

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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FY 2025 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TRIBAL CONSULTATION

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TUESDAY
MAY 23, 2023

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The Consultation was convened via Videoconference, at 2:00 p.m. EDT, Julian Guerrero, Director, Office of Indian Education, presiding.

PRESENT

JASON CUMMINS, Deputy Director, White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities

JULIAN GUERRERO, Director, Office of Indian Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

JAMES LANE, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Delegated the authority to Perform the Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

NAOMI MIGUEL, Executive Director, White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities

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ALSO PRESENT

MARCOS AGUILAR

CHERYL ANDREWS-MALTAIS, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay
Head Aquinnah

FAITH BEGAY-DOMINIQUE, Sicangu Co

LEVI BLACK EAGLE, Crow Tribe of Indians

SANDRA BOHAM, Salish Kootenai College

NATHAN ELLIOTT, Chickasaw Nation Department of
Education

LAURIE HARPER, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

SUSAN HAWK

MAHOGANY HOPKINS, Manhattan Strategy Group

JOEL ISAAK

JOSEPH MARTIN, Northern Arizona University

LEANDER McDONALD

REBECCA MOORE, New Mexico Highlands University

JEREMY OYENQUE, Santa Clara Pueblo

DARCIE PACHOLL

SAMANTHA REDHEART

AHNIWAKE ROSE

CELESTINE STADNICK, Oglala Sioux Tribe

PATRICIA WHITEFOOT

KARRAS WILSON

VICTORIA WIND, Circle of Life Academy

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2:04 p.m.

MS. HOPKINS: Good afternoon and welcome to the FY 2025 Budget Priorities Tribal Consultation to inform and develop departmental budget priorities.

Next slide, please.

A few consultation protocols. All lines have been muted. Event audio and video are being recorded. Comments will be received first from elected tribal government officials. Second, from proxy representatives, then members of the public.

Whenever speaking, please remember to state your first and last name, title, tribe, organization that you represent. Comments must be limited to the consultation questions, and we are allowing 15 minutes for each question.

Next slide, please.

In the event of technical issues, the traditional conference call line will be used. Please take note of the number and the conference

code. If you have dialed into the meeting, please press Star 5 on your keypad to submit comments.

Next slide, please.

You may submit written comments. They will be collected through the email address on the screen, tribalconsultation@ed.gov. Again, that is tribalconsultation@ed.gov. The comment period is open through June 23rd at 11:59 p.m.

Next slide, please.

Next, I will turn it over to Julian Guerrero. Julian serves as director for the Office of Indian Education and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Mr. Guerrero oversees grant-making and technical assistance support to OIE grantees.

Julian?

MR. GUERRERO: Yes. Thank you, Mahogany, so much.

Good afternoon. Good morning to you all. Thank you for joining this year's FY 2025

budget development priorities consultation. We've very excited to have you all join us virtually today and on such an important topic, the informing the development of Fiscal Year '25's budget.

This is something near and dear to many tribal leaders. And in the work of Indian Education, we know that at the forefront of this work we want to make sure that the budget reflects the needs and the relevant input that we get from leaders today.

That being said, we have quite a few of my honorable colleagues also on the line today. If I could get the next slide. I'm just going to introduce a few names, and we'll give them time to say hello.

Next slide, please.

First, we're going to be hearing from today's primary facilitator, Naomi Miguel, who's the executive director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native

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Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities.

As well as next slide, we're going to hear from Dr. Jason Cummins, deputy director for the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Next slide, please.

And Dr. James Lane, who is Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

First and foremost, I wanted to give an opportunity for Dr. Lane to provide some brief welcoming remarks, and then we'll hand it off to Naomi and Jason moving forward. So just give me a second, and we'll transition to Dr. Lane.

DR. LANE: Hello, everyone. I'm excited to be with you. I'm using Julian's computer, but I am James Lane, and I'm our acting

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assistant secretary in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. I'm so grateful to be with you today.

I'd like to thank Julian for inviting me, but also thank Naomi and Jason, the Office of Indian Education team, our contract staff and all those who made today's tribal consultation possible.

Our commitment to you today is to always strive to deliver our best as a service agency to meet your needs as important partners in this important work. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, I want to acknowledge the good work that each of you are doing to support and uplift the experiences of Native students across the country.

It is so humbling to see so many tribal leaders come together around the shared belief that Native students can achieve anything with meaningful supports that value their culture as an asset. We at the U.S. Department of Education are committed to partnering with you in

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raising the bar for all Native communities.

In his January 2023 speech, the Secretary encouraged all stakeholders to raise the bar in education. The initiative, known as Raise the Bar: Lead the World, is the U.S. Department of Education's call to action to transform P-12 education and unite around evidence-based strategies that advance education and excellence for all students.

Raise the Bar has three major themes. The first being that we will ensure that all students achieve academic excellence, that we will boldly improve learning conditions, and that we will create pathways for global engagement. And within those, there are six strategies.

First, we want to accelerate learning to ensure that every student recovers from the pandemic and goes beyond where we could have imagined before the pandemic. We want to innovative instruction through a well-rounded education and ensure that our students have amazing experiences in school every day.

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We want to eliminate the educator shortage to make sure that we have high quality individuals working with our children on a day-to-day basis. We want to invest in mental health to make sure that our students have the foundation that they need to be successful in school.

And whether it's the American Rescue Plan on the academic side or the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act on the mental health side, we have invested historic resources to making that possible. We also want to ensure that every student has a post-secondary pathway so that they know that the day after graduation that they have the opportunity to have a successful life after their time in our public schools.

And finally, we want to make sure that every student has a pathway to multilingualism. Whether a student is learning English as their second language, we want to make sure that students that are learning multiple languages are seen as having amazing assets that will make them

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competitive on our world.

And that includes those students who are learning Native language or the Native language was their first language. And for those students that are not learning English as their second language, we want to make sure that any student that already knows English has the opportunity to learn other languages, including Native languages, so that they can round out their education and make sure that they know either their own culture or other cultures that can help them be successful in society.

At the heart of Raise the Bar is a push to not go back to 2019 and the status quo. We don't want to simply refine old strategies or put band-aids on big problems, instead to get our kids back on track and successful. Our charge is to address the fundamental challenges in our system, and that includes those challenges facing Native students.

When we raise the bar in education, all our Nation's students will build the skills

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to thrive inside and outside of school. Our students will reach new heights in the classroom, in their careers, and in their enriched lives and communities making a positive difference in the world for generations to come.

So thank you again, welcome again, and we at the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education are all wishing you a successful and meaningful tribal consultation. Thank you for having me today. I'm going to pass it back to Julian.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much Dr. Lane. We really appreciate Dr. Lane taking time out of his very incredibly busy schedule to be with us. And moving forward, Contractor, could we go back two slides to Naomi Miguel? Wanted to give an opportunity for Naomi to welcome and also say hello to all joining us today.

Naomi?

MS. MIGUEL: (Native language spoken.)

Good afternoon. My name is Naomi Miguel. I'm from the Village of Chukut Kuk

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(phonetic) in the Tohono O'odham Nation. I'm the executive director for the White House Initiative on Advancing Education, Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunities for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Very long title. We usually refer to it as the White House Initiative or the White House Initiative on Native Americans and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

I just wanted to thank all of you for taking time out of your day to join this very important conversation and really appreciate all those tribal leaders who are spending time today, giving us your feedback on our budget, and also we hope to take all of that and make sure we're implementing it and really thinking about what you're saying today. Thank you all so much, and I'll turn it back over to Julian.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Naomi. It's such a pleasure to hear from you and to think about the important role of the White House Initiative moving forward in this work.

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I also wanted to do some quick program office acknowledgments. Contractor, could we go forward two slides? One more, please.

I wanted to acknowledge a few colleagues that are also joining us online today throughout the various program offices in the Department, the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Indian Education, the Rural, Insular, and Native Achievement Programs, Impact Aid Program, the Office of Post-Secondary Education, Institutional Service, The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, specifically the Rehabilitation Services Administration, as well as the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, and the Office of English Language Acquisition.

It's such a pleasure to have in presence multiple colleagues throughout today's consultation, and I do see them online and in the chat and in the participation list. Again, it's really heartwarming to know that we have multiple Ed colleagues on the line with us today.

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So that being said, I do want to take some time to welcome another esteemed colleague of ours, Dr. Jason Cummins, who serves as the deputy director of the White House Initiative. If you could give a second to transition to Jason.

DR. CUMMINS: Hello, everybody. I'm using Julian's computer here, but first of all, I wanted to welcome all of you to our session today for our meaningful engagement session. I also want to say thank you. Thank you for taking the time to spend with us, thank you for being concerned about the education of the students of your communities. Very sincere thanks and welcome.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Dr. Cummins, we appreciate that.

Contractor, next slide, please.

So into the business of today's consultation, we're going to walk through the facilitation, the agenda. That being said, this is at this moment in time is when I hand it off

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to our primary facilitator, Naomi Miguel, who's going to walk us on from here.

Naomi, welcome again and thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: All right, everyone. Thanks so much, Julian, for kicking us off and getting us started and also inviting a lot of our colleagues to quickly say hello. I'll be taking over for facilitating today, but I wanted to just make sure that you all were aware of what we have planned for you all.

Next slide, Contractor, please.

We already went through the welcome and background, and we're just going to do a quick overview of tribal leader acknowledgments of folks who have signed up or may be in the room. Don't worry, we're not going to put you on the spot. We'll just do a quick shout out to folks that we know might be on the call. And then we will go into our tribal consultation.

