



Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)

Office of Indian Education

Urban Native Educational Learning Session

PUBLIC MEETING

The meeting convened on the Fifth Floor Board Chambers at the offices of the Chicago Public Schools, 125 South Clark Street, IL on June 8, 20012 at 9:00 a.m. with William Mendoza, Executive Director, White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education and Joyce Silverthorne, Director, Office of Indian Education presiding and Ian Stroud facilitating.

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

9:00 a.m.

MR. STROUD: Good morning everybody. I'm not used to using a microphone because I work in student activities over at Northeastern Illinois. By the way, let me introduce myself, I got a little ahead of myself. My name is Ian T. Stroud. I'm Navajo, Cherokee and Creek, originally from a small town in Oklahoma called Tahlequah. So if you've ever been there, come by and talk, we'll chitchat, talk about the old days.

All right, welcome today, welcome to this little session we have going on today on the U.S. Department of Education, the Urban Natives Education Learning Session here today. We have many, we have a jam-packed day today. We want to go ahead and start off by having Susan Power come over here and do kind of a welcoming, from then on we'll proceed from there. But if we all can give a round of applause for Susan Power.

MS. POWER: Good morning and welcome. First of all, change the L to a D on Dakota, and I want to, first I want to thank the Board of Ed for re-acknowledging the existence of the Native American in the city of Chicago. We haven't been acknowledged since about somewhere in the 70's. And I am the last founding member of the American Indian Center breathing, and the last, one of the early members of the National Congress of American Indians, and I'm grateful to be here.

I fell yesterday and, I live in South Shore and I fell, but I realized growing up on the Standing Rock Sioux reservation across from Sitting Bull's original grave, Sorry, South Dakota, he was buried in North Dakota on the north, my reservation runs in North and South Dakota, and I realized that before vitamins we were getting D, so these old bones didn't break yesterday. And I'm winking at 88, and I'm a lover of history, I'm a natural historian. As my new young friend here, Sheila, will acknowledge, I'm already telling her about the first African American state senator here, that his grandson hates to run into me because I tell, write his story, write his story. I'm constantly, so I sat down and wrote three pages of my memories for him. So I told him, no more excuses, quit Twittering, quit looking at TV, sit down and write one page a month even, you'll have 12 pages.

There is another historian that I hoped would show up here, Sharon Skullneck, who is doing the history of our American Indian Center. And I want to acknowledge a few people here who,

Dorene, Jolieen, Alex, where are you, anyway, Jolieen, and I want to acknowledge Dorene Wiese who I met way back in the late 60's, a young girl with unusual eyes. She still has unusual eyes. She's Ojibwa and Dakota, I remind her each time, and, who has never taken her foot out of the, trying to see that Indians realize that education is out there and it's needed.

And it may be, as my mother would say, intelligence is what you're born with, wisdom is how you use it. But right now we need that paper to show, and if we're going to get our foot in any door to help our people, we need that education. And she will get people who have been on the street, encouraging them, and now we've got two in the education field and that's Dorene and Jolieen, and I wish one of them would change their name because I'm, I keep confusing them.

Now, I want to tell for, I live in a predominantly African American community of South Shore, I want to tell you a couple stories to show that we all have, we all need to be more aware of each other. People are not aware of us as Native Americans for some reason. A couple, not too long ago there was an article in the Tribune, and they happened to run out of people to write about I guess so they asked, did a little, we were having a big conference at the University of Chicago commemorating an important conference of 1961. And so they talked to me, and at the end I mentioned how my neighbors are always shocked that I walk to the library, South Shore Library, oh, you have all those people standing down there, about five or six African men, African American men stand down there. I said yes, I pass them. And, well aren't you afraid, I won't go down there, these are African Americans telling me this. And I said, well why? I said, they're helpful to me, come on momma, they'll help me.

And they have, one of them happened to see that article, so one day I'm going by and there was five of them there, and he said, would you stop a minute? So I stopped and he said, look, see, I told you this is her, they had my picture. And I said yes, that's me, and he said, at the bottom here when you said how you care for all the people on the street and what is happening, that's us, right? I said yes, that's you. And it made me feel so bad because you see, we tend to look at people just ourselves, whether it's our color or economic situation or whatever our ties are, we've got to look at each other, always each other.

And I want to tell you another little story if I may, it concerns a Native American woman who happens to be the first American, I keep going back to the American Indian because that's what was said at once, first Native American woman who was head of the tribe. This was before all the grants and all of the, never media attention, nothing. But she was, she was, Indians had their leadership after the

Indian Reorganization Act, which killed our old time leadership, we had our leadership, but the Indian Reorganization Act established our councils. Anyways, she became the leader of the council.

How many of you know who the first, this is for my African American friends, who was the first Pulitzer African American journalist? You all have -- his name was Carl T. Rowan. I met him in Indianapolis one time at National Congress of American Indians, way back, and he said you're Josephine's daughter. I said yes, Josephine's daughter. I want to tell you something, he said, I went out to your reservation, and he told me the year, like I said, 88 is winking at me so I forget dates, so you pardon me, and he said, I went up to the agency and the agent, who was white, he took me around, he showed me the new homes he was building for his employees, who at that time were all non-Native. He took me by Sitting Bull's grave and he took me back up to the agency. So I thanked him for his tour, but I said I had come out there to interview a Josephine, before I could say her last name the only Indian I saw in the agency said, Josephine, I'll take you there, that's my friend, Josephine. So he took me there.

I went to this little tar paper shack, two rooms, and I shook the door, screen door, someone said, come in, I went in, and this wonderful old woman was sitting there with a dishpan full of choke cherries on her lap, preparing them for winter. So I could see she had gotten me the best chair, the best cup, the best saucer, and she gave me coffee and biscuits.

And she said, he said I asked her, at the end I found she was easy to talk to, so I said you live like this, you're the head of this reservation and you live like this. You should be living in one of those new, white homes, those new buildings, they were all white, you should be having one of those nice homes with electricity and running water, you have nothing here and I feel concerned.

And she thanked him, and she said, thank you for your concern. Now, I don't want to hurt your feelings, through no fault of yours or you ancestors, I want to tell you something. You know one culture, through no fault of yours, that's the white man's culture, we, and that's a materialistic culture. We know one culture, it's a non-materialistic. So I'm sitting out here in my prairie, we're trying to hold onto that, because that will be the lasting culture.

And she said, and thank you for my concern, for your concern, but when all of my people have homes, nice homes with electricity and running water, then I will consider it. He said, I never forgot that. And that's what we must get back to in the urban areas now too, because we're drifting. Since we're the smallest number of citizens, apparently, we are so forgotten, that's why I'm so grateful that the Board of Ed is re-supporting us, acknowledging us. That's very important.

And I want to tell you a little about, today we're having a memorial at our American Indian Center, which is the first and oldest in the city. There's a lot of things going to be happening there this coming, this month, for the betterment of the community. Our oldest male Indian in the city, I think he's the oldest, unless Carlos is, he's, his wife passed away, so we're having a memorial there. And we are the, nobody gets things mixed up as we do, but we end up getting all together and being good to each other.

And this is what, what bothers me with my African American neighbors, I tell them when I came here, you guys were so good to each other. We were so good to each other, what's happening? Why aren't we good to each other now? What is happening to us, to all of us? It just isn't us brown people, it's all of the people.

And I could go on and on and on, but time is of the essence. But I want to thank you all so very much, and always remember, we do exist, we're still here, and I'm looking at Jolieen back there who called me this morning, we're last minute people, and I got here, I got my, the taxi driver was from Ghana, and he said, you're Native American. He said, he was curious, I said yes, I am. First one I've ever met, I'm so honored, I'm so proud, Native American, I'm so proud. So I said, you know, I'm glad you met me now because I'm a cancer survivor, I'm a, you name it, I'm a survivor and I'll be 88 before you blink your eyes. I might not be here in another two years.

But I want to say something about the education. I'm grateful that you push people. You can always go to school. When I came here 70 years ago next month, we all went to school, night school, night school. We didn't have people encouraging us, we had no grants, we had no one to apply to, but we went to night school. We didn't know what we were doing half the time, I'm sure, but we went to night school.

When I was 70 years old, I became a paralegal. I'm so proud of my, my paralegal certificate. And I learned to sail at 70, and I wanted to open an office in the uptown area and do what is within the realm of a paralegal's duties. But cancer hit, but I still do a lot, you know, as long as the brain still operates. So, we have to say yes, we can be intelligently born, and we can use it wisely, but we need those pieces of paper, right? We need them, all of you.

And thank you so much. And special thanks to, I have to say this to Jolieen Alex, first tribal member of her tribe here, and Dr., Dr. Dorene Wiese, and she's going to help me get the first

stamp for our Native American women. Thank you. God bless all of you. I didn't write it out, because if I wrote it out I would have, it would have been a polished, sharp speech, I'd rather ramble. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you, Susan, thank you. Everyone give a round of applause for Ms. Power. Thank you. Inspirational, I think that's a great segue. We're going to continue on. We're going to go ahead and post our colors, so if everyone will please rise. Today's color posting is by the Chicago Vocational Academy High School ROTC program, and we'll let them march in. Please, post the colors.

(Whereupon, the colors were presented.)

Okay. If you all will please remain standing. Thank you, color guard, that's one of our premier vocational high schools in the city. We're going to go ahead and present to our, one of our elders from the Kateri Center, to kind of go ahead and open a prayer for us, Sarah Calabaza. I am so sorry.

MS. CALABAZA: This is a prayer, Four Directions prayer we use for our services. And if you would like to could you turn to the east, please?

Great Spirit who comes out of the east, come to us with the power of the east, the light of the rising sun. Let there be light on the path we walk. Let us remember always that you give the gift of a new day, and let us never be burdened with sorrow by not starting over.

And we face the south. Spirit of Creation, send us warm and soothing winds from the south to comfort us and caress us when we are tired and cold. Unfold us as your gentle breezes unfold the leaves on the trees. And as you give to all the earth your warm, moving wind, give to us warmth so that we may grow close to you.

And we face the west. Great Life Giving Spirit, we face the west, the direction of sundown. Let us remember every day that the moment will come when our sun will go down. Never let us forget that we must fade into you. Give us beautiful color. Give us a great sky for setting, so that when it is time to meet you, we come with glory.

And we face the north. Come to us with the power of the north. Make us courageous when the cold winds of life fall upon us. Give us strength and endurance for everything that is harsh, everything that hurts. Let us move through life ready to take what comes from the north.

We look up to the sky. Lift us up to you that our hearts may worship you and come to you in glory. Hold in our memory that you are our creator, greater than we, eager for a good life. Let everything that is in the world lift our minds and our hearts and our lives to you, so that we may come to you always, in truth and in heart, giver of all life we pray to you from the earth, you are able to touch the earth. Help us to remember as we touch the earth that we are little and need your pity. Help us to be thankful for the gift of the earth, and never to walk hurtfully on the world. Bless us with eyes to love what comes from Mother Earth, and teach us how to use well your gifts. Amen and thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you, thank you for that prayer. That helps us kind of set the tone for the day, kind of helps us bring into us a little bit more open mind, plus our hearts, plus our spirit, try and keep us focused on what we want to accomplish today. All right, so without further ado we're going to go ahead and start off with, we have some distinguished guests here today. I'll go ahead and introduce our panel that we're going to have up at front, starting to my right hand side, facing you, so, all right, we have Ms. Cara Krantz from the, she's Deputy Chief of Staff for the CPS Board of Education. We'll go ahead and, would you please rise and just wave to the crowd? There you go, all right. And continuing on, we have Ms. Joyce Silverthorne, she is the Director of the Office of Indian Education, Ms. Silverthorne, there you go.

And continuing on, we have Mr. William, would you prefer to be called Bill or William?

MR. MENDOZA: Either.

MR. STROUD: He said either or, so Mr. William Mendoza, he's the Executive Director for the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaskan Native Education.

And continuing on we have Sheila Chalmers, she's the Senior Policy Advisor for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor in the Educational Committee. All right.

On behalf of Chicago, Ms. Silverthorne and Mr. Mendoza, welcome. As a person who's been your transplant for two years, welcome, and if you have any questions, feel free to ask.

So, all right, we're going to go ahead and continue on with our kind of introductions and welcoming remarks. We'll go ahead and go to Mrs. Chalmers over here, and proceed.

MS. CHALMERS: Good morning. I'm Sheila Chalmers-Currin, I'm with the Lieutenant Governor's Office. Sheila Simon has been traveling through Illinois talking with all individuals in regards

to education. So I'm here today on a fact-finding mission again, and hoping to gather information to take back to the Lieutenant Governor.

My new best friend is now Susan Power, and of which I'll be contacting her to get some more history, African American history, Indian history, I'll be reaching out to you.

I want to say that the Lieutenant Governor is very focused on education in Illinois, and she understands the importance and value in honoring and sharing the rich cultural heritage as part of a well rounded education.

As you know or may not know, we spent the last year traveling throughout Illinois gathering information regarding education. When you have the opportunity, please go to her website and look at Focus on the Finish. So today what I'll be here to do, today, is gather additional information to take back to the Lieutenant Governor.

Again, thank you for inviting me. I look forward to working with your organization, and I look forward to meeting again with you, Susan. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: All right, thank you. Now we're going to have some remarks from Ms. Krantz.

MS. KRANTZ: Good morning. I'm Cara Krantz and I'm here on behalf of David Vitale who is the Chicago Board of Education's President, and we welcome you. We find this unique and wonderful learning experience to be just what Chicago Public Schools is trying to achieve. And we know that this is vital to help us meet our goal that every child in every school is college and career ready.

When just the notification that this event was coming through the Board office, I said I want to go, can I go? I can't stay the whole day, but I have a special connection that I'd like to share with you, sort of in the spirit of Ms. Power's storytelling. When I was in high school, I grew up in Blue Earth County, Minnesota. And my high school American History teacher brought in a Native American woman to speak to the class. And as she spoke, I was feeling something inside me stirring, just something awakening, the words that she was using, the power she had, so quietly communicating to the class. And she made me want to speak to her more.

So after the class I went up to her and asked her a question. Now, that's 25 years ago, I don't remember what I asked her, honestly, but I remember her answer. And her answer, or her response to my question, has stayed with me for, will for the rest of my life.

And she said something like this, she said, were your words your own that you just spoke, or were your words something that your parents gave you, or something that history has given you? And do you know if your words are true? And I didn't. I don't know what I said, but I didn't know if they were truth. And inside of me at the moment she gave me a gift that said, you can question. Not everything has to be as was told to you.

And I feel like I've taken that message into my teaching career, as I was a teacher for 10 years, into raising my children, into how I am as a professional, and in my character. And that is profound. And if I knew who she was, I'd write a thank you now, but unfortunately I don't have that connection.

But I'm giving it to you in hopes that the work that you do carries that forward. Because this is vital, this is vital for us to share unique history, and for us to give children a chance for future success. And this is 40 years history long with Chicago Public Schools and the Department of Education. That's significant and we recognize that.

So, unfortunately like I said, I won't be able to stay the course of your day, but I know that you'll have great things come out of this, and I wish everyone the best of success, and keep carrying the message. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you again, thank you for those remarks. We'll go ahead and hear from our distinguished guest here, Mr. Mendoza.

MR. MENDOZA: Good morning everyone, and thank you for being with us. I especially want to thank Ian, Jolieen and Dorene and Debra and all of the staff that we haven't had the privilege to meet who've really made it possible for us to be here. It is, of course, important that we are here, particularly in these critical times.

I have the privilege of representing some pretty important people in regards to what we are trying to accomplish in education. Far most, President Barack Obama, Secretary Duncan, and Secretary Salazar who each serve as co-chairs of the White House Initiative, guided by Executive Order

13592, improving American Indian Educational Opportunities, and strengthening tribal colleges and universities.

This is a paradigm shift, if you will, in education. Those of you, I see a number of experts in this room whom, you know, I had the privilege of meeting in other, other venues, other capacities, know that we have historically approached Indian education in very isolated and siloed ways, namely, you know, through some of the lenses which, although they're critical to how we are looking at education, speaking in particular of the Bureau of Indian Education, and their 180-some schools and 30,000 students, that is but a fraction of our student base when we look at, not only our population numbers, and we know that we have many issues when we're talking about identity of American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, federally recognized, state recognized, et cetera. So there's a lot there, but even under the most conservative definitions, that 30,000 represents but a fraction of the students that we need to be considering when we're thinking of cradle to career impact on our communities, namely our tribal nations.

We also look at it through tribal colleges and universities, and that has been a big part of why the President and the Secretaries have approached this issue in a very careful way, knowing that, you know, we cannot just embark upon change for change's sake in regards to these issues, that there is a lot of dynamics that we do not know about, much less a course of action that we need to take immediately.

We know a lot about these contexts as we draw a light on them, and that's a big part of why we are here today. We in the Department of Education have a broad area of interests, through the Office of Indian Education, through our Alaska Native programming and Native Hawaiian programming, and we in many respects include within many of our programs state-recognized tribes as well.

And so what that has done for us in an unprecedented era of consultation, and listening and learning to these communities, by the end of, the conclusion of today we will have done approximately 18 consultations and our listening and learning sessions, since 2010. And that is again, something that the Department of Education has never done before. We did the first six in 2010, and from that tribes said, our students are attending schools which we feel like we do not have a meaningful role in the education of those students. We want to have a better connection to them, our students in public schools. We need to hear from those communities.

And so we began to embark upon Urban Native listening and learning sessions. And our process within the Department of Education has been evolving in that sense. We had a lot to learn from the agency standpoint from our partners in the Department of Interior, and Health and Human Services, who have been engaging in formal consultation with tribes for, you know, the establishment of those relationships to varying degrees, of course.

But the emphasis that the president has placed on that consultation is causing the agency to think how are we meeting the needs of these diverse populations, and especially how are we connecting them in response to the President's Executive Order.

And without Congress taking action, you know, the President felt that the best vehicle for this kind of effort to begin to take place immediately, knowing that this is a crisis for not only the students within communities like Chicago and the surrounding areas, but especially for our most neediest tribal nations as well, that we need to be connecting those aspects.

We need to have, you know, those programs informed from both the tribal standpoint of what we know, you know, is garnering the kinds of positive experiences and results within Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education, Health and Human Services and the Department of Education, and how are we bringing those conversations together, being led, of course, by the two agencies who impact educational services, the Bureau of Indian Education and that hierarchy, BIA, to Department of Interior, all the way up to Secretary Salazar and the Department of Education, Office of Indian Education.

Formerly our office was the White House Initiative on tribal colleges and universities. We saw the tremendous amount of success that they have been able to garner under that executive order, and we want to extend that same kind of interagency coordination, collaboration, and mandate, if you will, for agencies to begin to engage in these issues.

All 32 federal agencies can play a role in communities like Chicago. We need to have them developing plans, we need to have them establishing within each agency implementation teams that can support those plans, and then of course aligned with that, annual measurable performances that we can demonstrate, you know, what their contributions are in that respect.

Part of the Executive Order as you study it establishes an interagency working group to facilitate that work, to help implement the Executive Order. The other aspect of that is the

Memorandum of Understanding that is required of the Department of Interior and the Department of Education. Inside your packets you all should have received a press release regarding the Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding is attached to that. There is appendices to the MOU.

