



Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)

Office of Indian Education

Tribal Leaders Consultation

PUBLIC MEETING

The Tribal Consultation and Listening Session was held in the Seneca Niagara Casino & Hotel Conference Room, 310 Fourth Street, Niagara Falls, New York, on May 13, 2013 at 10:00 a.m., Joyce Silverman, Director, Office of Indian Education, presiding.

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Alaska Native Education (WHIAIANE)

BRIAN PATTERSON, President, United South & Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET)

KANDICE WATSON, Co-Chair, USET Education Committee

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

(10:08 a.m.)

OPENING CEREMONY

PRESENTATION OF COLORS AND INVOCATION

MR. PATTERSON: Good morning.

With the power of a good heart, power of the good mind, would you please rise and give your full attention to the Iroquois Color Guard.

Color Guard, please present your colors.

(Presentation of Colors.)

MR. PATTERSON: I've been asked at this time to give a brief prayer, and my Oneida sister reminded me to keep it brief. So please join me this morning in this morning's words of thanksgiving, the Words That Come Before All Else.

(Prayer in Native Language.)

MR. PATTERSON: We wrap our minds in our thoughts and give greetings to each other. We are thankful we could come with peace in our hearts and peace in our minds. So we acknowledge our people, that we still remember our old ways to give thanksgiving, the Words That Come Before All Else.

We give thanksgiving for Mother Earth, we turn our minds and thoughts to Mother Earth, and we are thankful that we can still, as a people, in our ancient homelands, sustain ourselves and make a place for our children's children, the generations, the faces still coming forward. So we are thankful and grateful that we give thanksgiving to Mother Earth and our place on Mother Earth.

And then, in our ways, we are taught to give thanksgiving from the smallest blades of grass, to all the medicines, to the berries, to the tree life, for they still remember their duties and instructions. And so we turn our minds and thoughts and give thanksgiving to that order.

We turn our minds and give thanksgiving to our four leggeds, for they still speak their language and follow their laws and their customs, and we acknowledge them as well.

Our minds on a journey, we give thanksgiving to the winged ones who come, the winged ones who sing their songs and greet the day with their songs and fill the air and lift our hearts. We give thanksgiving for their journey, that they still remember their ways.

We give thanksgiving at this time to the Thunder Beings who come and bring with them the life medicine, the waters, that replenish all of life on this earth. So we go thanksgiving to all the water life that exists.

We also give our minds, our best thoughts, our minds to the protectors in life. You may understand them as guardian angels, if you will. But these four protectors travel, clear the path for us, keep us safe. So we are honored that they still fulfill their duties and their ways of life.

We give thanksgiving at this time to our eldest warrior. We give thanksgiving that the Sun still follows its duty and gives it's light to our people, its warmth and direction. So we are reminded to give thanksgiving to our eldest warrior, our uncle, the Sun.

We give thanksgiving to our grandmother, the Moon, before we know how things are connected to the moon and her powers, that the women still follow the path, the waters follow the path and direction from Grandmother Moon. So we are very thankful that Grandmother Moon still follows her duties and for instructions.

And then we turn our minds even higher, and we see all the star life that fills the evening skies. And while the exact meaning escapes our minds, we still know to give thanksgiving to the Star People up in the skies, for they still, too, follow their duties and their instructions, and so our thoughts go there as we give thanksgiving.

And lastly, we save our best words of love and our best words of gratitude to our Creator. Our Creator still sees best to provide for us and give us our ways of life, our great law of peace, our place in our homelands, and all things that are provided for us. So we turn our minds at this time and give thanksgiving to our Creator.

(Prayer in Native Language.)

MR. PATTERSON: So be it. That is as many words as we have said as we wrapped our minds and thoughts, one heart, one mind. Thank you.

Color Guard.

(Exit of the Color Guard.)

MR. PATTERSON: As the Color Guard is leaving the room, from the United States Marine Corps to the United States Navy to the Army to the Air Force, our people are proud to represent the service to this country.

Our Indian people have served in every conflict this country has ever had. Our people have suffered the highest fatality rate versus any other group of people per capita. We are very proud of the legacy of service from Indian country to the United States of America.

Thank you.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

BY JOYCE SILVERTHORNE, DIRECTOR,

OFFICE OF INDIAN EDUCATION

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Good morning, everybody. I'm very glad to see some friendly faces out there. And because we have a small number of people, would you like to come closer forward, please?

(Pause.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Good morning. My name is Joyce Silverthorne. I am a member of the Salish Tribe from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Western Montana, and I work at the Office of Indian Education in the Department of Education in Washington, DC. I've been there for a little over a year and a half, and have had quite an education in the process of offering and providing grants for Indian education across the country.

The opportunity today is for tribal consultation. We, at the Department of Education, have been doing tribal consultation since 2010, trying to find out more from people across the country about Indian education and the issues that affect you, and the opportunities that we may have to look for solutions and for information, both to and from.

So, with that, I would like to queue up a PowerPoint that we have, in just a moment. Before we do that, I'll go ahead and introduce my cohort, Sedelta Ooasahwee, and she is representing the White House Initiative.

MS. OOASAHWEE: Good morning.

Good morning. My name is Sedelta Ooasahwee. I'm the Associate Director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaskan Native Education. I'm an enrolled member of the Mandan Hdatsa Arikara Nation, and I'm also part Cherokee.

Before we get started, I want to thank Brian here for offering that prayer, and the Color Guard.

I'd like to thank USET for helping us with his consultation in the Seneca Nation. They actually, this wouldn't be possible without all their help and their support, and the partnership that we have with them.

I also want to thank you for coming today. Tribal consultation is very important to us. Part of the Executive Order is a result of tribal consultation.

We heard when we went out to consultation that there was a fragmentation between services between the BIE and Department of Education, that 90 percent of our students who are in public schools weren't being reached by some of the mechanisms in place. So the Executive Order was put in place to try to help bring those services together and bring us all to the table.

So we look forward to hearing what you guys have to say today at consultation. What you say is very important because we carry those words forward when we meet with people in the Administration.

So, thank you for coming today, and we look forward to hearing from you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: There are no wrong questions, so if you have questions, please stop us.

We have a small group today, so we'll try to be as informal as we can be. And any questions you have are important for us to be able to answer.

The Office of Indian Education is one of the oldest of federal programs. With the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, it has been a continuous piece since that time, and we will be looking forward to a reauthorization in the next year, hopefully. We have been promising

that for quite some time, and somehow, it has not happened. We are past due by almost five years now. So, hopefully, this year will be the year that we actually get a reauthorization.

We are advised by a council, the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. We have 15 members from throughout the country. They are Presidential appointments and are considered employees of the Department of Education. With that, the Council meets twice a year, they prepare a report to Congress and recommendations to the Secretary of Education.

What most people are familiar with are the formula grants for every school that has 10 or more eligible Indian students. This is federally recognized and state recognized. Those children then are self-identified, and you identify by an enrolled member of either state or federal recognition, by either the child, the parent, or the grandparent. That is the broadest category of definition of "American Indian" that there is in the federal government, and intentionally so. The education of children should be our priority.

The direct funding goes to the local education agencies, to the Bureau of Indian Education, either Bureau operated or tribal controlled, funded by the Bureau of Indian Education and/or tribes in lieu of LEA.

The programs are for students K through 12 and are intended to be supplementary programs. Although we look for achievement and look for information about student achievement, it is not to provide direct content area instruction.

So they vary ----- you can't see that map very well; I apologize ----- but we have 1,302 programs this year. With those, we have over 450,000 students, and we have programs in most states, 19 states in particular, and additional states with one or two programs.

How many of you have a Title VII formula program in your school?

(Show of hands.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Okay, we can skip some of the basics. Thank you.

In addition to formula programs, there are programs that are discretionary. So you apply for, and are rated and receive, grants that are discretionary. Some of them are demonstration. The demonstration program has two priorities. The first is early childhood education; the second is

transition to college. Those programs are much smaller in number, and they last for four years. So those, again, are eligible to districts, or to tribes or tribal organizations.

Professional development ----- we know that we need educators. Only when children see people who are like them, who are able to do professional jobs and able to be leaders in their community, do they really understand that they, too, can be leaders and can earn the right to hold a professional position.

So we are hoping to increase the number of teachers and administrators across the country. We have professional development programs. Students who attend receive support, a stipend, for their books and other expenses of attending school ----- in addition to that, they may even receive an additional amount for childcare ----- with graduation.

And going to work in a school that serves American Indian students ----- there is a service payback ----- they are able to pay back their loan or pay back their support. It's not officially a loan, but one month of training for one month of payback.

That service payback is a tremendous opportunity. I wish my student loan could have been on such a status.

However, those students, then, are able to work in the schools and provide that role model that kids need.

Pre service teachers; pre service administrators ----- do you have administrators in your schools who are American Indian?

(Show of hands.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: One.

Teachers?

(Show of hands.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Wonderful. This is an avenue, an opportunity, a way that that can be assistance.

When we get to the end of this PowerPoint, there will be some contact addresses available.

This is the location of our current programs; I think, only North Carolina east of the Mississippi.

Is anyone else aware of any others?

(No response.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: We also have a new opportunity this past year. With the continuing resolution last year, 2011, there was an ongoing debate about what was going to get funded right up until February. And in February, although most programs were barely funded at what they had requested the year before, we received a \$2 million increase.

That \$2 million increase was to provide tribal education agencies an opportunity to work with state education agencies and providing education within the reservations.

That money has created a pilot program, and the pilot program has only four tribes that were able to create a preliminary agreement with their state education agencies, designate their tribal departments of education to be tribal education agencies, and get their applications approved through the states in time for the grants.

We are working very closely with those four hoping for good results. By June 30 of this year, they will have a final agreement with the state education agencies. What they are doing is taking on the responsibility of what a state education agency would do.

There were no changes to statutes. There were no changes to regulations. So, we are working within the same structure at this time. But we are hoping that this helps to inform us about what will be needed in order to create more of these opportunities as we continue working toward reauthorization.

Nez Perce Tribe, with Idaho;

The Navajo Tribe, working with New Mexico ----- they could have worked with either of their other states, but chose to work with New Mexico;

The Chickasaw Nation, a consortium with Oklahoma; and

The Cheyenne Arapahoe Tribes; and

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon.

One of the most heated questions of this year is the one about sequestration, and where do we stand with the Budget Control Act of 2013? What amount of money will we still be able to use for each of our programs for those formula, discretionary, and national activities?

The STEP pilot project comes under national activities. Each of them did have an impact of five percent. For all of the formula programs, that has been recomputed already at the end of Part I. Part I came out with an amount, and then we had to adjust. We got the final word on sequestration just after we had released the amount for awards. We had to go back in and reduce, so those grants were reduced by five percent.

We know right now that there are a couple of entities who have said they will not be taking their grant this year for one reason or another. One was a consolidation, and I'm not sure what the other one was. So there will be a little bit that will come back. The lowest it could be is the amount that they heard at the end of the readjustment for Part II.

Are there any questions on that?

(No response.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: With our discretionary programs, because what we were doing was funding programs this year, we will fund fewer new programs and the current programs that are continuing will not be impacted by sequestration this year.

With our national activities, we had a contract that has been through modification. Within that modification, those grants will not be impacted by sequestration this year.

So, little bit of good news out of a lot of other not so good news across the country.

Are there any other questions about sequestration?