So for our tribal consultation, we have sections of questions that we want to propose to you all. Those sets of questions will

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be broken into two separate sets of questions.

The first part is going to be specific on the Department's fiscal year 2025 budget requests. We'll kind of go through a little bit of background about what that is for the Department and our process, but those specific questions are going to be directly related to your community and the Department and what you currently know of the Department or programs at the Department.

The second half of those questions will be related to the Department's tribal consultation process in general, more or less the budget request process from what I know. There was a budget request tribal consultation done last year, so we're wanting to get your feedback about what that process was for you, what it looked like, and also what we can do better.

And then lastly, we'll go through tribal leader comments. So each question that we propose, we will have about 15 minutes to go through your various comments, and then we'll go

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through public comments as well. So those of you who are listening in as members of the public, you'll also get a chance to respond to these questions, but we do want to prioritize tribal leaders.

Next slide, please.

Okay, so now we're going to get into a little bit of the background for our budget.

Next slide.

All right. Today, we're hosting our tribal consultation on the development of our fiscal year 2025 budget. And the purpose of this consultation is to get all of your inputs to ensure that all of your tribes and your tribal leader views inform our budget policy development, but also inform us of your tribe's priorities, especially as it relates to education.

Also, this is all done prior to the Department submitting its official FY25 budget. I know FY25 is a few years away, but the work that we do in gathering numbers and data to

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inform us about that budget is all done right now.

Next slide, please.

So this is a quick review of our budget process. As you can see, the green box indicates that we are right now in May 2023 where we're conducting our tribal consultation. The next step is to submit our FY25 budget to the Office of Management and Business, and that will be done in September 2023.

And then in February 2024, President Biden will submit the FY2025 budget to Congress. So that budget will inform Congress on various numbers and what we would want to have for the Department and the programs.

And then usually, simultaneously on the Congressional side of things, Congress will be formulating its budget and appropriations and go through various hearings and appropriations processes at the member and Senate-level both in the House and the Senate.

And then that will be put into a large

bill that is usually the appropriations bill that gets passed in the fall. So we anticipate the budget for FY25 to be done in fall of 2024. Keep in mind, some of those budgets are usually passed through what we call the CR, or Continuing Resolution.

So sometimes, those numbers are just similar to what the previous budget is, but what you let us know in your input can help us inform those numbers as well.

Next slide.

Okay. So copies of our Department's FY2024 budget justifications can be found at this website. It is www2.ed.gov/cj/justifications. Now, each Congressional justification includes appropriations language, history, a description of each funded program and a summary of the budget, the Department's request for each program.

That is probably going to be, if you wanted to do a little bit more research prior or after this, this would be the website you would

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want to go to to make sure that you are getting a clear view of all the programming.

Next slide, please.

And this slide, we welcome any data or evidence that's helping you support any requests for increase of funding for various programs. That data can be specific to your tribe, or it can be other sources that you used to help inform you in your education needs. So in our request process that we submit to OMB, we usually take a lot of your justifications and data, and that helps us inform our budget.

Next slide.

So we wanted to do a quick overview of some of the tribes that we had signed up for joining us today. We may have some tribal council members from the Lummi Indian Business Council, Choctaw Nation of Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, and Lower Brule Tribe. And we also may have a tribal council member from Hopi as well.

We also have a Crow Tribe secretary

also online as well. Thank you all for taking the time out of your day to inform us of your tribe's education needs and also appreciate you advocating for your tribes and your tribal students.

All right, next slide, please.

Okay, so a quick overview of consultation protocols. I know you guys have all been waiting on this. Currently, we have all our lines muted, so please keep that mind. Once we go over the questions, we wanted just to remind you all that all of the audio and video for this meeting will be recorded.

Yes, there are also a lot of tribal college and university presidents online, so thank you so much for joining us, too. Quick shout out to you all. So the comments that we will go through will first prioritize tribal leader comments and government officials.

And then we will also go through tribal leaders and then the public as well. If you raise your hand or go through everything,

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don't worry, we'll get to you.

When you are speaking, if you could please start off by telling us your first, last name, title and tribal organization that you represent or that you are from. And then please keep your comments limited to our consultation questions.

Let's not forget that we're here to listen to you about education, and that means a lot of our Native students. We want to make sure that you're getting your information across and that all the information we're getting is very much relevant to that.

So each question that we're going to pose will be a 15-minute limit for each question. I do understand that there may be some questions that may have more input more than the other, and we have discussed that. If there interest in discussing one question, we may go back if we have time to make sure that we're gathering more comments and input from there.

All right, next slide, please.

Okay, just a reminder, this set of questions is going to be about FY2025 budget, so this group of questions will be about the current budget that we're creating.

Next slide.

Our first question is kind of a two-parter. What are your tribe's education needs, and which Department of Education programs meet or attempt to meet those educational needs? The question is what are your tribe's educational needs, and which Department of Education programs meet, attempt to meet those educational needs.

I'll kick it over to our contractor to let us know who is currently raising their hand or in the queue.

MS. HOPKINS: Hi, Naomi. At this time, I do not recognize any hands for this question.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay, Contractor?

MS. HOPKINS: I do recognize one hand raised, Faith Begay-Dominique. You may unmute yourself.

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MS. BEGAY-DOMINIQUE: (Native language spoken.)

Hello, everybody. Thank you so much for having this consultation today. I'm the federal relations director for Sicangu Co, the economic arm of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota. The first part of this question I would like to provide a response. What are your tribe's educational needs?

Our educational needs are housing for teachers so we can recruit more teachers and have housing for them to live at when they come to teach our school, transportation, and curriculum resources. We have Lakota immersion school for K through 2nd grade, and we add a grade every year. We're always constantly needing more curriculum resources in the Lakota language to continue our immersion work.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that, Faith. I really appreciate that. I apologize, I'm writing notes while you're speaking so I'm wanting to make sure that we're

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getting that summary, but we really appreciate you sharing all of that information with us. Thank you for joining us today.

MS. BEGAY-DOMINIQUE: Thank you.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, I do not recognize any additional hands raised at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay, thank you so much, Contractor.

So on each slide, just so you are all aware, we have a reminder about written comments. So if you see these questions and maybe you do want to get back to your tribal council or others, the written comment period is open until June 23rd, and it ends at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Your written comments can be submitted to tribal consultation at ed.gov. Again, that email address is tribalconsultation@ed.gov.

I believe we have a few more hands raised, Contractor.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. I have recognized

Susan Hawk. Susan, you may unmute yourself.

MS. HAWK: Hello, my name is Susan Hawk, and I am Inupiaq. My family is from White Mountain, Alaska. I'm also a member of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska. And I'm very concerned we have one tribe that I'm grateful there's one tribe that did state a verbal comment and that tribes are invited to provide written comments.

However, what I would like to say is that as 85 to 90 percent or more of our students are in urban areas, it's very important to have oversight of the Title VI Indian Education Formula Grants. As a previous administrator at LAUSD Title VI Indian Education Program, there has been lack of oversight and misguided advice to the district and other LEAs all across the country.

I'm disappointed to see less than 145 attendees at this meeting, and I welcome written comments. It would be very important for our students to be supported with the formula grant and for there to be oversight to ensure that

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these monies are meeting the targeted demographic of American Indian, Alaska Native students in our public schools.

As an administrator, I saw the parents advocate for academic supports for our students to no avail. No Indian preference instituted for employment, contracting or administration of the grants.

I urge the Office of Indian Education to uphold and communicate with the Office of the Inspector General when they request communication in order to ensure that the federal-wide assurances are being upheld to support that our American Indian, Alaska Native students are receiving the funds intended for their benefit, which is required by law.

I would also urge that the Office of Indian Education work towards providing requirements for the district to apply and for accountability of the funds to not only the students, parents, but also the tribes. Each of our tribes does have that in the law in the

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legislation to be provided annual performance reports, and it's never been done at LAUSD. Thank you very much.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for those comments.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, I'm sorry, I did not recognize any additional hands at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. Thank you so much for all of your comments on this first question, and we'll move onto the next.

Okay, so Question 2 is also a two-parter. What are the greatest educational needs of Native American students, and how can the Department of Education prioritize meeting those needs in our budget?

I'll read the question one more time. What are the greatest educational needs of Native American students, and how can the Department prioritize meeting these needs in our budget?

Contractor, do we have anybody raising their hands?

MS. HOPKINS: Not at this time. I

will continue monitoring.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. I'll do my quick spiel about written comments. Written comments can be submitted until June 23rd. Again, the email address is tribalconsultation, all one word, @ed.gov.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, Naomi, I recognize Laurie Harper.

Laurie, you may unmute yourself.

MS. HARPER: Thank you, good afternoon. I am Laurie Harper. I'm the director of education for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota. What are the greatest educational needs of Native American students? Honestly, we could be here all day discussing the greatest educational needs of Native American students.

What I see here at Leech Lake, what our greatest educational need would be is a strengthening of language work and knowledge of who our students are as well as seeing them reflected in classrooms, seeing themselves reflected in those classrooms, seeing themselves

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reflected outside of the classrooms and the students being able to visualize themselves being successful in ways that they've determined.

How can the Department prioritize meeting those needs in your budget would be to invest greatly in Native language revitalization and quit making it so competitive and so dang hard for tribes to access language revitalization dollars.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that comment, Laurie, I appreciate your comment about reflection and students seeing themselves. Really appreciate your comments.

All right, Contractor?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Faith Begay-Dominique and Marcos Aguilar. First, Faith and then Marcos.