And the MOU is not necessarily new. The seven objectives of the Executive Order are encompassed within what is and always has been since elementary and secondary education re-authorization in 2005, an MOU that facilitated funding for the Bureau of Indian Education. And from the Bureau of Indian Education BIA/DOI standpoint, and I hope everybody knows those acronyms, Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, that's the hierarchy structure within that department.

They pushed us on this issue and we agreed that it made sense that why disconnect our coordinated agency effort from the kinds of things that we would like to pursue together, in terms of the policy. So what you see in this Memorandum of Understanding is some principles around specific activities that we can explore together, knowing that the MOU in itself does not create policy, but it does establish a mechanism for us to be engaging on principles that we feel we can work towards as an agency. Namely it creates a joint committee between the DOI and Education, to begin consistent and regular senior level conversations between the agencies and how we can work to implement the Executive Order and the issues that are a part of the interactions between each agency.

In the appendices you'll see some very, if you ask me, dry and detailed funding language. And that speaks to specific authorizations from ESEA that the Bureau of Indian Education facilitates on behalf of their school systems.

And so, you know, the question always comes up, you know, is this a new MOI, why haven't we seen this before, you know, this is something that has been in development, you know, since that time, the last revision of it was 2005. The way Director Moore and myself and Director Silverthorne would like to look at this, is we need this to be a living, breathing document. We need this to be, you know, continually looked at in terms of the effectiveness and clarity around the relationship between the two agencies. Because we are always dealing with significant changes in the context in which we work, and because there's limitations to each agency's authority regarding the other agency, we need to be looking at that for the effectiveness.

You also have a background within the packet as well. We wanted to provide you, if you may let me state it that way, the cliff notes or a summary of the MOU without getting into our own interpretations of what it means. So that points out very succinctly, you know, our best foot forward as to what this MOU encompasses.

You also have for your perusal and study the Executive Order, and what that entails. And my, you know, I guess, you know, encouragement to everybody is to make that Executive Order a part of your work, whether you are dealing with our children's welfare directly, our children's health, support services of all kinds, our direct educational services, our juvenile justice issues, there is some aspect of that that you can inform us, that you can push agencies and program offices on, to begin to do a better job of that.

This is as much a call from the President as it is a call to you all in the federal agencies and states to say, how can we begin to make this an item that we can coalesce around, that we can focus our efforts on and begin to build systems around it, knowing that we are approaching this in dramatically different ways than we have before.

And we do have those opportunities before us. We have yet to re-authorize ESEA. We have yet to re-authorize the Higher Education Act, the Workforce Investment Act, Carl Perkins, all of these issues are before us in the same way that we have, they have dramatically impacted our students in the past. And so these decisions need everybody's focus, and everybody's work. And there is a tremendous amount of facilitators, actors, whatever you want to call them, the way that we simplify this is how are we strengthening the state, the tribal and the federal role within the education of all of our Indian students.

When we see meaningful collaboration between those three entities, we see an environment that is dramatically different than what we're experiencing now. And I point to some of the practices that we've been exposed to, say in Montana with Indian education for all, and their ability to make it part of the state constitution, and more importantly to fund that effort, the fact that there are essential understandings that can benefit all students within that state, and us developing standards and resources and strategies and measurement tools that align with those essential understandings.

This is the kind of integrated reform, this is the kind of efforts that we see connecting our students' ability to not only have a connection to their language, history and culture, which regardless of the communities that Joyce and I have been to, has been the number one concern,

language, history and culture, and number two has been we want our children to be safe, we want them to be successful, we want them to be able to have jobs in which they feel that their work is meaningful. And I think we can accomplish that with some of these practices that we're seeing all over the country, and I am certain that there are things going on here, if your leadership is any representation of that, that you can share and you can inform the rest of Indian country as to what is going on, alongside the tremendous need.

We were talking with the Bureau of Indian Education yesterday and, you know, about curriculum development, and some of the practices, Indian education for all has influenced states like Washington, Wisconsin, and now South Dakota, and they're developing essential understandings. And so, the conversation around it is, how can we share this from state to state and be strategic about it, you know, making sure that these essential understandings are adopted in whatever form a state deems appropriate. And in that conversation, of course, you know, this could significantly change the environment for our Urban Native students.

And as I've been on now seven of these efforts myself, in terms of being in Urban Native communities, what I have seen is that when you take away the city, you know, you're dealing with the same kind of dispersion, the same kind of mobility issues, the same kind of lack of resources that are culturally appropriate for our students, as you are on the reservations. You know, the analogy isn't perfect, but you know, when you take away all the bricks and mortar, what we're lacking is someplace that we can bring everybody together in a way that connects the systems that impact their lives whenever they're separated by distance or by a connection to a culture. And that is something new.

So what is that new something that we are going to be going after in the years to come, is our challenge. You know, is it a new act? Is it a new program? Is it at the student level or is it, you know, integrated into our existing systems. And we really need your help with this.

Secretary Duncan, Secretary Salazar, and especially the President have always said that the best ideas are going to come from these communities. And so that is why we are here from the initiative, and I'm sure Director Silverthorne will speak to her interest in that area, and her programming.

And so we really want to know from you what are the titles, what are the regulations that need to change, that need to go away in order to be able to provide you with the ability to be more

flexible, to be innovative, and especially to dramatically change the experiences and the outcomes for our American Indian/Alaskan native students.

And it's always tough for me, anyway, to be in this position. When I first was at, the first Urban Native learning session that I went to was in Denver, and it was a bit of a homecoming for me. I'd spent five years in that community, working, and experiencing what it was like to be an Urban Native having come from the Pine Ridge Indian and Rosebud Indian reservations. And when I was there, you know, people got up and boy, that finger started going and they were like, you know, you feds and, you know, the BIA and I was sitting there, I was shaking my head, and I was like, you know, gee, that's good, I was kind of fired up. And I said, they're talking about me, that's me, you know.

So that is one dramatic shift that we have been dealing with is that we now have our own, in many of these leadership positions. And when you think of federal Indian Education there is but only three positions that are your cheerleaders, your warriors, if you will, at the federal level. And you have two of them before you, and the other one is the Director of the Bureau of Indian Education. And without us coordinating our efforts, without us empowering these positions and holding them accountable in ways that we have never before, we are not going to be successful in our endeavors.

And I want to leave you with the last piece of this that is critical, is our tribal leaders. As much as you feel connected and are disconnected to our tribal leaders, they are essential to us moving it beyond what educators have gotten us to. They have been able to carry the mantle for us, to get us this far in terms of our educational self determination, in establishing an educational vision for us that is representative of our sovereignty and self governance.

And without tribal leaders pushing us over the edge, and these critical statutes, these critical laws that are under consideration right now, we are going to continue to struggle in the way that we are. And so my challenge, my understanding of these systems says, how are we engaging the tribal leaders on these issues? If our tribal governments are broken, how do we fix them? We need to have them on board with us, whether you are two miles away from them or 5,000 miles away from them, how are they contributing to your communities here, is the other aspect that we need your help in thinking innovatively about.

Thank you to, you know, Ian, again, he's in a difficult spot, and you know, he gets to facilitate these conversations. And as we get into public comments, you know, he gets to be the bad guy of sorts, and so we're really thankful for that role in throwing him out there. I especially want to thank

Ms. Krantz and Ms. Chalmers for joining us here today, because this is the first step in that, what, I always forget his name, but he's a scholar at Michigan State University, and he coined, for my understanding, the tri-lateral relationship between the federal government, states, and tribes.

And so if this is indicative of that conversation, you know, we need to have you all saying, where's our tribal leadership in these Urban Native conversations? How are they engaging with you? Because without that component, you know, your good work and your efforts are going to be continually challenged.

But thank you all for joining us here today, and thank you for bearing with us on our late start here. But Indian time is never, you know, it's always misunderstood. It's not that we start when we want to, it's that we start when we need to. And so we're very thorough in that sense. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you for those words, Mr. Mendoza. And by my clock, Indian time, we're well ahead of Indian time right now, we're almost on time. So, all right, we're going to go ahead and continue.

We're going to hear from, remarks from Director Silverthorne, Director of Indian Education.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Good morning everybody. It's so good to see everyone here. And we're really glad to have the opportunity to come and visit the Chicago area. We have a great wealth of information that we have been collecting under the Urban Listening and Learning Sessions. And we're anxious to include your voice into that information.

As we move forward in trying to look at all of the information we're collecting, it's not enough to collect information, it has to make a difference, it has to go someplace, it has to improve the kind of delivery that we offer back out to the communities that are giving this information to us. And so we'll be working on a summarization of the Urban Sessions, looking for those most frequently and broadly defined concerns and issues, and hoping to create some recommendations that will help us in our work as we continue.

So, the Office of Indian Education is probably one that you are most familiar with as far as the entities that Bill has described this morning. We have the Title 7 programs that are available in your school system, public schools across the country numbering over 1,300 this year. Last year we were about 1,275 and this year we're over 1,300 schools with Native American students. And that

funding, although it is not large, is the broadest-based funding for American Indian students in the country.

We serve both federally recognized and state recognized students, and we serve students to the second descendancy. So a child who can trace parentage to a tribal connection, a tribal membership, within two generations, a grandparent who was a tribal member is counted under Title 7.

With that we have programs that are supplemental, and they are, there are 11 different categories of options that can be the guiding parameters for the objectives. We utilize within that program the EASIE, E-A-S-I-E, and it's a system of application. The first time I saw it I was an educator in the field trying to work with it, and I didn't think it was that e-a-s-y. And I see as I've gone to the other side of the process and look at how we can make incremental changes and improvements in it, it is a challenging system to improve, as well. But we're working on what we can do to make that better.

One of the concerns that we have is how the assurances that the school superintendents, the people, and the staff, the parent groups, are actually all communicating and aware of what is being proposed in those applications. And whether or not the voice of each of those entities is represented in the decisions as to what the students will be able to do, and of course, how well that is reaching the students.

Our children go through an education system but once, as did we. And our experience as we went through education is what forever after colors our perception of what education ought to be, or ought not to be. And so, when we look at what happens for a child, we want to ensure that that education is the best from preschool on to career. And that's the challenge that we have ahead of us with this process.

In addition, under Title 7, we have some discretionary programs. We have a professional development program that is designed to educate teachers and administrators. In the best of those programs, the education community has taken on the issues of Indian education and made them a part of the education of teachers and administrators, both to be aware of the concerns, and to look for the solutions and those best practices.

That's a challenge, that's a challenge for the teacher training programs. It is a challenge for us to be communicating to them what our issues are that need to be addressed. We also have another discretionary program that is a demonstration. Demonstration grants are programs that are

innovative, that are designed with two different priorities, one that is early childhood education and the other that is transition to college.

And as we are moving forward the conversation with all of the improvements, we truly are in an unprecedented time. We have leadership that is involved who have experience with these programs, who are working toward solutions with communities. We are developing webinars to try and reach a broader audience. It's not enough to bring the directors together, we also need to have opportunities for parents to hear what is going to be taking place.

We have a series of three webinars that will be done over this summer before the end of September, one that will be for superintendents. We have found as we have gone around the country that many times the superintendents may not necessarily understand what the role of Indian education and Title 7 programs are in their schools. And so we need to make sure that we are in conversation with them so that they are aware of their important role in making sure that these students do well.

We also want to meet with our directors, our staff members in Title 7, and to be able to answer questions, to be able to offer guidance, to be able to look for those best practices. We're, I'm missing a cup of water. We're also looking for opportunity to have parent-committee webinars, and we'll be doing a series of four of those. This is a population that we have a greater challenge in trying to reach.

But we'll be needing your assistance in being able to reach out to those folks, and you'll soon be getting information on the dates and the schedules for those webinars. But those will all be conducted before the end of September. Hopefully that will be a step in looking at how Title 7 programs are implemented across the country.

We're also doing some activities that are under national activities, national activities for Title 7 are more of those supplemental background information, a couple of them are research studies on how effective our programs are, looking for those best practices and those stories from the field. So, if you have suggestions or information about programs that you think would be good, we're always interested in hearing that.

They will be looking, this will be contracting with a researcher, and they will be looking at programs across the country. We're also looking for language immersion, language education

programs, and looking for best practices among language education programs. As Bill has said, that was one of our main points across these consultation hearings, that that was a concern from our communities.

We also have the, we support the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. And the National Advisory Council on Indian Education represents an advisory group to us, and we're trying to look at how we can strengthen and incorporate that voice and have it be a meaningful part of our process. Within the memorandum they are mentioned as a part of that team of people that will be working on advisory work for how we move forward for Indian Education as a whole.

Whether our children begin in public schools or in Bureau of Indian Education, thank you, voice seems to go faster and faster, sorry. Within the Indian education process, we are constantly working on making sure that that experience is a holistic one. With this integrated approach between the Bureau of Indian Education, Office of Indian Education, and the White House Initiative, we really hope that that becomes much more seamless than it has been, and anyone working in the field knows that it has not been seamless in the past.

So we're looking forward to input from you today. Please register with the folks outside if you have something to say. We would like to hear from all of you. And we will try to have time to be able to do that today too.

With that I think I'll close and let's get onto having more input from the community.
Thank you.

MR. STROUD: All right, thank you. Thank you again for those words. We're going to go ahead and proceed to our open, educational open forums. We're going to begin with one of our speakers today, it's Dr. Dorene Wiese, Dorene Wiese. She's the President of the American Indian Association of Illinois. She's going to be discussing the history of Urban Native education in the Midwest. So Dr. Wiese?

DR. WIESE: Good morning. I'm not exactly going to give the history of the whole Midwest, that was kind of a broad topic, but I am going to tell you some things about Chicago. And as our discussion on the phone, our teleconference this week, really more try to lay the landscape, I think that of the past and the present Boozhoo Aanin I greet you, everyone this morning, I hope you're having a good morning.

Before I start, I think I'm going to have everyone stand up, because I think we probably could use a break right now. But we're not going to get one until after we finish this section. So just kind of stretch and breath deeply, and soon we'll get our coffee break. That's good, thank you so much. Please be seated.

My Indian names are Ahuska (phonetic), White Wing in the Ho-Chunk language, and Wakanyan Najii (phonetic) Stands Mysterious in the Dakota language, and my English name is Dr. Dorene Wiese. I am an enrolled member of the White Earth Nation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, but I am also a descendent of five other tribal nations, including the Oneida, the Seneca, the Stockbridge, Brotherton and the Dakota, and I am also an adopted Ho-Chunk.

I am the founding President of the American Indian Association of Illinois, a retired college administrator of 20 years, the past President of NAES College, Indian College, and a current adjunct faculty professor with the Eastern Illinois University. I ask forgiveness for the elders in the room who are older than I, and I pray that I do not say anything to offend you. I have dedicated the past 45 years of my life to American Indian education in Chicago, and thank the Creator for everything that opportunity has given me.

I have worked in American Indian education in Chicago since arriving here in 1967 where I was a tutor at the American Indian Center, and I still tutor in my organization with American Indian children in the Native Scholars program.

I come from Minneapolis, Minnesota where I attended public school. I have lived most of my life in urban communities and have observed prejudice, racism, neglect, bullying, stereotyping, ignorance, illegal activities and disdain regarding our Native histories and cultures, and in some of the best and worst schools and universities in America.

Sometimes from our own National Indian education leaders who lack any understanding of the challenges that have faced Indian people living in urban communities in the past and the present.

Chicago has been home to Native people for thousands of years. Most tribes were Algonquin speaking like my Ojibwa people and their Potowatomi, Odawa and Ottawa brothers, except for the Winnebago. Illinois is a state rich with natural landscape, fish, birds, four-legged's and the beauty of Lake Michigan, but no reservations of federally recognized tribes.

Today still, Chicago is home to more Indians that live on most reservations. Chicago has more Indians than over 95 percent of all Indian reservations, and many have fewer Indians than those that live here. That said, there are tremendous problems with any and all data, including census data that is used to describe the current landscape of the Chicago Urban Indian population.

Increasing numbers of individuals who are not members of federally or state recognized tribes, such as indigenous people from Mexico, are electing to choose the American Indian census box, without understanding its significance to data collection for American Indian people who are tribal members.

While we share with them tremendous challenges with all indigenous peoples, the political and legal differences are extreme. When most American Indian people left Illinois due to the massive dislocation under the Treaty of 1833, many continued to live here in small communities of plots of land, gifted, and as wives and children of mixed blood marriages, and many were forced to move to reservations with their tribes, and have been pushed to all corners of the United States.

But of course, the largest influx of Native people back to the region came as a result of relocation and termination, established by the federal government. With relocation and termination, and it's important to use those words together, Native people were sent to Chicago by the thousands, from as near as the Menominee Reservation in Wisconsin, to as far away as the Navaho Reservation in Crownpoint, New Mexico. They came from almost every tribe, including Alaska, to learn a trade, get work experience, live in a big city, and go to college. They came to get a job, earn a higher wage, so that they could be, than they could on their reservations.

They became welders, secretaries, nurses, teachers, sales clerks, seamstresses, heavy equipment mechanics, carpenters, auto mechanics, musicians, artist, beauticians, accountants, businessmen, and so many more things that they had never dreamed that they could become.

There were schools here and employment opportunities, more in Chicago than almost anyplace in the world, between 1955 and 1980. With an influx of Native people, they soon realized they needed to help each other to survive. Thus began the Chicago American Indian Community Development that has led to the creation of the Chicago American Indian Center, whom Susan Power helped establish, St. Augustine's, the American Indian Health Services, the Native American Committee, NAES American Indian College, Little Big Horn High School, Awiawa ML Elementary School, The Native American Program at the University of Illinois, Chicago, the Institute of Native American Development at

Truman College, the NAC Adult Learning Center, and numerous employment and other assistance programs for Indian people.

Most of these organizations and programs were created in the 1970's, with an influx of federal dollars aimed at keeping the Indian people here. So that, this was where the funding came from, there was an influx of funding, but it only lasted for three to six years. We had to learn to become, teach all these professions and develop federal grants and run schools and colleges, and do everything else when we didn't, we weren't educated at the time.

There were only seven people in, Indian people with Bachelor's degrees in Chicago in 1974 when I got my Bachelor's degree from Northeastern Illinois University, seven people. And yet we had to develop all those programs, clinics, hospitals, I mean, it was, that was, but there was money so we had to do it. But only three to six years, then it was gone. The federal money left.

We were, people were calling us from Washington to apply to grants, they were saying just send in some paper, you'll get the money. They could use, you know, the landscape is not like that today. No one's calling us, no one has called us in 30 years. No one has said, call us and we'll send you some money. But our population has not decreased, it has maintained or in some areas has increased.

The landscape of Chicago has been one of urban termination for the past 30 years, and I think I have coined that phrase, urban termination. Since that time, almost half of all Indian children drop out of schools right here, and there has been no funding for urban adult education, GED and literacy programs. You want to know how I know about those programs, because I started the first of those programs in Chicago in the 1970's. Zero funding is not enough. There's no excuse for that, for the neglect that we have experienced in terms of that area, in terms of our youth and our children and our adults.