(No response.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The Office of Indian Education has two group leaders and myself --
--- their names and addresses are on the PowerPoint ----- Lana Shaughnessy with Discretionary
Programs; Bernard Garcia with Formula Programs.

The addresses that are on this ----- did you get a copy of this in your handout, in your
folders?

I'll put a list at the back, and if you would like, I will send you a copy of this.

This is an overview of the Office of Indian Education and the programs that we work
with, and what we are hoping is that this helps you have a better idea of the kind of programs that we
are involved in, and where we play a role.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please bring those up.

By the way, we have not yet had anybody register for public comment period. If you
would like to make a comment, please let our folks know so that we can be sure you get on the
schedule. We have plenty of room today, so please feel free. Sedelta.

INTRODUCTION BY SEDELTA OOASAHWEE,
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE
ON AMERICAN INDIAN AND
ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION

MS. OOASAHWEE: Good morning again. I am going to provide some updates and an
overview of the work that we do at the Initiative.

Again, we're charged under Executive Order 13592. We're trying to take the successes
of the WHITCU Initiative, which is the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, and
expand those successes to Cradle to Career. So we're looking at education from early childhood all the
way to careers, such as higher ed., vo-tech., any other kind of higher ed. services that are out there.

We work closely with the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Indian Education.
We work closely with Joyce's office at the Office of Indian Education and other offices within the
Department of Education. We meet regularly with them to try to coordinate services, and take the

expertise of each office and how we can use those to better serve our students, especially those, like I said earlier, the 90 percent who are in the public schools.

A big part of our success is the inter agency working group which is outlined in the Executive Order. In your packet, you'll find three, I think we have a fact sheet about the initiative.

The Executive Order is included in the packet that you received, and there should be two MOAs in there. One is an MOA between the Department of Interior and the Department of Education. That also came as a result of the Executive Order, and that finalizes and formalizes the relationship between Interior and Ed and helps us determine who is going to do what, and how we can work together better over the next four or five years.

I was talking about the Interagency Working Group earlier. We met for the first time on February 7, 2013. It was the first presidential interagency working group on Indian education under this new executive order.

We had almost 100 people from different agencies present. I think we had 30 agencies represented at this meeting. The agencies will all have to come up with plans of action, and they also have annual reports that will be due to the Initiative.

We are asking that they turn in three priorities by the end of the month. Since we've had the meeting in February, I've had follow up meetings with the agencies to try to come up with implementation teams, so we're asking that we have people in the agencies who are part of the budget services, the policy services, the tribal liaisons, and we want a full group of people at the table to help us look at how we can implement the Executive Order within agencies.

A large part of what we're doing is looking at what's providing educational services and how we can make sure those are directed and funneled to our students, K through 12, early learning, and in higher education.

We also met with the Interagency Working Group on Indian Affairs, and one of their top three priorities is implementation of the Executive Order. So we're working closely with them to make sure that the agencies are aware of the Executive Order and are working to implement the seven goals and objectives that are outlined in the Executive Order.

We also have in the packet the MOA on language revitalization. That's been a huge push for our office. We met with the White House and other people last week from Interior and HHS on the MOA, what we're all doing.

At the Department of Education, we're looking at trying to include native languages in foreign language acts so that we can have access to those funds, so that's been a heavy lift. But we're looking at the State Department and finding out how they define foreign languages, and if we can include native languages in that so they can have access to those funds, we're really pushing on that right now and hoping that we can get good results on that. It's looking pretty promising right now, so we'll keep you posted on the updates and status of that.

We also work closely with the STEP project that Joyce mentioned. That's a huge historical movement for Department of Education as a whole. We met with some comprehensive centers last week, and they couldn't express how important that is. It's a huge step for the tribal education agencies.

For the first time, we're building capacity within those, and the states are seeing the tribal education agencies and understanding what they have available and how we can use the expertise and the resources of the tribal education departments to help serve our students. Right now, I think we haven't been able to do that, and they often get left behind. So, by bringing the tribal education agencies to the table and partnering with them, they're finding ways that they can work together to reach those students.

So that's kind of a broad overview of what we're doing and who we work with. Again, our main goal is to try to coordinate these offices and get everyone to the table so we can see what is happening and get the lay of the land of Indian education and see how we can all work together and provide a better outcome and better experience for our students.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Are most of you familiar with the Bureau of Indian Education and what it offers?

(No response.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Okay. What we try to do through our offices at the Department of Education is to provide educational activities that go along with the Bureau of Indian Education.

The Executive Order is designed for our two departments to be more closely aligned ----- the Department of interior and the Department of Education.

The Department of Interior has the Bureau of Indian Education, and there are approximately 180 some schools across the country. Most of them are tribal grants and contracts, with about 40 or 50, I believe, that are still Bureau operated schools. Those schools are designed for federally recognized children, so there has to be a quarter degree established for each child. The schools may be boarding schools under the Bureau operated schools ----- there are still a few boarding schools ----- and then day schools.

Then, the tribal grants and contracts are schools operated by the tribes on their homelands, but still, those are also for federally recognized children.

In addition to that, the Department of Education has a contract with the Bureau of Indian Education to provide services, federal programs, to the Bureau of Indian Education schools. So Title I, Title III, Title II, for professional development, and I believe it's Title VI ----- or V?

Under the consolidated grants, the same kind of consolidated grants that our public schools do with the federal government. So that grant is then made through the Bureau of Indian Education to provide those same services to the children in their schools.

Over and above that, we have been in this process now for the last 40 years, and yet, there is a high turnover of people in all of our positions. That high turnover contributes to a continual re- education on an ongoing basis.

There are always times where we need to be providing background information and understanding. Only recently, maybe in the last 10 years, have we had American Indians in these positions, and within the Office of Indian Education, only the last two years. So we're really working on some fairly dramatic changes.

The cooperation between Interior and Department of Education ----- this Executive Order is a first. The Interagency Work Group is ill defined, I guess. Not ill defined, but it has a great deal of opportunity to define where it wants to go. There has not been a roadmap laid out for it, and so we hope that as we are continuing to have conversations, this is going to provide us with greater opportunity to interact and improve the lives of children.

From 2004 5, there was national Indian education study, and with that study, they have looked at the progress or achievement levels of all children across the country through the NAEP, the National Academic Education Proficiency Test. That test is administered randomly across the country to all students. We oversample for those areas that have high populations of American Indian children. In 11 states, that oversampling has allowed us to increase the number of American Indian children that are assessed to try and get a better idea of how we're doing.

When I first started in education, we could not tell you how well our kids were doing compared to any other kids. We weren't disaggregated numbers. There was no information about how well Indian children were doing. For better or worse, No Child Left Behind has been a catalyst at being able to identify the progress of disaggregated groups of children across country. That may be one of our strongest points because until we tell the school and the state that our children need their assistance, we don't get their ear. We don't get to the people who can make a difference.

Since the time that we have had disaggregated data, we have had a better opportunity of convincing those schools, those state officials, and the federal government that in fact our children have not been brought along with the rest of the country in academic work, and it's not because of ability; it's because of a blind eye to what our kids need.

So, as we are able to convince these schools, these states, and the federal government that these children need attention, we hope that things will begin to change. At this point, they have not, yet. The National Indian Education Study was done every two years, until 2011. In 2011, the NCES, who does the study for us, came to the NACIE Board and talked to them about the fact that the data that they were accumulating had not changed appreciably since they began taking data.

American Indian children are still lower in achievement overall than their counterparts, and we are still having great struggles in trying to change those statistics. I'm not a 100 percent fan of statistics. I think statistics are a difficult way to look at what happens for kids. At the same time, it has brought the attention from people who really need to be paying attention about what happens to our kids.

So, with that, we're seeing an interest. We're seeing the positions of the Department of Education filled by American Indians. Our Office of Indian Education is able to do in Indian preference criteria when we hire. The fact that we are holding the consultations across the country and trying to

make sure that we reach out to more and more people and to hear what you have to say is another piece of that puzzle. We are also trying to look forward to what we can change into the future.

Certainly, one of the things that are important for us is to be talking to all of our other counterparts in the Department of Education, in the Department of Interior, in other agencies, and talking about our children as part of the "all" that we are trying to educate, and that "all" really does mean that our kids are included.

With that, we would like to open it up to some information from you about education in your regions and with your tribes, and find out more about those areas that are most of interest to you.

We've put on the agenda sometime for Kandice and Kathy to be able to comment from USET, and we've also put in some time for tribal leaders to be able to make direct comment about what they are seeing.

Again, we're a small group, and the only way this gets heard is if we have people contributing. So I think we're pretty informal today, and we welcome anyone who would like to be of a comment.

Kandice, would you like to okay.

Yes?

MR. PATTERSON: While she's coming forward, can I have my place on the agenda -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MR. PATTERSON: ----- Director Silverthorne, before she comes? Well, she's at the mic already.

But I request official remarks on behalf of our 26 federally recognized tribes of the United South and Eastern Tribes. Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Brian, I apologize.

MR. PATTERSON: It's on. I believe you just have to start speaking.

MS. GRAY: What we're seeing in our local school district is we have a lack of culture and language. And we see that part of this was revitalizing our language and culture in our communities and in our schools. And unfortunately, that's not happening in our school district.

Instead, what we have is a large amount of students being placed on in school suspension and out of school suspension on a regular basis. If I was to go back to students' records right now, I would say 10 or 12 students week in, week out, that would consistently be ----- instead of finding alternative ways of working with our students, they're being punished.

So I was just wondering what we can do to work with our school district, or what information can we offer to them, so that we can work together, for one thing, and for another thing, so that our students aren't being punished, but they're being praised and cherished.

MS. BRYAN: Good morning. My name is Stephanie Bryan, Vice Chair of Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

I just want to say what's affecting our tribe, our tribal children in our communities. The county schools and government schools are ----- of course, a lot of the schools in our area ----- are on academic alert. So, with our tribe not having our own school, it makes it very difficult for our native children to obtain a quality education.

At some point, the states started to come in and take over some of the schools, but of course, due to a lack of funding and budget cuts, and various issues, the states have not done that.

So, with our tribe, we have discussed the possibility of a charter school or building a school. Of course, that's very costly to do those types of things, and you want make sure that when you do those things, you can provide quality education.

And in the community, as far as the native languages, we have an early learning program where we have our four year old children in this program. We teach them the native language, and they become very fluent in speaking the native language at a young age. But then, when they go to the public school system, in kindergarten, you know, that language is no longer there. So, if you don't use it, you lose it.

By at the tribe, we do offer native language programs that, if did have the time ----- of course, dealing with young children in school and in sports and other activities, sometimes it's hard for

them to participate in those programs. And if we make it easier for the public school system to revitalize the native language in the school system. If Spanish is allowed in the school system, why can't we implement the native languages for those native children that choose that that as an elective course?

So I really appreciate all your hard work and dedication with the myriad of agencies in trying to bring back or revitalize the native language because statistics do show that as long as there's the native culture there, the native language, that there's a less possible drop out of our children. They love their native history, their culture, and the language, and it's very important.

So if there's anything we can do from our tribal perspective when you guys are meeting with these agencies, we will gladly speak loudly to revitalize our native language.

But, in reference to our situation with the school system, you know, as a leader, we're at our wit's end on what we should do here because of lack of funding, of course, to do the brick and mortar. As I've often said, you know, it's not the look or the appearance of the building; it's what is in that building to provide that quality education.