MS. BEGAY-DOMINIQUE: Hello, everybody. Coming to you again from Sicangu Co, economic arm of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. Something that we have recognized as one of the

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greatest educational needs of Native American students is funding for training to train school counselors in social and emotional intelligence for children so we can keep children in the classroom.

One of our schools on our reservation has done some of this work. There was a psychologist hired that trained counselors in limbic recovery and certified school counselors. There was a recovery room established within the school where students could go and interact with sensory tools and other therapeutic tools and speak with a therapist.

Students were in these rooms for 15 to 20 minutes. The counselor would try and figure out what the student was trying to express, and the student learned how to express themselves in a better way instead of using the terms that got them kicked out of the classroom. And this just helps students with communication and being able to communicate what their emotions were, and it helped get them right back into the classroom.

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So they would be in that recovery 15 to 20 minutes, figure it out, and then hop back into the classroom again. And they were able to turn their ISS room into a recovery room. That year, the 7th graders on the reading assessments, they had a 50 percent growth in performance in a positive way.

There hadn't been necessarily anything that was done extra in the reading curriculum than any other year, so it's kind of thinking that getting these students back into the classroom was really what boosted that growth.

So looking at funding for training for school counselors to be trained in social and emotional intelligence for children and working on these recovery rooms and hiring psychologists to do these trainings and keep students in the classroom. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for sharing all of that with us today. I really appreciate you delving into the recovery room and sharing all that information with us.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, so there are five additional hands raised. Marcos Aguilar, Jeremy Oyenque, I believe. I'm sorry if I mispronounced your last name. Levi Black Eagle, Celestine Stadnick and Nathan Elliott.

Marcos, you may unmute yourself.

MR. AGUILAR: Thank you very much. I am a director of a OIE-funded program called Native Voices College (phonetic) here in Los Angeles County. We've been assisting with the reformation of the Title VI program in Los Angeles Unified School Districts about 2014, but particularly uplifting the importance of tribal consultations since 2017.

And one of the critical needs that we see is having tribal government participation, even taking advantage of the opportunity to co-partner on the Title VI grants and be co-equals if not the lead applicants on an urban ed center as well such as Los Angeles.

In LA, I think it reflects a national trend in urban centers. According to the latest

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publically available data, an estimated 250 American Indian students are expected to graduate from the district and charter schools across Los Angeles County. However, the data indicates that only a few over half of those graduates achieve college eligibility according to the state standards.

As of 2022, American Indian dropout rates have steadied at around 20 percent, but in actuality college eligibility rates for American Indian students are really closer to 30 percent county-wide and only 24 percent state-wide. By contrast in our program, 100 percent of Native Ways 2 College seniors have graduated college ready.

A state-wide greater attention and nationally greater attention is being called for a support for American Indian achievement such as in California with AB 1703 calling for a task force that are encouraged in local educational agencies but not required.

We think that there's a need for

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additional attention to close that gap between high school graduation and access and eligibility for higher education. Nationally, we're a part of a coalition called the Resurgence Practitioners Network led by the National Urban Indian Family Coalition. And in 2017, a study was conducted across urban centers in the United States on American Indian programs.

There was an emphasis on the needs that were outlined in seven core practices to indigenizing the school experience, learning out of doors, learning in community, learning across generations, learning in redefined spaces that are community-controlled, learning leadership and advocacy, learning indigenous language, the revitalization and also through new language programs, and learning indigenous cultural practices are the greatest needs to help bridge that gap and address academic priorities from the standpoint of self-determination and not assimilation. Thank you very much.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for

those comments, Marco.

MS. HOPKINS: Jeremy, you may unmute yourself.

MR. OYENQUE: Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Jeremy Oyenque. I'm the director of youth and learning for Santa Clara Pueblo representing Governor Chavarria. Some of the greatest educational needs that we are having right now is really teacher retention and educator retention.

Fortunately through our state of New Mexico, we have had an increase in public school employees, especially for bachelor's-level teachers. Unfortunately because we run federally-funded programming as well as tribally-controlled schools, we've been lagging in just being competitive for that, wanting to do our own but also meet the needs of our student has been very competitive.

Having to be competitive with the surrounding school districts and just seeing the limitations of funding to our students. Also

with trying to grow our own, the first area that has been impacted for us trying to remove or move those budgets around has been an area of paraprofessionals.

These critical staff members, substitute teachers, support staff who provided specific learning intervention for our students, a lot of times they are cultural leaders and have that cultural knowledge that bring that to our classroom, even if they're working towards their educational degrees.

Just losing these paraprofessionals would make it challenging for teachers and other staff to time off to attend trainings, provide after-school programming. Basically, these paraprofessionals allow us to provide a richer and more varied education for our students. That's something that our students deserve.

A way that the Department could help prioritize is to also increase the request for the special programs for Indian children because that does affect the LEAs, which we do know most

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of our schools go to, but at the tribal level, you know, that also can trickle down through the BIE-funded schools and also hopefully make some efforts for our Headstart as well. So with that, just want to thank you for the time on behalf of Santa Clara Pueblo.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you, Jeremy. Those are really great comments, and I really appreciate your emphasis on paraprofessionals and tying that into a lot of the culture and how that impacts students. Appreciate that.

MS. HOPKINS: Levi Black Eagle, you may unmute yourself.

MR. BLACK EAGLE: (Native language spoken.)

Thank you for having me. My name is Levi Black Eagle. I'm the secretary of the Crow Tribe of Indians executive branch. Our tribe's issues, our needs I would say, is that a majority of our students or tribal members attend school on the school district because it's right off our

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reservation. So a lion's share of our students are at a non-tribal school.

I believe the population from tribal to non-tribal is 90 percent tribal and 10 percent something else. However, they have failed to see that as a -- it's a tribal school, basically, but just not. And two of the schools are actually on within the exterior boundaries of the reservation, and they're always last as far as school facilities, roofs, fence, any type of maintenance.

They're on the bottom of the totem pole, so to speak. And I think that if there'd be some way where we could enforce a certain amount of oversight with these non-tribals who we're entrusting to teach our tribal members, that'd be great. I think we need to go back to the trust and responsibility.

I think that needs to be taken serious with regards to our Native American children. I think that the policy should reinforce what the treaty said concerning the education to our kids.

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Also, I think this is probably universal, but more money. We need more money for teachers, for higher ed, for Native language revitalization and not prioritizing English. I'm sorry, I'm reading my notes here.

I just wanted to thank you for having this consultation and allowing me to speak.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that, Levi. Also, if you do remember anything, just doing a little plug, you can also write us back and let us know of any additional comments you may have.

Contractor, next person?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. The remaining, Nathan Elliott.

MR. ELLIOTT: Hello. Nathan Elliott, secretary for the Department of Education, Chickasaw Nation. I would agree with the first speaker that said we could be here for a long time on the greatest needs of students, and I agree with everything everybody said. I'm in

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Oklahoma, is my location, and every issue everybody's pointed out from the different locations around the country, we see that too with our students.

So my comments will be brief. The questions here, the purpose of the consultation is where should the Department of Education, Office of Indian Ed, look at budgeting money. My comment would be the NYCP grant that we've had before.

I believe the Chickasaw Nation was awarded that in 2016. We applied, didn't get it the last time, but that was a grant that we had worked with several schools and had great success in the need of college and career readiness, which is something we see with a lot of our students to get them on that path in that direction. Again, that's what I mean I'll be brief.

So when you're looking at the budget, possibly budgeting more money to something like the NYCP grant to allow more tribes, more schools

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to be awarded that, just again, something that we witnessed was and got great feedback from our families we work with, great feedback from our schools.

We actually gained a couple of key staff members in the Department of Education once the grant ran out. That would be my comment, that college and career readiness, which we handled that through NYCP grant. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: All right, thank you so much for that, Nathan. I'm trying to be mindful of our time on this question.

Contractor, is anyone else in the queue?

MS. HOPKINS: No, there is not.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. We'll go onto the next question, Question 3. Question 3 is actually a large question, so just bear with me while we do a few background slides before we get to the actual questions. If you want to have this previous question on while you're thinking, let us know and we can make sure to display that.

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So each year, our Department writes budget justifications to explain to Congress the different programs that we have, but also the importance of funding these programs for the Department. As I mentioned previously, these summaries are found at this website, www2.ed.gov, and you can kind of see the rest of this.

Actually, I should probably say it for those who are just listening in, www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget24/justifications/index.html. We'll have someone on staff put that in the chat, Connie, so thank you so much for that suggestion.

Next slide, please.

All right, so those budget justifications I just mentioned, our questions are do these budget justifications for our FY2024 budget adequately describe the use and importance of these funds, and are there changes that should be considered for the FY25 budget justifications that are currently being written?

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I'll say those questions again because I know they're very long for those who are listening. So the first question is do these budget justifications for the fiscal year 2024 budget adequately describe the use and importance of these funds? The second question is a follow-up question. Are there changes that should be considered as the fiscal year 2025 budget justifications are being written?

Those are the two questions. Contractor, are there any hands up at the moment?

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, I did not recognize any hands at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. While we wait a little bit, I'm just going to go over written comments really quick. So if you just joined us or are jumping on, our written comment period is currently open, and we must receive comments by June 23rd at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Again, your written comments can be sent to tribalconsultation, all one word, at ed.gov. I believe we have one hand up, is that correct?

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MS. HOPKINS: I do not see any hands raised. I'm sorry if I missed it, but I do not see any at this time. Oh, yes, I see one. Ahniwake Rose?