NAES American Indian College lost its accreditation in 2006. In part to the lack of funding from such sources as the Federal Tribal College Fund. They had as many Indian students as the tribal colleges, but could not access that money because we were not a tribe. That was one of the reasons that NAES, who also served reservations and helped establish many tribal colleges, went under in just 2006. And I was the last President of that college and I had to, I had to close it down.

So that's another, I've lived through the loss of all of these programs in our community. I have worked in almost every one of them, and I have struggled to see how the people needed those

programs, and they're gone because the funding left. There was no local funding for any of these types of programs.

Most American Indian people who attend college attend public community colleges, not tribal colleges. Recently the NIA board member, one of them even admitted, now it's down to something like only between 8 and 13 percent attend tribal colleges. All the rest are like the students here, the Indian students here, who probably have not attended tribal colleges. Most, we could be up to 90 percent, do not, and yet we cannot access tribal college money.

The five million or something that is in the Tribal College Act is not enough to cover all of Indian country, 95 percent of the students. We're never going to see an increase overall in the academic achievement of our people unless we give something to it. Again, zero is not enough. That's what we have in Chicago for those programs, zero.

There's a need for more funding, or some funding actually. And I wanted to say a word about how, whole books need to be written on everyone of these subjects, but that many Indian people came to Chicago, they took advantage of those programs that were three to six years, or maybe some kind of lasted longer through bake sales and taco sales, but basically a lot of the people served on boards here, they got experience writing grants, they became mechanics, they became nurses, and they went back to serve their tribal communities.

Many graduates of NAES American Indian College not only became tribal legislators, they became tribal chairman and tribal chairwomen. They got the experience here and they used that experience to benefit their people. It has always been, it has always been a change of address, but we have always worked in cooperation with our tribes, the kind of cooperation that you've been talking about. It's a model that NAES created and has yet to be duplicated across the country of the urban reservation relationship.

Many of the graduates of NAES College, as I said, went on to become professional people, the first in their communities to do that. The largest community college program in Illinois for Indians was the Institute for Native American Development. It closed in the late 1990's, but had over 300 American Indian students every single year. We were larger than most tribal colleges when they begin. We could not access one federal dollar.

And when I went to the INET it was called, in the 1980's, it just happened that nine months later it lost all its funding, and I was left to take care of 350 American Indian students, all their financial aid, all their counseling, all their job placement, all their retention efforts, by myself. If it wasn't

for work study students, several of them that helped me, I would have surely died of a heart attack that year.

Today there's no distinct school for Native Americans or teens, no native language emergent programs, few American Indian teachers for a population of Indian students here in Chicago who identify, 1,600 American Indian students identify themselves as American Indian.

Illinois does not require American Indian history to be taught in the state curriculum, and the most popular time of year for us is still Thanksgiving where people are interested in American Indians.

Created in 2007, my organization, the American Indian Association of Illinois, runs a GED program for youth, an after school tutoring program for young people, a university program, all with no federal funding, and the students can hardly make it to school because they lack bus fare, and we have to feed them out of our pocket.

Without food stamps, most Indian children would go hungry. Dental care for our community children and college students is non existent or scarce. Young native girls still drop out of school due to teen pregnancies, and young boys and girls still leave school because of gangs, violence and school regulations that are so harsh they encourage young people to leave instead of encouraging them to stay.

There are no jobs for youth, and almost 50 percent of all Indian homes lack access to computers and the internet. No jobs for youth. There hasn't been any Indian youth program of any size in our community for many, many years.

I'm going to save my other comments for under the needs and open hearing session. But I think that gives you an idea of the landscape that we're in. We really have gone backwards. It's similar to the 1950's when the American Indian Center was started. We have banded together to provide services, but they're being provided by volunteers.

My organization is all volunteer run. We run completely by just personal donations. And our seniors that are here, many of our seniors are here who volunteer in the organization, without them we wouldn't be able to provide the educational programs that we provide. And I'm thankful for that. But that shouldn't be. We should have some funding in all those areas of education, including

tribal access to tribal language programs, just like the children on the reservations. Our children and our elders and our parents, we want that too. We want that for our children.

I run a Native language program, again, with all volunteers. We teach what we had, we were tutoring our children, we said, well why not teach them Ojibwa. We have them here every week, why not build that into our curriculum, so we did that. And, but those are some of the things that we have done in Chicago. We've done great things here. Chicago's a great city.

A lot of the programs were started with the help of the Chicago Board of Education. The schools within the school, Awiawa, Little Big Horn, now Title 7, these have been made possible through Chicago Public Schools. But they can't do it alone either. Chicago Public Schools cannot do it alone. They have a big job, and we're part of that. But as I recently talked to the gentleman, I'm not sure of his name right now, President Obama's point man on charter schools, I tried for three years to get a charter school. And I had experience, I started the first Indian, I mean first school for dropout within a college called Truman Middle College Alternative High School. And I had money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. I had a million dollars. I had political backing. But guess what? I didn't have enough money and so I couldn't get that charter school.

But those are the kinds of things that, you know, it's not that we haven't made efforts to try to develop some of the same programs as schools that other people have, but we just do not have the money and the political clout to get those things done. But we're trying and we're not stopping, we're not giving up. We're Indian people, we're not going to let a little lack of money hurt, you know, stop us. We're going to keep going.

And that's, I think, the vitality of our community, is that that's where we started, we started with nothing, we're back to almost there, but we're going to keep going. So I'm sorry I've rambled a little bit here but I kind of wanted you to get an idea of how far we've come, and where we are at this point in time.

So I want to thank you so much for listening and with that I'll turn the mic over to our next speaker. Oh, I'm sorry. Levy.

[Off-mic comment]

DR. WIESE: No. It was contingent upon that I get a charter from the Chicago Public Schools, and I couldn't get it. So that was what happened with that.

MR. STROUD: All right, great. Thank you, Dr. Wiese for that great presentation. Very thorough. And our next facilitator is no other than myself.

I'm here to discuss a little bit and open the forum to talk a little bit about the current and Native American or American Indian, First People's initiatives on education through what's called P through 20. P through 20 is an educational term used to describe preschool through PHD level, or MD level. Okay, so that's the term P20.

I am not an expert by no means. I believe the people who are experts are sitting in this very room right now, and that is you all. You all are very much the experts on your all thoughts and idea what education is, it's particularly what American Indian or Native American education is.

By the way, I'm going to do a little bit of education by saying that I am going to use multiple terminologies to describe American Indian or Native American identity, okay, so you hear a lot of indigenous, first peoples, first nations, a lot of different terminology. Those terminologies are interchangeable. It varies from person to person. Some people prefer it by, either their, for instance, I grew up in Taloga, Oklahoma, which is Indian country. I prefer Indian. But I know many others who prefer to be called American Indian or go by their tribes or nations. So just kind of, that's, I want to kind of set that dialogue and set the tone for that conversation to happen. So if any other members -- feel about that, educate them, feel free to have that conversation later.

A little bit about myself. I grew up in, like I said, Taloga, Oklahoma, a very indigenous populated area. I went to school at University of Arkansas, which is not a heavily populated, indigenous population. It was a predominantly white institution. I was very fortunate to have a strong foundation, educational foundation at my, when I was growing up, through kindergarten through, to senior.

I was a, I'm a product of the Johnson O'Malley Program, JOM, which offered either educational services and supplies to Native American students. In addition to that I had great opportunities to participate in different TRIO programs, Upward Bound programs, these programs were sponsored by various universities to kind of outreach and support Native American students. And also with that, just kind of added very strong family support network as well. Very fortunate to have parents who encouraged education, who allowed me to pursue that.

So, from University of Arkansas I went to University of Vermont for my Master's work in higher education, student affairs. What I do currently right now, work at Northeastern Illinois

University. I've traveled, I've lived, across the country. And I've been, participated and been an active member in all various different communities throughout the United States, from California to North Carolina.

One aspect I want to talk about, some of the current initiatives that I've seen broadly through the United States is, one, cultural activities, cultural-related activities, mentoring programs, mentoring programs that actually started a little bit sooner than through high school level. They actually started, I've seen at some institutions, or some regions of the country mentoring started as early as eight years old. So that's a powerful, powerful way of doing that.

When I say cultural activities, I'm talking about, for instance, my experience working with the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, as a state-recognized tribe. They do a lot of mentoring after school programs with youth, and they make that an incorporation of that. Also just kind of learning more about Navaho cultural out in Ganado, I want to say Ganado, Arizona, they're doing a lot of cultural-based schooling. So they incorporate Native American, the Navaho language into their curriculum, which is very powerful. So, that's kind of, a couple examples of current initiatives that I've been aware of.

In addition to that, to more -- discussions, back to mentoring, college preparation programs, Upward Bound, Title 7, the TRIO Programs. We're seeing a lot of the rise of technology being influenced a lot on American Indian students, our current students right now. For example, out in the Navaho reservation, there's been discussions about access to the internet. If you go out to the reservations it's a very desolate place. It's a very, very wide open, not too many, there's in between, there's not houses that have internet access. So if our students are being encouraged to use technology, they need to have access to that. So, that's just a couple examples.

We'll talk a little about the current initiative here in Chicago. Again, I serve, a little bit more about me, I serve on the city-wide American Indian Education Committee, which is a parent advisory board for the Title 7 program. And I want to kind of highlight just a little bit of the program, that Title 7 here, Jolieen, if you have an opportunity to meet with her, she helps facilitate, her and her staff does a great job.

One, they're very focused on being a literacy-rich home. They're incorporating that program very much. And what they mean by that is that they're trying to incorporate as much Native

American authors, American Indian authors, and trying to incorporate that into family homes. And one way is access.

We're talking about access as the opening of the White Cedar Room, which is hosted at the Kateri Center. And what that is is a large library resource room, pretty much, open to the public, open particularly for educators and students. And where they, what they do is this access room, this resource room, they can have opportunities to read about Sherman Alexie's novels, or read about different other Native American novels, children's books all the way to adult books. So it's not just history books, we're talking about contemporary American Indian history, contemporary American Indian artists, or authors.

One, N. Scott Momaday who wrote a gray book that influenced a lot of, myself and a lot of things on American Indian culture. In addition to that they're also working with, they're strengthening partnerships here in Chicago. As Dr. Wiese has mentioned, various different type of opportunities for students. They're working with, again, for the Kateri Center, they're working with the American Indian Center, as such as that.

I believe Dr. Wiese hit a lot on what initiatives here are being held at. I wanted to kind of open the floor, because this is an open forum. You all are experts. You've been talked to for the last two hours, last, I want to hear from you all, and I believe our distinguished guests want to hear from you all because you all are active voices. You all are advocates, okay.

So, I want to kind of pose a question, because, I will get to you, ma'am --

MS. POWER: -- crossing grounds for the tribes that were going to DC. And when I stress about how good we were to each other, remember, back then without telephones, whatever, they somehow knew about this one Indian woman here, a Sioux woman who I came to take care of in 1942, that if you were stranded in Chicago, you could reach Anna Pleets Harris, who would help you get on to DC. And remember, they always, those old time delegations, you're all so young you don't remember when they had the inner tubes for the car, if they even got a car to go there. And what they'd have in their, their blankets in the car, so they slept under the shrubs outside the capital if they couldn't get a, and they naturally couldn't get a room. But this was the crossing grounds. A lot of people don't realize the importance of Chicago to the Native Americans.

One other thing. We have one liaison person, Jodi Gillett, from my reservation, but I think President Obama doesn't realize that we need another liaison person between the tribe, from the urban areas to the tribes, that, hear, hear my struggling to get what teeth I have left fixed. But if I went home, they would give me implants, or what do you call, yeah, implants. You know, why can't I get it here, we have an Indian health, but I still can't. You know what I mean, there's, we need not just one liaison. We're the only people on this earth that have just one person here, one person there, you know, and that's not, that's -- matter of fact, I'm going to write him a letter because he has a good friend that lives in my building, and I met him many times at the Illinois, Independent Voters of Illinois, when he came running up the stairs as he's running up and down stairs now, and smiled, and he won't remember me, but he'll get the letter. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you again. And that's the power of mentoring here. That's the power of mentoring we have in the city of Chicago. Ms. Power over here is a very inspiring mentor. And I say this because she is a great example of what lifelong learning is. Okay. When I discuss educational terms, that P through 20, I don't like to use the word 20, because that seems like there's an end. It's just, I started at pre-school and that's it, and that's where I'm going. So, that's kind of how I view education itself.

So, again, I believe there's a lot of terminology out there talking a little bit about what is Urban Indian. I would like to hear some definitions from everyone in the audience. What is your interpretation? What is your definition of an Urban Indian?

PERSON 1: A city kid.

MR. STROUD: City, that is definitely something.

PERSON 2: A change of address.

MR. STROUD: Very true. What was that again?

PERSON 3: One who ran away.

MR. STROUD: One who ran away. You know what, yeah, that's very -- okay, great. How about our non-Native indigenous peoples in the room? How would you define an Urban Indian?

PERSON 4: Temporary.

MR. STROUD: Temporary. That's one. Yes, sir?

PERSON 5: In teaching what I realized is they were really kind of an invisible minority.

MR. STROUD: And those are all terms that I have encountered through my research and through my involvement with students. That is something, those are very much the same terms, working with Native American students. In fact, we were just talking to a colleague over, Lisa over here, we were talking about like, you know, how this, how we're going to define Urban Indian. Oh, we're the city Indians, you know, we're the city ones. Or the one who got away. Or the one who left. Out of, I come from a large family of five, and I'm the one who got away. All my brothers and sisters live in Oklahoma, I'm the one who has moved, I'm the one who left, and they're, I was gone. So as soon as I turned 18, I was like, see you later.

But that's the terminology. That's one way of what we're encountering as American Indian, as a community here, is those terminologies. And that kind of helps us define who we are and what we do, but in the same sense, you know, we're here to discuss how we can improve upon the Urban American Indian experience, education, as such.

So, another question is, you know, this should be kind of a basic question, but it varies from person to person, but how do you all define education?

PERSON 1: A must need subject.

MR. STROUD: A must need subject. Okay.

PERSON 2: Something that's lifelong, and lifelong learning. And it goes beyond specific frame of knowledge base, but sometimes also extends to knowledge that cannot be always tabulated in certain texts.

MS. POWER: Open door to opportunity, open door to wonderful experiences, and you're never bored, you never have enough time once that door is opened. Keep learning.

MR. STROUD: Yes, ma'am, that is exactly --

MR. MENDOZA: Ian, if you could, I should probably just say it, if you could state your name too, just, we are, have the court recorder here, so we'd like to capture that you said that comment. Thank you.

MS. WHITAKER: Toni Whitaker. My name is Toni Whitaker and I'm Oneida. An education to me is what my grandfather always told me. It's something you got, and you can get, that no one can ever take away from you.

MS. ALFONSO: Someone told me that in the Miami language that teaching, the word for teaching and learning is the same thing, so I like to keep that in mind when I think about education. Oh, and my name is Jasmine.

MS. BERNELL: If I can say myself, I'm Lisa Bernell, I'm a parent here. Education to me is just the continuing challenge to continue to learn and keep your brain working. I just encourage my children to continue their education and to keep thinking.

MR. STROUD: Okay. Oh, yes, ma'am?

MS. PERKINS: My name is Darlene Perkins, I'm Lakota, and I just wanted to say I think education is something to be shared.

MS. CLOUD: Hi, my name is Melanie Cloud and I think education is a never ending process.

MR. STROUD: Okay. All right, so we kind of defined what Urban Indian, you know, as far as our terminology, we kind of described, we definitely hit on what education is. Now, I'll pose a question here open to the floor because, for one thing, working with collegiate students is that they come from all different places and walks of life, and this is not uncommon for K through 12 or whatever, but could you all describe to me what it means to be American Indian, indigenous, in a multi-cultural society, in a multi-cultural setting? And then I want to talk a little bit about like, we're going to see, continue to see the rise of bi-racial, multi-racial individuals who come in, who identify as Indian, who have not been exposed to that. But I want to kind of ask you this question is, how do we continue to support our students who live in a multi-culture, multi-diversity environment in American Indian, American Indian students in a multi-cultural environment. How do we continue to support them, or how do we help them, how do we outreach, how do we continue to do this? And I want to hear some thoughts about this.

PERSON 1: I think there should be more outreach programs for high risk students with low GPA's in low income neighborhoods.

MS. YEPAPOPAN: I'm Deborah Yepapopan, that question really hits, hits close to home to me because I'm Haymus Pueblo and Korean, so I am a person of multi-racial background, I'm, and I'm very proud of that. And I think the way to tackle that is just to teach everyone to embrace, embrace other cultures as well as your, you know, your own culture. My daughter is, you know, she's multi-racial as well, she's enrolled with Haymus Pueblo, she's Korean, her name is Korean, she's also Osage and Cheyenne River Sioux on her father's side.

And I teach her to embrace her cultures, all of her cultures, so that she always knows what her background is. And she, you know, the kids that she goes to school with, she's the only Native American among her friends, but she embraces the different cultures that all of her friends are, and I think it makes her appreciate her own cultures a lot more. And we do go home to Haymus a lot too, and she dances at our Feast Days, so she knows her Native background as well. We just need to do more on the -- Osage and Cheyenne River Sioux part.

But she is aware, and she embraces all of herself, and I think that's very important to just make sure that people that are of mixed race, that it's okay to embrace all of yourself.

MR. STROUD: Any other thoughts?

MS. POWER: There's this myth that we all, because we have the casinos, we're all rich. My dear mailman even said to me, Mrs. Power, I want you to help me become an Indian. I said why? He said I want some of that casino money. I said, as soon as you find how to get it, you tell me, because I need it too. And he said, you don't get it? I said no, we don't get anything. I said, furthermore, to prove we are Indian we have to go back, back, back, you go back to the records out home, and I said, I have to go, I had to go back there and have my picture taken to prove that I'm an Indian. And I haven't gotten anything so far, other than the wealth of what I inherited as a Dakota. And that isn't enough right now.

So that's difficult, this whole business, you know. And then we talk about the census. First time we were counted was in '80, and the Department of Commerce gives credit to the wrong people, it was people on the street, including myself, who sat in one night to get that census, so they'd count us Native people, and you know, and you see the first form that we had to fill out? You can't believe it, and the reservation form, I kept one because it's a collector's item now. But the first time we were counted was in 1980, correctly, halfway correctly. Thank you.

DR. WIESE: I wanted to say something really about living here in a multi-cultural, in multi-cultural societies, that we are the minority of the minority, in terms of numbers in a large city like Chicago. I think much of the federal policy has been created that says, and believes, that we have access to so many rich resources here, that once a Native person lives in a city, they no longer need any services.

That is an incredible myth, it kind of is as large as the casino myth in that the services are very few and stretched for the other minorities and other citizens, low income and poor people of Chicago, so that when Native people who are actually have many of the worst statistics in terms of income, health issues, education, all of those, that we cannot compete with the larger groups that have more money, more numbers, and more, a more political influence. That is just totally unrealistic.

And so for people to use that argument in saying that is why Chicago does not need any funding for higher ed or for dental care or senior health services or a huge number of things, language immersion programs, so that is just, it's totally just untrue, and that message needs to get out that that is not, has never worked for us.

