office of Indian Education Programs, and Lorraine Edmo, management team member, Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education, welcomed participants. Denny Hurtado, Skokomish Tribal Chairman and supervisor of Washington State's Indian Education Office, also provided a tribal welcome. In his remarks, Hurtado paid tribute to a number of American Indian educators from the Northwest who have worked in the field of education for a number of years. He also discussed a couple of projects in which his office is involved in the state of Washington. These projects involve development of school curriculum from the Native perspective and a reading collaborative being done in cooperation with a couple of Washington State universities. He called on tribal council representatives to come forward and make education a priority. He said this could be done by tribes working in partnership with the states and with the federal government.

Cross analysis of all forum discussions resulted in a synthesis of five broad topic areas that are highlighted and discussed below.

Community & School Partnerships

Participants recommended that school districts reach out more aggressively to Indian communities in an effort to get more active family and parental involvement. Strategies to try to get this involvement included:

- Holding parent teacher conferences on the reservations;
- Providing student recognition opportunities that families could attend;
- Creating opportunities for teachers to be involved in tribal community activities;
- Holding open houses on Indian reservations to break down barriers;
- Recruiting parents by going door to door;
- Providing opportunities for parents to advance their education;
- Surveying parents to find out how best to support them; and
- Developing compacts for parental involvement similar to those in the Title I program

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

As was the case in four earlier forums, participants noted that Native language, culture, and history are integral parts of the educational experience for all American Indian students. Educators must be knowledgeable about geographically appropriate language, culture, and history curricula and be able to integrate them into the instructional program.

Strategies for implementation of this recommendation:

- Provide in-service days or continuing education credits dedicated to American Indian topics;
- Include tribal elders and Native language speakers in schools with larger populations of American Indian students;
- Tribes should work in cooperation with school districts to develop partnerships to promote culturally congruent school reform curricula;
- Schools could establish multicultural committees that could receive and evaluate culturally relevant curriculum materials.

It was also suggested that culturally congruent school reform models should be identified that could collaborate with Title IX and BIA Johnson O'Malley Programs in effectively engaging Indian students. As a requirement of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA), states must identify struggling schools that are "in need of improvement." Across the nation, many of these schools serve Indian reservation lands. Participants felt the time is ripe to push for systemic reform and that Title IX programs and their associated parent committees may serve as an effective catalyst for change.

Many Title IX/JOM projects have proven themselves very effective in re-engaging American Indian students, who may feel alienated, by facilitating cooperative group projects that are authentic, worthy, rigorous, and to some degree, student led. Such teaching strategies may be, in a broad sense, be congruent with traditional tribal teaching practices. Unfortunately, the organizational system in most middle and high schools does not encourage nor greatly reward such teaching practices.

Participants further suggested that the most effective strategy for Title IX programs in helping districts improve success rates among AI/ AN students is to collaborate closely with central teaching staff to organize and implement a rigorous cultural educational program. The term "rigorous" is used here to describe a program in which participating students not only learn cultural content but also may earn credit in core disciplines such as language arts, science, mathematics, technology, public speaking, social studies, history, political science, and more.

Northwest representatives felt that school reform models utilizing cooperative, authentic student projects as a core instructional tool are capable of close collaboration with Title IX programs. To that end, they recommended that the U.S. Department of Education work with state and national Indian organizations to identify culturally congruent school reform models that are listed under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRDR).

They also recommended that state or regional conferences be sponsored for Title IX programs, JOM, and tribal education departments. The purpose of the meetings would be to introduce Indian educators to the most culturally congruent school reform models, encourage Title IX programs to develop and implement rigorous, project based cultural education programs, urge Title IX Parent Committees to advocate for congruent school reform in their local districts, and to assist selected CSRDR model programs to collaborate effectively with Title IX programs.

Finally, participants noted that project-based education is more flexible than traditional middle and high school programs and provides an excellent mechanism for parents and outside entities such as tribes to participate directly in helping Indian students earn credit toward graduation. Overall, the combination of Title IX/JOM programs working in close collaboration and support of culturally congruent reform models may be the most effective way to accomplish most, if not all, of the six stated goals in the President's initiative.

Quality of School Personnel

Participants recommended that teachers who work in school with larger numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native students should be required to take ongoing, mandated training in Indian history. To accomplish this training, participants suggested that tribes be involved in the training to provide orientation to teachers on tribal values and issues. This orientation could be provided to all school staff but would also require collaboration with State Education Agencies (SEAs) and in particular, the State Office of Teacher Standards and Practices. It was also suggested that school administrators be trained to recognize inappropriate practices and urged to implement culturally appropriate materials in the schools.

As in other regional forums, the Northwest forum participants recommended that schools serving Indian students hire more Native teachers. To achieve this recommendation, it was suggested that the chief State school officers work with local school boards, tribal councils, tribal education departments, and Federal officials to collaborate on ways to fund teaching scholarships. These same offices could also assist in recruiting more American Indian candidates to the teaching field. Participants called on State offices to dedicate more funds for Indian teachers.

Research Development

Northwest participants recommended that tribes and tribal organizations get actively involved in research on Indian education issues.