MS. ROSE: Hi, Naomi. It's Ahniwake Rose. I wanted to make sure you had a response for this question because I know a lot of people are probably going to have to dive into the budget justifications.

But one thing that I would encourage the Department to do is for the lump programs such as special programs for Indians, that seems to be sort of the catch-all for all things, new things, that happens within the Department around Indian education.

And as a result, some of the longstanding programs like our professional development program end up getting cuts or waylaid. So I would encourage that the budget justifications specifically pull out lines within those programs and fund them directly instead of making some of the larger groupings like a catch-

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all for funding.

MS. MIGUEL: Your comment of getting direct funding for each of these programs is duly noted.

MS. ROSE: Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you for that.

MS. HOPKINS: I do not recognize any additional hands at this time, Naomi.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay, all right. Well, we can continue on to our next set of questions.

MS. HOPKINS: I'm sorry, we do have one hand, Patricia Whitefoot.

Patricia, you may unmute yourself.

MS. WHITEFOOT: It's taking me a while to go back from screen to screen.

Good afternoon. My English name is --

MS. HOPKINS: Patricia, you are very low.

MS. WHITEFOOT: Okay. Can you hear me now?

MS. HOPKINS: We can hear you a little better, yes, not great.

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MS. WHITEFOOT: Okay, I'll put it up here. Is it better? Is that better?

MS. HOPKINS: No, but we can hear you now.

MS. WHITEFOOT: Okay. My English name is Patricia Whitefoot. I'm a citizen of the Yakima Nation in the State of Washington. I did want to speak to just the budget overall. There has been work, of course, done previously by the Broken Promises report.

And in our case, U.S. Representative Derek Kilmer of Washington and Senator Elizabeth Warren have advocated for the Honoring Promises to Native Nations Act to make certain that the federal government is meeting its trust and treaty responsibilities and to hold the federal government accountable for honoring the country's legal promises to Native people.

I want to just add that as you continue to work on the budget that you remember this report that was undertaken by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in December 2018 where

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one of the meetings held was on the Quinault Nation. I was pleased to be able to speak to the issue of education.

And I think just overall, this report is important for the federal government to address the various needs that exist, of course in education, but at the same time there's a need for the healthcare of our children in the school systems, community, economic development for our families, public safety to address some of the violence and the drugs in our community.

And one of the major ones is housing. When I was a teacher on a reservation, housing wasn't available for teachers so I really just want to speak to housing particularly for isolated, rural communities most often in unincorporated communities where there are significant Native student populations.

Want to continue to address the housing needs of our teachers, educators in our communities. And just want to make certain that we're following the intent of the Broken

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Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you for that comment, Patricia. I appreciate the reminder of that very important report.

MS. WHITEFOOT: Thank you.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Next is Levi Black Eagle.

Levi, you may unmute yourself.

MR. BLACK EAGLE: Thank you. This is in regards to the previous question. I would say that I think that we need to increase the NAM fund for language revitalization from I would say at least \$20 million. I think that one of the things that sets all our tribes apart and makes us unique is our language, and I know that across the board language revitalization is -- our language is going away.

If we don't do something proactively to rectify that, it's going to be gone. Apsaalooke, we kind of tout the fact that we preserved onto our language quite a bit, but yet

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still that number is really low. If say, like, 10 percent of a tribe is still able to speak their language, that's considered a win, but that's not enough.

I think we need to do everything that we can to make sure that we prioritize that and we not allow any of our Native languages to die. In the past, federal funds were spent to basically eradicate our language, and I think that we need to undo that in some way, shape or form. I think more money in the tune of \$20,000,000, if not more, \$20 million, to be shifted towards language revitalization. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you for that, Levi, and thanks for the reminder of the history but also appreciate you identifying something very specific and adding the number on to it. Thank you for that.

MS. HOPKINS: We have Oyenque.

MR. OYENQUE: Good afternoon again. Jeremy Oyenque, director of youth and learning

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for Santa Clara Pueblo representing Governor Chavarria. My comment is also for the previous slide and in regards to the information that could be added to the budgets.

I think it may help to do a comparison of the two federally-operated school systems. There's only two in the country. One is the BIE, and the other is the Department of Defense Education Activity of the DoDEA.

The DoDEA is often viewed as one of the best performing school systems while the BIE is oftentimes seen as one of the lowest. Even just having some of the basic descriptions of some of the discrepancies between those two entities I think will do a lot, especially at the Congressional level.

I know there's a lot of changes and comparisons that we try to do from state to state, but using those just as the two federal systems that are operated I think can be helpful for some of our people, especially if they have tribal communities in them.

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Just to give one of the highlights that we've done with research here with our lobbyists as well as the DoDEA, their staff to student ratio right now is currently one staff to 4.65 students while the BIE on the other hand is one and it's about 13 and a half.

So even just looking at that discrepancy, talking about my previous comments on teacher retention and also just the paraprofessionals, I think we can see huge discrepancies which might help some of our Congressional leaders fund and justify some of these decisions. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Appreciate that, Jeremy, and also really appreciate some of the data that you referenced that your tribe is doing. Really appreciate that.

Contractor, do we have anyone else? I believe we were on the previous question too.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. We have Celestine Stadnick.

MS. MIGUEL: Can we also just go to

the previous slides since we're still on the other -- there we go. All right, thank you so much.

MS. STADNICK: Hi, my name is Celestine Stadnick. I'm the educational specialist for the tribal education agency of the Oglala Sioux Tribe here in South Dakota. Where I would like to see an increase in the budget is in the special learning programs, and specifically for our student inmates and the students that cannot attend school because they have addiction issues or they don't have the stability of a home that --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that, Celestine. Have that noted, so thank you for that.

Contractor, do we have anyone else?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, Rebecca Moore. Rebecca, you may unmute yourself.

MS. MOORE: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm really appreciative of this consultation.

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I am an employee while I'm on faculty here at the New Mexico Highlands University in the school of social work, and I think that what I'm hearing from several of these comments really needs to be addressed because we've got larger systemic issues that are impacting our students and the parents and the community, and there aren't resources that would involve community and parents.

And we're not living in a vacuum. We're not just getting students in school or in college because they're bringing all of these problems that are systemic and challenging to the classroom, and we as educators are attempting to address these. And on a larger scale, we have to look at social and emotional learning.

We have to look at parenting. We have to look at the idea that there is a lot of racism and discrimination that contribute to how our students view the world, and this all goes back to the realm of the person in the environment as a social worker speaking.

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So I just see all of these systemic challenges, and it's not just about money. It's really about human resources and getting parents and community and governments involved to facilitate change, systemic long-term change. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you for that, Rebecca. I appreciate your comments.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, we have Joseph Martin.

Joseph, you can now unmute yourself.

MR. MARTIN: Good afternoon. I want to go back to some of the comments that were made in terms of priorities in tribal needs. I think it's fair to say that every tribe probably has a need for additional scholarship funds. Some tribes do okay with the bachelor's and master's level, but I would dare say that many of them are probably shorthanded when it comes to support for doctoral candidates.

The OIE, I think for many years at the very beginning back in the '70s and '80s, have

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the doctoral program assistance in place. And it was not until 1990s, I believe, somewhere in that era that all of a sudden it ceased. There's a big need for that, I think, across in the country in many of the -- in professional development programs, the projects at universities and tribal colleges have.

Everyone will say that we need additional funding to support students who want to pursue a doctorate degree. We have tons of that at the university that I work at in Arizona, the Northern Arizona University. Since 1990, I believe, we've graduated over 350 candidates, and every one of those students every year will ask me, why can't we have a program very similar with the same level of support that we have for the master's in the doctoral era?

I can't remember the explanation I got when the doctoral program was stopped. I think the word I got or the explanation I got was that it was because someone in OMB or the White House reasoned that there's a bigger need for master's

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program in the country. Who in their right mind would ever believe such a statement?

I think doctorals are just in demand, probably even far greater than any other parts of degree programs we have. So I hope that you all take in consideration that -- the language is already there. You don't need to reinvent the wheel. You don't need to reinstate the language. It's already there.

It's just a matter of, from what I'm told from NCAI AND NIEA and members of the Congressional folks, that all the U.S. Department of Education needs to do is to reprioritize that component and then you have a program back in place. It doesn't need to go through new legislation. It doesn't need to be rewritten to the law or anything of that sort. So hopefully that would be something that'd be high on your priority. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for information about that program, Joseph. We'll keep that in mind and have that noted.

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Contractor, do we have any others for this question?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, Leander McDonald.

MR. McDONALD: Director Miguel, I want to (audio interference) for holding this consultation or this listening session with our people, our educators, out here in the country. I also want to just shout out to yourself in regard to helping us here at the tribal leader summit here in Bismarck in September and being one of our keynote speakers. We appreciate that very much.

A couple things. I wasn't really sure where to come in today, so I'm coming in here in budget justifications, but it's not necessarily an overall perspective, I think, in regards to the questions from 1 to 3 until now. But what I'm seeing on here, we have an elementary school here on campus.

You have an elementary ed teaching program here as one of our programs of study. United Tribes Technical College is focused on

technical education and workforce development in regard to our roots, but we also have academic programs.

And I come from the perspective is that there's no really -- it's not a dichotomy in regard to education services that we provide, but rather it's a continuum. Some students come in wishing for CTE, some students wish to get an undergrad with us or a two-year degree and then transfer out to an undergrad program that we don't have, and then they go out to graduate school from there.

We don't offer a graduate program like my relative who just got done sharing, but I think that's important. But I think what's important for us to provide these educational services is understanding the importance of having (audio interference) programs based in Native culture and Native understanding in regards to learning and to have that as a basis, a foundation, for the teaching that we do.