Look at the health, the health issues. They say, well you have, you have all kinds of hospitals here, you have clinics, you have everything. Well guess what, try to find a dentist that will pull your tooth here when you have no money. All the people older people, Indian elders I know, they pull their own teeth. I went and told this to the head of the American Dental Association right here in Chicago, and he was out there talking about Indian dental issues. He never even mentioned it. He never took it to heart what I was saying, he didn't get it. He didn't get it that it's non-existent.

And there are many, many services that American Indian people have access to on reservations, if you can believe it, that we don't have. As Susan said, we don't have housing assistance. We don't have emergency funding for any reason. We don't have special services for seniors who are shut-in or completely disabled.

And actually we have been caught between the federal government, the state governments, the city governments, and the tribes for the last 40 years, since we've been here. We have caught, nobody wants us, nobody wants to say, acknowledge that we are still citizens of our tribes and deserve all the same, you know, the same recognition that other tribal members have.

I'm with Susan, the more I think about what she said, we need our own urban liaison. I tried for two years to communicate with Jodi Gillett, two years. I tried Facebook, I tried her e-mail, I tried telephoning, nothing. Not a thing. Until she called one day and she asked, wanted to know what, how were the President's programs, how were they benefitting our community. And I said, you do not want to talk to me now. You do not want to talk to me. And I am a firm supporter of the President. I believe I'm the first American Indian that ever shook his hand. I met him the week before he went, he announced his candidacy at the Multi-Cultural Journalism Association Meeting where a Native was elected.

But when, I started by saying, you know, I told her the programs we don't have, but also I said, you know, the only things that are helping us stay alive here, are food stamps and student loans. That's it. And unemployment, I'm sorry, the extensions in unemployment have helped a lot of people. But those are the programs, the federal programs that have made their way down to us and have been sustaining our community.

So, and you know up until the President Executive Order, no one would talk to us about urban issues. No one would even take our phone calls. Now, it did make a difference the Executive Order, but now as you said, we have to work on developing a relationship with other government agencies so that they will be able to come to the table and represent our people, who are really a majority in many situations, and the state, because there's no tribe, we're the majority, Chicago has the majority of Native people.

So we need a, we need a vehicle to do that. If that would be a liaison, then that would, you know, that would work for us. Someone that we could at least call, we could write, someone who would express what our needs are, and not be afraid. That's really the issue. All of the Indian people that are working with tribes are afraid to mention the words urban. They're afraid to say it.

I had a young woman who was helping me run for NIA Board for three years, she said don't say the urban word. Don't say the U word, you won't get elected. No one will vote for you. And so I didn't, but I didn't get elected anyway. But, but, and then someone who came up and said, you know, the urban word, they got elected right after my speech. But that's all right.

But it was that, the idea that I was being told by even someone that lives here, that was my, we joked she was my campaign manager, that she wouldn't let me say it, she goes no, whatever you do don't say the urban word. No one will vote for you. You know, so it's like, and this was, I realized,

was a sphere across the country. There's even people that didn't come today because this is about, we're going to be talking about urban issues, and they're employed by tribes.

So that shows you what kind of fear, anxiety, frustration people are feeling when they know the needs are there, but on the other hand they know that the political, the political, really landscape, is that there is no support yet for Indian issues, and there hasn't ever been. Oh, wait, I want to say one, there was, when that money came into the urban communities, there was a National Urban Coalition, in fact the spokeswoman was LaDonna Harris. There was support for that brief period of three to six years.

But last year when I called her to speak at the American Indian Families Conference at the University of Chicago, she did not answer my phone calls. She didn't want to be associated with the urban issues either. One of the only people we could get was Don Fixegoloi, he's one of the few, the few people that has written and researched about urban, urban issues. So that kind of shows you again the landscape.

MR. STROUD: Thank you.

MS. HAGEMANN: My name is Francis Hagemann and I'm Ojibwa/Metis, so my experience is considerably different than probably anybody else in the room. My grandparents, both of them came from Canada, one from Quebec and one from Ontario, and eventually settled in Evanston, Illinois. I have tribal recognition from Canada because I was able to document my background going back five generations. But I'm not a recognized Indian here, in the United States, because I'm not considered a member of a federally recognized tribe.

I spent, I can't even remember now if it's 26 or 28 years, teaching in the Chicago public school system. And while I was here, I could not be recognized as an Indian faculty member because I was not enrolled. So what I did with my students was not make an issue of what I was, but I did manage to integrate Indian history into my lessons. And I still continue to develop materials.

When I left CPS I went with the University of Illinois at Chicago and I joined the History Department there, and worked with History majors who were becoming teachers. I think what education has meant to me is it opens one to the world, and to your inner self. And I think when we learn who we are, it is much easier to reach out to everybody else.

It took me a long time to come to grips with who I was, because when I was a child I was told yes, you're Indian, but when you go out this door, don't you ever tell anybody else. And there are a lot of us that grew up that way.

MR. STROUD: Great. For the interest of time we're going to go ahead and kind of slowly wrap up this up, this session. What I took from this forum, what I took from our discussion was a sense of advocacy, advocacy and development of allies. I say advocacy, we need to be, as a community, as members, as educators, we need to advocate for Native American students, our Native American education, look towards to what we can do to infuse our culture, our history our language; and allies, there's a few teachers in this room, I look to you to kind of continue to be an ally.

Now, just like anything, that's a title that's going to be earned, not given. So I encourage you and empower you to kind of continue to seek that out, how can you be an ally to American Indian students who then can advocate for themselves, advocate for their communities.

And then I want to close one thing by looking, having us as Urban Indians, as the ones who got away, the ones who left home, City Indians, I think we need to start looking at ourselves as a community, and really strengthening that. We have Pueblos, we have Navahoes, we have Ojibwas, we have First Nations people in this room, in this community. And I think really need to look to our resiliency as a culture.

I'm reminded of a great speaker I had the opportunity to meet by Dr. Iris PrettyPaint HeavyRunner. She talked about the buffalo. She talked about like, she goes, you know, the buffalo are very strong, and the reason why is that, you know, if you look to, for instance, a thunderstorm, in the plains there's these great thunderstorms, lightening crashing down. The buffalo will stick together, and they actually, they increase their survivability by sticking together. They put their head down and they just keep moving. They stay together and they continue moving. So we need to take those lessons from that and as a community within this urban setting, need to again, look to each other, support, have our support be educators, advocaters, allies for our Native American students, and look to that resiliency that we have within our culture to kind of just continue to pursue on and hopefully help get our Native American students here on their urban campus.

All right? So that's enough of me rambling. All right? All right, so we're going to go ahead and take a little bit of a break here, all right. The break's going to be a little bit short because

we're running out of time, so we want to go ahead and keep it about, I'm going to put seven minutes. So in seven minutes we're going to go ahead and start, okay. So thank you.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. STROUD: During break I saw a lot of great conversations, continue those. We, this is an opportunity to have those discussions. We have some distinguished guests here. Please talk to them, share your story. They're taking all this information, they're taking this back, so I encourage you all to do so. Have those conversations as much as possible, and reach out to new people. This is a great networking opportunity. I just found out I know somebody through a cousin of mine, so that's just great stuff. So, all right?

So we're going to move onto our next forum, but before we do that I want to make a quick housekeeping announcement. One, lunch is going to be provided, and it's going to be after this session. Lunch is going to be provided by the, actually it's courtesy of the American Indian Association of Illinois, and it's going to be held at a different location. They're going to be given out walking maps in the back, as you exit, okay? So travel, stay together, like that story, stay together. Don't make us bring out that rope and everyone hang onto that, so. So, again, just, we're going to make this announcement again at the end of this session, so.

All right, so we're going to be going on to our next agenda item, opportunity to kind of do some open forums. We're going to have some guests from Wisconsin, Rachel Byington and Denise Thomas. They're going to, have them come up and introduce themselves and have them talk a little bit about the Wisconsin Act of 31, Wisconsin Act 31. So, and then we'll hear from our, some of our Parent Advisory Council here for the Title 7 program. So, Rachel?

MS. BYINGTON: Hello everybody, my name is Rachel Byington and I'm Choctaw. My tribe's from Oklahoma, and I'm from Madison, Wisconsin. I was born in Madison, and my family ended up there through Indian relocation. My grandparents first came to Chicago and they're from a little bitty area, rural. This was a huge, probably giant place for them, and they weren't fitting in very well and ended up going into, just north of Madison and working, my grandpa worked there, and then ended up working in Madison, and then they stayed there. My grandma had siblings that ended up in the lower part of Wisconsin as well. They all eventually went back home to Oklahoma, but my grandparents were the only ones who stayed.

So with that, I grew up in Madison Metropolitan School District K12. My grandpa was on the Indian Education Parent Committee, and I started my job as the Title 7 person. In our district we don't call ourselves coordinators or directors, we are instructional resource teachers, so we have to have a license as well. So I'm a licensed teacher but I don't, I do the, I manage the Title 7 grant.

And when I started my job it was kind of interesting that I had to, first thing I had to do was kind of clean out the office, because it was, you know, it wasn't, it was, the person before me, all their stuff in there, and I needed to figure out what was keepable and what I needed to get rid of. And I was going through all this paperwork and I found, I found me and my sister and my aunt's Title 7 applications from the mid 70's, so that was kind of cool.

But I also found a scrapbook with pictures. My grandpa used to take us all to the Title 7 parent committee meetings, or the, I don't know, I don't think we had GOM at that time, but took us to the parent committee meetings, but found a scrapbook of activities that happened through Title 7, newspaper clippings and all this, including pictures of my grandpa. So that was a wonderful treasure to find on my, in my first couple weeks of working in my position.

But growing up in an urban setting, I can let you know that you're often very isolated. In Madison, you know, it's a medium sized city, and people come from all over the place, and now that I work for our district, I have a lot of statistics. So one thing I know is that we have over 30 different tribes represented in our school district, which provides a unique challenge in itself in that, because it's such a small population, you might have one family that is from a tribe from Alaska, or one family who's a tribe from California, or a different tribe from California.

So there's not even the sense of that there might be, you know, more of your people. Then there's the level of connection that the people have to their tribe, or maybe being raised by non-Native family members. And so that causes, you know, just various degrees of isolation of whether they feel connected to their tribe or to any other Native people in their community.

And unfortunately far too often I see students who are Native who don't want to be Native. They do not feel connected, even connected enough to say that they're Native. And I think that there's probably many different reasons, maybe, maybe some that I would be able to explain some that maybe I can't explain.

But one thing I know is that in the public education system is that far too often Native people are just left out of the curriculum. And what's in there may be accurate, may be not, but Natives are, if they're in there they're always the bad guys. They're always, they were always attacking somebody. It's never the true -- it's not the Native perspective that's being taught, it's white man's perspective.

So that might contribute to why we have so many native students who don't want to be Native, because they don't want to be the bad guys, they don't want to have to be identified as the bad guys who killed everybody, who shot everybody with the arrows, who raided people's villages, that hurt people, that raped people. So, I think that's part of it.

But in our state, we do have legislation that collectively, it's six statutes, collectively is called Act 31. This legislation came about in the mid 80's, maybe some of you have heard about it or read about it or know about it, but there was a big, there was a lot of race riots going on in our northern part of our state.

It started with spear fishing. There was Ojibwa bands who were practicing their right to hunt, fish and gather on the ceded territory, and usually DNR or police would confiscate their materials, destroy their materials, ticket them, put them in jail, whatever the case may be. But there was some brothers who knew the law, knew what the treaty had said, and of course, went out and were spear fishing on ceded land, which was their right to do so, and ended up being arrested for it. And it went through a series of courts, including all the way to the Supreme Court.

But this caused a lot of tension between the spear fishing folks, the Ojibwa folks, and the sport fisherman who, you know, are, obviously there for a totally different reason to fish. And with the court rulings, that just amped up the tension between folks. And it was pretty ugly. I remember seeing it on the news. I was, you know, I wasn't that old, but I, I was probably like a pre-teen or a teen when all this was going on, and I do remember the ripple effects coming down to Madison, even though this was in the northern part of the state.

And it was ugly, it was ugly that, the racial tension that was happening, and you know, kids, you know, drawing pictures of, you know, Save a Walleye, Kill an Indian; Save Two Walleye, Kill a Pregnant Indian, you know, things like that. It was ugly, there was things called treaty beer, and it was, it was a tough time in Wisconsin.

But out of that came this legislation that is now part of our state, and it's, I don't know if you guys have heard of Indian education for all, like through what Montana's doing. And it's not quite as, there's some probably similarities, but there's probably some differences, and it's great. So what the law says is that, that there's a requirement, and that the state superintendent and then the superintendents need to make sure that the history, culture and sovereignty of the tribes of Wisconsin needs to be taught, typically fourth grade, eighth grade and 12th grades.

Well, that's a problem because in our school district there's only, I believe, three credits of social studies needed, so seniors may not be taking it. So there's some great stuff with the law, but there's some flaws with it too. And it really shouldn't be only 12th grade, and in my opinion it should be all day, every day, inclusive. It shouldn't be one month, it shouldn't be one unit, it should be in our reading programs, teaching about Native people should be in our reading programs, our math, or science, our social studies.

But far too often, you know, it's compartmentalized, there's nothing holistic about the education, so, and that's how when you're growing up in this education system, you don't see the rich, rich things that Native people have done for our country, you see them as a compartment, as just one part of the society instead of throughout our society.

The other part of it requires that teachers must have received instruction to be able to gain their teacher license. Well, it doesn't say how much instruction. So I come across far too many teachers who say, I'm not prepared to teach about anything Native, let alone the Native tribes of Wisconsin. You know, the law says the tribes of Wisconsin. It doesn't mean you can't teach about other tribes. But it specifically says you have to teach about the tribes of Wisconsin. Unfortunately, if you don't know what tribes are in Wisconsin, you might end up teaching about a tribe from the west coast or southeast or whatever. And that's great to include the other tribes outside of Wisconsin, but if you're missing the mark, that's a problem.

And because it doesn't say how much instruction is needed, it could be a seminar, maybe a brown bag lunch series, two hours, four hours, maybe eight hours, maybe. Maybe if you have a multi-cultural education class, you might have a unit, might be a couple of weeks. Maybe if you're lucky, you take Native American History.

But, really? Does that prepare anyone to teach about the Wisconsin tribes? And unfortunately, unless you do your own research on your own and try to learn about the tribes, you're

probably not going to be prepared. So, while I think that the legislation has brought us to a great place, it's also something we can build on.

Of course, there's some resistance to it and if any of you guys know what's going on in Wisconsin, it's a very political place right now and unfortunately I feel that Act 31 may become threatened as legislation. I don't want to get too political, but our governor has repealed some important progressive moves that have moved us forward. And so I worry about that.

So, and then the other piece of legislation that we have that was signed into law, I believe, about a year and-a-half ago, maybe two years ago is called Act 250, which if -- that requires that if a school uses a race based mascot or logo, Indian mascot or logo, if the student or anybody, it doesn't have to be a native student, anyone feels that the name is problematic, they can go in front of Review Committee and go through a process to have it changed.

So, some school districts have already come, you know, just right away changed it before anything, before anyone made an actual complaint. There's some that have gone through the process and have changed it and then there's some that are just won't change it. They want to hold on to their image of the Indians or the warriors. And even though there's lots and lots of evidence including research and testimony about how it impacts students or people or adults.

Those schools, some schools are resistant to the change and they fully want to hold on to their image and don't believe that they need to change. So, that's just another piece of legislation.

But when you think about families in urban settings, when you're already are somewhat isolated, you're maybe geographically very far from your tribe, like me, my tribe, to get there by car, that's like 14 hours, you know? It's not like we can hop in our car and go there, even on a long weekend, you know? Memorial Day weekend, no, you know, you get there, you have to turn around and come right back.

So, there's this isolation with being far from your tribe, your people. And then you might have some native people but they may be from many, like in my city, over 30 different tribes. So, you might not be able to connect with anybody that's from your tribe because there might not be anyone there or you don't know where they are.

And like in my city, we don't have a native center. We don't have a native urban center or cultural center or inner-tribal center or anything like that. So, it's just, again, creates that isolation.

And then in the school system, if you're not feeling proud because the Indians are always the bad guys, I believe that's part of where kids get to where they're saying, I mean, there's this one girl, I feel so bad. She's brown, very brown, browner than me and she's like, I'm white.

And it's pretty sad. And I'm not going to tell her who she is. But for her to want to be so badly not brown, not have the dark hair, not look, she's Ojibwe, she's White Earth, not be White Earth. She doesn't want any of it. And it's pretty sad. And how did she get to a point in her life that at, I think she's maybe a sophomore, so 15 or so, at 15 doesn't want anything to do with her people.

Where did this happen? Her mom is non-native, so there's the home part of it. But then there's the school part of it. And that is one thing that I feel is a big problem. That we have, you know, in my state, these couple of pieces of legislation that help. But it's not enough. And I believe this contributes to our student attendance. Their kids aren't connecting with the curriculum. They go there. You have to listen to something that you know isn't true. You're tired of being the bad guy. It's not a place for you. The teachers don't look like you, they don't sound like you. They tend to be non-native. They're not relating to you. The cultural norms aren't the same. Attendance starts and then suspension and the expulsions to the drop out rate. Then all of a sudden, well, because you didn't get everything you need to prepare for college, college just seems like an unattainable goal. It's just way too far out there to even be in something that would be in your mind set that you can go.

So, I think those are some of the unique challenges that native students in the urban setting face. And that's just from my perspective, so, thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you again Ms. Byington. Thank you, thank.

So, we're going to go ahead and continue on. I'm looking to hear, our next part of our forum is going to be conversations and some input from our Parent Advisory Council here for that Title 7 Program. And one of our forefront leaders, Ms. Lisa Bernell. So, would you come over here and introduce yourself?

And any other parents or any other members of the council, please come up and introduce yourself as well.

MS. BERNELL: Good afternoon. My name is Lisa Bernell. I am a Dakota and I have been an urban Indian all my life. I was asked today to just touch base a little bit on Title 7. And I wanted to

say that throughout most of my life, I've always had the ability and the access to some type of a Title 7 Department.

Grammar school, I started off in Phoenix and I had a tutor, a native tutor there that I could go to her office and get some assistance with my school work, prepare for any tests and I had her probably five years of my life there.

After grammar school, my mother moved us here and I started in high school here with a tutor coming to the school. I think she came about once a week and, again, I still was able to have somebody there to help me with my studies, somebody there to help me prepare for any testing, whether it was ACT's, any type of forms or scholarships I was interested in.

And, so as I began my family, I encourage my son to participate in a school, which at one point I thought the Title 7 Program was based out of. So, I sent him to Audubon Elementary on the north side of Chicago. And unfortunately I found out after that the Title 7 Program wasn't there. But I continued to let him go to that school and found out where the Title 7 Department was based out of now and have been participating and encouraging my children to be involved.

And I figured being a parent, I want my children to have the access to as many mentors, as many programs, as many resources that we can. I think I gained the ability to succeed and to pursue my education having all of these doors. So, I want to continue with my children to encourage them to utilize whatever resources and participate in any community programs so that they can continue to succeed.

And so I have been on the council for a couple of years and I keep myself visible in a lot of the community agencies, whether it's the American Indian Center, whether it's, you know, supporting Dorene in her programs. I work with Kateri every so often and volunteer there, Indian Health. I'm just always visible and I want to be that go to parent, not only for my own kids, but for any other native youth here so that they can look at me as a role model and that's what I try.