As a strategy to accomplish this recommendation, tribes might develop their own research agendas that would address education needs and provide funding for research projects. Perhaps tribes could develop model projects that might be replicated by other tribes and develop partnerships for research with federal agencies, private foundations, and higher education institutions.

Early Childhood Education

Participants placed special emphasis on early childhood education programs and recommended that American Indian and Alaska Native children need to be prepared for future educational experiences through programs that are culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate.

To implement this recommendation, participants suggested collaboration among all Federal agencies that provide funding for early childhood programs including Head Start, BIA Family and Child Education Programs, Even Start, OIE formula grant programs and other programs that tribes and tribal colleges may be administering.

Western Regional Partnership Forum
January 25-26, 2000
Phoenix, AZ

The Western Regional Partnership Forum for E.O. 13096 was held in Phoenix, AZ, January 25-26, 2000. Forum participants came from the states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah. There were nearly 80 people at the forum, including several elected tribal chairmen from the region. There are at least 170 federally recognized tribes in this five-state area with California alone having 104 tribes and rancherias. The Office of Indian Education in the U.S. Department of Education provided funding to nearly 148,000 students in 287 Title IX formula grant programs during the 1999-2000 school year.

OIE Director David Beaulieu provided opening remarks. Bureau of Indian Affairs Line Officer Joe Frazier provided welcoming remarks and Acoma Pueblo Governor Lloyd Tortalita of New Mexico, provided a tribal welcome.

During the forum, Brian Wallace, chairman of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and several teachers from the Washoe Language Immersion Program, did a presentation on their program. Chairman Wallace spoke of the importance E.O. 13096 and how the signing of the Order inspired him to try to revitalize his own tribal language through the language immersion school, now located on his reservation. Several Washoe tribal members were on hand to discuss the language immersion program and the important role that language has in the preservation of culture and heritage for future generations of Indian people.

This summary report highlights the proceedings of the Western Regional Partnership Forum. Primary topics discussed at the forum are described in the following paragraphs.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

Participants in Phoenix urged tribal governments and school districts to establish common educational policies and codes to develop educational standards, promotion policies, and attendance policies.

Participants urged tribes to work with BIA and school district personnel to establish student-tracking systems to address academic achievement and student transition issues. They could also establish student assessment tools and teacher accountability systems. All individuals connected with a local education agency are encouraged to create safe and healthy school environments for Indian learners.

In order to accomplish these recommendations, participants suggested partnerships be created to insure adequate health and well being of American Indian students and their families. Partnerships could include the Indian Health Service; state funding agencies,

tribes and counties, non-profit organizations, local colleges and universities and local business people.

Community and School Partnerships

Participants recommended that school districts work with Federal agencies, tribes, states, and local communities to develop and disseminate to the community a Comprehensive Tribal Education Plan (CTEP). Schools should also be required to provide an annual report on the CTEP to the school and community. Interagency partnerships should be established within three months of the current school year. An annual report could be provided within 60 days after the end of the school year.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

There is a major need to preserve tribal languages and culture of the Northwest tribes, according to NW forum participants. They felt that all tribes have a stake in retention of Native languages and should empower parents to maintain tribal language as a bridge to literacy.

Strategies to implement this recommendation are:

- To include under Title I of the new ESEA bill, specific tribal language learning requirements to facilitate literacy for Indian parents;
- Have tribes develop education codes to mandate teaching of tribal language and culture in schools where their children attend;
- States should develop Indian education policies to mandate inclusion of tribal languages as a vehicle for parent and community involvement;
- States should include tribal histories and language in curriculum and evaluation materials.

Quality of School Personnel

A priority recommendation is to increase the numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native teaching personnel that can be recruited to teach in schools that serve large numbers of Indian children.

Strategies to accomplish this recommendation:

- U.S. Department of Education should fund teacher training programs, possibly modeled after the Indian Health Service recruitment and retention program;
- Colleges could provide distance-learning opportunities and universities and housing allowances provided for teachers in remote reservation areas.

- Participants also recommended that tribes and LEAs should collaborate with university and community college systems to develop more appropriate teacher training programs to address the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native children.

Participants urged colleges and universities to offer a Native American endorsement for teacher certification to include economic, geographic, and cultural diversity and awareness of language differences in Indian communities.

A third recommendation under this topic is to ask school districts, working in cooperation with colleges and universities, to provide extensive training to all K-12 classroom teachers in language acquisition and reading and English language issues. Federal and state governments could be asked to closely monitor LEAs for compliance with this requirement, if implemented.

General Recommendations

Participants recommended that the Secretary of Education take the lead and direct the 15 intergovernmental agencies, involved with E.O. 13096 to assess their agency budget levels, initiate data collection activities and develop recommendations on increasing funding for Indian education programs. Participants also felt there is a need to institutionalize E.O. 13096 to assure that the activities started under the E.O. are carried on through a new administration.

The 15-member Interagency Task Force should continue with its work and implementation plans set forth in E.O. 13096. All Federal agencies should uphold, honor and respect the trust responsibility to American Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages.