I heard the importance of language and

culture revitalization today. I believe that's at the core of everything, not only for us as educators, but also for us as tribal nations.

We should have these things within our constitutions, within our tribal codes, law and order codes, within our bylaws, and whatever governance documents that we use to guide us in regard to our principles because we're Native people and we need to remember that.

But in regard to the assimilation policy that happened with us, and the mental health issues that I think we're experiencing now, and these issues aside from self-identity that we see within our elementary school students as well as our college-aged students and even our relatives who are as old as myself, I'm 60 this year, is that these issues of intergenerational trauma.

And sometimes not even recognizing that but realizing that's there. I think when we realize that's there, then we can address it. So it also stresses the importance of having an

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accurate history on what happened and having the true stories of our people that brought us from the past until now.

It's not to walk around with a chip on our shoulder, but rather it's to realize that we've come through this, we've persevered through this, and we need to move forward from where we're at today. And positive strides are being made. I think there's best practices that are out there, and we have to identify those for moving forward.

The other piece is that -- and I think these are true for both Bureau of Indian Education or Department of Education work that's happening in regards to our elementary and our college students, and then also recognize the importance of us reaching back into middle school and secondary school in regard to recruitment into our systems.

And then to somebody's previous point, the importance of having Native teachers and administrators within these systems. We come

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from that perspective. We have a different perspective than our non-Native relatives that didn't grow up in our communities, that did not grow up in poverty, did not grow up in alcoholism or drug addiction. And these are all social issues that are a result of the poverty that we're in right now, and we have to recognize that, what we're doing.

The other piece is the importance of having new, or a minimum, adequate facilities in order to teach and to learn. And so that stresses the importance of construction and rehabilitation funds for our facilities. We here at United Tribes, the buildings that we're in were built in the late-1800s, early-1900s.

And some of these buildings that we're living in or have operations in still have their original windows from that time, still have the original doors from that time. They still have the plaster on the walls. There's no insulation in those walls.

And then we have students living in

there, we have programs that are being housed in there. So there's things along those lines I think that are important for us to have to create learning environments for our people. Why should we be any different than our non-Native relatives out there that have these things?

Lastly, in closing, as I serve on a commission on Native children, and we've been doing that work for about three years. It's been about six years since it started, but we're getting ready to wrap that up.

The report should be available in February 2024 when we're to present that to Congress, and there is a lot of information in regard to education and culture, mental health, and all the things that I've touched on today. Thank you again for a few minutes, for allowing me to share some thoughts.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much, President McDonald. Appreciate all of your comments and really appreciate your emphasis on recruiting students to TCUs and construction,

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teacher recruitment, and also the work that you're doing on the commission. Appreciate that as well.

Contractor, I believe we have two more people left for this question, and then we can move on to the next section of the consultation.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Chairwoman Andrews-Maltais and Joseph Martin.

Chairwoman, you may unmute yourself.

MS. ANDREWS-MALTAIS: Thank you very much, and thank you very much for the opportunity to be here. Apologize for being late. USDA was calling on us at the same time, so they started earlier. Anyway, I'll even just briefly go back to Question 1, the priority needs are very high for our education.

We have always put education as a very high priority in our tribal community as evidenced through the centuries of college graduates. However, the burdens that are placed on our students, but also their families. Families are often the ones that sacrifice in

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order for the students to be able to go to school and get the advantages that we need to get in order to be competitive in today's world.

However, because of the lack of funding recognized by the United State to be able to be provided to the Department of Education and the Office of Indian Education, those scholarship levels are generally inadequate to meet the needs as well as ensuring that members of federally-recognized tribes should be able to attend the state school in any state.

Because again, we don't all live on reservations. And through several of the failed United States' policies, our people have been dispersed throughout the country into the urban areas when they were trying to -- in the removal era.

So acknowledging and recognizing that there are other ways to be able to assist in elevating the scholarship and the access to scholarship funding may not just simply be in the dollars, but also in requiring state schools to

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be supportive of indigenous students whether they come from Massachusetts, going to school in Texas, or vice versa.

The other thing that we need to really be looking at it in Question 2 is the Department really evaluating the split with the funding and looking at how we can help as tribal leadership, emphasize the importance of increasing the amount of funding coming to Indian country because 95 percent of our students go to public school, reserving only about 5 percent going to the tribally-run or BIE schools.

And nobody wants to see any funding taken from the BIE or tribally-run schools. In fact, we need to see that dollar amount increase significantly to meet the needs as well as to upgrade the schools and get away from friable asbestos and the poor condition of these tribal schools that the United States has allowed to take place.

But also, we can't lose sight of, again, those failed programs and the forced

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acculturation into areas outside of the tribes' aboriginal territories or reservations that we also need to pay attention to the overwhelming majority of our students that are in the public school system.

Today, to answer the questions that we have, the budget justifications do describe the importance of these funds. However, I think, and I think I heard a previous speaker mention that it's also important to keep referencing back to the United States' obligation to tribes, the trust and treaty obligation that they have, as we've paid it forward.

And in exchange for the lives of ancestors, lands and natural resources, we were promised that the United States would in provide for the health, education and well-being our people. And it's articulated clearly and plainly in the United States Commission on Civil Rights' Broken Promises and Quiet Crisis reports and being able to consistently revert back to the United States recognizing its own failures to

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Indian country and reinforcing that so that Congress understands that this is not an entitlement.

We are unlike anybody else. There is a specific obligation of the United States to provide these funds and these services to our tribal nations, and I can get more -- I'll be able to send in more detail on the actual justifications for you.

And the changes that need to be put into the 2025 budget is really, this is across the board, trying to ascertain what the true cost of education is. And as somebody else mentioned, not only the undergraduate and the graduate, but the truly advanced degrees where our people should be and where there is no financial support as well as in the trades and the services areas with certification and licensure.

Not everybody is destined or wants four years, six-year, eight-year in those graduate bricks and mortar degrees in a customary college setting, but also in those trade where

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people are able to earn a living which we know that these areas, as well as STEM, are going to be so important.

And the last thing with regard to looking at the changes or what we should be looking into more is -- I'm sorry, I lost my train of thought. Someone pinged me, and it made me lose my train of -- I hate when that happens.

Looking at how we can better service our communities, oh, that was it, and trying to focus a little bit more on how we can support the connectivity of the tribal colleges and universities so that this way it allows for students to do more tele-education so that you have students from different parts of Indian country being able to take advantage of the wonderful education opportunities that the TCUs have, but clearly they may not be able to have it due to class size constriction and/or the ability for somebody to be able to live and relocate to an area where those TCUs are.

So enhancing the ability and the reach

of the TCUs I think would be another thing that we should be looking at in 2025 on how to make that connectivity stronger so that we can have that type of outreach. And so I guess caught up to three, and I'll just be here for the rest. Thank you so very much.

MS. MIGUEL: Appreciate your comments, Chairwoman, and thank you for joining us today and also your reminder of looking at the true cost of education. I think that's very much a comment that is very true for this specific question, so appreciate that.

All right, Contractor, if we could go to our last comment for this question, and then we'll move on to the next section.

MS. HOPKINS: Okay.

Joseph Martin. Joseph, you may unmute yourself.

Joseph, Joseph Martin? I'm sorry, Naomi, his hand was raised a few seconds ago.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. I don't think I see him in the participant list, so maybe he

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dropped off for a bit. I guess that's a good reminder. So if you are a little bit more limited on time the more we go on, we do have written comments. A written comment is currently open.

Our deadline is June 23rd, 2023, and you can submit them to tribalconsultation@ed.gov. You'll hear me say that a lot today, so feel free. I know I'm going to sound like a broken record, but just wanted to make sure you all understand that this doesn't end when this consultation ends, that there's still a written comment period that we welcome all of your input.

Can we go to the next slide, please.

Okay, so this part of our consultation is going to be more reflective. We're going to look at the Department of Education's tribal consultation process on the budget generally. Last year was the first time that they had tribal consultation on our budget, and this is our second one. So we just want to get an idea of what you all would like to see these tribal

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consultations look like.

So these next few questions are going to be more reflective of the process and what you've experienced here and also taking any ideas on what you would like to see in the future as well.

Next slide, please.

Our first question is a two-parter as well. We use a lot of the data to inform our process in grant-making decisions when we're writing these justifications, so we wanted to know what sources of information or data on performance and needs of Native American students, teachers and schools do you believe should inform our budget development here at the Department.

So it's a very long question, so I'll repeat it again. So the Department uses data to inform its budget in grant-making decisions. What sources of information or data on the performance and needs of Native American students, teachers and schools do you believe

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should inform the budget development here at the Department of Education?

I'll let that question kind of sink in, and I believe we might have a hand up. Contractor?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Susan Hawk. Susan, you may unmute yourself.

MS. HAWK: Hello, thank you. I'd just like to say, yes, I appreciate this opportunity being the second tribal consultation and inviting voices to form this policy. Of course, it's been since 1974 since we had Indian education, and it is very important to have the parents of the students and the tribes of the students be involved in this policy process.

Unfortunately, it's not always the case that the Title VI Indian Education programs provide the annual performance reports to the parents nor the tribes of the students as is required by the legislation. However, this is a start.

I would just like to say regards to

the data and the budget when we are talking about, and as this questions asks, specifically what sources of information or data on the performance and needs of American Indian students is to be collected.