So, that is just my story and I just wanted to share a little bit. Thank you.

MR. STROUD: All right, well, thank you again. I, too, serve on that committee as well. I am not a parent. I am a community representative. I serve because, again, I agree, much like Lisa, I'm an advocate for education and I wanted to be part of Indian education as much as possible wherever I'm at. And I had an opportunity, I met Jolieen. Jolieen came through my office, again, I work at

Northeastern Illinois University. And she came in randomly one day. She saw that I had a picture of one of my inspirational leaders of Wilma Mankiller, who is one of, a very predominant great leader for the Cherokee nation at one time. And she's like, oh, you have Wilma Mankiller. I'm like, yes, I do.

And, so I thought this was a great opportunity to have that dialogue, that educational opportunity. And then we both did our head tilt because this is what I've encountered through my travels when meeting other native people. It's like, are you Indian, you know? Is that what you are? And they're like, oh, yeah. And our eyes light up because we had found another community member, another person who feels like us.

So, we started exchanging information there. We had a great conversation. She told me there's a great opportunity for you. I know you're not a parent but come, come participate, be a community representative. And through my experience through this Title 7 Program, it's been a great experience as far as seeing education at its best, as far as community, as far as outreaching to our high school and junior high and elementary teachers to educate them on what the Native American issues are, contemporary American Indian issues.

And also working with students. I work with predominantly college age students ranging from 18 to, the oldest I've worked with is, I had a 49 year old student. So, I have mostly adult students. So, just an opportunity to kind of work with under-aged students has been kind of enlightening. I know where my limits are at, I know where my strengths and be, okay, I can't work with you. You have a lot of energy. So, I have much more respect for instructors and teachers now.

But anyway, the program's great. I think we're going in a right direction. We continue to learn and develop as Ms. Mendoza and Ms. Silverthorne has mentioned earlier. The focus of American education, number one, is language, history, and culture. That's always the premise first and then we go, then we start building on. You know, those are primaries that I feel this community and also this council focus on mostly.

So, I mean, that's where we're leading off. That's our foundation. And that's kind of going from that. So, are there any other members or parents of the community here who would like to share some of their stories? Does everyone know what Title 7 is? Oh, great.

MS. YEPAPOPAN: I'm Deborah Yepapopan. I'm the Youth Development Specialist with Title 7. So, I'll just tell you a little bit about myself first. I am Korean and Jemez Pueblo. I was born in Korea and I came to America when I was five months old, my mother and I did.

And we moved to Chicago when I was about one year old. So, I grew up in Chicago so I'm also a Chicagoan. Throughout my life, you know, I've gone back home to Jemez Pueblo with my parents at least once a year. So, I had a very strong foundation in my culture and who I am.

And after I became a US citizen, my mother and I went back to Korea to visit. And I must have been 11 years old at that time.

So, I grew up in Chicago. I attended Catholic school for my elementary school years and then I went to Lane Tech High School. And so I am also a product of Chicago public schools.

So, I am the Youth Development Specialist. What I do is I work closely with parents in our program. I am also a parent of a Chicago public school student, Chicago public school Native student as well. So, I have a very good idea about what parents want for their kids.

And the Chicago public school system is huge. We have over 600 schools in the entire district. And sometimes it gets very hard to navigate. Not every school is the best school and everybody wants to send their kids to the best schools.

Sometimes you're bound to your neighborhood school. But what I try to do is I help the parents at the beginning of every year in the fall with the Options for Knowledge application process. And what that is is helping parents understand that there are other options outside of their neighborhood school if it's not a good school.

And I'm very fortunate. I had gone through that process myself with my daughter. So, I know the process is very daunting. Everybody wants to send their kids to the selective enrollment schools. And I was very fortunate that my daughter tested high enough and was accepted into one of the top schools in Chicago.

So, I know just how nerve racking that is to go through that process, to try to figure out what the best schools are and not everybody knows what the best schools are in the system. But I've been through it all. I talk to a lot of other parents, non-Native parents, and I see where they're sending their kids and what the process is that they've gone through and that's how I learned.

And that's what I do at Title 7, is I help our Native families navigate that whole process because it's very daunting and it can be very nerve wracking, especially from the time that you send in your applications to the time that you get your letters. And you either get a letter that says, yes, you know, your child was accepted into this school or your child was wait-listed or your child, sorry, we didn't have enough room for your child for this school.

And, so we're also there as a support system for parents to help them understand what more they can do. If they're on a wait list, you know, we just describe to them the whole process, the step-by-step, what they need to do. There are appeal processes for selective enrollment high schools.

I mean, the whole system, the application process is just, it's incredible. It's hard to explain to people in other cities or other districts. They just don't understand it. So, I try my best to understand it so that I can help those parents. And, I mean, the system, it changes. And who knows? It could change again in a couple of years.

So, when our parents get their children into certain programs that are accelerated or demand more of the student, those students need extra help sometimes. And so we try to offer support, academic support for those students and we try to offer tutoring. So, we always have tutoring.

And we do a lot for our parents. And I really, because I am a parent and I know what I want for my child, I take that to work with me. And I try to find those same opportunities for other parents. And we live in a world-renown city with world-renown institutions. And there are a lot of opportunities out there that people don't know about or maybe can't afford.

So, what we also try to do is form partnerships with a lot of these institutions, with museums and such to try to offer opportunities, specifically to our Native kids so that they have the same chance as other kids to take part in summer programs, spring break programs or any kind of educational programs.

I mean, our museums are always offering all kinds of just, you know, workshops and, you know, day camps and, you know, just fun things for kids to do. And our kids, you know, they deserve that same chance to take part in all of those.

So, thank you.

MR. STROUD: Okay? Yes.

MS. THOMAS: Hello, my name is Denise Thomas. I'm the Title 7 AISES Coordinator for the Madison Metropolitan School District in Madison, Wisconsin. I'm first and foremost a parent of two boys in the district, an eleventh grader and a seventh grader.

And I wanted to talk a little bit about our program in Madison and what we do because you had asked earlier about ways that we support our children within the district. We started the AISES Program, well, I started with the AISES Program about three years ago. And we looked at the data that we had for our students.

They struggled in reading. They--

MR. STROUD: Can you define what AISES is?

MS. THOMAS: Oh, I'm sorry. AISES is the American Indian Society for Engineering. No, American Indian Science and Engineering Society. I'm sorry, I'm nervous.

And we, like I said, we looked at the data and our kids are struggling in reading and math and science, you know? And so, AISES, we took on the program of AISES because it focuses on science and engineering.

Well, I work part time for the -- I also work full time at the UW of Madison with the Wisconsin Alliance for Minority Participation Program. So, when I got, as I was working with WISCAM, I realized that my kids are not seeing all the different aspects of science, engineering, and technology and math that they could be. And so when Rachel asked me to come aboard and work as the AISES coordinator, that's kind of my goal with the program, you know, have a set agenda.

It's just that I want the kids to see more than just a lab coat. I want them to see more than just their science teacher standing in front of them. I want to let them see the research that's been going on. I want them to see the technology developments that they could do and everything.

And so we talked to the kids and I don't know if your kids are like mine, when we first started, they didn't know me, I didn't know them so there wasn't very much dialogue. Yeah, so, what do you want to do and they're like I don't know. Whatever you want us to do.

But luckily, three years later they're still here. We meet every other Sunday and from that we started, first we started off with a diabetes project and we just looked at diabetes and the way it's affecting Native American children. And then we looked at food deserts. We looked at commodities

and how that affected our Native American population. We looked at urbanization, how that affected Native American populations.

And then our kids presented their work and their findings at American Health and Science, Indigenous Health and Wellness Days at UW Madison. And from there I thought, well, we'll take it a little bit further and we started talking about food science and looking at the science behind making food and the marketing that goes into food and why, maybe why there are food deserts, why in certain neighborhoods this is what's going on, the marketing and all this.

And from that, we went to, we worked with the UW Arboretum and we talked about mounds, the mounds in our campus and around Madison. And we learned about the different native vegetation and we helped clear vegetation around a mound so that it could be more visible.

Also, we have done water monitoring. And last year, and then this past semester we went to the NIA Conference, no, and we went to the AISES Conference in Minneapolis. And the kids are mostly middle school, we have a few high schoolers. But when they went and talked to the different people at the Career Fair, the Career Fair people asked them, okay, you want to get into this. What do you want to do? I want to be an engineer. Okay, what kind of engineer? They're like, I don't know. I just want to be an engineer.

So, I was like, okay. Getting them on the track of what they want to think about, they want to be an engineer. But they need to know what kind of engineer they want to do. What type of research they want to do. What kind of path they want to do.

So, now then I was able to, lucky from where I work, I was able to get them connected with graduate students that are going for the PhD's and talk about the different chemical engineer, mechanical engineer, biology, life sciences engineers just so that they can open their mind to what the possibilities are.

So, and other things that we have done, one thing about having Native American students, I've noticed, is that they do or we do, I grew up as a Native American urban student was that we struggle with our identity. We're not really traditional. We're not really city but we kind of, you know, we shadow that line. We want to claim our heritage but there's not necessarily always somebody there that can teach us it.

So, one thing that we had wanted to and what we talked about was how do we get also that cultural into our programs and into our students? Luckily, we have some good students that really know what they want, helped us. Like this past year, our students started their own youth drum, things like that.

We take a lot of our direction from our kids, from the students that we have. We ask them what they want and like I said, before they used to say I don't know but now they say, well, this sounds good or that sounds good. And you just kind of keep working at it.

We're lucky this year, last year I had one student that graduated and now she's an architect at UW in Milwaukee. I have a student that's graduating this year and he will be going to the University of Iowa and he wants to be a chemical engineer.

So, it's really a good thing. So, I would just say for researchers who, any and all researchers can. You have a university by you? Use them. They want to help you, even if they want just because your data, your numbers, use them. Don't let them just use you; use them. Use the money that they got.

There are people out there that have research money to do outreach. Use them. They want to use our monies? They want to use our students for the numbers that they need? Give us the money. You know, one of our biggest things for Ivan and Madison is transportation. And how are we going to get our kid where we're going to get them. So, we're like, well, if you can get them there, we have a student. Would you help us bring them there? And they're willing to do it, so. That's one thing I would say. Use any and all resources, you can.

The other thing is listen to the students, encourage them. Like I just said, your first time you ask them, they're going to say, I don't know. Keep asking them. They do know, they've just have never been asked before what they want. So just keeping asking them, they will tell you. They'll get use to you and they will tell you, especially in an urban area where there's so much turn over.

They finally find a teacher, a counselor, some adult figure; yes, this person I get. They graduate from college, leaves. For whatever reason, they go back home and then we're like start all over again. So, just keep working at them. They're there, they want it.

Like I said, I'm a parent and it's really good to be this coordinator's program. I actually see the light bulb going off in these kids heads, you know, and they're like, they get it. They get curious

about it. They stand there. At first they're standing way to the back. The next thing they're all standing up front trying to figure out, you know, they're raising their hands, you know?

So, I would say that's the resources I have for our program. One of our biggest things that we did was that AISES, the National AISES Program in Albuquerque, we have a national science pool, middle school science pool. Our students, five middle schoolers went last year for the first time and they won. Got to go to D.C. This year we went back again. We won again. We got to go to D.C.

So, you know, encourage your students to do this. You know, my kids are shy and they really didn't want to do it. Push them. They do like to be pushed, you know, encourage them. So, next year we have, three of our students are going to high school, so hopefully we can find two or three more students that want to be pushed, want to be encouraged and we'll have another team again. So, thank you.

MR. STROUD: Thank you, Denise.

Does anybody else wanting to have -- parents? Anybody? All right. Well, we're going to do a little housekeeping, then we're going to close us of this session. One, I want to talk about, a little housekeeping agenda. Inside your folders, you'll see a little comment card here, okay? This comment card is an opportunity for you to kind of, if you have any questions, you want any follow-up or suggestions or just kind of thoughts that maybe triggered you in this conversation that we've had thus far. Feel free to put that on there and turn those back to the table out in front.

In addition to that, the table out in front, now the afternoon session, there's going to be a public comments session, if you look at it, after lunch. That is for an opportunity for you to have some dialogue with everyone. We want to kind of give everybody an opportunity to have some space and also air time, as I say, so you need to go up to outside, there's a table out there next to the registration to sign up for that, okay? Just to kind of make sure we have an ample time for everybody as such, okay?

And then lastly, as we break for lunch, we're going to be going out to a different location so there's going to be walking maps given out to everybody. So, everyone should have a walking map. So, go ahead, and if you don't, see the individuals in the back and they'll give you one.

And lastly, I just kind of want to wrap up. I will be leaving because I have to go back to work. Someone's got to earn some money today. But what I took from this, now this is coming from

me, what I took from this morning session. The overall arching learning things I learned from this session was identity.

Identity as Urban Indian. Identity within our own indigenous self. Just kind of owning that identity and how do we express that identity and how does that express in our education. To our non-indigenous individuals in this room, I hope you learned something today as far as how education's passed through our -- one of the ways we tell or one of our pillars of education is storytelling.

So, you've heard a lot of stories I have told, Ms. Power, we all took different stories and that's kind of how we pass our language, how we pass our knowledge to others. So, that's one of our pillars.

Another one, an overarching challenge was advocacy. Advocacy was a strong point and I hope you all took that from that as well. Dr. Wiese did some very strong advocacy throughout the work she's done thus far. Ms. Powers, being not only an inspiration for myself as an educator, but also seeing her as a role model and saying, okay, how is she advocating, not only for herself but her community as well. You know, she grows up in the south side which is not predominantly Native, nonpredominant population but she's still an advocate. So that's great positives.

So, those are my two overall things I took in, themes, as you would say. I do want to leave you with a note. As I wrap up, I've done a lot facilitation with the college age students and one of the things we talk about is what it says here stays here. But I often leave little notes saying what's learned here, leaves here. Okay? So take that with you, learn here, leave here.

Mr. Mendoza, do you have anything else to say?

MR. MENDOZA: Let's give Ian a round of applause. Thank you so much, Ian. Go get that money now.

I know that there's more than money that guides him in his work. His passion and commitment is certainly in his voice and his actions. So, I really appreciate Ian's work and others like him. You know, there's countless others that aren't here.

There's a few thoughts that I'd, just kind of mutual agreement with what Ian talked about. But I also want to kind of give you some things that just generate consistent curiosity and study on our end as we get to talk over lunch and as you provide your testimony to us.

Director Silverthorne, as beautiful as this setting is and as appropriate as it is for CPS and stuff, we feel like there's a gulf between you and us, you know? So, I think we're going to try to be a little bit innovative. We're going to put some pressure on our AV team here and we're going to probably plant our chairs up there and if we can get either one of these mikes and we can utilize one of the wireless ones and just place ourselves in a couple of chairs up front, we'll try to keep ourselves miked, but if you can help us accomplish that, we appreciate that for the public comment period because I think we do have some questions and some of your testimony and stuff that we'd like to hear.

Four things really stand out to me right now and this certainly isn't absolute, if you will, but I'm really curious about the conversations around consensus and identification of our students of our populous within the urban area, especially as it relates to mobility and how we track our own programs. How are you all determining if you're successful?

We hear this issue from every urban area to even the reservation and the whole country, Indian country is grappling with this issue, the notion that, you know, there is no mechanism for us to adequately reach out to 30 different tribes, 250 different tribes. And it's really hard to find those students. We know that but what we need to take that conversation to next is what's working in that area? How do you get those students, those families, those parents, those stake holders to your events to, you know, demonstrate that meaningful collaboration. I'm very interested in that.

And alongside of that is that diversity component. I guess I look at those two together. You know, when you're talking about circular, when you're talking about when teacher's speak, you know, those give an understanding of the notion of differentiation within the classroom.

You know, what is it that you see as creating a connection to your students? One of the speakers today talked about sharing native history, native language and culture in the class. When you have all of your students who might not be of Metis background. You know, what are those principles, those essential understandings that you're drawing upon that resonate with your students, that we do have resources for. I'd like to hear about that.

I know that in every gathering like this we would get to that point where you're like, you know, so and so should be here. They're an expert in this stuff and they're not here. I wish they were here. And I know a little bit about that but, you know, I wish they could be here and document, you know, some of their expertise and commitment to these issues.

Bring their name up, you know, point them out to us. If you know how we can get a hold of them, we want to reach out to those individuals and visit with them.

Also, programs that haven't been discussed. If there's not a person behind that and that you know, but you know that there's an effort, you know, help point us in that direction because those are the, Joyce and I are constantly careful of best practices, throwing that term out there and what that means to everybody.

But if there's positive practices out there that are getting at some of those issues, we may be surprised but the federal government doesn't always know everything. And even more so, you know, we don't necessarily know if our programs are entirely effective. And so, you know, that's no-brainer either.

So, how can we improve those processes and those programs? We're always looking to states to municipalities, non-profit, private philanthropic, all those areas. But those are just some of my initial thoughts. Joyce, I don't know if you want to share some of yours before we break for lunch?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I'm very impressed with the kind of testimony that we've heard this morning. I think that one of the things I'm hearing is, as I'm listening to the stories, and the passion from Urban Voice, is that we have more in common than we have difference.

One of the schools on my reservation serves 56 different tribes. It happens to every tribal college nearby who recruit from many different places. And there are many, and this is a reservation setting. I believe the number that I heard a few minutes ago for the Chicago public schools was 600 schools within the district. That's as many school districts as within the State of Montana.

So, we have a lot of interpretation we need to look for as we listen for the testimony. And so we want to see if we can't help draw out some of that discussion as we start talking this afternoon.

A question occurred to me was how do you select your parent council? In an urban setting it's a little bit different than a smaller school. In the smaller school you look for everybody who's present, everybody you can bring into the meetings, entice, feed.

With a larger urban setting, I think you have some barriers that are different for it and we need to hear how those work; what you've done to solve them, what you think still needs to be done and some ideas or some innovation from that.

Certainly, the practices from the field, whether we call them lessons from the field, stories, all of those are important. And it isn't that there's a one silver bullet. We know there's not one answer for all of our education issues. But we need to hear the variety. We need to hear the options. And hopefully as we start being able to look through that as we go back, that we'll be able to pick out some of those highlights, some of those common points that recur across the field.

And so we're looking forward to this afternoon, and yes, we're going to move closer. This feels very distant. It feels very much like a barrier. And we'd like to make that more conversational. And so we'll try to see what we can do.

So, thank you for staying with us and we'll be off to lunch. Thank you.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. MENDOZA: One, two, three, eyes on me. One of my Kindergarten teachers taught me that one, so, and it still works.

Well, thank you for everybody coming back and joining us for what amounts to our public comment period, making sure that we hear from the public at large and other stake holders who didn't get a chance to speak this morning.

We have a sign-up sheet that we will, in essence, give priority to but we have a little bit over, what's our timing again? An hour, a little over an hour. We're scheduled to wrap up here at 3:00 o'clock.

So, you know, if we have to go a little bit over that or whatever, you know, we can certainly try to accommodate as many people as we can but we want to be respectful of everybody's time, especially that beautiful weather out there. Man, that was tough to walk in that revolving door, all those tourists out there. I was a little bit inspired.