So we're researching and doing our due diligence in a feasibility study to see what it would cost our tribe, due to the lack of quality education in our rural communities. If there ever any support that you all financially can offer, it would be great to either do a charter school or you know, public versus charter is the question out in our community right now because we do have a lot of children that are attending private school if they can afford it. But still, there's no native language. There's nothing of that magnitude.

We just recently experienced our native children graduating from public school and private schools wanting to wear the feather, which represents, you know, happiness, success of such a milestone achieved, and these schools not allowing them to do that. That's part of our culture, but they're not being allowed.

So, if this ever any legislation or language that could be approved to help in those types of situations ----- we, as leaders, native leaders, we spoke to these boards and said, please allow those children to exercise their culture and their it's a milestone they've accomplished.

So those are just a few things that we're doing at Poarch Creek. So anything that you guys can help with, it greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

MR. PATTERSON: She should be at the table as a leader.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MR. PATTERSON: Vice Chairwoman, please join us at the table. Make it official.

I would also like to ask the Vice Chairman from Aquinnah Wampanoag if there are comments before my platform.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Please.

MR. RANDOLPH: I didn't truly come with real comments or concerns.

But I guess what we struggle with is an explanation of the formulas, Title VII in one, and then ----- I'm not sure if you can speak to it or not but the IMPACT aid that is given to the county system. That has kind of baffled us for quite some time, how that money is worked into the school systems or into our county.

From what is reported from the school systems, those numbers fluctuate terribly quarter to quarter, year to year. In some quarters, you know, it's not given. There's not really a lot of rhyme or reason. So, if we could have an explanation of how that actually works, that would probably help me in my conversations with the school systems.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I'd like to respond really quickly because we don't represent the IMPACT aid office within our two offices, but I can certainly take information back to them for you. I can tell you that they are based on land ownership, not for Indian students in particular but for federally impacted children, and that count should only happen in January. So I'm not sure why it would change periodically during the year.

The difference between IMPACT aid and all other programs at the federal government is that the money goes into the general fund. Even though there is a parental consultation requirement, there is no parental guidance on where the money goes.

It goes back to the school board, and your greatest impact on what happens with that is your voice at the school board level. I can give you some information on who to talk to at their office.

MR. RANDOLPH: Right. And some of the tribal parents have voiced their concern to the tribal leadership about not having enough IMPACT, because the money comes in directly to the school systems, at least IMPACT aid does.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Does it?

MR. RANDOLPH: And we get told one thing from the school system in terms of the money ----- you know, they gave me a report this year reflecting money coming in for the past five years, and there is no real pattern there.

The money comes in approximately four times a year, and very few dollar amounts match up, to the point where there's a steady pattern. And like I said, sometimes, they've missed altogether, you know, a quarter or two quarters in a row, from receiving money.

So, when the tribal parents want to voice their concerns about what their kids need to have in the school system, it's not necessarily falling on deaf ears, but they don't feel that they have the actual impact or the voice behind them to say, you know, this is what we want for our children; this is what we'd like to see happen. You know, we simply just fall into the crowd. IMPACT aid isn't having the impact on our students, per se.

Title VII, that money is something our tribe has a great influence over. We have a much greater impact with our students because of Title VII monies.

Basically, I need a better understanding of how the Title VII formula works, and also maybe loosening or leaving more flexibility with the tribe to implement Title VII monies in a more effective way.

My tribe in particular uses a lot of that money for kids with learning disabilities, giving them extra tutoring or helping them learn how to have proper study habits, and we've really seen a large improvement, or a good impact, because of the involvement with that program that we've been implementing for a couple of years now where, you know, grades have steadily risen with that extra consultation.

The kids that have learning disabilities ----- my daughter in particular ----- are making the honor roll quarterly now. Without the consultation that she's been getting on the side, my daughter would be doing well but not doing as well, certainly.

So thank you for that piece anyway.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes, thank you.

INTRODUCTION BY BRIAN PATTERSON, PRESIDENT,

UNITED SOUTHERN AND EASTERN TRIBES

MR. PATTERSON: Director Silverthorne, Associate Director I'm going to say it in our language. That's how we pronounce it in our language, with that pronunciation. I's become Es, or Es become I's. Certainly, I do have qualifications but not permission to speak on behalf of the Seneca people. The Seneca people are well represented.

But I would like to take the opportunity to welcome you to their ancient homeland. You know, the homeland is an ancient land, and with that comes a long term relationship, and the realization that relationships are paramount and everything else is derivative.

As an example, I bring this Seneca Wampum belt ----- this belt was presented to me by the Seneca Nation ----- it is called kaswentha. And the kaswentha, the two row wampum, is 400 years old this year. So we have a long standing relationship with visitors who came across the great salt waters and never left. So we certainly realize that relationships are paramount, and everything else is derivative. There are other examples of that, through the ancient teachings of the kaswentha wampum belt, the river of life we travel, the duty and responsibilities we have to not only our current generation but generations to follow.

So I thank you for taking the time to come to Seneca Territory to address the unique needs of the United South and Eastern Tribes. Oftentimes, the voices of our tribes are left out of the process ----- 'oh, there are still Indians east of the Mississippi' ----- and you know, us Indians, we still live within our ancient aboriginal homelands. The bones of our people are here. The dust of our ancestors is who we are and who we represent. As I said in my opening, the face is still coming forward, which is the sacred responsibility.

I have a quote as I look at our limited amount of people, and it seems to address relatively your earlier remarks on attendance. And while the quote doesn't really fit, I think it does fit as we speak of this ancient relationship in the long term. So, if you will allow me, it's from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"First they came for the Socialists, and I not speak out because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I still did not speak out because I was not Jewish. And then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak for me."

So, even though it's a small group, we're a proud people, and our numbers don't reflect a large segment of American history; right? Yet, we speak of an American value. Even as recently as the 100th Congress, the contributions of our Haudenosaunee Iroquois confederacy were recognized. That is an American value.

As we look at sequestration, they also exempted American values of low income families, honoring veterans' commitments; so, too, America should honor its sacred obligation to its first peoples. That is an American value expressed through the treaties and through the court cases ----- countless court cases; countless executive orders ----- and as exhibited through kaswentha, the two row wampum. The founding principles of democracy are rooted in Indian Country.

So that quote, while significantly and dramatically different from what we face, speaks volumes of the need for a collective voice to achieve and change the process that we are addressing today. We need to change the process. We've heard the examples of our children still being left behind. Certainly, I can attest to that.

You know, for countless years ----- I have four children ----- they got all my meetings were at the Syracuse Airport. They thought that once I walked into those doors, that's where I was for weeks, and they didn't have the full scope of what I was doing.

Even though we work hard, and as my nation representative, my chief, Ray Hallbritter has said time and time again, education is paramount, it's the key to our survival as a people.

We really need to work on perception. For example, even though I was raised in the Newtown Longhouse here in Seneca Country, we had a teacher who was a Seneca teacher from a reservation in Canada. And he was a product of the boarding school, so he was the boarding school era generation. He influenced my life by saying, in our longhouse year after year, when you hold that book in your hand, it burns your soul. And so that was the message I grew up with, to revere and respect your elders. And here is the message.

So I said, education is not for me. What does it take to define me as an Indian man? So I walked in the path that my grandfather and my many uncles walked, while they went into ----- they were iron workers ----- and I went right into construction because I thought you worked hard and you went to the gin mill at night. That's what I've seen as the example in my life. And I did not fully realize why my elder was telling me it's because education burned his soul; when he returned back to the reservation, he wasn't Indian enough to be Indian.

So I think, you know, with our children still being left behind, we have to deal with the stigma and the attachments of perception to education. By example of that, in my generation, anyone who left the reservation and made something better for themselves was an apple. If you went for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, you were the biggest apple in the whole bunch. That's the way it was, and that was the perception of my generation, but I see that as changing.

As an example, I'm a lifelong member, I'm a Sequoia Fellow of AISES as, American Indian Engineering Society. And I joined that group, and I believe in the group for a number of reasons. But I believe in our young people. They have a vision, they have a dream, and they are taking steps to achieve and implement that dream. So things are changing, and that's exciting to see.

But I joined that group because the values, values of being alcohol and drug free, committing to a 3.0 or greater for that organization. And never once did I ever hear one of those children say, 'when I grow up and get my degree, I'm going to go work for Chrysler', 'I'm going to go work for NASA,' I'm going to go work' somewhere else. The resounding theme and perception for that group of committed individuals, whether they're from Cornell University or any other prestigious university throughout the country, is that they are going to make a difference and impact for their people.

The sad thing is our systems don't allow for that direct impact. Oftentimes, they have to leave to find the experience because our systems internally do not embrace the legacy of their work. So that is, I think, an opening perception.

Also, I noticed in your presentation that it seems, as we often find in Indian Country, there are only pockets or regions such as the Umatilla, the Nez Perce, and the Navajo where there seems to be advancement forward. We need to ensure that we go forward and lift Indian Country collectively.

In our flags that were carried in, there's the Hiawatha flag. Hayo-went-ha was part of a message that was brought to us as Iroquois people that formed our confederacy. And in those teachings, we have a concept that we speak of in English: 'one dish and one spoon'. 'One dish and one spoon.' USET exhibits that practice by our model that has sustained us for 45 years in the motto of, In Strength, There is Unity.

In Haudenosaunee, we speak of that as, 'one bowl, one spoon', that everything must be good. What can sustain me and my future generations can also sustain you and your future generations. In the USET model is, In Strength, There is Unity. So we recognize the efforts of these different regions and their pockets of influence, yet we must raise all of Indian Country to have any measure of success.

Also, despite our disappointment with the last Congress failing to include specific language, in the Health Committee's Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization bill, to pass the Native Class Act as a stand-alone piece of legislation, we remain steadfast in our belief that the ESEA reauthorization effort in Congress is an opportunity to significantly improve Native American education through federal law.

I spoke of federal law. It's an American value; right? In exchange for our land, water, and resources, treaties were made, promises were given, sacred obligations were spoken of, from this country to our peoples. And America should uphold its own obligations and federal law in its promise of health, safety, and welfare of our peoples. So we speak of that.

Also, USET has submitted written comments, and we'll make sure that our leaders have those comments here today in our education committee; that is where it was developed from. So we will be sure to advance those.

Failure to include Native American education provisions in the how do you say? ESEA?
E S E A?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: E S E A.

MR. PATTERSON: ----- ESEA reauthorization equates to failure by the United States to uphold its sacred trust responsibilities. For the first time in over 10 years, ESEA reauthorization offers the opportunity to effect real change for our students. As part of the ESEA reauthorization effort, it is of

utmost importance that the following be included, as the Vice Chair reflected, and as Kandice Watson, as the Committee Chair for USET, will reflect in her remarks:

Strengthening tribal administration of education;

Preserving and revitalizing native languages;

Increasing access to tribal citizen student records;

Encouragement of tribal state partnerships, which is just horrific in many of our territories, certainly in Oneida country.

It's something we work very hard on. In the Haudenosaunee, the Iroquois, it is something that we have worked on for decades with this state, with little advancement. But we don't quit for trying, eh?

Unfortunately, our current reality is that American Indian and Alaskan Native students have the highest rates of dropouts, absenteeism, suspension, and expulsion. I mentioned my own child; my boy fit right into that stereotype. Even though, as hard as I work and education is paramount, the key to our survival as a people, that's the path my boy walked for a number of reasons and dropped out.