**South and Eastern Regional Partnership Forum
Arlington, VA
February 1-2, 2000**

The South and Eastern Regional Partnership Forum was held February 1-2, 2000 in Arlington, VA and was hosted by the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET). Participants were primarily from the states of New York, Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Alabama, Tennessee, and Florida.

USET is a non-profit association of more than 30 tribal entities in the eastern part of the United States. The USET office, located in Nashville, TN, invited the Office of Indian Education (OIE) and Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Indian Education Programs (BIA/OIEP) to hold its two-day forum in conjunction with the annual winter meeting. OIE Director David Beaulieu opened the forum in Arlington, VA and was also given time on the USET general assembly to address delegates to the regular meeting.

There were at least 50 participants at the forum including representatives of the various tribal education departments in the Eastern region of the United States, some Federal Interagency Task Force members, public and tribal school board members, parents and tribal higher education staff, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and The Native American Rights Fund.

While the USET tribes are federally recognized, this forum reflected not only needs seen in other parts of the country but also some needs unique to tribes and tribal groups in the East. The Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education works with 53 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in this region serving nearly 18,000 American Indian students. The BIA provides funding to a number of tribal grant and contract schools in this area as well. There are hundreds of public school districts in on the East coast that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education for such programs as Safe and Free Drug Schools, Title I for helping disadvantaged students meet high standards, and others.

The following section contains concerns and recommendations received at the South and Eastern Regional Partnership Forum. A summary of the topics discussed at this forum follows this listing.

Participants at the South and Eastern Regional Partnership Forum preferred to conduct the initial process together and then to consolidated their recommendations. Therefore, instead of being presented in narrative format, the recommendations are straightforward and immediately followed by complementary strategies.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

Recommendation: Tribes and school districts were urged by participants to integrate mental health and wellness into their educational systems.

Strategies to implement the recommendation:

- Search for mental health and wellness funding opportunities through the Internet as well as federal state and local funding sources;
- Determine which ones are Indian-specific and tested, such as Healthy Kids 2000;
- Encourage school systems and early childhood programs to work together;
- Encourage all federal agencies to make accessible all applicable funds;
- Use resource guides to provide federal opportunities targeted to this effort;
- Fund new facilities, staff and administrative costs;
- Provide transportation to implement better services to Indian people.

Recommendation: States should be empowered to include American Indian/ Alaska Native (AI/ AN) representation at all levels of the State/Federal education system, including, but not limited to, school boards, state planning committees, Federal planning and education committees.

Strategies to implement this recommendation are:

- States and LEAs shall be required to include AI/ AN in education initiatives and planning for school reform;
- States should require local school boards to have Indian representation if the school has at least a five percent Indian population;
- States should fund development of Indian-specific curriculum;
- States should fund in-service teacher training for those who work with Indian students;
- Federal and State governments should fund mandated programs such as state - required finger printing of teachers;
- The Federal government should ensure that mandates for interagency consultation with tribes be reflected in implementation of Federal education programs in the future, especially at the state level;
- All school systems should be required to involve American Indian representation in standards-based reform including the alignment of assessments.

Recommendation: The Federal government should expand on all relevant and innovative educational opportunities and resources to fill local tribal and community needs.

Strategies to implement recommendation:

- States and tribes should require training and economic development program links to Federal research and development grant monies;
- Federal officials should develop and maintain a resource guide that identifies all tribal, Federal, and State resources available to Indian students; and develop intergovernmental linkages for applying for Federal grant monies; and, create a clearinghouse for information on grants and funding sources for Indian education.

Community and School Partnerships

Recommendation: States and tribes should inform and involve tribal members in the education of their children and encourage participation in leadership roles in the community.

Strategies to implement the recommendation:

- Tribes should identify and support a tribal member for a school board position;
- Schools should provide instructional workshops for parents;
- Schools should find ways that are interactive for parent involvement;
- Schools should provide activities in which parents participate with their children; Ask parents to get involved to bridge the gap between reservation and school;
- Federal government should require schools to conduct process testing in special education to provide specific assessment of child's educational development; and,
- Train teachers to use culturally appropriate assessments to identify and increase the number of gifted American Indian students being served.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Recommendation: There should be development of intergovernmental strategies including partnerships to address the need for Indian and non-Indian community awareness of tribal specific history and culture and to prepare professionals to work with Indian students. This includes curriculum development regarding local tribal history that may enhance self-esteem, identity and visibility of local tribes.

Strategies to implement the recommendation:

- Develop partnerships among tribal, State, regional and Federal systems;
- Set scheduled timelines for group planning to include tribal history and culture in state history framework and standards;
- Connect electronically among all groups involved;
- Establish a Governor's liaison in each State for addressing Indian education issues and collaboration of agencies other than education;

- Federal government should provide incentives for States and for local school districts to develop and include local tribal curriculum in all schools;
- Partnerships among mainstream universities and tribal colleges are encouraged and incentives offered to encourage development of eastern tribal colleges.

Recommendation: All governmental entities should identify and develop strength-based education models to enhance American Indian students' retention and performance.