But thank you to our hosts for the wonderful lunch and especially to the dance troupe, you know, they just shared their wonderful words. The gentleman was hilarious. The awesome thing

about Indian country, and especially about attending urban Native settings is just how you see Indian people becoming a part of their communities.

For me it was the first time that I heard and obviously by phenotype and of course by heritage and lineage, Mr. Bege Asadanay person with a Chicago accent. I was like simultaneously cool and tremendously awkward, you know, because I do a lot of work in Navajo country, you know? That was pretty cool. But just really appreciate him and his family and that wonderful lunch. I think I speak for Joyce and I both, we're very thankful to have that experience.

So, let's get into it, I guess in terms of protocol, Joyce, without even saying it, nominated me facilitator for this and so we'll do our best to try to accommodate everybody and we kind of have, in this process, consistent with that, you know, three to five minutes. If we get through everybody, we can go through again. Typically, you know, people are, yeah, I kind of want to speak to that issue too, you know, and they're a bit inspired by others and would like to have an opportunity to comment.

If you could help us organize that so we can help make you a part of the public record, make sure that you sign up in the back if you do want to provide comments, so with Amarman, and she'll get us an addition to our list. And then at an appropriate point, you know, we will have to cut it off. But I want to remind you that we do have through our edtravelconsultations.org an e-mail address that you can submit comments and we also have the comment cards as well.

And if you feel like you want to type something up and then send it to us by e-mail, that's great. You know, if you have a statement right now from an organization, we can take that and make that a part of the public record as well. Do send the word out to other stakeholders as well that we have those mechanisms. We are doing these all the way to Anchorage and Troy and, you know, maybe some other locations that we're looking into right now in what our budget can accommodate.

So, you know, be monitoring that edtravelconsultation's website for additional opportunities for voicing the needs and concerns and issues as they impact your communities.

MS. POWER: And it will certainly continue on into July.

MR. MENDOZA: So, I guess, first up, and we have the mike here. You know, if you feel like facing us or the crowd, you know, whatever you feel comfortable with, a combination of both, please do. If you need to take the mike out, feel comfortable to do that.

But we'll start off with Melanie Cloud, Leech Lake, Minnesota, Ojibwa.

MS. CLOUD: Hello. My name is Melanie Cloud. I am an enrolled member of Leech Lake Reservation Ojibwa. I am the Director of Education at American Indian Association of Illinois. I hope it's okay if I read off of here. I really don't do too good freestyle. I just start rambling on, you know?

I'm hear to mention that American Indian youth have the highest drop out rate in Chicago. You see, I was one of those youth that did not make it through high school. I grew up a screw up and a black sheep. I was called every name in the book until I concluded that I had to be honest with myself and going to school helped me do just that.

I started AISES College in the fall semester of 2003 for one reason only. And that is my son, Ethan. In order to protect and provide for him, I knew that in my heart I would have to make a dramatic change in my lifestyle. Therefore, I chose to go to school, to sustain my family and myself in ways that I never thought I could by learning responsibility, leadership and community and family support.

Since then, with the encouragement of Dorene Wiese, I graduated from Eastern Illinois University magna cum laude, I am a member of Alpha Sigma Lamda, which is a national honor society that aims to recognize special achievements of adults who accomplish academic excellence while facing competing interest of home and work.

I know firsthand the trials and tribulations of a student that has dropped out of school. There are many problem factors when it comes to youth and why they drop out. From not having a support system to racism at school to not having clean clothes to not having enough money for a bus, or gangs and teen pregnancies.

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, most drop outs are already on the path of failure in the middle grades. This is due to low attendance or a failing grade as specific risk factors. When young people drop out of school, they and American society at large, face multiple negative consequences. I recommend that we need programs to help our youth stay in school or complete a GED or alternative school completion.

Drop out prevention is important because many people drop out. We need funding for drop out retrievable programs for American Indian youth in all urban areas and for GED and literacy programs for all American Indian people who need them.

We also need youth employment programs to give young people work experience and money to help their families. We also need tutoring programs and after school programs for youth to help them connect to their tribal cultures and languages in ways they can be proud of.

American Indians should not have the highest drop out rate in Chicago. We can do better. Thank you.

MS. BERNELL: I kind of didn't know the format of this, so I hope I didn't, I might repeat something I said earlier, so, I'm sorry.

Part of where I think I left off was talking about that we need to target our specific programs to American Indians. And just because they're available in our city does not mean they are appropriate for Indian people.

I've worked in many of these programs and they are often rigid, un-welcoming, they lack Native employees as resource people, and role models and they're often prejudiced and they lack, many of the people often lack any knowledge or interest in Indian people.

The current landscape says these Indians live in cities. They can go to the city services along with all the other minorities. But as city resources have gotten increasingly scarce, Indian people have been shut out and discouraged from even attempted to utilize them.

As early as 1976, the National Urban Indian Council commented that federal agencies do not recognize their responsibilities for natives living off reservation. They ask that the U.S. honor responsibilities through policy inclusions and services for the entire American Indian and Alaskan native populations and discontinue its exclusion by virtue of residency in off reservation areas.

Urban native youth retrieval programs are so important and they help Indian youths stay in school. Urban American Indian adult education programs and GED programs are needed for youth and adults. Remember, adults are the first teachers of our children. What they know, the children will learn more quickly. We cannot let the drop outs, stop outs, pushed out students be left behind.

We need American Indian community college programs for urban community colleges where most attend. When we had an American Indian program in the city colleges, we had hundreds of Indian students. Today, where there is no program, we have just have a handful.

We also need urban programs that encourage funding for tutoring and basic areas using Native focus materials and Native language teaching. The current opportunities for tutoring after school are very, very limited and very, very small. And to my knowledge, only our program, the Native Scholars Program, utilizes American Indian tutors. And all of our tutors are university graduates.

We need data collection in urban public schools that requires academic achievement test scores be aggregated by tribe. That is the only way we are going to figure out the people who have knowledge of their tribe and we can estimate what their needs are by those kinds of groups.

We also need urban wellness programs. There's been such a big push for reservation wellness programs. The children in our communities have the same health needs as reservation children. Children, youth and adults all have health conditions here that are no better than on most reservations.

Also, we need the Native language programs. There are native speakers in Chicago who would pass on their knowledge if they had transportation or food money or a small stipend. But, again, we have no funding for those kinds of services.

We also need data collected on American Indian students in urban public schools that include grades in each class aggregated by tribe. Again, this will paint a picture that more closely gives us the areas in which students are falling behind. No data is currently collected on students in school by semester by course. We collect that data on our native scholar students. And believe you me, even in as early as kindergarten, we can tell when a student is falling behind; kindergarten.

And that's what I think is great about tutoring. Those who want to learn about Indian education in Chicago, tutor a child for just one semester and you'll learn what their needs are.

We also need, we would like to require, and this is big one and probably very difficult to achieve, but we would like to require that American Indian employees hired under federal education contracts be required to produce tribal identification or make it a federal offense if they falsify applicant information regarding tribal identification.

There are programs such as the Apro Program that do require that and they have gotten, and it has, they've been able to use it because of Indian preference. Because without that, as I said, there are probably 200 people in Chicago public schools who say they are American Indian and

they are not. They've never once stepped in our community. No one has ever met them. No one has ever seen them. So that's a problem for us.

We would like to require all federally funded educational programs to submit affirmative action plans and report to the federal funders. I worked with affirmative action plans for 20 years in my life. I never realized they don't go anywhere. They do not have to go to Washington. They are only kept internally by the businesses and the institutions and they are only used if there should be a lawsuit. So no one ever sees that there are a hundreds of companies, hundreds of schools that do not, hundreds of organizations that do not have one American Indian employee. Affirmative action did not work for us and it is going to be gone and it still won't have worked for us.

Also, we would like to recommend that Title 7 add a requirement that all American Indian students be tracked in terms of academic progress on a semester basis and that all data on Title 7 students be sorted by tribe, grade, school and subject.

We also would like reports on the number of students who are in special selection schools and how many real American Indian children are in them. There are over one hundred applicants for every special selection school in Chicago, the most sought after schools.

So, guess what? How many Indian people are getting in those schools when they're competing against young people that have ACT's of 24, 28, 30, 31 and the average ACT in Chicago public schools is 17. Not very many.

So, while there are excellent programs, some of the best programs now in the whole United States, an example, North Side Prep, very few Indian people are getting into those schools.

We ask that President Obama strengthen his recent executive order to require state plans for every state and large urban areas that spell out actions to be taken to improve American Indian academic achievement in high school and college graduation levels. This would bring us to the table to begin the discussion because we were talking about today about we need to have that tribe-lation, that triangulation of ideas and bring people to the table to bring those solutions. But right now, we're not being called to the table.

I tried to get a conference in the state on education with the governor. I never even got a response after we came back from our last trip to Washington after the President's executive order.

So we haven't been called by anybody to talk to them about anything about education and we have been trying but it's not working.

Why? Because when every other school, and I said this also the gentleman in President Obama's office who I talked to about charter schools. I said, do you know when every other school, when every other student has achieved at the highest academic levels in this country, if we do nothing but what we have been doing for American Indian children and adult students, they will be at the bottom of that chart without hope. We have got to change the paradigm. We've got to change what we're doing because this is not working.

Let us not remember the beauty of the world our people came from and the knowledge our elders taught us. One of my favorite authors is Mountain Wolf Woman and Ionash Adanceshaw that was given to one of her great granddaughters. If you give food to an old person and he really likes it, that is very good. The thinking powers of old people are very strong and if one of them thinks good things for you, whatever she wishes or he wishes for you, you will obtain that good fortune.

I say "Pingigee" to Mountain Wolf Woman for sharing this with us. Say "migwetch" to all of you for being here today. She knew what was important and I hope we can learn that as well. My dear Ho-Chunk relative, Leon Mike, once told me, living in Chicago is just a change of address. Use what you learn here to survive and then go out into the world and succeed, he said. Thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: Amy West, Southern Cheyenne.

MS. WEST: Hi, everyone. My name's Amy West for those of you who don't know me, which is actually a lot probably. I am Southern Cheyenne on my father's side. He's from Misgoy, Oklahoma. I grew up in Washington, D.C. and I'm a child physiologist and a researcher. I'm on faculty here in child psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago. And my interest is in urban native youth, mental health and wellness and in developing programs and services to better meet the needs of urban native youth in Chicago and nation-wide.

And I've been partnering with the community here in the American Indian Center for the last five years to try to develop programs and services and conduct research to gain more information and obtain more knowledge about what the needs are for youth in our urban communities.

So, I think we can probably all agree that thinking about kids in our educational system that, you know, one of the most important factors, in terms of achieving an education is wellness and

health and mental health, spiritual health, emotional health and that kids are not going to stand a very good chance of achieving and reaching their goals if they don't have good health and good mental health if they don't have a healthy family system, if they're not connected to their communities.

And, you know, I think in our native communities and cultures we know that way. We're very, you know, we're all about being interrelated. We understand that concept. I think the larger society isn't always as good at understanding how youth are embedded in their systems and in their cultural context.

And so, you know, listening to all the conversations this morning, and I've been trying to think about, you know, I think we're all acutely aware of the challenges of the barriers, of the lack of funding, of just all of the problems that face our urban native communities and I've been trying to think about how we can try to move forward and problem solve and think about how to do things differently.

And you know, one of the things that I would like to see, and this is not just a problem in the Chicago urban native community but in probably all urban native communities and all communities as a whole, but, you know, health and wellness programming is not very well integrated into our educational system.

These systems tend to be very isolated and, you know, I think that that's a huge problem and I think in some ways that's a gift, that the native people and communities can give to the rest of the country in terms of thinking about things from this perspective, from this perspective of being interrelated, of being part of a system, of needing to achieve balance in all areas of our life.

And so I'm wondering, you know, I think one of the challenges that faces this community, that faces a lot of communities that we've heard a lot of people speak to today is just that a lot of our programs and our services are sometimes fragmented. They're transient. They tend to come and go with different funding streams, with different people that come in and out of the community and there's not always, you know, consistency.

And part of what I've been thinking about and wondering is if some of that is because that's what trickling down kind of from the federal level and perhaps if at the federal level, all the different agencies or organizations that are stakeholders in urban native youth aren't talking and aren't integrating their work and aren't coordinating. I don't know if that's the case, but it's just something that I've been wondering.

Because I'm in medicine and health, you know, I know a lot more about kind of what's going on. Like I'm funded by the National Institutes of Health -- and also NIH and Department of Health and Human Services. And I know that there's a lot of really exciting initiatives and with Obama's health care reform. There's a lot of really exciting stuff going on focused on urban native health.

But, again, you know, I don't know whether people in the Department of Indian Education are talking to people, you know, and I just wonder if there's a way to kind of coordinate these efforts at the top, you know, at the very top and think about ways to kind of prioritize and consolidate efforts and attach, you know, actual, whether it's funding or, you know, mission statements or things that actually will help kind of organize our thinking and our work as it trickles down to then us on the local level.

You know, I know that we in Chicago, the community here has been doing a lot of work recently to try to be better integrated, to integrate all, I mean, there's obviously, as I'm sure you've heard today, no shortage of knowledge and passion and drive in this community. A lot of people who have been working here for a very long time, starting incredible programs and doing incredible things. And we've been, I think, working very hard to try to, you know, better integrate our programs and services. And I'm just wondering if there's, but I think it's hard and we come up against a lot of challenges and barriers and I'm wondering if there's just any way to kind of start at the federal level, at the top and kind of think about how, you know, you in Washington could kind of organize yourselves that would kind of provide the framework or the structure to then trickle down to urban native communities and help us better organize and integrate all of our programs and services and establish consistent priorities with Washington and with other urban native communities moving forward.

Thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, Ms. West. I think Director Silverthorne and I will kind of reserve comment on some of those points for our closing remarks. But we can definitely speak to some of the things that you talked about.

Next is Sarah Jimenez, Ojibwa. If I said your name right, Sarah?

MS. JIMENEZ: You sure did.

MR. MENDOZA: Okay.

MS. JIMENEZ: How are you? It suddenly got really hot in here. I'm a little nervous. Sorry, okay. I think this kind of captures everything so I'm just going to read it.

It is written, know that wisdom is sweet to your soul. If you find it, there is a future hope for you.

Good afternoon, Department of Education stakeholders and colleagues, American Indian community members, my elders, and especially to the future of our children. I humbly stand before you and thank you for engaging your minds and your hearts for even a moment, this very moment, as I speak with you.

My name is Sarah Jimenez. I am perhaps from two very distinct culturally diverse, rich worlds. My mother is from the M'Chigeeng Ojibwa first nation and my father's Puerto Rican. Either way, these are the ingredients Creator had in mind when he made me.

I was born and raised in Chicago within the Humboldt Park community. I always knew my mom belonged to a tribe, yet it wasn't until I lived on my reservation that my journey of cultural education and tribal identity began to fully form. My tribe stated that in order to acquire their support for university tuition, I had to live on the reservation for one year. So, I took them up on their challenge and left Chicago. I went to live with and come to know my grandmother, not only as my mom's mom, who baked really good homemade bread, but also as the woman who would have a lasting impact and change my life.

When I lived with her in the summer of 1994, I came to see, I'm sorry, I tried so hard not to do this, drama queen, sorry. I came to see my mom in a different light, not only as my mother but also, sorry, as a daughter. My grandmother had a way of teaching me through her sense of humor accompanied by the "you know better" look in her eyes.

I asked her one day, "Who didn't you teach mom the Ojibwa language?" She continued to play her game of solitaire at the kitchen table and said, "I'll tell you another time." The elders and the fluent speakers described my language as art. They said the words themselves came alive when they are spoken. So, when my grandmother didn't answer me, I just waited.

Later in time my grandmother and I were in her hospital room one afternoon in October 2000. She had been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer the previous July. I thought I would read her a letter with all the words I couldn't speak because I knew that soon she would leave this world and I

would have to wait to see her again soon. So, I asked her why she didn't teach my mom our language. After I read my letter and we wiped our tears, she began to tell me a story about her life throughout the next month. She shared and shared until her death in November of that same year.

She shared that because of the atrocities she experienced in the boarding school era, she wanted to protect her children from even the remotest possibility of harm and trauma. Essentially, she was beaten for speaking for language while other classmates were raped and tortured for being exactly who they were, Indian children. She thought it better for her children's future and safety to assimilate and learn only English.

My heart was broken for her and all the children who ever went to an Indian boarding school. Yet, at the same time I was happy that her story, her experiences and wisdom did not die with her. It was in that last month she entrusted me with her legacy. What was I to do with her trust and wisdom?

I went on to graduate with two undergraduate degrees. I applied, excuse me, and was offered a highly coveted position as an advocate, one of two, within the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services working toward the program goal of 100 percent compliance of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978.

I am blessed to work with and for my people. Unfortunately, I have a job with a vast symptomology of historical trauma is alive and well within our children and our families. The premise of ICWA is to keep our families together whenever possible and serve the families according to tribal traditions and within the child welfare system. Yet, there are few cultural activities, cultural services and language educational opportunities available within the urban setting. In addition, this scenario is compounded by the fact that Illinois does not have any federally recognized tribes.

Surely, the time for educational excellence for all tribal people is now. Yet, we must come to a mutual understanding that education cannot myopically focus on academic achievement. It must also include cultural education and preservation, accurate elementary and secondary tribal curriculum, inter-generational programming and language revitalization within the urban setting, to name a few.

Let today be the commencement for tomorrow with federal laws and policies that will be created and implemented accordingly. In essence, I am grateful to have shared a little part of me and

trust that you, the constituents, to carry this information where it will have the most impact. Thank you and "migwetch."

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you, Sarah. Keith McCormick?

MR. MCCORMICK: Good afternoon. Thank you for giving me a minute to speak. My name is Keith McCormick. I'm Director of Cultural Programs at Chicago Children's Museum. And some of you here know me. I've worked with Dorene and many others here in this room. And I was very pleased to be invited to come and talk a little bit about the relationship between Chicago Children's Museum and the American Indian community here in Chicago.

Chicago Children's Museum is an institution where we believe in the strong connection between play and learning. And that is important for children to learn through a variety of opportunities through traditional education in schools but also in non-traditional settings like museums and cultural institutions and that there is a continuum of a child's education that goes from the home to the school to non-traditional non-education settings, in the playgrounds and that we should collaborate and work together in order to make sure the continuum of education is consistent for every child in Chicago.

Here in Chicago, my role as Director of Cultural Programs, I have an opportunity to work very closely with the American Indian community here. And I've been in this position now for ten years and the community is one of the first communities that I started working with.

And one of the things that I had to make it very clear when I first started meeting with members of the community, the American Indian community here, is that I was not interested in a short term relationship. I did not want to do a one-off event where there was an opportunity for non-American Indians to come to the museum and see a performance or to see some of the stereotypical things that they might be seeing.

I wanted to develop a program in partnership over a long period of time that would be first person, culturally authentic. An opportunity for American Indian communities to represent themselves, not for me as an expert on cultural programs for children to develop and get a stamp of approval. I wanted the community to represent themselves.

And I think that this approach is the only approach that would have worked, especially with American Indian communities here in Chicago. I'm very pleased to say that we have a wonderful

relationship with a lot of organizations here in Chicago and they have been long term and the program would not have been successful without the commitment from all of our partners coming together to work together to develop this great program.