I'm interested to know what the definition is of Native American that you are considering and is the policy of OIE since in the state of California, they have broadened the scope of Native Americans to be any Native American from the western hemisphere, specifically since there is federal Indian in the trust relationship to the tribal enrollees of federally-recognized tribes, there seems to be a total disconnect to any accountability and trust relationship or federal-wide assurances by the districts that apply for these funds.

They are using it in the case of LAUSD, Los Angeles Unified School District, they are using it for indigenous students, which is broad. And that is good. There should be more money for indigenous education for all indigenous

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students from anywhere, but specifically about the trust relationship, the focus here is the Office of Indian Education's policy to follow federal-wide assurances in providing the targeted funding for our students, the targeted demographics of American Indians, Alaska Natives, or is the Office of Indian Education policy to provide for Native Americans of any country of origin or being born here of descent of other countries.

Where would this stop? Are New Zealand people considered part of this Office of Indian Education? Does the Office of Indian Education provide for indigenous people of Japan, the Hokkaido perhaps? The New Zealanders or the Icelanders? Where is the line drawn? What is the policy? It's very vague. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you for those comments, Susan.

All right, we'll go to the next person.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Chairwoman

Andrews-Maltais.

MS. ANDREWS-MALTAIS: Thank you again. I just would like to echo the question of the previous speaker. It is a very challenging position to be in because while we honor and respect all indigenous peoples and their expectation to have those considerations, the trust and treaty obligation is to the federally-recognized tribes, and it is very challenging when we wind up by having to dilute the resources that are supposed to be coming to us for the education of our students into a broader pool.

That includes with the Title VI and all the rest of the aid that comes. And I guess when it comes to the data, not only with the definition of what we're going to be considering as Native American students or American Indian students, it's easier to know more specifically what that data would be used for because I believe that most of the data that should be collected should, A, be collected through tribal resources and certainly not for the census.

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The Census Bureau information is generally incorrect, and we often have challenges with trying to make corrections to that census data. And once it's implemented or incorporated, it seems like it's etched in stone and we can never seem to correct that, and it's always at the detriment to my community as well as a lot of the communities in the east as well as around the country if they're not well-established or very large tribes.

Additionally, when we're looking at the information, I believe the actual cost of education of the students in each locale is a critical component. In our neighborhood, just to say, it was \$28,000 per student, and that was about five years ago. And I'm sure it didn't get any less with age.

So we know that when we're looking at some of this, which also affects impact aid if the information is not accurate, if it's not there to really identify what that cost is, then we will wind up by being grossly undercompensated

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for the schools. And that creates a hostile environment for our children as they attend these public schools.

And it doesn't go without mention that every year our students do get commented and denigrated because the general community at large believes that the tribes or Indian people don't pay anything, and therefore we're a drain on their community and their tax burden -- or therefore, a tax burden for them.

And the last thing I think that we need to think about when we're talking is the families and then through their tribal governments and then filtering the information from the schools, because of course everybody's got their own side of the story to tell, but we know at the end of the day what the impacts and implications are of the funding that comes in through the schools.

And also, there should be something that demonstrates that a state is fulfilling its obligation for consultation with the federally-

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recognized tribes underneath the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act so that we know that the states are actually doing what they're supposed to do as a recipient of federal funds in order to educate all the children in whatever state they may have.

But most specifically, what that impact is for the tribal students, and that does not come from them not speaking with us. It is imperative that the states start fulfilling their obligation as the recipient of federal dollars and consult directly with the federally-recognized tribes that are contained within the exterior borders of their states. Thank you very much.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much, Chairwoman. We appreciate your comments.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, we have Karras Wilson.

MR. WILSON: Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Karras Wilson. I'm from the Fort Yuma Quechan Tribe. As we're talking about

pointing back on data collection and any type of research for American Indians is with IRB, Institution Research Board.

But also when you're dealing with tribes, you need to have the community-based participatory research where the tribe is involved with this research to make sure that the correct data is collected.

Too often we have the wrong information as the chairman has discussed, and this is where the term indigenous comes into play because it doesn't delineate any specific group. And to top it off, and this is where the government needs to enforce the legal terms, which is Native American and Indian.

Native American became law May 20 of 2016, and it went through Congress and signed by President Obama. We need to maintain the legal terminology. Going outside that, this is going to have major implications as it did in 2005 closing down D-Q University in Davis, California, in 2005.

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So we need to stick to the legal terminology. This is going to affect education as a whole. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for your comments. I just want to remind everyone that the question is related to budget, grant-making and the data that we would need to inform the budget for next year from the Department.

Contractor, can we have the next person?

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, I do not recognize any additional hands at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. All right, we'll go on to our next question.

Well, I guess, can you go back, please? I guess I'm going to continue part of that question, I apologize. If there are resources that you do know of and you would like to share them, or as previously mentioned if there are specific ideas or recommendations on how the Department should go about getting data, please include that in our public comment period

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and area.

I believe the suggestion of having the community discussions about education is duly noted in your comment as well, so we can go to the next question, please.

Question 5 is as the Department of education conducts our annual budget consultation, what information would you need to be shared in advance for future consultations? So I'll go through it again.

As the Department of Education conducts our annual budget consultation, what information would you need for us to share with you in advance for future consultations?

While we kind of wait for that question to settle in, I'm just going to repeat the written comment period which is currently open. Our deadline is June 23rd, 2023, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. You may submit your written comments to tribalconsultation@ed.gov. That's tribalconsultation, all one word, at ed, E-D, dot, G-O-V.

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Do we have anyone on the line, Contractor?

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, not at this time. I do not recognize any hands.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay, we'll give it a couple more --

MS. HOPKINS: Chairwoman Andrews-Maltais, you may unmute yourself.

MS. ANDREWS-MALTAIS: Hi again. Thank you. I think that the information that would be able to be shared in advance would be consistent with most of the federal budgets or departmental budgets where if we have last year's budget as consolidated as it can be because it can be pretty overwhelming.

And then what changes are being recommended for those line items and/or whether or not there's the ability to include more priority line items within the budget and have that shared. I know it's hard to get it out early, but at least two to three weeks in advance to provide enough time for our overloaded plates

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as well to be able to review and take a look and formulate good questions.

I think that that would be the most helpful, at least for me, to be able to see that stuff early. And also may I just suggest that if it's uploaded into the invitation so then this way if we lose it in the 10,000 emails that we might get in the three weeks or four weeks, whatever, that we know that we can actually access it again through those means of mechanism. For me personally, that would be the most helpful and adding in any other questions just in advance.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for those comments, Chairwoman. We really appreciate that.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, I do not recognize any additional hands.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. We'll move on to the next question. Question 6, what budget development questions should the Department of Education consider asking in future years? So

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while we're looking at FY25 in this current discussion when we're talking about FY26, what type of budget development questions should the Department of Education consider for future years in tribal consultations?

Again, I'll just go over our written comment period. It's currently open. It closes on June 23rd, 2023, 11:59 Eastern Time. And your written comments can be submitted online through tribalconsultation, all one word, at ed, E-D, dot, gov. I believe we might have a hand up.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, we do. Samantha Redheart. Samantha, you may unmute yourself.

MS. REDHEART: Hello, thank you. My name is Samantha Redheart. I'm with the Yakima Nation. I am a parent. And as an active and involved parent, I help and participate in several budget writing and approval for impact aid for Title VI for JOM.

And a lot of the time, the schools -- well, my experience only, the schools just go through these checklists for these budgets.

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They're going to the tribes without any of the parents or without any of the officers from any of these organizations.

And I don't even know that the school is meeting with tribal council to discuss issues that our district are facing, and they're just going through the motions of the requirements without the tribal leaders vetting the information or sharing.

Because a lot of time, the tribal leaders do not have children in the school districts, or a lot of the tribal leaders are elderly and their kids are -- they don't even have kids in the school districts anymore. Some of the times, my experience is the leaders do not know what the issues are that the parents, the students and the families are experiencing in each school district.

So I think there should be parent liaisons as well as all the other checkmarks because I have additional concerns that are always met or addressed because that's not a

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requirement for accountability. Thank you. I appreciate being involved with all these fabulous people on the line. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for your comments, Samantha. Appreciate your note about parents and their involvement in a lot of these budget discussions, the connection between them and tribal leaders. Thank you so much for that.

Contractor, do we have anyone else for this question?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, that would be Chairwoman Andrews-Maltais.

MS. ANDREWS-MALTAIS: Thanks. I would like to echo the sentiments of the previous speaker. The connection between the community, the parents of the students as well as the obligation of the tribal governments to be engaged with the parents to get that feedback and also consolidated in that.

So it might be a -- it looks like a checklist for all of us to ensure that we're

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doing that as well as back to the proof of the consultation of the schools to be able to provide that there was in what way did you engage with the tribe as opposed to just being able to check the boxes, which oftentimes happens.

And also to the point that somebody made in the chat box as far as maybe asking is this grant system working? Or should it be weighted formula-based? Which again, trying to get away from grants and competitiveness and pitting tribe against tribe, region against region.

When it comes to the education of our children, every young person deserves a quality education irrespective of where they are. And it shouldn't just be based upon some sort of grant formula that maybe some area might weigh in because they're on point with it and other areas may not have the bandwidth to be that involved or engaged, and of course they are missing out.

I guess the other thing would be, again, full cost of what the education of the

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students are and whether or not these additional fundings that the school system gets are actually being administered properly by them for the cultural or the additional value for the native students.

And if it's not them, then ensuring that the tribes themselves, if they're using the funds, say like in the Title VI, that those things are in fact being utilized.