Strategies to implement the recommendation:

- Incorporate American Indian cultural curriculum in all schools to increase not only the participation of Indian students, but also foster a sense of understanding about American Indians at the national level;
- Ensure that State education boards form partnerships with tribal education departments and programs to review State educational frameworks and standards to incorporate curriculum on local American Indian history and culture;
- States and the Federal government should increase scholarships available to American Indian students pursuing education in order to increase the numbers of Native teachers in the schools.

Research Development

Recommendation: The Federal government should expand the availability of data on funding, research studies, evaluations of effective models and practices and funding opportunities to tribes to ensure quality education for Indian students. Included in this should be the promotion of comprehensive funding strategies based on research that actively involves tribes in the research process.

Strategies to implement the recommendation:

- Ensure the reauthorization of all Indian education components of ESEA;
- Establish and improve relationships between tribes and university research centers and educational laboratories to develop a system for accessing data that supports Indian education;
- Eliminate moratoria for any Federal Indian education funding, i.e., JOM;
- Expand use of computers in schools to include community members and parents via creative scheduling; and,
- Improve training of teachers in use of computers for instruction.

**Summary of Alaska Partnership Forum
Anchorage, AK
March 28-29, 2000**

The Alaska Partnership Forum was held March 28-29, 2000 in Anchorage and was hosted by the Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education. OIE Director David Beaulieu and William Mehojah, director of the BIA Education office, welcomed participants. There were 53 participants at the forum representing Alaska Native villages, rural and village public schools, urban school districts, the Alaska State Education office and representatives from Alaska Native corporation education offices. Participation was lower than anticipated due to a statewide Alaska Native Education Summit held March 1-4 in Juneau, AK.

There are 265 Alaska Native villages in the state of Alaska. Members of other American Indian tribes live among the Alaska Natives and in urban areas of the state. This forum reflected needs seen in other parts of the country as well as some needs unique to Alaska Native groups. The U.S. Census Bureau noted in its 1998 projections that 16.2 per cent of Alaska's population is American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut, the highest percentage of Native population among all of the states. The Alaska Native population was estimated at 100,000 in 1999.

The Office of Indian Education in the U.S. Department of Education funds 48 formula grants in Alaska. These grants serve nearly 32,000 students. Additional Education Department grants are provided under the Alaska Native Equity Act, which is located in the Office of School Improvement Programs, also a part of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Melody McCoy, NARF Attorney, gave a presentation on the "Legal and Political Aspects of Indian Education," with specific focus on Alaska Native villages. A research focus group session was conducted by Westat, Inc., a private education contractor, as part of a contract to develop the Research Agenda on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.

The following section contains concerns and recommendations received at the Alaska Partnership Forum. Complementary information also resulted from the Alaska Native Education Summit 2000 held March 1-4, 2000 in Juneau. The full summit report can be requested from the Alaska State Department of Education.

There were six broad topical areas discussed and highlighted at the forum. These topics are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

There were four recommendations in this category. The first recommendation is for the Federal government and the state of Alaska to support the development or implementation of school to careers programs to reduce the risk factors students face without supervision after school. Participants thought that students can then be successful in the community and be given chances for further education in community cultural values.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- Partnerships could be formed with, tribes offering different programs and student exchanges to overcome the expense of starting up vocational technical programs;
- Schools and vocational technical vendors can work with tribes, students, and skilled community members coming together for student learning, especially in the areas of carving of wood, bone, antler or ivory; basket weaving, bead work, painting, skin sewing, knitting, Native dances, Native cooking, language, hunting skills, subsistence, cultural story telling, skin tanning and exercising;
- The State, Federal, Native Regional Corporations, and Village Regional Corporations could provide funding sources and technical assistance.

A second recommendation is a call for better collaboration among agencies that provide similar services and coordination among those with differing services; i.e., school districts and other service providers need to share information and teaching materials so they can be used throughout the region. Participants cited the need for a regional strategy meeting to set common goals, including the control of education from within the region rather than mostly outside of the delta to overcome the limitation of meeting someone else's standard(s).

Strategies to implement collaboration recommendation:

- Providing more local control through involvement of tribal councils and tribal courts to deal with truancy;
- The Federal government could provide additional funding for regional education program services and training by utilizing tribal colleges;
- Federal agencies should try to remove funding restrictions to allow for more local/tribal control. A promising practice cited was the type of partnership that can bring training opportunities to people closer to the villages where they live.

A third recommendation from Alaska participants was the need for continuity of policies and programs from the national, State, and district levels.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- All funding agencies should consider establishing a 5-year base funding period so that programs have a chance to “take root” and produce desired results;
- States should assist school districts in developing educational plans through a process that school boards and staff can follow for several years;
- Federal and State agencies should channel resources towards making local education plans a reality;
- Federal and State representatives should train regional and local school boards to understand their roles and responsibilities so they can safeguard the local education plans.

Participants identified a major coordination problem in early childhood programs in rural Alaska. They indicated that different Head Start providers have reduced coordination of programs in a region and reduced information sharing.

A fourth recommendation from Alaska participants is that service providers find ways to improve coordination of programs and try to get programs like Head Start to villages that do not currently have them. There needs to be more emphasis placed on funding early childhood programs with emphasis on language preservation and cultural preservation.