In fact, my eldest daughter ----- I'm proud of her, that she got her GED. But even though my nation expended tremendous resources to fund private education, and my daughter took chase of that, she still dropped out of school and was stereotyped in that school; right? Old money versus, oh, you're just here because you got casino money. So it was hard for our children to fit in.

Yet I can equally point to our children who have had success in that system, providing the opportunity, but it takes real strength and courage.

Over the last 10 years, American Indian and Alaskan Native students have been the only student groups not to demonstrate an increase in academic performance, as you mentioned in your study. And we should not let that go. We need to hold those studies accountable to Congress and to the administration. This statistic alone reflects the dire need for creative and innovative solutions to address this situation and eradicate the disparity between our native students and their non-native peers, a huge area. And if we only stand on one principle, I think it is that principle I expounded.

In our USET area, United South and Eastern Tribes, which is 26 federally recognized tribes from Texas to Florida up to Maine, our native youth attend public schools on tribal lands, public schools off tribal lands, and at the Bureau of Indian Education schools.

We also have the Seneca Nation Freedom School no that's Akwesasne_Freedom School. What is the Seneca school, people's do we recall that?

Okay. So I'm kind of misspeaking and misleading, so we'll speak to that in more detail as the Senecas advance up. But I know they have taken aggressive steps to control their education, culture, and language in their own schooling system, with their own values, and I believe that's completely funded by the Senecas. That has had success, when we have empowered our own agenda, for we realize this, that a well-educated citizenship holds the key to unlocking the infinite possibilities within our communities and for rebuilding our own nations.

We often hear of the administration's support for tribal sovereignty and recognition of the need for law and policy that empowers us to achieve greater self-sufficiency, which truly is self-determination. Core and central to this goal is education of our greatest resource: our children.

As sovereign government entities, we have the same responsibilities to our citizens as any other government structure, be it state or local government, by example. Far too often, our ability to provide for our citizens in the same manner as other governing structures is limited by bad law and policy. ESEA reauthorization presents an opportunity to provide tribal nations with parity by extending us full participation in educational programs offered to the general population.

I'm going to begin to wrap up with quotes from a colleague and then from President Obama. My colleague in Anchorage, Alaska mentioned that she had the fortune of visiting the Martin Luther King Memorial and found a quote. The quote is from Emma Widmark, Grand Camp President of the Alaska Native Sisterhood. I thought the Sisterhood was fitting, as Mother's Day is upon us, and we honor with gratitude the role and leadership of our mothers in our lives, the love of our mothers, but also, within our community, in the mother's heart that leads our people. So I thought it would be fitting to quote from her. It's a simple quote: "I am not satisfied with awareness. I want action." I want action.

I think that fits in President Obama's recent quote that is included in our USET remarks: "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change we seek. We are the ones that we have been

waiting for, and we ask the Department of Education to stand shoulder to shoulder with the USET family as we stand up for our children's children and our ensuing generations. The face is still coming forward."

That is an open invitation, and we looks to stand shoulder to shoulder one bowl, one spoon.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you very much.

COMMENTS BY MS. NANCY KLEMENS

LAKE SHORE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MS. KLEMENS: Good morning. My name is Nancy Clemens. I'm from Lakeshore Central School District in Angola, which is west of here, two miles off the shores of Lake Erie.

We have two other colleagues here. Is the Jeremiah Thompson is the home school liaison for the middle and high school, and I am the home school liaison for the elementary school.

Approximately 20 percent of our district is made up of Native Americans, and I think that number is growing because the elementary building that I'm in has 30 percent Native American population.

We have two questions. We're wondering about working on getting colleges and universities to accept Native American language as an official language so that kids did speak in our school district can transfer that on to the University. What's happening is children in our school start in kindergarten with Seneca Nation language. They have it all the way through fifth grade, skip sixth, take it up again in seventh all the way through 12th. The have a choice French Spanish, German, or Seneca.

They wisely ----- I think, unfortunately ----- don't want to continue to take Seneca because it will not transfer on to college. So, many of them are instead, to get their foreign language credit, taking French or something else.

We are working with the Seneca Nation to try and get that accepted at the university level, but I feel like we're being ineffectual. We don't have a strong enough voice. And I think if you want to preserve the language, then we need to have it recognized at the university level because we

have less and less kids that take it, so that by the 12th grade, you have two students taking Seneca language in their 12th grade year. In my building, every single child who is an enrolled tribal member will not, even as enrollment is continuing up, is taking that language unless their parents sign up for that one.

The other issue is that we've partnered with the Seneca Nation on language. They provide the majority of shoot.

Anyway, we can't afford to do all the funding for the Seneca language teachers, and they are provided through the nation. And we're hearing a little bit more from the Seneca Nation that they will not be able to continue to provide this service, so we are looking at possibly the demise, or certainly the reduction, of Seneca language in our school. We are wondering what we can do to address that because our school district does not have the funding.

We are already at a deficit this year, I think over \$1 million deficit. We're already letting go of teachers when we shouldn't be, so I was kind of wondering. If the government wants to make it a mandate to continue on with language, then we need physical funding to continue to do the program that we have put in place.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Are there any others who would like to make a comment at this time?

COMMENTS BY BRANDON STEVENS

NORTH CAROLINA

MR. STEVENS: (Native language spoken.)

Good day to you. What I just said is that I'm Brandon Stevens, and I'm from and I am from North Carolina.

I can speak three languages, some of them you know, I'd like to be able to speak more of my Cherokee language. I'm a Cherokee.

On the other hand, I hear the educators talking about trying to get more money to make Cherokee, and some of the native languages that we have as foreign languages. But they are not foreign languages. They are our languages, and we have to remember that.

So really, the approach needs to be ----- and I'm not an educator; I'm still working on being educated ----- the big thing here is that this has to start earlier age. I have two nephews who are going through our immersion academy, and one of them, actually his first words were not English, and we had trouble actually communicating with him because he only speaks Cherokee. Otherwise, he shrieks and shrills when he wants something because he can't get it in English. On the other hand, that's almost be approach that you have to take it from the early ages. You know, we have to actually have to serve this up at the morning breakfast; we have to have it at the noon lunch and the afternoon recess. That's where it has to be. This has to be integrated into the school systems, and it has to be integrated in the school and the school systems will, and it has to be spoken at that point. Otherwise, it goes away. The importance of this is that's who we are. It's how we communicate ideas.

I look at my two nephews, and they walk around like my grandfather. And they walk around and they talk like old men and old women and that sort of thing, but it's not. It's this tradition and this culture. It's the ideas of how we express ourselves. That's what makes us Cherokee and Seneca and Oneida and Poarch Camp Creek Indians, the Wampanoags, and so on and so forth.

But in that way your efforts have to go a lot younger, and they have to also build up and fortify that, and it's not going to be an easy process. But to some degree, I disagree on, sometimes, the approach of saying, this is a foreign language. That's no disrespect to the educators in the room, but that's just sort of the first part of the puzzle. It is who we are.

So in that, I hope that somewhere down the line, there is an approach here to fortify the language, the culture of our communities, and the history even before that to now wait until high school. It's a part of a curriculum. It's something that we just eat, live, breathe, and exercise during our entire course of our education.

I think that it's important that we learn the syllabary. We learn to how to communicate to evoke those ideas. I don't want to be repetitive, but although, I applaud you for any kind of effort you can place on those people who are now later in life, in high school, in elementary school, in post-secondary education, that sort of thing.

I think we need to work with our universities, particularly those that are closer to our reservations, our tribes, and our nations to allow them ----- I think they have a natural interest, too; I know, in Western North Carolina, University of Tennessee, Western Carolina University, University of Georgia where we haven't had that physical presence ----- really pressuring that in. I think we need to work with to build those partnerships to where that can be integrated to save the culture.

But coming from a non-educator, someone who lives, actually, on the other side of being educated, I hesitated because I don't know if this is my platform, or anything like that. But I think about it every day, and I'm also learning to speak my language, too, to transmit and to receive those, the speakers' energies for my people.

MR. PATTERSON: Okay.

COMMENTS BY ROD COOK

DIRECTOR OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ST. REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE

MR. COOK: Good morning. My name is Rod Cook. I'm Director of Higher Education Programs for the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe.

We take pride in our students. We take pride in the students who go on to college and come back to the reservation and work. At one of our local high schools, we have 1,000 students, and of that, 65 percent of them are Mohawk.

It took us a while to get to where we are today. The flag in the corner flies from the Salmon River along with the state flag and the flag of the United States.

In that school, our principal of the elementary school is Mohawk. -----Our high school principal is Mohawk. We have six guidance counselors. Of that, five are Mohawk. We have two members on our school board. And it took us a while to get to that point. It took us a couple of civil rights law suits, affirmative action lawsuits, and some school takeovers.

MR. PATTERSON: Does "takeover" need to be translated?

MR. COOK: And the last time we took a school over, we gave the superintendent to buy the school back. We take pride in that.

I've been doing my job as higher education director for approximately 20 years, and when I started, we had 75 students in college. Today, we have over 225 undergraduates. We have at least 50 graduate students, and then a couple of Ph.D. students.

But it took us awhile to get here, and you know, I like to take pride in that.

But we spoke of language and culture in schools. Unfortunately, with No Child Left Behind, we didn't certify and qualify teachers. We tried going that route. We worked with the local college, and we were told that you needed a Ph.D. in Mohawk to come and teach certified teachers coming out of college. But we're trying to create an undergraduate program and a graduate program. Let's get a Ph.D. to finish it all off.

And we're looking at treating tribal members as making our elders who are fully Mohawk and have them meet young people as qualified Mohawk instructors. So we're working on that, and hopefully we can change things in that regard.

But at least the Mohawk language is taught in our schools, and we've come a long way with that.

Unfortunately, I was in the generation that got lost, and so I able to speak English and French, a little Russian. And I can say, you know, Bonjour; that's 'hello', 'good morning'. But I'm of that generation that got lost because my parents didn't teach me at home. And we had a wonderful school, the Akwesasne Freedom School, which is a totally good school for kindergarten to seventh grade. It's an immersion program. But once they go home, it's everything in English.

So we need to take this home with us, that if we're going to learn our culture, learn our language, we need to be around it 24/7. Not just nine out of 24 hours. That's where I'll leave it.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

REMARKS BY KANDICE WATSON

CO-CHAIR, USET EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MS. WATSON: Well, I'll try to reiterate some of the things that Brian said earlier about the USET tribes, things that are related to us in particular as USET tribes.

As he said, you know, the area that we represent is so huge ----- you know, from Maine down to Florida and then all the way over to Texas it's a huge area. We have so many different things going on, as he said. We have schools on tribal land. We have schools off tribal land. Most of our kids go to public school, but some of them go to private school. We have so many different issues within the USET tribes that it's very hard to just say this is what we need for USET tribes.

I know, for my tribe, Oneida, as Brian stated earlier, New York State has never been very cooperative with us. It's always been a struggle. We're always struggling about this. Then again, within our own school district, I am a resident of Oneida. I've lived on that reservation pretty much my whole life. I attended a public school, a very rural school; more of a farming community school. And you know, we're speaking earlier about our students and expecting them to excel in things.