And the last one would be is there enough flexibility in the program and the granting so that this way people can kind of develop what they feel might be an appropriate way of administering the funds based upon the unique needs of that particular tribe, school district or region. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for those comments, Chairwoman. You really mentioned about adding in flexibility for some grants and then also looking at the competitiveness of grants and taking that away and looking more at formula. Thank you so much for all of that.

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MS. HOPKINS: Another commenter, Levi Black Eagle.

MR. BLACK EAGLE: Hello, thank you for your time. I wanted to say that one of the questions we could ask is what would the cost be to fully fund so that we're able to address and basically meet the needs of all our education deficiencies or all the needs with regards to education to our Native American students.

I'm part of the budget formulation for -- not the board, but I'm on part of the budget for the Billings region. What they did for IHS is every year they get around \$9 to \$10 billion, but that is not enough to fully meet the needs of our Indian communities. So what they did was they did a study and said, what's the dollar amount to actually fund for our health needs?

And the number was like \$60 billion. It was pretty high. And they never asked for that because they said, well, we're never going to get that. We'll just go with what they're always giving us.

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So when we go up to the Hill as tribal leaders and we lobby our delegation and say, well, we need more money for our health department.

They say, well, what did you ask for? We said, nine. Well, that's what we gave you. Why didn't just ask for more?

So if you could find a dollar amount that will fully address all the needs with regards to education of our Native Americans that what will it take to fund us, and let's start asking for that number. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Really appreciate that comment, Levi, and also the example that you provided for us from another agency. Appreciate that.

Contractor, I think we have one other?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Patricia Whitefoot.

Pat, you may unmute yourself.

MS. WHITEFOOT: Thank you. I just want to reiterate again the need for

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consideration be given to the Broken Promises report. Again, by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to address the chronic underfunding and barriers to sovereignty in Indian country.

I think that is so critical that we continue to utilize the title here, particularly with chronic underfunding because members of Congress have also supported this as well, and so we need to be consistent with those members that are continued to advance this type of initiative because it really addresses that chronic underfunding.

And I know that you as employees at the Department of Education can't say anything about it, but we as citizens of our tribal nation can is that we know that this chronic funding has been pervasive just across the board.

And in addition to that, questions to consider or thoughts to consider is being consistent across the board in terms of funding that's being advocated for and are the funds in alignment with one another. I'm just thinking of

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Title VI. It's the formula grant and other programs may be competitive.

So I think that there really needs to be some work done in terms of taking a look at what type of funding is available. So if you have Title VI as a formula grant, how was that formula developed and how does it change over time due to inflation and issues like that? We're talking about now recession in the country.

How is it going to change? Do we really know that? I think that there's a need for more education about how each of these resources are derived because I know you really can't say anything to us, but we can ask those hard questions that need to be asked. How is that determined, and then how did those funds come up?

Because of my long experience with Title VI, I always thought it should be double than what it is right now because it's one of -- it's the lowest funded project for Native education. Another one would be the tribal

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colleges endowment budget item.

That's been in there since the 1980s and something that we caught with the tribal college and are working with Congress right now to make changes to increasing that amount from \$3,000 to increasing it even more than the \$3,000 that was provided from the 1980s.

So there are things like that that go within the Department of Education, but it's up to us as the tribal officials, the leaders, directors, parents, grandparents to be able to locate those issues which then doesn't, you know, help us to understand and realize that it's important for the agency to be transparent and accountable to our communities.

I've noticed that we don't have some of our Alaska Native brothers, and sisters because I'm with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, I always want to make certain that we're paying attention to the needs particularly of our Alaska Natives just because of their sheer amount of land base that they have

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to follow and plus the kind of weather conditions that they have and the diversity of the villages as well.

I think it's important to make certain -- perhaps there'd be a time where you're able to hold this kind of hearing with the Alaska Native communities themselves. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for those comments, Patricia. And also the reminder that our tribes are all diverse, and they're all in different areas. Appreciate that reminder.

Contractor, do we have anyone else for this question?

MS. HOPKINS: No, we do not.

MS. MIGUEL: All right, we'll move on to the next question. I believe this might be the last question for this section. Our question is what suggestions do you have regarding how we can improve our presentation of our budget information, and particularly regarding funding programs with tribal implications.

This is a long question, so I'll

repeat it again. What suggestions do you have regarding how we can improve the Department of Education's presentation of budget information, particularly regarding funding programs with tribal implications?

I'll let that sit for a little while. While you all think about that, I'm going to just do my little plug about written comments. Our comment period is currently open, and it closes on June 23rd, 2023. You can send those public comments electronically to tribalconsultation, all one word, at ed.gov. Again, tribalconsultation@ed.gov.

There's one person.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. I recognize one hand. Darcie Pacholl.

Darcie, you may unmute.

MS. PACHOLL: Good evening or good afternoon, everybody. I'm really honored to be with you today. I think that as I'm sitting here listening to everybody and taking notes, I will be submitting my public comments before the

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deadline.

And one of the things that came to mind multiple times is it's very difficult to have these sort of presentations on Zoom, and yet I participate in programs like Strengthening the Circle and recently rebuilding Native economies through Oweesta and Wells Fargo.

Some of the things that we did was really focus on the circular type of learning rather than such a formal presentation. So if we could base future presentations more like a talking circle and to include some of those traditional forms of leaders coming to the table with talking feathers and those sort of protocols and opening with a prayer and ending with a prayer, I think that would be really coming together and really inviting some tribal leaders to the table. Thank you for letting me share.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for your comments, Darcie.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, we have Jeremy.

MR. OYENQUE: Good afternoon, again.

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Jeremy Oyenque, again representing Governor Chavarria for Santa Clara Pueblo. Two requests that we would have in the presentation. One would be visual ways and infographics. Utilize the visual aids such as charts, graphs, infographics to present the budget information in a visually appealing and easily digestible format.

These visual representations can enhance the understanding and make it easier for the stakeholders, particularly our tribal leaders who may not have the biggest staffs or have to comprehend this information very quickly. I would say even for myself, I only received this notification of this consultation from my leadership about an hour before it had started.

So even for myself dealing with this on the day-to-day, at least had some familiar background over the last consultation as well as here, but just having some of that would help in explaining it to our tribal leaders and just so that they can see the impact of the allocation of

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funds and how that's impacting our tribal students.

The second one actually goes along with the reports that are generated. I know there's a lot of NAEP data, a lot of graduation data, but for a lot of the tribal communities, it always shows that we're not hitting the mark unfortunately in a lot of these reports.

If you could have case studies and success stories that highlight the positive impact of some of these funded programs on Native American students, teachers, schools, these stories could provide real life examples of how the funding has made a difference and serve as an inspiration for future initiatives.

Fortunately for us in Santa Clara, we do have a good relationship with our Congressional delegation. A lot of times when we do give these reports, whether it's from Office of Indian Ed, BIE, or Health and Human Services, we do have the senators and representatives calling and asking for examples or our own data,

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how is this impacting New Mexico and our New Mexico tribes.

I think just two of those could add to the presentation not only for the tribal leaders, but for our Congressional delegation. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that input, Jeremy. I appreciate your suggestion about adding in more visual aids to the presentation.

Contractor, do we have anyone else for this question?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, Levi Black Eagle.

Levi, you may unmute yourself.

MR. BLACK EAGLE: Okay, thank you. I would say that if it wasn't for my Washington insider, I wouldn't have known about this meeting either.

I know there's -- how many federally-recognized tribes are there? There's a lot. I know that historically from my tribe, the tribal leaders take an active involvement in the education of our people. They left it to the

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educators and said, we're not educators, we'll trust that they'll do the right thing.

And I know that that's not always the case. If there's where the communication channels are a lot more open, because I never would have known about this consultation, I feel like I would have missed out on so much. And I feel like the tribal leaders really need to be at the table for these questions. I think finding a way to open up the channels of communication back and forth. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that suggestion, Levi. I really appreciate that.

MS. HOPKINS: Naomi, we have Victoria Wind.

Victoria, you may unmute yourself. Victoria, would you like to make a comment?

Naomi, she may have changed her mind. We next have Patricia Whitefoot.

MS. WHITEFOOT: Yes. I'm --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MS. WHITEFOOT: -- Whitefoot of the

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Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. The explanation, I did put in the chat examples of infographics that has been shared. Would like to just acknowledge the gentleman from Santa Clara Pueblo.

I agree with him having been a teacher in the classroom and thinking about how our children learn and continuing to do professional development with teachers. You have a copy of the infographic to consider. You'd just utilize your regional consultation centers.

They helped us put together this infographic on American Indian, Alaska Natives identity. And we've also been advancing migrant education as well as our students are also eligible for those kinds of services. So with regards to the questions, I agree that some audio-visual would be very important, particularly with these programs that have tribal implications.

And one that came to mind as the question was being asked, I thought about migrant

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education because not all of our tribes particularly participate in this program. And so it's something we've been advancing here in the Northwest and continuing.

Which means then we have to educate folks around us, educate our non-Native educators and school administrators, which we have begun to do, but it also means that we're consistently working with the state's superintendent of public instruction as well. So just wanted to share that with you all. If you have any questions, please feel free to follow up with me. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that information, Patricia, and we'll note all of that as well.

MS. HOPKINS: I do not recognize any additional hands at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. I'll do another reminder that the written comments period is currently open.

Contractor, could we try Victoria Wind

again. I think she just was unable to unmute earlier.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes. Let's see.

Victoria, would you like to make a comment?

MS. WIND: Can you hear me now okay?

MS. MIGUEL: Yes, we can hear you.

MS. WIND: Yes. For whatever reason, apologies, I wasn't able to unmute.