Strategies to implement these recommendations:

- Head Start teachers and parents need to be involved in children’s learning;
- There should be provision of services by agencies external to Head Start such as health and dental and vision care;
- Community members should make wise use of existing schools and facilities;
- School should coordinate student placement through programs like Early Find;
- Teachers should be required to complete degree programs;
- Encourage volunteerism from the parents for student support

Community & School Partnerships

There were three recommendations for community and school partnership development. The first is to encourage school districts to assist parents in goal setting in order to focus on their own education needs and provide opportunities for parents to further their education as well.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- Ask elders and resource people to come into the schools to train school personnel on parental involvement;
- Grants should be secured for use of school facilities and equipment after school hours. This could include using community education funds to carry-out activities using Native Corporations' Education Liaisons to get needed items at schools;
- Encourage parents, village council members and Native corporation members to run for school boards;
- Use newsletters to encourage community members to help with children. In order to move forward, inherited feelings against the schools need to be overcome.

A second recommendation is to promote tribal/community responsibility and accountability for the education of all students.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- The state of Alaska should provide training on a yearly basis to local community school boards to understand district and State politics so that they can advise school administration on development of school curriculum and programs;
- School districts should develop a "community assessment" that is administered at the district level to gather information and prioritize education goals of the community;
- Schools should incorporate the educational goal of teaching students on "how to be a true human being," in addition to the usual "reading, writing and arithmetic" – participants felt there would never be true investment in the education process by parents and community members if such a cultural value is not equal to the 3 r's;
- Tribal entities should identify three tribal members per year who they will sponsor with a combination of emotional/financial support to encourage timely completion of teacher certification.

A third recommendation is to provide assistance to students to include them in the decision making process to improve their accountability for academic achievement.

Strategies to implement this recommendation were:

- Counselors can help students develop complete education plans to include secondary and postsecondary goals;
- Develop partnerships among schools, parents, tribes, health and social service agencies to take an active role in helping students to achieve goals;
- Schools and local governments should appoint students to school boards and community groups whenever possible.

Culture Based Curriculum and Instruction

Participants made a third recommendation that tribes and school districts should develop a cultural curriculum to meet needs of Alaska Native students.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- Require school districts to collaborate with local tribes to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate curricula;
- The State of Alaska should design a comprehensive information campaign for school and communities to develop and improve Alaska Native language and cultural immersion programs.

Participants further recommended a framework for implementing the strategies which included asking the State of Alaska to develop a comprehensive information campaign plan; develop partnerships among tribes, schools, parents, and universities to design and implement curricula that are linguistically and culturally appropriate for all grades; and, create mechanisms that will hold tribal, state, and national officials accountable for developing and implementing linguistically and culturally appropriate curricula.

Quality of School Personnel

Participants called for increasing the number of Native teachers, counselors, and administrators in schools serving Alaska Native students.

Strategies to implement this recommendation:

- OIE should inform tribes about the \$10 million for training AI/AN teachers being made available in FY2001;
- Encourage youth from preschool on up to respect school personnel and see the education profession as attractive and achievable;

- School districts should implement career ladder programs that will provide opportunities for AI/ AN teacher aides;
- School district hiring committees should have an elected parent on the committee;
- Tribes should educate school superintendents and principals on the importance and benefit of having Native teachers in the schools;
- Schools should establish multicultural awareness orientation to instill and nurture awareness of more than one culture;
- Ensure that minority teachers represent demographics of the student population;
- U.S. Department of Education should establish a teacher and administrator fellowship program modeled after the Indian Health Service pay back program;
- The State of Alaska should establish job shadowing of teachers and skilled elders; create clubs similar to Future Teachers of America for Alaska.

The second set of recommendations follows and were geared to secondary schools in the state of Alaska.

- Ensure teacher preparedness by providing teacher training in the early identification of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE) children;
- Provide teacher training in the design and implementation of educational programs that will support the special learning needs of FAS/FAE students;
- Provide teacher training in the identification of gifted and talented AI/ AN students and in the design and implementation of educational programming that supports these student needs;
- Provide a career ladder or professional development program to allow AI/ AN teacher aides to become certified classroom teachers; and
- Provide training that will allow new teachers to understand the local Native culture of the community in which they teach.

Strategies to implement these recommendations:

- Require Fetal Alcohol Syndrome programs as an element of teacher preparation programs;
- Have school districts and universities work together to develop teacher certification programs for AI/ AN teacher aides;
- Have school districts implement career ladder programs that will provide opportunities for AI/ AN teacher aides to become certified;
- Include in teacher training preparation programs on-site cultural immersion;
- Have school districts collaborate with local communities to implement in service Training for new teachers on issues addressing cultural diversity,
- Have school districts collaborate with local communities to implement in service training utilizing local elders and certified Native teachers.

**Summary of North Carolina Partnership Forum
Raleigh, NC
May 9 - 10, 2000**

The North Carolina Partnership Forum was held May 9-10, 2000 in Raleigh, North Carolina and was hosted by the North Carolina State Indian Affairs Commission. There were 60 participants at the forum including representatives of the state's only tribal school, representatives of various tribes and tribal groups within the state, public school superintendents, other school staff members, parents, higher education staff, the North Carolina State Advisory Council on Indian Education, the North Carolina State Indian Affairs Commission, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and Native American Rights Fund.