We still have a lot of work to do though. I think that Dorene had mentioned and I think it's come up a couple of times, too. We want to do more than just a three day program here at the Children's Museum. We want to extend the learning so that it continues year round. And I go to events and participate in things in the community and I represent the museum at different things, such as this, and I would also like to see ways for us to reach the community so that there is opportunity for American Indian kids to come to a museum and learn about how to work at a cultural institution, to do internships, participate in the internship programs at the museum, to seek employment if they're interested in working in the field of education. How do they go from, you know, working in, you know, in the community to working downtown and how do we encourage them that this is a welcoming place for them to come and seek out jobs in this field?

I was very pleased and honored to be invited to go and participate last month at two different conferences: the American Association of Museums and the Association of Children's Museums. And these are national conferences. And I spoke specifically about my relationship at the American Association of Museums about my relationship with the American Indian community here in Chicago. And the response was fantastic.

And there are cultural institutions all over the country that are interested in doing more of this kind of program where the, we are really looking for opportunities nationwide for cultural institutions to connect to the needs of the community in a very meaningful way but also to make sure that the community is represented in an authentic way at the cultural institution.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: Next up is Rachel, and forgive me, Rachel, --

MS. PRICE: She just stepped out.

MR. MENDOZA: She stepped out? Okay. We'll come back to her. Jasmine Alfonso, Oneida --

MS. ALFONSO: "Poso." My name's Jasmine Alfonso or Yago Javaley. It means, she who speaks her mind. I'm still growing into that. I want to say welcome to Chicago. I believe it was mentioned before about how our people lived here a long time ago, long before relocation.

So, you know, when people said when they thought about urban Indian, that they felt stuck or that they got away. I don't feel that way. I feel like I'm just continuing the path of my ancestors because they always lived here. Their history is on this land and, you know, I've heard people say like the bones of my ancestors are here, so I'm just continuing that path by being here in Chicago.

I do work at the American Indian Center in collaboration with Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin and also Northwestern. We have two federal research grants from National Science Foundation doing community based research projects. And I've been doing this work, we've been doing this work for the past seven years. And our last grant created a science program for middle school students.

And the primary goal wasn't to increase like school success. It wasn't focused around school success, but actually to show a different perspective around science. And if you think about science as an explanation of the world, then there's going to be different explanations of the same world.

So, we were introducing the native perspective of that and it actually, not only did it increase their success in schools and their test scores, but it also increased their like long term interest and engagement in science. So, I'd say it was pretty successful. I think that's really important if you're thinking about, you know, all the problem solving that we have to do in our communities around things like climate change and water reclamation; issues like that.

Now we have these two new projects. One is focused on early childhood education because it's not fair to ask our kids to survive all the way through until high school or college until they start to get a better quality education. So, we're thinking about what are the best practices, like you mentioned, for teaching science to young kids because some people or, I guess, the research out there right now says that young kids can't learn science at that age and we disagree. So, we just started that this last fall.

The other grant is focused on community based science learning for all ages. So, when we ask what education meant, I know a few people said lifelong learning. It's something that's never ending. So, I thought that was cool.

Our project has community members from all ages coming together to work on projects that they believe are relevant and pertinent to themselves and their community. And like I said, going back to that, you know, we're going to have to be doing a lot of problem solving. And I'm hoping that we're able to fill in any gaps.

And then these projects have helped me individually. They push me to go get my graduate degree. So, I went back to Northwestern and got my Masters in Learning Sciences, which help me even further think about how we learn in anything; traditional, formal education and museums and things too. So everywhere, you learn everywhere.

So, working on these projects supported me and helped me to learn how to be reflective, to question things, inquiry skills. But also like the research skills, I ended up doing an exploratory study in Chicago around language attitudes, just to kind of get an assessment of the situation, very basic to think about how we can successfully revitalize our languages.

I think the big goal that we had was building community capacity. So, now we can help ourselves and we can be in the driver seat to decide like what we want for our children and their education. So, I think that was a big success of our project. These are just some of the strengths that I wanted to share with you that have come out of the Chicago community that have been successful. So, I'm sure there's many more. And it's important just to build off of those strengths and the knowledge that we do have as native people. Never let any doubt slip in your mind about the things that we can achieve and that we have achieved.

MR. MENDOZA: Thank you. Did Bridget come back in yet?

MS. PRICE: Rachel?

MR. MENDOZA: Or Rachel, sorry, yes. Wrong person.

MS. BYINGTON: Hello again, thank you. I just wanted to add in some things that I've been thinking about throughout the day. One thing that in the urban setting that we have is because the students may be spread out between many, many different schools is teachers may not have

anything to go on about what the native student needs. They may have their own stereotypes that they've learned from misinformation throughout their education.

And so I really believe that we need professional development and we need to have culturally competent teachers to be able to serve our diverse populations.

One thing you always hear is it's the parents. It's the parents' fault. They're not involved with their kids. And I can see, through my Title 7 Program, it's my parents that are very involved with their kids. They are succeeding. They're in the schools. They're not going to take, you know, any crap. They're not going to let somebody close the door on them.

But it's those parents that are still trying to handle all of the suffering with the trauma, generational trauma that we inherit. They're trying to handle that themselves and they go into the schools and sometimes there's a hostile environment. And they just get to the point where they just don't want to be involved.

It's not that they don't want to be involved. It's just such a hardship to go into the building, have someone come at you like you're the blame. Your kid's not reading up to the level that they're supposed to read. There's a personal story. My middle child was struggling with reading. And so we go in to meet with the teacher for the parent/teacher conference and the teacher brings it to our attention. I'm Choctaw, my husband's Muskogee. And found out my son was struggling at reading. And, of course, as parents, oh, you know, my daughter always excelled in everything. She potty trained herself. She as just this wonder child.

And then here comes my middle child and, you know, so we got a little freaked out. And really what it was is that my husband focused on oral story telling. And it wasn't that he had a reading problem. And it was unfair to even say that he had a reading problem.

He had a huge strength. And my son, so we caught him up. So, we figured, oh, you want us to read, you know, Rewan has to read paper books. Okay, that's fine, that's great. But to overlook his rich heritage of the oral story telling, that's not having that cultural competency that we need.

And being in the education world, I understood that, you know, that mainstream idea is that your kid is reading at or above level by the time they enter five year old Kindergarten or four year old Kindergarten. But back then I was just new into the education world and really didn't get it.

So, I really think that we need to focus on professional development so that our parents don't, you know, leave their kids or abandon their kids' education by not being able to feel welcomed into the school system.

I also want to say that we need to be able to, urban settings, we need to be able to grow our own. You know, we're from the city. We know what it's like.

But we don't have any initiatives, strong initiatives that grow our own so that our students can stay in our cities and feel welcome to teach. There's programs like Teach for America where teachers are sent out to reservation schools. And that's great. But what about in our own home cities, you know, in our own major cities?

So, thank you for your time.

MR. MENDOZA: Frances Hagemann? Jawagonti. Did I say that right? Sorry.

MS. HAGEMANN: Good afternoon. I've been asked, received a voice mail when I got back from lunch, and Cathleen McDonald, the Executive Director of the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, was to be here this afternoon. And I left her at the museum at 8:30 last night and she was there until 5:30 this morning writing a grant, finishing a proposal. So those of you involved in grant writing know what that's all about and then she had to deliver it someplace today. So, she asked if I would speak for the museum. I'm happy to do that at all times.

The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian is in Evanston, Illinois. It is not an Indian owned and operated business. Never was, has never claimed to be. However, I think cultural organizations like museums, have something very important to offer our children and our parents.

When the Mitchell became independent, its own freestanding 501(c)3 organization about seven years ago, I happened to have been president of the board at that time. One of the first things I had to do was to develop a search committee to hire a new executive director. And that is when the Mitchell got its first American Indian executive director. It was John Lowe, who is Pokagon Band Potawatomi.

Currently our board president is Jim DeNomie, who is Bad River Chippewa. We have a very small staff; two full time employees, two part time employees. One of our employees is Christine Red Cloud. I am still on the board and I head the education materials section.

We have a lot of very good material on our website. Just go to mitchellmuseum.org. We host several thousand school children every year, many of them from the City of Chicago come up by bus. When we think about education, think about what we might call non-traditional education, something outside of the school setting. And we have to realize that that is an important source of education as well.

All of our work is vetted through native people. All of our exhibits, all of the writing. We just opened a new exhibit last night, which is wonderful. It is on Indian art, traditional and how it evolved, what contemporary Indian art is like. And we were able to borrow some wonderful pieces that are not in our collection. But we have a very good collection.

So, basically that is what I want you to be aware of. Go to the website. Call the museum. We have some wonderful programs for children.

We also have a resource library. It's not a lending library but it is a good resource library. And on my own, I want to address something else and that was the remark about the oral tradition, our oral tradition. Often in non-Indian writing it's referred to as an illiterate language. It is not an illiterate language.

The word illiterate has come to mean ignorance when all it was supposed to mean is a lack of literacy. So, in my own work, I no longer use the term. I refer to it rather as non-literate. It's an oral tradition.

MR. MENDOZA: Lori Faber, Oneida.

MS. FABER: Sicoli, good afternoon. My name is Lori Faber. I'm Oneida on my mother's side and I am German American on my father's side.

I wanted to ask my elders for forgiveness for me being young and inexperienced in speaking in front of you. So I appreciate this opportunity to get a chance to talk.

I work with Jasmine Alfonso at the American Indian Center as a community researcher. And I just want to put out there right away that I'm aware, I've been told by an elder of my own that research is a dirty word.

It is not of our tradition, but I think what we're trying to do with our programs using the National Science Foundation funds, to use research to empower us, to rethink what it means to educate

our children. Where does the knowledge, how do we use our indigenous knowledge systems which have deep connections to the land. We know our land. We know how to live off our land. And our lands are here. Our lands are Turtle Island. We are on it.

And, again, I want to reiterate that I don't want us to think of urban as deficit or urban as losing our tradition. We can know our traditions and know our life ways and know our values here and we've been doing it. And survivance is a word I prefer over surviving, as in we are continuing to be here and continuing to use our knowledge and use our ways so the, excuse me, I'm getting a little nervous.

But I wanted to also agree that education, we have to think of our students holistically in their community settings, in their educational settings, in the non-traditional educational settings, in our homes. And I want to reiterate what Amy West was talking about is that health and wellness needs to prevalent throughout all of these programs that we're working for because if we don't have healthy bodies or healthy minds, then we're not able to share, not only with ourselves but with other communities what we know what our strengths are and how our conception of place our relationships to plants, to animals, to the environment. We're all related. We're all interrelated.

And I invite you to come visit our American Indian Center, which is home for all of us, all Native Americans in the community are welcome there and non-natives as well. And I want to invite you to come see the medicinal garden, the medicinal garden that we have around our center.

We use this as a learning environment for our children to think of these plants that are here are our traditional medicines. We have non-genetically modified tobacco growing in our alleyways. So the land is always reemerging and re-becoming itself despite we're in this concrete world that we're living in.

So, I do invite you to come visit us and I appreciate for you listening to our communities and working on these policies. It's really important that our federal government is paying attention to what's going on in urban environments seeing as that more than half of our Native American population lives in urban environments. So, thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: We have Dr. John J. Laukaitis? Forgive me, doctor.

DR. LAUKAITIS: I'm John Laukaitis. I'm an assistant professor at North Park University and I've been working with various members of the American Indian community in Chicago for probably

the last seven or eight years documenting the history of educational programs that have existed here since the 1950's.

And one of the amazing things that stood out to me is the number of people who have dedicated their lives to education of other children and other community in this city. Some of them are sitting here in this room today and I'll speak of one, Dr. Dorene Wiese, who came to Chicago from Minneapolis in the late 1960's and has worked continuously in education for the community since that time through institution of native American development, through NAES College, through the American Indian Association of Illinois, through the Native American Committee; not in that order but you get the idea that she's dedicated her life.

And then many people in this room who know of others who were here before her, like Susan Power, who could tell you of all the people who have helped people in the community. So we have elders in here who know how far back education goes and the power it's had.

I want to speak just about two programs because I guess I don't want anyone to leave this conference today without knowing that what's happening now with Title 7 is sort of a continuation more than a beginning.

With the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and also the American Indian Education Act; two programs formed in the early 1970's. In 1971, one was Little Big Horn High School. And it was a set aside, I'm sorry, it was a pull out program, meaning children would attend the Chicago public schools half a day and they would attend Little Big Horn High School the other half of the day for their cultural education.

Awaywo Elementary School, which means in Locato, Place of Learning, was also a pull out program. Half a day they would go to Goudy Elementary School and the other half of the day they would go to Awaywo. So these programs were very similar to, I guess what we would consider charter schools today, is that people who were attracted to preserving a sense of culture and identity, whether it be through language art, dance, music, song, that these people wanted to continue that. And some of them had already lost it and wanted their children to have it.

So, I'm looking at these programs. They were led by very dedicated people like Lucille St. Germaine and Luis Delgado. And there were also organizations like the American Indian Center that

had the Explorer's Program that tutored hundreds of children every year. And also its Head Start Program.

St. Augustine Center for the American Indian also had a tutoring program. The Native American Committee had a strong GED Program and also an alternative high school.

So, when people want Title 7 funds to continue and people want GED funds for programs like the American Indian Association of Illinois, it's more of a continuation of a very strong commitment of this community that I'm speaking of as an outsider who looks at all communities and looks at a very small community that some people in the history of the community have called the Invisible Minority. A group of American Indians who don't have a very strong voting block and have often been ignored by the politicians in Chicago as a result of that, but yet dedicated themselves to making sure that these programs first came into an existence and then continued no matter what the cost, often at their own personal expense.

So, I'm just proud to have known so many of the people who are here in this room who have not only dedicated their entire lives to education, but are also still working today to make sure that there are some young people who might be in this room or outside of this room who continue the legacy that exists. Thank you.

MR. MENDOZA: I believe, I'm sorry, it's a fancy handwriting here. First name M, middle initial L, last name starts with S. Ms. Stein? Is it Stein? Maggie Stein, okay. It's pretty.

MS. STEIN: Thank you. Hello, good afternoon and welcome. I was blown away when Arnie Duncan and President Obama put that Executive Order out there. It was way overdue, too long in coming, but it is here. I also know the definition of insanity is doing the same thing you've always done and expecting a different result.

I, for most of my career, for all of my career for 43 years, have been in adult education. Worked for the State Board of Education for most of that career and was honored to be the only liaison to Native American education they've ever had. It was one of the hats that I wore.

I learned a lot and was exposed to a lot and I am still learning. As a child, I learned to love the native culture because I'm from the LaSalle-Peru area near Starved Rock, understood that heartbreaking story and that heartbreaking history of the place and was tutored by someone named

Hanasign and his family who took children who were non-native in and really showed them how it was. They weren't Indians, they were people, which is true.

And what raises the bar a little bit is the fact Indians are indigenous people. There is a reference to that that hasn't been expected. So, I'm not happy.

This Liz Warner debacle that's come out in the last several weeks was bad enough in itself. But yet I listen to a lot of talk radio. When I hear folks like Rush Limbaugh, Don Wade and other people talking about Liz Warner speaking with a forked tongue, she should go back to her tepee and take her wampum with her.

The FCC should come down on that. If they were saying anything in such a pejorative way about African Americans or anybody else, they'd have their license in question. And I think they should have their license in question because there is ignorance and as African American people always say, there's ig'nance. And we're steeped in ig'nance about all this stuff.

I think it needs to go to that high level to the policy level where policy and process are ironclad. That politics and personalities, because somebody happens to be a so and so from such and such a tribe, this person would make a decision for everybody. No.

It's common ground. One of the richness of the native American community in Chicago is that there are so many different tribes represented and, yes, you learn a lot about each other's cultures, as well as their tribal cultures as well.

So, I'm not satisfied. I agree with you, is it Rachel, when you say professional development. But to me it shouldn't just be that. I think it should be part of teacher preparation and I think that it shouldn't just be professional development. But I would suggest that people who are really knowledgeable about the native experience team-teach units at every level. I won't be satisfied until native languages receive credit that is transferrable to college. Is it a foreign language? Oh, h, no.

But it deserves a higher status even than a foreign language. And because of that oral tradition, it's even harder to learn. So, you know, it's good to have programs. It's good to have activities and events. Insanity is doing the same thing you've always done and expecting a different result.

I think Arnie and Barack Obama opened the door with his executive order and I think we should take it by the head and ride it hard. And not take little baby steps. Map it back from the top to

where we are today, not climb up toward whatever we can achieve. That's been done for a lot of years and a lot of people have dedicated their lives to many things. And that's all great.

But what has it come to in the whole of it? There is no system. So it has to be at the policy level, the process level and it has to be systemic. There shouldn't be a Native American month or week. There shouldn't be an African American month or week. All of this is part of our rich culture and it should be treated as such and the leaders in those communities, the scholars, the writers, the historians, the artists and all of that should be a mandated part of the curriculum, not an also ran, not a professional development activity. Although that's a good thing, it's not enough, not enough.

So, I'm really hoping the first thing that happens is somebody goes to the FCC and gets these fools off the air, if not get their hands and mouths slapped because that just proliferates the worst stereotypes and stereotypes, as we know, proliferate the worst types of behavior.

And it's awful to work so hard and be invisible. Grants are fine but they come and go. What happens after the grant is gone? Can't remember who it was, what they did. There might be a report somewhere. No. It has to be systematic. It has to be part of the program. Title 7 needs to be shaken to its core and totally held accountable. They're not an also ramp. It's not a part of something we do. It is what we do.

So, I thank you for that and go get `em.

MR. MENDOZA: That's a tough act to follow. Does anybody else want to talk? No. We have about ten minutes left and so Ms. Power, please, would be appropriate and then we'll have one more person and we probably should wrap up after that. We have our color guard is here and so we will be ready to close. Dorene, I understand, is going to walk us out, if you will, and the color guard will take over from there. And so we'll go with Ms. Power, get Denise back here. Okay? We'll offer some closing remarks.

MS. THOMAS: Hello, my name is Denise Thomas. I am Hickory Apache, Navajo and I'm Nicholson. I grew up in the city and like most native Americans, urban Native Americans, my parents also left their reservation to help give us a better education in growing up.

However, when I was growing up we would always kind of jump back and forth between the city and the reservations between South Dakota or New Mexico, whichever one we were closer to. But when I went home, I always wanted to stay there, I always wanted to stay in South Dakota or in New

Mexico. I didn't really like living in the city because I didn't look like anybody else. I didn't have that culture there. I didn't have my grandma or my aunties, my uncles, my cousins. When I went home, I had all that family. It wasn't just my mom and my dad.

So, growing up, I wanted to always live on the reservation but my parents were like, no, you need an education and you can't get that here. And I'm like, there's schools here. They're like, but they're not as good as they would be in the city.

The reason I didn't like living in the city because I remember getting bussed an hour. I remember there's a school that was blocks away from me but because of zoning or whatever, I had to get on the bus and go an hour away or just different things I didn't like about it.

So, growing up, when I had my own children, I went back to the reservation in New Mexico and I decided that I would want my kids to stay there because I wanted them to have that tradition, the culture that I knew that they wouldn't get in the city.