I've always been a math geek, ever since I was a little kid. And when I got into high school, I pretty much had to beg my guidance counselor to allow me to take math and science. I was supposed to go to BOCES because that's where all the other Indian kids went. So, for me, getting my degree in math was really a big deal. I ended up getting my Bachelor's in mathematics, and I went on for my Masters at Colgate University and received my Master's in teaching high school math.

So we had Indian students even back then who love to learn. We need to make sure we allow them to love that. A lot of times, I know we tease kids because they're smart. We need to stop doing that because we have so many kids who are over achievers and would love to be doing these things, but they get shut down real early. So we need to start encouraging our kids to take that academic track and kind of go that way these days.

Another issue we have within our USET tribes is that some of our tribes are gaming and some of them are not. A lot of times, we get the impression that every Indian nation in this country is just loaded beyond belief, and it's simply not true. I know we have a lot of tribes in Maine that suffer because they do not have gaming; they do not have money. So, when we're thinking of things, we've always got to be mindful of those tribes that do not have gaming and do not have money. We always think, well, the school won't pay for the teacher; why can't your nation just pay for it? Not every nation has those resources, so it's really difficult.

I know, within our nation, we have a wonderful language program which started pretty recently, where we actually go into the homes. We have a teacher who will go to somebody's house in the morning when they're getting ready for school, and helps the mother tell the children in Oneida

what to do, so they get it from the minute they wake up in the morning until they get on the school bus. And then, of course, we don't have it in school, but we have an after school program. We have somebody who will go ----- if they can get five mothers together who maybe don't work ----- she'll go right to the house, and she'll teach those five women.

We're doing what we can, but it's only because we have those resources. If you don't have the resources, again, it's probably not going to happen. So we're fortunate in that regard.

And then again, I'll just kind of reiterate, we do have a very high truancy rate. We have a high high school dropout rate, as most people do. We have over identification of the ADD in ADHD in our schools with our children. I think that's kind of a general thing throughout the country, but it seems to be very, very high in regards to Indian children.

We have to be careful about letting parents have their kids tested, maybe placed on Ritalin, because once they're on that medicine, it's very hard to get them off it. So we need to make sure that our parents know their rights before the children are tested. Oftentimes, they will be labeled in fourth grade, and that's where they are stuck until they quit or are pushed out of the school.

I know that some of these things were already stated. I just want to kind of reiterate some of those things. But with us and, I know, a few other tribes, it's really the states' unwillingness to be cooperative ----- that's pretty much it ----- and to respect to the Indian nations' ability and rights to be self-determined and to decide what's best for their nations.

I think a lot of times, the states are still in that mindset where we're underneath their thumb, and we need to realize that we are not under the jurisdiction of the state that we are in. So we really need to focus on the federal level and maybe get them to force the states to work with the Indian nations because, obviously, us going to the states is not working.

So that's just a little bit about what's going on in Oneida and, I know, throughout the USET areas. It's been very difficult for people to get anywhere with the state that they're in.

Thank you.

MR. RANDOLPH: Excuse me.

After listening to several people speak, I was thinking that from the Department of Education, maybe we could have a better impact if we started thinking a little bit outside of the box and used some of the things that could be to our advantage.

Some of our tribes have incredible resources. Some of them have worked out nice MOAs, MOUs, with institutions, or have access to institutions. I think, if, in this day and age of videoconferencing, we create some type of distance learning program to operate from USET to the USET tribes, it could function on a multi TA platform that could offer educational opportunities for high school students.

President Patterson was talking about kids dropping out in large numbers, in different tribes. Some of them that do dropout are discouraged and don't even go back to get GEDs because it means going back into the same institutions that they felt discouraged in, in the first place.

If there were distance learning programs offered to each individual tribe through videoconferencing, those types of students could come back to their tribe as opposed to a public schooling get the education and that means.

People spoke about language programs. It's a source of pride in many tribes to be able to speak their language or recapture their language. Students, young children, take great pride in what they are taught and learn. It's a way of exchanging what they've learned with other tribes, one tribe learning from another tribe, you know, in sharing their different languages, their different culture, I think, would be very beneficial.

And then lastly, the adults, the forgotten generations, the generations that didn't have the same advantages that are currently being reaped in this day and age, can also benefit from that whether it be after hours educational programs or courses offered to all ages, you know, whether it's a tech class or, back to GED, so that they can move on and obtain a degree ----- an Associate's, Bachelor's, whatever it may be ----- would do great things for some of our tribes just because, as the lady spoke, we come from a vast region. Most of our tribes are in isolated, small areas.

I know that in the past, I think maybe three or four years ago, there was a great initiative to try and get a tribal college, perhaps, or a tribal school in our region, which would be great but it's only going to help but so many if we only do one school. There's still the logistics of it. It's going to be a lot of tribes left out.

She spoke of, you know, some tribes have gaming, some tribes don't, which obviously means that in terms of economics, there's a great deal of diversity here. And potentially, a distance learning program offered in this manner could help overcome a lot of those obstacles.

Thank you.

MS. BRYAN: I would just like to make another comment. The majority of the comments your today have reflected on language, dropout. You know, is there any way and as you said, there is no stupid question, so hopefully this is not a stupid question.

The Office of Indian Education could reach out to companies such as Rosetta Stone to implement the language? Because, there's so many. There's diverse languages. There's Cherokee; Creek. There's just various languages ----- but to reach out to such an entity to try to provide the tools needed not only for the children that are in school, colleges, but for those elders that missed out on that language.

As the gentleman stated earlier, you know, you teach the children ----- and as I stated --- -- a four year old can speak fluent Creek language, but then when they go to the public school, they lose it. And as my grandmother always told me, if you don't use the language, you lose the language. She was fortunate enough to be a part of that era that spoke fluent Creek language. But then, you know, I was not.

So, if you can't communicate with, not only your children learning this language, but at home as well ----- it needs to be communicated through out every day. So maybe that could be an option that we could look at.

And as we all said here, we at Poarch Creek have all done some due diligence to reach out to a company that could possibly do that for us, and we offer that as a part of our educational course through our education department for all tribal members; not just children but for all tribal members.

As far as the dropout statistics, I know it's hard for us to communicate with our county school systems, our state, in reference to statistics as to why children, the dropout rate is so high, but that would be interesting to look at statistics as to why, and how we can start at an early age to try to prevent this, the high dropout rates. What do we need to do? What steps or structure do we need to

try to put in place for the children when they're younger to prevent these dropout rates being so high in statistics?

So that's just a comment that I wanted to make, as well as, if there is any way that we could work with the Board of Education to provide those statistics to us as to why these children are dropping out.

And I know, in our community, there's a lot of racism. You know, if you're an Indian, you're picked on at some point and some time; "oh, they're just Indians." So that bothers our children to be singled out, and the racism in our community.

But that's just one thing I would like to suggest is, if we can all work together somehow with the Boards of Education in our areas to get these rates so that we do not have these high dropout rates.

MS. WATSON: I just wanted to answer one point that you said about contacting Rosetta Stone or something like that. We actually did that a few years ago. We worked with Berlitz, and they did develop a curriculum for our language.

The only thing is, we didn't distribute it to everyone. It was used to teach the teachers how to teach Oneida. Just because somebody knows how to speak Oneida doesn't mean they know how to teach it.

So we actually trained the people to be teachers in that method. So they were the teachers for the new group of students who learned through the Berlitz method in a two year program.

Right now, the students that we have ----- and it's a pretty good program ----- our students take language 32 hours a week. They get paid \$10 an hour. They work Monday through Thursday, eight hours a day; they have Fridays off. And they get tested routinely, periodically, to make sure that they're advancing in the language and they're retaining it. They get tested quite often. So it's not just like, I'm taking a language and it's free money. They actually have to have a desire to learn it, and if they are not advancing, they are cut from the program.

So it's been really successful. We've got a lot of people taking it. Of course, we've got people that think it's going to be great, and then they get in there and realize, oh, my goodness, this

language is really hard to learn; it's a lot of work. So we do have quite a few people drop out right away. But otherwise, it's a wonderful program.

And again, we have the resources. If you have the money, there's a lot of different, novel ways that you can, as a sovereign nation, do what you want, so that's one thing we've done.

We've tried many language programs. I've lived on the reservation, as I said, my whole life, and I have taken language since I was about six years old. You know, not so much lately, because I have another job; I can't quit to go make \$10 an hour. I'm not going to do that.

But, you know, it's been around a long time. We've tried a lot of different kinds of things, and this one seems to be working. It really does. It seems to be working.

MR. PATTERSON: Yeah, it does provide impacts on a number of levels within our community.

You know, Berlitz told us when we had our first graduation of fluent speakers that it was the hardest language - here is a worldwide institution telling us it was the hardest language for them to build a program that they've encountered. Our verb is in the middle of the word. The action is in the middle of the word. It's a female language, and to make it masculine, you have to translate it to masculine because everything is feminine. We're matrilineal. So we learned a lot through that process.

But I can't tell you how pleased: When we first selected those eight initial people to do the language were all women. They were all women, and I was so pleased because the result was the love of our language being embraced with a mother's heart. It made a lot of sense. It was really, really good. They brought the language to our ceremonies. Now we open, we close, we do different things. So it's in the recreation department in our different programs. So it's manifested in different scopes in our community. It's a huge success.

Vice Chairman Randolph makes a great point in illustrating the need for a tribal college in the East. In past years, it is an initiative that I've broached that there's no tribal colleges East of the Mississippi and that we should have one.

You know, I was recently in DC for the House Committee testimony. And while we spoke of education and the importance of it and the prominence that it needs to hold within Indian Country, I also attended the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, where they inquired extensively,

assistant Secretary Washburn, on why there are no schools being constructed. Why are there no advancements in education in Indian Country? They grilled them pretty hard, the Senate Committee did, and I was very pleased to see that process and the accountability, of the need for quality education within Indian country.

Also, when I was up on the Hill when was this? This was the week before last ----- I sat with a new representative, chief of staff, from North Carolina. USET has a priority initiative of orientation of the members of Congress.

And so I was sitting before this representative from North Carolina, chief of staff, and all he wanted to talk to me about was Johnson O'Malley Act. Why wasn't that greater priority? Why wasn't that funded to the great level of need? And he went on further to say, why hasn't that had any demonstrated success and sustainability in Indian Country? Why isn't Indian Country putting great pressure on it?

I mean some of the, some of his comments were kind of naïve. I mean we don't have the numbers that others can bring to the table, to put great pressure on. So we really took our time with his representative.

But you know, he, at one point, made the comment that a great deal of money is spent from Congress on Indian Country. And I said, well, you're certainly entitled to that opinion, that perception if you will. I said, but if you change that objective to, what is the identified need of Indian country, then it becomes a different perspective that you're offering, identified need. So we went back and forth.

But I thought it was interesting that a first year member of Congress, who's putting a great deal of attention on education, realized that a great need for Johnson O'Malley and why isn't that sustained.

On the face of it, he said, well, we given you lots of money. So it was quite a challenge, and thank goodness we had time to respond to the many different topics: The trust responsibility, the treaties, the identified need versus this perception of a great deal of money.

And again, as I did here, I wrapped it up to the sacred obligation of America's word to its first peoples, but also an American value not to leave Indian Country behind. Thank you.

COMMENTS BY MEGAN YOUNG

POARCH CAMP OF CREEK INDIANS

MS. YOUNG: My name is Megan Young, and Poarch Camp of Creek Indians also, and I just want to address, also, the state sovereign nation relationship. I just feel like states don't realize, you know, Native Americans make up only about one percent of the population. We're basically national treasures. And I feel like they see no value, or little to no value, in bolstering our native education. So I would like to propose maybe an educator initiative to see there's a value in our native students.