With one federally recognized tribe in the state, this forum reflected needs seen in other parts of the country and some needs unique to state recognized tribes and tribal groups. There are 10 tribal organizations of state and non-federally recognized tribes in North Carolina in addition to the one federally recognized tribe. The Office of Indian Education (OIE) funds 18 formula grant programs in this state with a total student enrollment of 16,290 in school year 1999-2000.

At the forum, the Director of the Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education, provided opening comments. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Michael E. Ward, who underscored the importance of the forum by having his special assistant represent him for the entire forum, welcomed the group

The following section contains the actual concerns and recommendations that were received at the North Carolina Partnership Forum by topical area.

Collaboration Among Diverse Education Systems

North Carolina forum participants developed six recommendations under this topical category which are discussed below:

- There is a need at the local level for improved communication between local education agencies (LEAs) and tribes particularly with respect to a district's overall curriculum plan. There is also a need for collaboration between Indian education staff and other district staff, including teachers and administrators.
- Participants recommended that college guidance materials be disseminated for American Indian students beginning as early as elementary school and follow-up contact should take place with Indian college students through their college years.

- Participants felt that all Federal policies and funding resources should be made available to state recognized tribes.
- At the Federal level, participants saw a need for a requirement that each LEA document that it has informed the local community of the availability of all Federal programs; and, that it document it has not used special population funds to educate all of its students.
- In terms of interagency collaboration, participants recommended that a committee be established to determine solutions for meeting American Indian student needs in North Carolina. Potential committee members could include parents, North Carolina state representatives, a Federal representative from OIE in the US Department of Education and local community members. The committee could look at development of an expanded, consolidated school district grant program under the Title IX formula grant program.
- Participants emphasized the importance of inclusiveness in the identification and recognition of Indian people across governmental agencies as well as the employment of more American Indians at all levels of government.

Strategies to address recommendations included the following:

- Establish a viable funding level for Title IX Indian Education that allows LEAs with small numbers of Indian students to provide effective services;
- Increase the overall Title IX appropriation so that Indian Education grantees can provide more comprehensive services to Indian children;
- Increase eligibility for tribal applicants to access federal grants to administer TRIO programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education;
- Post scholarship information on the OIE web site for easy access and keep it updated by enlisting the support of state agencies, universities and colleges to help maintain the data and inform tribal organizations of this service.
- North Carolina schools should make a concerted effort to encourage and support Indian students to graduate from high school with North Carolina high school diplomas, rather than just certificates of completion.

Community and School Partnerships

Participants at the Raleigh, NC forum recommended that local school districts should make greater accommodation of cultural issues and factors in virtually all aspects

of school operations in order to nurture meaningful parent and family involvement in the schools.

Strategies to accomplish these desired ends included:

- Increasing the degree and type of community involvement, i.e., consider using retired Indian educators in classrooms that would have the simultaneous benefit of increasing the ratio of instructional professionals per student and introducing both a cultural resource and a role model;
- Schools should consider compensating students to tutor their parents, thus simultaneously increasing parents' personal skill level and involvement in their children's education;
- States should establishing mentoring and job-shadowing programs targeted to counties with American Indian students.

Culture-Based Curriculum and Instruction

As was the case at other forum locations, NC participants cited the lack of culturally and locally relevant curriculum as a serious and ongoing concern. A promising practice of bilingual instruction starting in the early grades was noted, namely, the Cherokee Language Curriculum which has recently been published and is currently being used at the Cherokee Central Schools.

Participants felt that greater preparation and support should be provided to at-risk American Indian middle school students to improve their achievement in science, reading, math and technology. Concern was also expressed that once such students enter high school, support must be ongoing for those demonstrating such need. This is especially important given the state of North Carolina's proposed public school requirement for more accurate reflection of Indian history on the state.

School strategies to implement recommendation included:

- Providing cultural sensitivity training for teachers and administrators;
- Accommodating cultural issues when considering disciplinary actions like expulsions;
- Promoting and strengthening greater achievement and readiness among American Indian students through use of promising practices such as after-school programs, day camps and other summer programs for science and technology acquisition;
- Development and purchase of culturally relevant material for the schools;
- Hiring more tribal language teachers in districts with Indian students.

Quality of School Personnel

In the area of teacher preparation and enhancement, identified needs included: early identification of prospective teachers among American Indian high school students; policy changes to make it easier to recruit and retain Indian teachers, middle school teacher aides; and cultural sensitivity training for teachers and administrators – this latter idea proposed for implementation via a teacher training academy. Participants made three recommendations for improving school personnel that are listed below.

- North Carolina colleges could incorporate an American Indian cultural component into the teaching curriculum which draws on traditional Indian values and teachings
- All college education majors intending to teach within the state of North Carolina should be required to take a North Carolina American Indian history course; and, such a course should be a requirement for all teacher certification as well as re-certification.
- Resolutions of support should be passed on school personnel needs by tribes and other entities including the State Advisory Council for Indian Education, the state legislature, the North Carolina State Board of Education, the Association of State Governors, and others with responsibility for working on state mandates.