However, my oldest son was coming up to the age when you start school. We had started with Head Start and everything and I was on the parent committee for that program and everything. And I noticed, you know, over and over, there's a reason why my parents left and I was starting to see why. And it hurt to realize that I would have to leave. But like my own parents, I made that choice as so many other parents have to choose.

So, when my oldest son was in Kindergarten and my youngest son was two, we left. And after a brief pit stop in Nashville, Tennessee, we ended up in Madison, Wisconsin. And I just wanted to say that there's a reason why that I stay in Madison, Wisconsin. Our closest relatives is 12 hours away and that's in South Dakota.

I stay there because of education. I mean, there was a time, because I lived in the west, I grew up in the mountains, you know, I grew up in the prairies. When you come out here and it's total, a different kind of environment and you don't feel at home. And for like five years I kept saying, when summer comes, I'm going to move home. When summer comes, I'm going to move home.

But when my son, my oldest son was going into middle school. I have to make a choice. I had to sit down with a long list of places that I could possibly move and look at where I would go and what kind of education that they would get. And out of all the places I could have went to, I've lived in Denver, I lived in Spokane, I've lived in Phoenix, I've lived in Minneapolis, I've lived in Albuquerque. I

lived in many places. And Madison was the only one that fulfilled all those things that I needed and I wanted to give my children.

So, now it's been ten years and my kids are there. My oldest son is on track to graduate next year as a senior with a 3.0. My youngest son was part of the Science Team that went to Nashville. And that's why, I mean, we went to D.C. And that's why I stay in Madison. It's because of the education my son can get. And I really wish that they could have got that back at home but they can't. It's a sad truth that they couldn't.

And I wanted to talk about the different programs that I would like you guys to think about. When you give money to people for different things, give money for simple things, just like for transportation. Grants for transportation because in the city, even as small as Madison, we have trouble getting our students to places because they can't, even a bus ride cost a lot of money, even a car ride. A parent, you know, will have to decide, am I going to drive my kid over here or save money for gas? You know, and it's hard. And I think that's one thing that, just simple things, you know?

Sometimes we get too caught up in the bigger picture and we forget about all the little things that we have to accomplish just to get the kid there. And, you know, start out small sometimes and then you never know. From small things come bigger and bigger and bigger.

So, I just want to thank all of you guys. I'm not an educator. I'm still going to school about I am a parent. I started out as a volunteer. When Rachel was doing Student AISES, I just started as a chaperone and I just stuck with it because I wanted my kids to see that I supported them. So, at least you sucked me in and now I'm a coordinator.

And I would say parents that are there and part of the parent committees, and I know it because sometimes it gets hard because you see just the same old people over and over working and you kind of get down. Stick with it because it comes around, you know?

For a while there it was just like three of us, four of us. But now we have a parent committee of like seven people. You know, we have parents that are involved. They just see it and your kids see it. And that's the thing. You don't think the kids are watching but they are. So, just remember that.

So, I would say do the big pictures and do all these big programs but try to sometimes think small because sometimes it's just barely just trying to get them there, you know? Buying a kid a bus pass, you know? That would help.

MR. MENDOZA: Get you on the mic.

MS. POWER: Thank you, everybody. I want to say that first of all, what's very, very important to me is that, one, I guess you're well aware of the importance of the liaison, I'm going to say that to our journalist back there, between the urban area and to misspell this, that we have this difference. I can't say my loyalties are to my reservation more than to my people in the urban area. I don't want to be put in that position. We need to work and the liaison for the urban area will work with the present one. That is number one importance in my agenda right now.

Two, the other important thing is we're talking about language all the time. There were originally probably 250 different languages. Right now I think it's great and I always tell my daughter you learn enough so you'll know if they're talking about you. And that's very important.

But when I came to Chicago, I lived with a deaf girl so I speak the deaf sign language. But I also know of the Indian sign language. I don't know it but there were two native Indian speakers of a sign language. One was a Ho-Chunk and one was a Cherokee, Whirling Thunder and Tom Greenwood. And I would like to see, I wish everybody in the world knew that beautiful language. So simple to learn. What's this? The train that's going along shooting up smoke. It was so simple anybody could use it while even explaining I think we'd all be better off.

The other thing that's very important to me, what I think we need not only on a national level but on a local level is a watchdog organization of volunteers who know the community well. And this is for Amy, whose grandfather I knew and whose father I know. The Indian center name is well known across the nation, even in Europe because it's old. It's the first of its kind. It's not doing what it was set out to do. It's not.

Now, if we had a watchdog group, you would have sought out people to work there. You would have went immediately to Dorene Wiese, who you met today. Very knowledgeable since the '60's. She didn't come in through the community to promote herself and become our speaker, she was born into it.

All right, now we were suspicious. We're very suspicious people. Who is this strange lover, whoever this is. We don't know. They're all asking me. I don't know. I never heard of her. She's never come up and talked to me. I don't know. And the old timers, be careful. We have to be careful what our children are questioned and what they're going to be recorded as.

Are they going to end up being recorded as a bunch of idiots or something? We don't know. That's the scary thing. So, we need that watchdog group all over. We don't need misinformed people building themselves up constantly. We need to build each other up.

Now, I'm going to tell you one incident of the difference of the Indian child promoted to. I'm looking at Melanie there and every time I look at her I see her grandmother. Her grandmother got off the bus and danced down the street, danced up the stairs. Nobody loved to dance as much as her grandmother. And she did her jingle dancing all the time.

But anyway, I'm going to tell you the difference. My daughter was at the University of Chicago Lab School, the first Indian student there, all right? After six years, the last year I was called in, teacher conference. Scared to death. What happened? They're asking me, what is the matter with your daughter? Is something bothering her? No, no, nothing.

Her favorite teacher, the drama teacher was there, and I said, why? Why? She said, well, she didn't try out of the play this year, the big play. And if she would have, she would have gotten the part. I said, is that it? I said, okay, now I want you to go learn about my people.

You know, she told me, did you know about that she did an audition? I said, yes, she came home and told me. I said, she said why should I? I had a chance to be a star one year, that's enough.

Our Indian children, like other children, may be shy and back but they don't have to be a star all the time. She said there's others that are better and I let them be. You see, there's a difference. We don't promote ourselves in that way. That's why we need that watchdog group to quit getting misinformed information and misinformed people out there, right, Mr. Journalist? Thank you. He always understands me.

And so, then at the end of that I thought, well, this was a good school for her because it showed her, she grew up in Indian Center. She danced under the chandelier we used to have there. It

showed her the outside world that was a more aggressive world, a different world, competitive world, something we don't know, right? Competitiveness.

And so I asked the director of the school, Lab School. We had incidents recently, thank you, Dorene, you helped straighten that out. And I said, how do you start a scholarship? And he said, well, he told me how. So, how much money do you want start with. I said, \$50. And he said, don't worry. \$50 is enough. We'll get the money and we'll start a scholarship there. I said, other bright Indian children need that chance to know what competition, that the world is competitive out there. And they need to hold onto their culture but still be able to compete. And so that is still going.

And so this is why we need this big important watchdog group out there because we need to hold people accountable. If you have become important and your name is on, you're speaking there. I'm speaking here, I'm doing this and that. What have you done for us really? Tell me. Nothing. Thank you.

MS. ALFONSO: I don't know where to begin. There was a moment in time today where I thought it was going to be a little difficult to draw people out. Not the case. That's good to know. Your skills in communicating are very strong. I want you to know that we have heard you and we will take the information back and try to look at every way that we can incorporate this information in the decisions for where we go from today.

The challenge that we all have, and earlier we were talking about identity and what does identity mean. Why is it so critically important and I can't agree more. My family was there for us and so the solution for us was the military.

My father was a World War II veteran and had nightmares the rest of his life. So, the whole history of who we are individually, our parents and what they bring to us and what they share with us. The stories about the loss of language, the loss of culture are all alive and well.

I was a high school freshman when my father retired and we moved back to the reservation. And I committed every error in stepping back into a community that I was not daily a part of. We came for celebration. We came for events in our family. We were not always there.

I was raised more in Spokane, Washington than I was on the reservation until my father retired. With the retirement there was a whole process of understanding the hidden rules, the unwritten information that is shared when a community is intact.

Boarding schools have done a tremendous disservice to Indian people, and that does not mean that they were all bad. There are people who were very successful in boarding schools, in all generations of the boarding schools, but they are not the norm.

My mother was one of those people. My father was a wonderful boarding school runaway. And when they finally got tired of chasing him, he was allowed to go on his own. And at that point, they were in different worlds entirely. My mother, a very professional orientation. My father, a very personal one and he was rugged outdoors man. We didn't know how to fish from the boat. It was fly-fishing. It was always out in the out of doors. I don't know what it was like to buy beef at the grocery store.

All of our stories, all of our histories come together to make us who we are. I'm on a journey. This is eight months that I have been in Washington, D.C. I am a great grandmother of seven. I have 15 grandchildren and six children. I can claim four that are my own and two that I shared and another that I borrowed.

So, with that incredible family, I have left them in Montana, and at some cost. I'm in Washington D.C. now for eight months. I believe that this system can be better. And all of the listening that we do is a part of how we gather that and bring it back there.

There is an open ear today to being able to hear what our stories mean and how they can change what happens in that town. But it takes, it takes people to be able to go and do that.

And so for every story that was shared today, I value that it was brought here and that you felt comfortable enough to share it with us. And we will do everything in our power to try and incorporate this knowledge that we are learning into the daily process and it is an incredibly complex process of how things get done in a federal level.

I'm still learning but I guarantee we will take this with us and work hard on it. So, for that, thank you very much.

MR. STROUD: That's why I wanted Joyce to go first so that she could make all the promises and I could just have the rhetoric. You know, I just thank you for the, just the tremendous testimony. Sometimes, you know, Joyce and I, we travel all over the country and, you know, we draw a lot of parallels from these conversations and it sometimes feels like, you know, we've heard it all and

we've seen it all in some respects. And try to make that connection between these communities, just, you know, we don't want it be lost that there is that uniqueness.

And you can see how close to the surface these issues are when you think about, you know, Sarah's testimony and Denise's, you know, and just how much diversity within that, you know, hearing what Jasmine had to say and, you know, I guess this home for her and hearing what Denise had to say in how, you know, she makes tough choices to be here, where she's at there in Madison.

And that's consistent, you know, whether or not we're talking about Denver or Seattle, you know, you see that, that dichotomy, if you will, the conflict with these areas. And I do believe that there is a way that we can address that. We can address that with the community where we're at. And we can make those ties to what amounts to our land basis that we're, for all of our nations, you know, the land which we defended and we held on to.

It was essentially our retreat land and it still remains our homeland in that respect, never owned by the United States government in anyway. As, you know, the bones of our ancestors and the blood, sweat and the tears of all the generations that came before us and there's something to be said about that connection because we all benefit from that unique identity and the rights and the responsibilities and the privileges that come with that.

And how we are strengthening those connections is critical to the system that we leave in place for our children in the years to come because it's a really precarious environment here and in the Great Lakes, all over Indian country. I shouldn't just isolate in one area. We know what that termination era felt like. And it always feels like it could rear its ugly head again and be there.

And so we have to be thinking about not only our numbers, not only the treaties and those pieces of paper and how alive the stories and the knowledge and wisdom is that accompanies that, but also the substance of that. Who are we? You know, and it's much more complicated than just, you know, just our clothing, our hair, our accouchements.

It's much more than that. It's ways of knowing and being. It's alternatives to, you know, what we are placed with. If it's utilizing that ugly word, -- or, you know, dominant ways of knowing and being. You know, we do have major contributions and many people here spoke to it. Many people of youth, you know, which I identify with. I have no doubt, and I really appreciate how Director

Silverthorne and I balance one another in the sense that she is antique. Very so much she could be my grandmother.

And, you know, how we try to address this in that sense of, you know, what has come before us, what are we dealing with now and how does that impact our future generations.

And you saw all of those dynamics played out here and very much close to the surface. Our work is just like yours. It's Education 101. It's trying to establish that as unique as we are, 566 different tribes, over 300 diverse languages, optimizing what it means to live in co-existence in diversity, for time and memorial, as we see it, understanding sustainability, keeping our technology in relative check.

That's our contribution to this educational mission of the nation. We see how this democracy has embraced those ideals and we have so much to share, so much to give in that respect because as somebody invoked here today and some of the conversations here said even in its most fractionated state, that's still within us. We just have to create the systems that unlocks that and allows that to flourish and become a part of the systems that we interact with.

And that's our job and don't feel alone in that. Everything that you are saying, you know, please don't let me discount it by saying that we have heard those perspectives and different nuanced ways across the country. And in that commonality between us, there has to be solutions on how we can address this on the national level, whether we're looking at it through some 27 urban Indian centers or the programming that supports those centers or the cities themselves, 15 different states with high proportions of American Indian and Alaska natives.

Whatever that arbitrary strategic program or proportional dynamic that we're looking at, there are solutions there as much as we spend the time on the problems. And we have to be at a community level, at a neighborhood level, at a school level be looking at how are we involving and incorporating in those diverse perspectives and creating that bind and creating those goals, creating those measurable objectives because as much as we hear, you know, those are the white ways.

These tests, these objectives, you know, those are the white ways. We were never, as Indian people, without certification of knowledge and wisdom, demonstration of accomplishment. We especially weren't without our own continuum of education that took into account growth and gain.

And we especially weren't static. We were involved in people's from our core. And we did all that amongst diversity of being everything from sedimentary to nomadic.

And so those are the essence of what our educational system looks like at its core. We just have to translate that now into the 21st Century and create those stronger connections back to our home.

The infrastructure, as mentioned by Amy, and she may not have been here during the opening remarks, but we talked about the interagency working group. We talked about an implementation team that is outlined within the executive order that's within your packets.

We also talked about the National Advisory Council in Indian Education. And as we move forward, the agencies themselves are optimized by the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Interior, BIA, BIE as one entity and the Department of Education, Office of Indian Education and the White House Initiative.

That is the infrastructure that we are going to be taking the substance and saying develop four year plans. Develop measurable outcomes. The people have spoken. How can you help us? How can we push you? We are going to learn your programs, we're going to learn your regulations. We're going to learn your statutes. And we're going to call you into consideration for how we know that you can help us because you're helping in this way.

Let us know what are particular programs that are specific to us because we need them in this area. If not our program, give us the set aside. If not a set aside, give us competitive preference, an invitational preference, technical assistance.

Well, let's talk about the next fiscal year then. You see the ball game that Joyce and I have to play. And in that, you know, I know we have to be inclusive and I know, you know, exactly what the charges from our president and what I've come to learn and what Joyce has increasingly realizing with the federal government is that the squeaky wheel does get the oil.

If we shake hands and pat each other on the back and look at, you know, let's not rock the boat here. There's a time for this and we'll get our cut at some point, we're going to get ran over. We're going to get ran over. And so, you know, there's going to be difficult decisions that doesn't meet everybody's needs as we go into the future, especially under the diminishing resources that this country is facing us with.

And it's not just Uncle Sam. It's Mr. and Mrs. Senator, Mr. and Mrs. Representative who are elected from all of the bodies which represent our communities. And that's where the real power is, that we all need to be engaged at every level. Do not underestimate for a second how much impact you have. If you want to focus those efforts and organize and coalesce around these issues that you care deeply about.

I really appreciated Ms. Power holding us to be accountable in the way that she does that only an elder can. And that speaks to the responsibility that we all have. When I heard her talk, minus the hair standing up on my neck, you know, what I heard is that I have an ability to make that change. And that if I'm acting in a vacuum, I'm doing a disservice to everyone who has come before me and everybody that I'm responsible to.

And I think with all of us taking that and heeding those words of wisdom, you know, we have a tremendous ability to move forward. And those are tough decisions. I know they are in this community. I heard about, you know, some of the efforts that are going on now to bring this community together, looking at all these programs that we heard from today, having difficult conversations about resources and alignment of services.

And, you know, there may be some plus and minuses to all of that. But we all agree that we're lacking that organization. And that's what we're trying to do at the federal level is say, yeah, even though you have to advocate for your students, but, you know, we have to put that aside because the state or the Indian nations is at risk with 92 and 93 percent of your students attending schools that your tribal leaders do not have control over. How are we addressing that strategically?

They are asking us tough questions like who are you to tell us what to do with our schools when public school students are the worst, public school Indian students are the worst performance students in the country. So we're having those tough conversations. And everybody who's ignoring us, everybody who is not talking to us and benefits from our differences with one another.

So, what is our goals? What is our solutions is what we're trying to get to at the federal level. We're not trying to do that in a vacuum. And that's a part of these conversations that we want to continue and have ongoing throughout these next few months here, and especially this next term.

For this initiative to hit full steam ahead, really we're looking at 2015 monies, designated programs. We may be able to work our way up that IOU to technical assistance to

invitational competitive between now and 2015, but if we're looking at creating something new, at a minimum, and that would take a tough push for 2015.

So we spend a lot of time managing those expectations for this initiative. It took us a long time to get to this point. It's going to take us even longer to create this kind of coordination and effort. But the degree to how we get there is going to matter on how much we are doing this at the ground level. And that's a part of the Secretary's commitment.

When I say Secretary, I mean Secretary Duncan and Salazar. They're waiting for these words to pull the trigger on something because they care about these issues. I have no doubt that Arnie has learned a tremendous amount in the role that he's been here about Indian education issues. That he's just saying, you know, what else can we do on a regular basis? Let us know what we can do. And so that's our charge to, you know, help bring that forward.

I can't thank enough our people who are helping us today; the court reporters, our AV and especially our contractors, Manhattan Strategies Group. They put up with us tremendously and they wouldn't have been able to do their job without the work of Jolieen and Dorene and Deborah and others. And so I just really extend a gratitude to the committee and the showing of support that you all have for the President's efforts and the Secretary's efforts. And we want to continue this conversation and be back here as soon as we can to help continue these critical efforts in our communities.

So, with that, I just want to turn it over to Ms. Wiese here, Dr. Wiese, and thank you for your contributions to this community. Without a doubt, you are tremendously respected here and I just really extend gratitude from, you know, our efforts in making our job easy to be able to have these modeled for us and to hear these concerns.

I really appreciate how you told us how it is. Continue to push us hard. Continue to hold us accountable. We should be back here, you know, in the next cycle and be able to explain exactly how we followed up on these issues. That's our commitment and you heard that from Joyce and I want to echo that as well. So, thank you.

MS. WIESE: Thank you for all of you who came today. And I know this is a long day and we really appreciate it. This is a historic moment. I think some of us don't realize that when these things happen. It's been a long time since we've had such dignitaries as yourselves come and visit us

and talk to us. And that this will go down in history as a major point in the American Indian education in Chicago.

So, you are a big part of that and know that and understand that your goal, that you've helped bring this forward. No matter what happens in the future, we've all learned something. We've all changed. We all know now what additional work we have to do.

And so I think that ends our program for today and we want to retire the colors. I don't know, do we still have any, we have the Color Guard still here? Okay, if they can come in and get them. Then we'll follow them out. Our drum and music people weren't able to stay so we'll just march out after the colors.

(Whereupon the above matter was concluded at 3:34 p.m.)