So one of the concerns that I have, Victoria Wind, I'm with the Circle of Life Academy in White Earth, Minnesota, is our graduation data, our graduation cohorts, and a lot of times small schools like mine that are a lot similar throughout the area that I'm in is we have area public schools and we're a choice for our students for our students to attend and not required.

Our students struggle because we have low graduation rates because of a cohort from 9 through 12, and that always kind of skews the data that we have being that students may come

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for a particular reason to our school and leave to go to a neighboring school because they offer a larger sports program, more whatever the case may be.

So if we were able to -- there's the formula that we follow for our graduation rates. And for small schools like us, it kind of hurts us when it comes to that type of information. So if there was a formula that we were able to use to, I don't know, follow or create for small schools like ours so that just reflecting off of what Jeremy had said earlier about some of the graduation data reflects some of our tribal schools in a negative light.

(Native language spoken.)

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that, Victoria.

Anyone else on Question 7?

Okay, can we go to the next slide, please?

This is another reminder that the written comment period is currently open, and it

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closes on June 23rd, 2023, 11:49 p.m. And then those written comments can be sent to tribalconsultation@ed.gov. So we do have a few more minutes left, and so we're going to -- we didn't get to a few commenters who didn't get to speak.

Contractor, could we go back to Question 2? So with the time that we have left, we're going to go back to a few questions just for a people who didn't get to speak on them, and then we'll wrap things up after that. Question 2, okay, perfect.

And these two questions just as a reminder, the first one is what are the greatest educational needs of Native American students, and how can the Department of Education prioritize meeting these needs in our budget?

And our first person I believe we're going to go to is Rebecca Moore.

MS. HOPKINS: I'm checking to see if Rebecca is still with us. Unfortunately, it looks like she is not.

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MS. MIGUEL: Okay. Celestine Stadnick?

MS. HOPKINS: Celestine, you may unmute.

MS. STADNICK: Oh, I didn't mean to raise my hand. It's not raised.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. Thanks for that.

So we'll move on to Question 3, I believe. We had --

MS. HOPKINS: Joseph Martin.

MS. MIGUEL: Yes, Joseph Martin. I believe we didn't get to you on our Question 3.

Contractor, can we move the slide to Question 3, please.

MS. HOPKINS: Joseph, if you are still with us and wish to make a comment, you may unmute yourself.

I do not see that Joseph is still with us. We did have one hand raised. I'm sorry, I do not know how to pronounce your name. Your hand is raised. You may unmute yourself and state your name.

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MR. ROSS BRAINE: Is that for me?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. ROSS BRAINE: Okay, hi. Oh, yes,
I appreciate that.

(Native language spoken.)

My name is Iisaaksiichaa Ross Braine.
I'm a citizen of the Apsaalooke Nation, and this
is in regards to Question 2. So the educational
needs of students do vary, and I think some of
the things I was able to kind of boil down. So
my background is in education.

I was the University of Washington's
tribe liaison, and I'm currently a PhD student
studying data. So I got really excited to hear
all the tribes talking about data, but the key
issues that I highlighted for the needs of
students are of course cultural relevance and
inclusivity.

The second thing I had was language
revitalization. Third is that we need quality
early childhood education, so access to high-

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quality, early childhood education. Support for tribal control and sovereignty. Closing that achievement gap with successes as well. I like to hear that, too.

As a person who was homeless and survived domestic violence and now to be in PhD program, there's some success along the way and my reservation in Crow and without, but also college and career readiness. Careers as well, not just college ready, but we have to be able to do the job.

And of course, access to technology and infrastructure. That's one thing I'm hearing a lot that's being missed is that our students need access to the internet. Additionally, now that I live off of my reservation in Seattle, we need a lot of support for our Title VI, our Title VI programs.

My children are two of only four in our school district here in Northwest, so I think that's something that I really want to make sure that we talk about is education, that access to

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technology and infrastructure throughout urban, suburban and reservation places. That's what I have. Thank you so much for having me.

MS. MIGUEL: All right, thank you so much for your comments, Ross. We really appreciate your emphasis on data.

All right, Contractor, can we pick after the written comments slide.

MS. HOPKINS: We do have one more hand raised.

Karras Wilson, if you would like to --

MS. MIGUEL: Sorry about that.

MR. WILSON: Hello again.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. WILSON: -- here. One of the Department needs as a justification is students with special needs. The data shows, it's older data, 70 percent across the nation are under IEPs. A friend of mine just did some research. That data is up to 24 percent now, and a lot of students are being misdiagnosed.

And this is more research and more

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funding needs to be geared towards this to accommodate all these students. We are seeing a lot of students slip through the cracks throughout the nation, and some schools believe that, oh, we're doing it just to get funding, but we also have to consider one of the major issues within any country is alcoholism seen as ADHD, but actually it's fetal alcohol syndrome as some experts would say. This is something that really needs to be done and looked at in depth. Thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that comment.

Before I move on, Contractor, is there any other hands raised?

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, there is one. Actually, there's two now. Sandra Boham and Joel Isaak.

Sandra, you may unmute.

DR. BOHAM: Good afternoon. Thank you for this consultation and allowing me to have a few minutes here to make a few comments. I am a

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citizen of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. I currently serve as the president of Salish and Kootenai College. I spent most of my career in higher education, but I also was Indian Ed director in a K-12 school district off reservation.

And so the conversation that I'm hearing today has sparked many different issues within my brain. I want to say that early childhood education is very critical. When you were hearing about misdiagnosing of special education, it was interesting that when I was working in the school district, I was working in something like 30 percent of the Native kids in Grade 3 and below were identified in special ed for language when it really wasn't that they had special ed.

It was really just the lack of the vocabulary, not the number of words that they used to identify, and that it was a really fairly easy thing to do. They were not special education students. They were perfectly

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competent. They just did not have the wide range vocabulary. So that is an issue that needs research and that our former speaker was definitely right on.

We work very hard here to train early childhood educators, and many of them go to work in our Headstart programs. And one of the things that needs to be looked at in these programs is that we need to pay these teachers that work with our very youngest children a livable wage, and we don't. Early childhood educators are some of the poorest paid teachers, and they are teachers, make no mistake of that, in the system.

We also need to look at opportunities for high school students to get the jumpstart on careers, whether that's college or not. And right now, the system that's in place in some states, the state funds gives institutions for dual credit but does not fund tribal colleges for dual credit, which puts students at a disadvantage, which also puts the tribal college on its own reservation often in direct

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competition with state-run schools that are not here.

The other piece that I'd like to talk about is the transitional piece because we do still have a high school graduation rate that is not where it should be. We also are tasked with making the bridge between not completing high school and being able to enter college or even the workforce, and that comes through at the HiSET or GED testing.

And we currently, at our college, have the highest number of testing students, and we have the highest rates of success in the state, but we are not funded at the same way that other places are funded for for that. And part of it is our choice, but we used to have a set-aside. So the funding went straight to us to serve those students.

Now, it goes to our Office of Public Instruction at the state, and then they pass it through. Primarily, it goes to school districts, which makes it very difficult for us to navigate.

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But we're serving our students, and that in Montana, that's the predominant minority that is affected and is being served in these GED courses.

The other piece I'd like to talk about is language and culture. What we know, and we have research, is that knowing who you are, knowing where you come from, having that language understanding, having knowledge of your culture at whatever level you have it, but having it is incredibly protective and builds resiliency in our students.

And we know now through multiple practices, and not every tribe is going to be the same, but one of the things that we have found to be very, very successful in our language program and in our culture program is through an apprenticeship kind of approach. It's sort of an immersion, but the person commits to essentially an apprenticeship.

They're working eight hours a day immersed in learning these culture and language

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programs, but it's not something that is generally approved as an apprenticeship program if you tried to fund it. And I think that in looking at approved apprenticeship programs, language and culture should be on those lists of appropriate apprenticeship because you're not going to learn our language and culture out of a book.

It's an immersive mentorship protégé relationship. Of course we can talk funding all day long. One of the things that I say all the time that we learned during COVID, our students, we went from a 40 percent to an 80 percent retention rate because students who are funded well can focus on being students.

If they don't have to worry if they could feed their family or pay their electric bill, they can focus on getting their skills they need to enter the workforce and not be struggling quite as much. And it wasn't like it took a lot of money. It's incredible the small amount of money that it takes to put somebody into that

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successful category. That's what I would like to say, thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Thank you so much for that, sharing all of that, Sandra.

I believe we have one more person.

MS. HOPKINS: Yes, Joel Isaak.

Joel, you may unmute yourself.

MR. ISAAK: I just wanted to ask. I work for the State of Alaska as the director for tribal affairs. I didn't know if I was allowed to make a comment or if it's just for tribal leaders at this time.

MS. MIGUEL: Yes, this is specifically for tribal leaders, but you are welcome to provide written comments if you'd like. If you have any specific questions about the presentation and such, we can discuss that.

MR. ISAAK: Okay, thank you.

MS. MIGUEL: Okay. Contractor, can we go to the slide that's after the written comment information.

Oh, that's the slide, all right.

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Thank you all for taking some time out of your day to join us. We appreciate all of your comments. And also wanted to just remind you that the written comment period is currently open. It will be closed on June 23rd, 2023.

Again, the email to send your comments to is tribalconsultation@ed.gov. We appreciate you taking the time to talk with us today and hope that you all have a great rest of your day. Thank you for participating.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 4:18 p.m.)

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In the matter of: Tribal Consultation

Before: US Dept. of Education

Date: 05-23-23

Place: teleconference

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