Research Development

Participants noted a serious shortage of Indian-specific research that tends to have a negative impact on Indian student achievement. In particular, they pointed to a need for early identification of at-risk American Indian families, not just at-risk American Indian students. This identification should be done prior to initial school enrollment.

They suggested increasing the knowledge and use of technology and data collection in American Indian communities over the next five years and providing Internet access to Native American communities and including Federal, state, county, and local organizations in that process.

Strategies to achieve these goals included:

- Providing technology centers to American Indian communities;
- Tribes should work with the Federal government to expand the definition of Native American to include all American Indian and Alaska Native peoples;
- Federal programs should provide outreach training within Native communities; and, provide training and education in the collection of accurate and consistent ethnic information for statistical purposes.

General Recommendations

Two recommendations made at this forum transcended all topic areas. (1) The Federal and state governments should provide technical assistance to tribes and school districts on grant writing and preparation of applications for funding; and, (2) the U.S. Congress needs to appropriate sufficient funds to support recommendations emanating from the Executive Order 13096 regional partnership forums. Included among such funds should be more grants and scholarships for state, not only federally recognized tribal members.

Appendices

- 1. Executive Order 13096**
- 2. Interagency Task Force Members**
- 3. Forum Acknowledgements**

Executive Order 13096

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For immediate Release
August 6, 1998

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13096
AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, in affirmation of the unique political and legal relationship of the Federal Government with tribal governments, and in recognition of the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Goals. The Federal Government has a special, historic responsibility for the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students. Improving educational achievement and academic progress for American Indian and Alaska Native students is vital to the national goal of preparing every student for responsible citizenship, continued learning, and productive employment. The Federal Government is committed to improving the academic performance and reducing the dropout rate of American Indian and Alaska Native students. To help fulfill this commitment in a manner consistent with tribal traditions and cultures, Federal agencies need to focus special attention on six goals: (1) improving reading and mathematics; (2) increasing high school completion and postsecondary attendance rates; (3) reducing the influence of long-standing factors that impede educational performance, such as poverty and substance abuse; (4) creating strong, safe, and drug-free school environments; (5) improving science education; and (6) expanding the use of educational technology.

Sec. 2. Strategy. In order to meet the six goals of this order, a comprehensive Federal response is needed to address the fragmentation of government services available to American Indian and Alaska Native students and the complexity of inter-governmental relationships affecting the education of those students. The purpose of the Federal activities described in this order is to develop a long-term, comprehensive Federal Indian education policy that will accomplish those goals.

(a) Interagency Task Force.

There is established an Interagency Task Force on American Indian and Alaska Native Education (Task Force) to oversee the planning and implementation of this order. The Task Force shall confer with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE) in carrying out activities under this order. The Task Force shall consult with representatives of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and organizations, including the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), to gather advice on implementation of the activities called for in this order.

(b) Composition of the Task Force.

(1) The membership of the Task Force shall include representatives of the Departments of the Treasury, Defense, Justice, the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Energy, and Education, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the National Science Foundation. With the agreement of the Secretaries of Education and the Interior, other agencies may participate in the activities of the Task Force.

(2) Within 30 days of the date of this order, the head of each participating agency shall designate a senior official who is responsible for management or program administration to serve as a member of the Task Force. The official shall report directly to the agency head on the agency's activities under this order.

(3) The Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education of the Department of Education and the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior shall co-chair the Task Force.

(c) Interagency plan.

The Task Force shall, within 90 days of the date of this order, develop a Federal interagency plan with recommendations identifying initiatives, strategies, and ideas for future interagency action supportive of the goals of this order.

(d) Agency participation.

To the extent consistent with law and agency priorities, each participating agency shall adopt and implement strategies to maximize the availability of the agency's education-related programs, activities, resources, information, and technical assistance to American Indian and Alaska Native students. In keeping with the spirit of the Executive Memorandum of April 29, 1994, on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments and Executive Order 13084 of May 14, 1998, each participating agency shall consult with tribal governments on their education-related needs and priorities, and on how the agency can better accomplish the goals of this order. Within 6 months, each participating agency shall report to the Task Force regarding the strategies it has developed to ensure such consultation.

(e) Interagency resource guide.

The Task Force shall identify, within participating Federal agencies, all education-related programs and resources that support the goals of this order. Within 12 months, the Task Force, in conjunction with the Department of Education, shall develop, publish, and widely distribute a guide that describes those programs and resources and how American Indians and Alaska Natives can benefit from them.

(f) Research.

The Secretary of Education, through the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and the Office of Indian Education, and in consultation with NACIE and participating agencies, shall develop and implement a comprehensive Federal research agenda to:

- (1) establish baseline data on academic achievement and retention of American Indian and Alaska Native students in order to monitor improvements;
- (2) evaluate promising practices used with those students; and
- (3) evaluate the role of native language and culture in the development of educational strategies. Within 1 year, the Secretary of Education shall submit the research agenda, including proposed timelines, to the Task Force.

(g) Comprehensive Federal Indian education policy.