You know, and with our particular situation, in the Poarch community, we don't have our own school, so we don't have native educators teaching our native students, and there is a lot of opposition not just in our community but also within the state. So, if there was some sort of initiative to educate the ones that are actually educating our native students, they may see there is value in implementing that culture and an accurate history of our native peoples.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

Our agenda has changed dramatically since we began this morning. And so there's, on the agenda, we had intended to have an opportunity to have lunch and conversation, and to take a look at any additional comments that you might want to make after lunch. I understand that we have a couple people who are leaving after lunch.

I think that this is been this has been productive, and I apologize for talking about the small numbers this morning.

In every meeting that you have, particularly when you're coming out from the federal offices, the people who come are the people who are interested. So, even though we may not have a lot of numbers of people here, this is the right group to have here.

So please join us for lunch, conversation informal, and we'll come back together after lunch and wrap up with any additional statements that may be necessary.

MR. PATTERSON: Director Silverthorne, you're competing with a golf tournament -----

(Laughter.)

MR. PATTERSON: -- but listen, listen ----- here's the outcome to that. The golf tournament is a fundraising activity of the USET to fund educational scholarships. So that's what you're competing with.

You're also competing with our dear mothers and the sacred day that they have, and so many of our leaders have to travel. And with USET, the week-long attention that we ask of our tribal leaders is quite a commitment to give, you know, four days, now five days for this. But it also honors the request from our tribal leaders to join other activities. So, just the full realization.

In USET, through our education committee, our subject matter experts will advance to the voice of our leadership an official position and follow through for you. So we are grateful. While we are small in numbers, our voice is strong in our impact and our realization of future generations. We will look to a shoulder to shoulder relationship with you.

I hope that made sense. Maybe it is too close to lunchtime.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: It does make sense, and I do appreciate that.

We had heard that there was a golf tournament that we were competing with, and we appreciate that difficulty.

So, if there are people who would like to stay, you are certainly welcome to. We will be here. And if you need to leave, we understand that as well. So thank you.

And Sedelta is encouraging me to do wrap up remarks even now.

MS. OOASAHWEE: Well, I just wanted to put forward that possibly we make final remarks now and then we can all go to lunch. And you can visit with us then and maybe not return after that, because I'm not really sure what the audience will be like after lunch. And I'm not really sure if there's many more comments that will be forthcoming.

Does anyone want to comment on that, or make a -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: My only concern is that we advertised that we would be here, and the concern that people may show up and not know why we left.

MS. GRAY: I just have one more question.

We are exploring new territory, and we're really close to implementing an undergraduate program in our language. Our final barrier is, just like the Navajo, where we need the state to give recognition from them and any agreements from them to go forward, with that possibility of having the state recognize the language and someone to be certified.

So I didn't know how I need to address this thing, and where I would go from here?

MR. PATTERSON: I would add before you respond, that is an area in which we could really use federal assistance. We're standing here in a state that believes that our sovereignty should exist underneath the state's, not as an equal. So we're out there dealing with these issues within the statehood trying, in a collaborative fashion, to advance our needs.

But oftentimes, we don't hear of the federal government and its agencies, which ----- I should recognize the interagency pool and White House support driving that initiative is something we asked for; something we fully support, as well. But we need for the agencies to be in a position to be a voice of advocacy for us, to be a voice of reason with these states.

You've got to remember that the states here are a little bit different than the rest of the country. We have Indian haters that exist within our communities. They wrap themselves in the American flag and preach unity but practice separatism and don't believe that American Indians ----- you know, I've heard comments, official comments, such as, well, American Indian sovereignty and treaties, that was long ago; that doesn't affect me know. So I quickly countered and threw the U.S. Constitution back at them as an ancient document that affects their everyday lives.

But within the states, especially within the original 13 Colonies, you will find a mentality that nationhood belongs under statehood, of the states, and that we should be state reservations controlled through the state. So they resist any advancement of this notion of tribal nations as states, as quoted through the U.S. Constitution and protected through the U.S. Constitution.

So that's where we could really use a strong voice, is the federal level to the state level in advancement. After all, it is an American value.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you. That is important.

I think we're going to take a couple minutes to respond to some of the questions that have been raised this morning because some of you may not be here this afternoon. We will still be

available if there is a desire to have additional conversation, or for people who aren't here this morning me who may be coming this afternoon.

MR. PATTERSON: I apologize; I did not talk with Kandice Watson, who chairs our education committee.

Are you going to be with us during the week? Tomorrow? Are the tribal leaders going to get to see you and interact with you?

MS. WATSON: I will be here through tomorrow evening, and then I leave tomorrow evening.

MR. PATTERSON: Good. Perhaps, if the opportunity presents itself, I will make introductions -----

MS. WATSON: Okay.

MR. PATTERSON: ----- beyond the vice chairmen that are with us today.

MS. WATSON: Okay.

MR. PATTERSON: And also boy, I'm going to get in trouble here Kandice may invite you into her committee for an introduction, as well.

MS. WATSON: Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Wonderful. There were several comments that were raised about some possible ways that we could support what you were working on. And certainly, there is some potential for conversation that we are looking at, that will be with the Chief State School Officers. The Chief State School Officers are an organization of the state education agencies across the country, and we are looking at some possible conversations yet with them.

The area of language and certification of teachers is near and dear to my heart, and during my time on the Board of Public Education for the State of Montana, that was one of the areas where we struggled as well.

Part of the difficulty of marrying three different generations of government together to bring it as a positive support for our native languages is a complex matter. It's one that is very politically

and emotionally charged for our people. When we talk language, it is that link to our history and our culture and our ceremony. It is also the wound that was inflicted through boarding schools in the denial of language and ceremony and culture. So there's a lot of passion about it.

When we look today, remembering that even though we are products of a generation who lost the opportunity to learn our languages because of the circumstances our parents dealt with, it still is we can't fix those wounds. It is a process, now, of making the education system the best it can be for the children who are still in school. And how do we do that? That is a true challenge.

My mother was a boarding school success story. My father was a boarding school runaway. My father eventually earned his GED through military, and military was his route back. But my mother, she came to work in Washington, DC when the New Deal established the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And for a number of years when I was young, I was ashamed to tell people that my parents worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs because what Brian said was right: that for a long time, that was the point of shame for people who had gone to work for the government.

Full circle, here I find myself working for the federal government, looking at what their experience was at that time and trying to understand it, and looking at what we can do to make it better for my great grandchildren who are still going to school back at home in Montana.

In Montana, we created an option through our constitutional language to do Indian education for all. It has pluses, and it has minuses. We were training educators across the state to work with our language well, not so much our language; that was difficult ----- but at least our history and our children and their potential.

The children's potential is not defined by a test score, and how to do that continues to be a challenge. But it is a different world than it was when I was in school in Montana. Not so long ago, there were no classes, there was no acknowledgment of language, there was no sense of history, and most people thought that Indians had disappeared. That is changing, and it's changing incrementally and slowly. We see surges of change and then we slow down again.

What I can say is that being involved at the school level is critical; at the state level, whenever possible. Where you have an opportunity to have people that are willing to take on some of those tough tasks, it's very valuable. Even if they aren't able to make all of the change we want at the time, for those people in those offices that do have that role, that responsibility, that accountability for

our children, it's harder to ignore people who are in front of you, people that are in the room with you, and people who you know as people, not just as a note on a piece of paper.

Data sharing is changing. Oklahoma is working with its tribes to share data directly from the state to the tribe about their students, wherever they are, not just on the reservations. Oklahoma has a different structure. What I have learned in this job is that every place has its own unique set of circumstances and issues. Oklahoma, without reservations, once it was called Andean country, and now it's absence of Indian country. Alaska and their corporations and Howell the villages and the corporations work together ----- every place has some different criteria.

There are vast numbers of people who were sent away to relocation, who stayed in those community centers and became the urban population of this country. And the urban communities have very different issues than reservation communities do. How do we address some of those? How do we bring forward language, when they're talking about having children from 50 different languages in their school systems, and no one of the 50 different languages has representative teachers? So we struggle with all of these issues.

Yes, we can support more of the activities toward that state and tribal understanding and appreciation. We can't, unfortunately, direct states to do that.

Another difficulty when we talk about the curriculum is that unfortunately, we have so many languages. Over 500 languages that are Native American. And Rosetta Stone isn't unlikely to do 500 languages. But there are language families. So, can we look to language family descriptions? And are there some other tools that we haven't looked at?

The federal government is, by law, not supposed to provide curriculum. We are not supposed to tell the states how to teach. We can encourage the inclusion, but unfortunately, our role is one that was different. I came thinking that we would be able to could be able to be impacting curriculum, too, and we can't, but we can support you as you do that. So, wherever we can bring our voice to pair with that, we can do that.

It's a long process. In Montana's move from the state constitutional language that was passed in 1972, it wasn't until 2005 with many efforts in between before there was something that went into law, into place with funding.

So moral support you have moral support from me, and hopefully that begins to look at all the different corners of opportunity where we are in meetings. We have an opportunity to share what you have told us. The transcript of this meeting will be online. We will have the full transcript printed and shared. Those are ways that we can help what you are telling us today get to people who were not in this room with us.

Sedelta.

MS. OOASAHWEE: I heard a few themes echoed and reiterated today, native language, absent students, and how to deal with those. And last week we met with comprehensive centers. There are working with -- three comprehensive centers that came and met with us, and they have step grantees working with them. And one thing I kept hearing was that it's hard to work with the states and that the states aren't always being cooperative.

The comprehensive centers have two or three of the STEP grantees within those comprehensive centers in their regions. So one thing we talked about working on is documentation of this process of making an MOA with the state or MOU with the state. How did they do that? What were the steps in making that happen and to starting to give the tribes a little more control over the students and the funds and the processes in place?

Hopefully, they can begin documenting that process so that other states other tribes can learn how to that happened, the steps that were taken. That's also with language revitalization. There are some states doing some really interesting things with certifications. Oklahoma is looking at an issue of literacy, which is a component of assessment for foreign languages, and some tribes, because they are not written, don't have that component. How do we deal with that? So the comprehensive centers are trying to tackle that issue right now, and hopefully, that's something they can work on and disseminate, that information to other tribes and other states so we can start addressing those needs.

I also want to talk about something Joyce mentioned earlier. We have had a change in leadership in the Office of Indian Education and the Bureau of Indian Education. We haven't had consistency in leadership, and that's something that we're working on now. The BIE director has an opening for that position. I think it ends on May 20th. That's the final date to submit an application for that. But we're going to try to have people in place and hopefully have more consistency.

But the other interesting thing is we have American Indian people in these roles now. And the one thing I always remember, and I think that Joyce ----- and I can't speak for her, but we think of, and I have conversations with the Executive Director often about when we make these decisions and we're at the table, we are products of the system.

My parents went to boarding school. My mom went to boarding school, BIE and parochial. My dad is an English language learner. He grew up speaking Cherokee and learned English when he went into school. So we're products of these systems. I went to public schools. We understand.

And the decisions we make I think that sometimes, in DC, decisions are made in a vacuum, and they don't really understand the impacts of that. But the one thing I keep with me and that I carry with me is that the decisions I make impact me and my community. And I'm going back to those communities when I leave, and that's where I have to return to. And so language is not just language. It's a worldview. It's a perspective. It's a way of viewing the world. And those are things that we carry with us, and those are things that we always try to reiterate.

When we are at the table, we remind people, don't forget about the Indian students, and don't forget about us. We do our best, and consultation helps us take the words that you say and carry those words forward in those meetings and say, this is what we're hearing and this is what we need. And we can say verbatim some of the things that you have said, and it makes it more meaningful and more powerful when it comes from a group of people, versus one or two people. So again, I want to thank you for that.

A couple people had mentioned language programs and working with universities. And if you guys want to have some time at lunch to speak about that, I know of some programs that are doing some really innovative tracks and innovative programs where they not only teach the language to students, but they're teaching them how to teach the language. So it's a two course system, where it's education and language teaching at the same time.

So, if you guys want to have a conversation about that, maybe we can meet and talk about that because I think the language component is something that I've heard several times, and it's good to hear that because that's what we keep telling people. It's nice to hear that that's being reiterated in the communities and in these consultations, so I appreciate that.

And again, maybe we can have some further conversations about that and some programs that are occurring throughout the nation that might be helpful to you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Another point about language, one of the things that helped with Montana's work was to stop calling it foreign language and start calling it world language, both world language and heritage language. The educators of the world and the universities of the world do understand those terms.

So, with that, let's -----

MS. WATSON: I just wanted to say one more thing. We talked today about language and about boarding schools and different things. My mother also attended boarding school, actually, right here in Seneca Country. Thomas Indian School was located here, and a lot of Haudenosaunee children ended up here; my mother was there for six years.

And I tell you, I want us to be careful about the language. I know that we all have a desire to learn it and to revive it and all this, but I'm telling you, if you try to make my mother speak one Indian word, she will shut down quicker than anything. So, although most of us want to learn this language, we have to be very careful about, for lack of a better word, shoving it down people's throats.

A lot of people don't want to learn the language, they don't want to have anything to do with learning the language, and we really need to be careful about that. It's not 100 percent 'everybody's for this'. I mean my mother would love to see the language back in the community, but do not force my mother to learn it.

So we need to be careful and mindful of these people, and mindful of the people who attended boarding schools and what kind of baggage they have with them. So, yes, we all think it's a great idea, but let's be mindful of those people who attended those boarding schools, who were not allowed to speak it and who do not want to learn it now. So let's just be careful and be mindful about being too enthusiastic about the language with everybody. We need to be careful. Be mindful and considerate.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

With that, we'll break for lunch.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 12:21 p.m. and reconvened at 1:46 p.m.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: We'd like to call the group back together.

We understand that we're competing with the golf tournament and that we probably aren't going to have a lot greater numbers, so we appreciate the folks who did come back, and we'll turn this into more of a conversational discussion.

But please come forward so that we can have the microphones and be able to get the recording.

What we had on the agenda for this afternoon beginning at one o'clock is tribal leaders statements. And I have a list. We have Chairwoman oh, I'm sorry.

MS. OOASAHWEE: Maybe if you could state your name and who you represent before you speak for our court reporter, that would be helpful as well.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Please. Okay, so she's the first one that we have up, and we'll go ahead and begin a conversation this morning.

We did a little bit of background information about our Title VII programs and the White House initiative. We had some conversation from local leaders and USET leaders, and just kind of a back and forth.

One of the tasks that we're trying to pay special attention to as we do our tribal consultations is to bring tribal leadership back to the table with education. In our ancient history, in our original formats and systems of governance, we would have been the educators of our own children, and that has changed through the history of mission schools, boarding schools, and the public system.

And so we really want to be able to bring education back to those tribal leaders and try to have more of a government to government conversation. The Department of Education is recent to this need. They have not been in the role of government to government in their past operations. So there's a learning process that's taking place on all levels.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Is the chairwoman outside?

SPEAKER: I'll go check.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you. Arlene Bova is that you?

MS. BOVA: Bova.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Bova; okay.

And Rod Cook, is that the gentleman who just left? Should we go ahead and start with the next person, then?

Arlene?

MS. BOVA: I just sort of signed in. I guess I'm a little behind. So this afternoon is just about commenting, or how do you want to go about it?

The representative that was going to be here from the Nation had a death in her family, so she wasn't able to make it.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Okay.

MS. BOVA: So I came just to be a part of what's going on --

MR. CARROLL: If you decide you have comments to make after -----

MS. BOVA: -- for the record.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: ----- after you listen for a bit, that's fine. That's fine

MS. BOVA: Okay.

Rod.

FURTHER COMMENTS BY ROD COOK

MR. COOK: This past Friday, I sat down with counsel and asked them if they had comments to make in regards to this get together today. One of the things that they had asked me to ask is if all the funds for Indian education are discretionary. If so, this is not good. Why? Because discretionary funds are usually the first to get cut.

In this day and time, we can't afford any more cuts, because the cost of education continues to rise. Our students have learned a four letter word: Loan. And as we all know, loans have

become the new credit crisis of our day. With the increasing loan debt our students are accumulating, this will not create a happy person who will return to our nations and take up leadership roles. This will be discouraging because many of the students could fail because of this loan debt.

But we need to have the funds for Indian education no longer discretionary because discretionary is usually the first to get cut.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The answer would be yes and no. The formula program that we had on the screen this morning that has 1,302 grants across the country and has \$105 million under Title VII is not discretionary dollars. It is formula dollars, and so those formula dollars operating all of it differently. However, with sequestration, they were impacted, where our discretionary dollars weren't.

We were able to reduce the number of not that they weren't impacted ----- we reduced the number of new grants instead of reducing the loans that were out there, the grants that were out there. And because of that, there is the appearance of not being impacted. Of course, that means fewer programs, and yes, that is an impact.

That's only one department. That's only one program. So each of the programs, it depends on the statutes that created them, and I can't answer for all of them. I know that the information I gave this morning from the slideshow -----

By the way, I didn't set up a sign in sheet, and she's gone.

What we can do is send a copy directly to Kandice, and then that way, it will be available to anyone would like to have copies of it.

SPEAKER: Send it to Kathy, then.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: To Kathy, all right.

MR. CARROLL: Can I ask you to clarify that last statement in terms of the funding? I want to know if there is other funding or formula driven funding across the federal system that falls under the category of "discretionary funding."

I guess I'm a little bit confused. When you said the fact that it's formula doesn't make it, it's not because it, let me rephrase that.

What part of funding does it fall under if it's not discretionary, even though recognizing that it's formula driven funding? Is it entitlement? Where is this budget coming from, then?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: This is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII.

MR. CARROLL: No, I understand that, but through what federal funding mechanism is it

MS. SILVERTHORNE: That is it.

The difference between formula and discretionary within the federal government, within our office, the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and believe me, I don't have enough experience to tell you more beyond that "discretionary" means that you prepare an application and submit it. It is weighted and then the top applicants get awarded.

MR. CARROLL: Let me rephrase the question, then, because we're not talking apples to apples right now.

When you look at the federal budget, one slice of the federal budget is discretionary funding. So Congress make the decision every year whether or not they're going to appropriate dollars for those programs under that discretionary slice. Another slice is defense. Another slice is entitlement.

So I asking, if you're saying that education is not under the discretionary slice of appropriations, what place does it fall under then? There isn't a slice that's formula, so I'm asking you what slice it's coming under.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Well, this is probably an excellent example of how difficult it is sometimes to get to apples to apples. And you're right. Yes, we are under the budget that is discretionary to Congress.

MR. CARROLL: Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: But we operate, in delivery of that portion of that budget, under different mechanisms.

A formula program is an entitlement program based on the student count, and so the first part of our Title VII formula requires that the grantees submit a count of the eligible students that

they are educating. And then that entitles them to that portion of the Title VII funding. So the terms get blurred, depending on which level you're talking to.

And yes, I appreciate the difference. I'm sorry I didn't understand the -----

MR. CARROLL: And I apologize; you had asked previously Kitcki Carroll, United South and Eastern Tribes, for the record.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

When we talk about the federal budget overall, that gets away from where our expertise is. Certainly, that is a challenge when we try to speak government to government, so what we're talking from is the experience and the expertise that we have working within the Department of Education.

MR. CARROLL: So can and I apologize ----- one more point of clarification. So, since then, we've established at this level that education funding is in fact part of the discretionary slice of the federal budget. Are you saying that those dollars were not I think I heard you correctly that they are not impacted by the sequestration, across the board cuts to discretionary funding? Did I hear that correctly?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Can you pull up the PowerPoint and take us back to the budgetary fund page?

MR. CARROLL: I apologize.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: No, that's fine. That's fine. It's clarification of these things that this an opportunity for us to do, so we appreciate the time. Now this is only the Title VII program, and so there is a multitude of other entities that are involved in Indian education. They, too, will have their own unique set of where the money came from, what is intended to do by statute, what the regulations have been to create how it gets spent, and then what's happened with sequestration.

So there's multiple answers to your question. Does this help?

MR. CARROLL: Well, I think, based upon what I'm seeing tell me if my understanding is correct ----- we are in fact talking about two separate things.

When I look at this PowerPoint page, this is talking about the Title VII program. And within the context of Title VII, \$105 million of that is allocated via a formula driven methodology.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Entitlement, to student count.

MR. CARROLL: Eighteen million of it is determined through, you have the discretion of how those dollars go out, and then you have the STEP piece. That's ----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Application.

MR. CARROLL: ---- so you said discretionary has nothing to do with the discretionary sequestration issue that's going on budgetarily at this level.

So, the way I'm understanding is, at this level, what we in Indian country have been told is the effect of sequestration is across the board cuts to all discretionary programs. Right? So then what's left of that comes to you in the Department of Ed for Title VII, which then you allocate out via this methodology. But those are two separate things if I'm understanding correctly.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: They're not actually separate. The Budget Control Act, which is the act that is governing the sequestration dilemma that we are in with the federal government affects all federal funding. So, yes, we are impacted.

The \$105 million that you see here was reduced by five percent; a little over five percent, as a matter of fact. And that has been generated for each of the entities that are working on their budgets now. We had just, had finished for Title VII and we were just beginning Part 2 when we got word of what the amount was going to be that we were reduced.

MR. CARROLL: So then the answer is, in fact, yes, that Department of Ed Title VII monies were impacted by the effects of sequestration.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MR. CARROLL: Okay. I must have misunderstood that in the previous answer, so thank you for clarifying that.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: And what kind of impact depended on the circumstances around that fund. For the \$105 million, I have no other place that we could cover that five percent.

Under the discretionary programs, which is the \$18 million that you see here, it was reduced by over five percent, so it's under -- it's \$17 something. Actually, I don't remember now the exact dollar for dollar. But that amount will be used for us to cover those grants that have already been made, that are already out there, that people are relying on.

What it will reduce instead is the number of new grants that we can make this year.

Under the STEP, the STEP grants were under national activities dollars. National activities dollars were also reduced by the five percent. But we had a budget modification under one of our contracts that allowed us some unexpended dollars, and we were able to make up our full five percent without impacting this year's grants. Next year, that won't be the case. Next year, there will be an impact to all three.

This is just the Title VII portion of the No Child Left Behind Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Each of the other titles also was impacted by sequestration. How it played out to their grantees, to their public, depended on the circumstances of their finance at this time. The reason we are able to have less of an impact at the current time for Title VII is because all four of our grant areas were funded at the end of September of last year.