(1) The Task Force shall, within 2 years of the date of this order, develop a comprehensive Federal Indian education policy to support the accomplishment of the goals of this order. The policy shall be designed to:

- (A) improve Federal interagency cooperation;
- (B) promote intergovernmental collaboration; and
- (C) assist tribal governments in meeting the unique educational needs of their children, including the need to preserve, revitalize, and use native languages and cultural traditions.

(2) In developing the policy, the Task Force shall consider ideas in the Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement proposal developed by the NIEA and the NCAI.

(3) The Task Force shall develop recommendations to implement the policy, including ideas for future interagency action.

(4) As appropriate, participating agencies may develop memoranda of agreement with one another to enable and enhance the ability of tribes and schools to provide, and to coordinate the delivery of, Federal, tribal, State, and local resources and services, including social and health-related services, to meet the educational needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

(h) Reports. The Task Force co-chairs shall submit the comprehensive Federal Indian education policy, and report annually on the agencies' activities, accomplishments, and progress toward meeting the goals of this order, to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sec. 3. Regional partnership forums. The Departments of Education and the Interior, in collaboration with the Task Force and Federal, tribal, State, and local government representatives, shall jointly convene, within 18 months, a series of regional forums to identify promising practices and approaches on how to share information, provide assistance to schools, develop partnerships, and coordinate intergovernmental strategies supportive of accomplishing the goals of this order.

The Departments of Education and the Interior shall submit a report on the forums to the Task Force, which may include recommendations relating to intergovernmental relations.

Sec. 4. School pilot sites. The Departments of Education and the Interior shall identify a reasonable number of schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and public schools that can serve as a model for schools with American Indian and Alaska Native students, and provide them with comprehensive technical assistance in support of the goals of this order. A special team of technical assistance providers, including Federal staff, shall provide assistance to these schools. Special attention shall be given, where appropriate, to assistance in implementing comprehensive school reform demonstration programs that meet the criteria for those programs established by the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (Public Law 105-78), and to providing comprehensive service delivery that connects and uses diverse Federal agency resources. The team shall disseminate effective and promising practices of the school pilot sites to other local educational agencies. The team shall report to the Task Force on its accomplishments and its recommendations for improving technical support to local educational agencies and schools funded by the BIA.

Sec. 5. Administration. The Department of Education shall provide appropriate administrative services and staff support to the Task Force. With the consent of the Department of Education, other participating agencies may provide administrative support to the Task Force, consistent with their statutory authority, and may detail agency employees to the Department of Education, to the extent permitted by law.

Sec. 6. Termination. The Task Force established under section 2 of this order shall terminate not later than 5 years from the date of this order.

Sec. 7. General provisions. This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person. This order is not intended to preclude, supersede, replace, or otherwise dilute any other Executive order relating to American Indian and Alaska Native education.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,
August 6, 1998.

APPENDIX 2 Interagency Task Force Members

Executive Order 13096 established an Interagency Task Force to oversee the planning and implementation of the order. The Task Force membership includes representatives from federal departments and agencies. It is to confer with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education and consult with representatives of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and organizations.

Michael Cohen (Co-chair)
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Kevin Gover (Co-chair)
U.S. Department of the Interior

Maria Hernandez
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Gerald Gipp
National Science Foundation

Marcia Warren
U.S. Department of Commerce

Jane Stutsman
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David Beaulieu
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National Indian Education Association

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Melody McCoy
Native American Rights Fund

Anna Goddard
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Victoria Wright
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U.S. Department of Labor

E.O. 13096

Regional Partnership Forum Acknowledgements

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Name

Organization or Affiliation

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Mr. Kelsey Begaye	Navajo Nation President
Ms. Genevieve Jackson	Navajo Division of Education
Ms. Roxanne Gorman	Navajo Division of Education
Dr. Anselm Davis, Jr.	Navajo Rural Systemic Initiative
Ms. Judy Martin	Navajo Division of Education

Facilitators

Betty McCorkey	SW Regional Assistance Center Rio Rancho, NM
Floyd Beller	WestED, San Francisco, CA
Loretta Draper	BIA/OIEP, Washington, DC
Dr. Anselm Davis, Jr.	Navajo Rural Systemic Initiative
Ms. Judy Martin	Navajo Division of Education

Other Federal Staff*

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John Cheek	National Indian Education Association
Brian Colhoff	National Indian Education Association
Jack C. Jackson Jr.	National Congress of American Indians
Melody McCoy	Native American Rights Fund

Northern Plains Regional Partnership Forum
Rapid City, South Dakota

Facilitators

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Karen Suagee	U.S. Department of Education

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John Cheek	National Indian Education Association
Brian Colhoff	National Indian Education Association

Lower Midwest Regional Partnership Forum
Oklahoma City, OK

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Arlington, VA

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James T. Martin

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United South & Eastern Tribes Director

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Alaska Regional Partnership Forum

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North Carolina Partnership Forum

Raleigh, North Carolina

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John Cheek
Brian Colhoff
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National Indian Education Association
National Indian Education Association
Native American Rights Fund

*Federal staff members present at all forums included Lorraine Edmo, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education (OIE) and Charles Geboe, on detail to OIE from the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Indian Education Programs (BIA/OIEP).