Funding at the end of September was Fiscal Year 12 money. Sequestration impacts Fiscal Year 13 money.

MR. CARROLL: So you're using forward funding.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: It's not legally forward funding because then I would be doing a full year in advance.

MR. CARROLL: Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: It is kind of a quasi-forward funding because we find at the end of the fiscal year.

MR. CARROLL: I apologize if somebody already made this comment this morning, but I just want to use this opportunity to make this comment for the record.

You said that the USET tribes are fundamentally opposed to the effects of sequestration being applied to Indian Country programs and dollars. This includes funding of ESEA; specifically, what we're talking about right now, Title VII.

As I know was commented on earlier this morning by our president, Brian Paterson, the majority of our kids that reside in the East here attend public schools, so these dollars that come through this channel are extremely important to the needs of our Indian youth in this region.

So, again, for the record, we are adamantly opposed to the effects of sequestration on all programs that affect any budget cuts, especially education, because from our vantage point, there are two fundamental responsibilities that the United States has in fulfilling that trust responsibility. One is in the area of health care, holistic health care, and the other area is the area of education.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I appreciate that, and I'm glad that you put that on the record. Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to make a comment today?

MR. CARROLL: Is this just general commenting?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: This is just general commenting.

MR. CARROLL: This isn't USET specific, but it's a personal comment from me at least. You were speaking, talking specifically about native children attending public schools, whether it be on or off the reservations.

I am a product of the public school system, and I always find it fascinating and always share this example that when I was in the public school phase of my academic career, it wasn't until the very end of my senior year that I even learned that my high school had a native program for native youth at my high school. The only way that was manifested was I received an invitation to come to an honoring ceremony about two weeks before school ended, and at that time, that's when I learned that there was a program supposedly there to support me as a native student in the public school system.

The reason why I always use that example is, without placing blame or pointing fingers at the educational system I came from, this is a very rich, urban native community.

There are native youth in higher numbers in this specific community, as compared to other urban areas, and this is a very large public school system, the largest in the state. And to find out that there was such a program that I was totally unaware of was absurd and unacceptable.

I know that is not a situation or circumstance unique to me. I'm sure that is replicated across the country, which underscores the importance to make sure that ----- funding is the starting point for these programs, but beyond the funding is making sure that they are having the impact that the supposed to be having in these communities beyond just the school system being able to say that they have this program. That's extremely important, and I know that to be the case in our USET region.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Could I ask you a question?

MR. CARROLL: Sure.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Were you a student with higher grade level?

MR. CARROLL: Yes.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: My point exactly. Unfortunately, many of our programs do not identify well the Native American student that is doing well. It is almost like a doubly underserved population.

I appreciate that. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT: To tag onto a few of the words he used, IMPACT how does the federal government hold the accountability?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I'm sorry; I -----

PARTICIPANT: Dollars go down, and you know, how does the federal government measure that they're getting their dollar's worth? And where can tribes actually go to read that, to find that? Because, as you get down and have to deal with the state, depending on which state you're from, things can be pretty ----- what would be the word? Exhausting.

MR. CARROLL: One other note for the record. I know that this year, we're looking at the reauthorization of ESEA once again. I know it didn't happen last year. But USET partnered and collaborated a couple years ago now with the National Congress of American Indians as well as the Native American Indian Education Association, and we drafted what is still called today the Native Class Act, which accounted for various scenarios of Indian education because, within our USET region, our kids go to all the different types and varieties of systems that you can think of.

We were extremely disappointed when none of the provisions or the language that we put forward addressing native education, Indian education, came out of the Health Committee.

We view this reauthorization opportunity with ESEA as a wonderful opportunity to address some of these unique challenges and opportunities within Indian Country and in our Indian youth. So for none of that language, none of those provisions, to make it out of the Health Committee was beyond frustrating. This is going to be the vehicle which looks to strengthen education in all corners of the country, not just Indian Country.

For any country to be left out, especially in light of the dismal overall rates of dropouts and absenteeism and delinquency and post high school pursuit, et cetera, for that class of population to be left out when we are generally performing more poorly than other communities is not acceptable. It's not acceptable because, from honoring that trust responsibility, understanding, that should be the first thing on the radar.

Especially in an environment where we know that the ability for us as tribal nations to work cooperatively with the states in which we reside varies across the board. But there are some scenarios within our USET region where our tribes have a very favorable and strong working relationship with the states, so addressing the needs of our native kids in those states holds a far better chance than in scenarios where the state and tribe don't have a working relationship at all.

At the end of the day, our kids are going to be the ones left out because of that, so this is one of those situations where it becomes the role of the United States as trustee in this government to government relationship, as you noted earlier and as expressed in this consultation, to make sure that that is not occurring, and that state challenges don't present themselves as barriers to addressing education in Indian country.

PARTICIPANT: My question would be, what do you see changing now?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I believe we have a seat at the table which has not been available to us in the past. That isn't a great promise or means of making that change in the immediate future, but it is a commitment to the ongoing effort to see that change come about.

Part of the product of the tribal consultations there is one published document, Tribal Leaders Speak, there are the transcripts from each of the sessions that are available online, and with all

of those, there is a an awareness that is coming about. Yes, in the previous ESEA reauthorization efforts, those have been concluded, and with the next ESEA reauthorization efforts, it begins again.

In the blueprint that is the formal document that the Department of Education is promoting and still promoting, that same work and the groundwork that was laid is still a part of that document.

We are not able to do lobbying. As a matter of fact, when we talk to groups that do lobbying, we are under its definite scrutiny over what we do or do not say. So we cannot take a stand as a Department of Education representative either for or against a piece of legislation.

MR. CARROLL: So let me just say, you should feel completely comfortable within this crowd, since we are not a lobbying group because Indian country is not a special interest group that needs a lobby and we have to protect their interests. So feel free to share whatever you like.

(Laughter.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Pay no attention to the recorder at the back. I would like to continue to be a voice of what you tell us in the rooms and the role of my position in the Department of Education. Based on that, I will defer back to the group here. This is why it is so critically important to have people sharing their true issues and concerns with us, because this is the only way we can take it back and share it with the people who need to hear it.

MR. CARROLL: I apologize for asking this next question and Kandice, you may already know the answer to this, but it's not coming to me right now is there still a conversation taking place right now about the Bureau of Indian Education falling under the umbrella of the Department of Education, or is that off the table?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Last December 3rd, there was, based on the Executive Order, a Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Interior and the Department of Education to collaborate. We are not taking over the Bureau of Indian Education, and the Department of Education is not a part of the Bureau of Indian Education. So they are still two distinct entities with the guidance, with the responsibility of educating Indian children from birth to lifelong education.

Children that we educate in the public schools are many times also, at one point or another during their educational career, a part of the Bureau of Indian Education. What that

memorandum guides us to do is to better communicate between two departments within the federal government to assure that our policies and our process are at least communicated and shared across the lines, and that's an important change that was not in place prior to the executive orders of the last two administrations.

MR. CARROLL: So, if I may just add and offer for the record, USET is appreciative to see that Department of Education and Department of Interior are communicating. I would say, however, that our expectation is that they should have been communicating along.

Our expectation, for the record, is that they should be working cooperatively because, even though the Department of Interior is often viewed, especially through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as the point within the federal system to carrying out that trust responsibility, it is our contention and our position with USET that the trust responsibility extends across all agencies, departments, and bureaus within the federal system. The fact that the Department of Education isn't doing that to the same extent that interior wise is not acceptable, recognizing, however, that this is a good first step of them at least reaching out to one another.

However, our expectation is that it's well beyond just reaching out and communicating, that it actually becomes realized as something much more powerful than just communicating and sharing information where they were actually partnering in the execution of that education component to the trust responsibility.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I appreciate that and support your goal.

Hello.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Hello.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Welcome.

COMMENTS BY CHERYL ANDREWS-MALTAIS,

CHAIRWOMAN, WAMPANOAG TRIBE OF GAY HEAD

(AQUINNAH)

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Thank you. Sorry that I'm late. My name is ----- I don't need a microphone, I guess.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I don't think you have to turn it on. I think he's turning it on from the back of the room.

My name is Cheryl Andrews Maltais. I am the Chairwoman of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah). Thank you for holding this session. I apologize; I misread the notice this morning; I thought it was one o'clock. But my vice chairman was here ----- Mr. Richard Randolph and I guess he hit most of the points that we had collaborated on.

But I just really wanted to reinforce the concern that we have with 90 percent of the Indian education funding going to tribal schools, and 90 percent well, for us, 100 percent of our students are in public school and private school, and that is all of us in the Northeast and the majority of us East of the Mississippi, we want to know whether or not there has been any movement to reevaluate this formula because it has been on the agenda for us for three years, four years now, from one of the consultation meetings that we had.

You know, the disparity to where those monies can actually be effective, for our communities, is just too larger gap. The Title VII monies that we have, they're restrictive to a certain extent; however, we have some serious concerns. And I don't know if this is everyone in the country, but particularly in the Northeast, being that an individual can self-declare, and there's no requirement to demonstrate that they are members of federally recognized tribe or enrolled members of federally recognized tribes poses a challenge to us because those are revenues that are to be set aside for Indians, and in every other case of monies that are set aside for Indians, they are to go to members of federally recognized tribes.

Because there's no requirement for those Title VII monies to verify that, it just concerns us because we have such a limited amount of dollars that it's getting channeled off to people who may or may not be entitled to that specific support that was designated for Indians.

I guess the last thing is, is trying to work through the G 5 delivery system. It's challenging.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Say that again, please.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: The G 5, I think it is. Was that the last iteration?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: But it is challenging, to say the least, in the communication and ensuring that, you know, what we put forward the report and the expenditures are able to be accepted. We have a lot of issues in trying to get the people that are representing Department of Indian Education to actually acknowledge that the work has been done. The money has been expended. It's not out of Appropriations' purview; therefore, it is allowable.

And we shouldn't have to go such machinations to do a budgetary change for a small line item. Small tribes like ours, the human resources that's necessary to try to go through all these hurdles and hoops that we're being asked to do for a very small amount, I think, is a little bit more than necessary. And I think that if we can work together at streamlining that process or at least allow them some flexibility in how they handle it, it might work better for us, as well.

MR. CARROLL: Can I just add to the first point that the Chairwoman was making about the Title VII funding?

One of the things that we recognize is, you know, in the scenario where our youth are attending public schools off the tribal lands, we know that we have our kids attending the schools, and those school systems are receiving those Title VII dollars.

You know, it is not a far stretch of the imagination for us to be requesting that those school systems work more directly with the tribal leadership in the development of that curriculum to meet the needs of those native students attending those public schools, so that's from the lens of us looking after protecting our Indian youth; right?

But the other part of this equation, too, that I want to state for the record is one of our biggest challenges that we are often confronted with across the board, no matter what issue we're dealing with whether it's education, whether it's tax, whether it's whatever there is a fundamental disconnect of America as it relates to Indian Country, and the tribal leaders sitting around the USET table will tell you that starts at the K through 12 education level, where our non-native students, as well as the native students, are not getting a proper curriculum as it relates to Indian Country, in terms of from a historical context as well as a present day context.

So we take the position that states, as part of this whole process to make sure that, you know, when the administration is standing up there saying that we support sovereignty, we support nation rebuilding et cetera, on down the line, well, that starts with our kids at the earliest levels.

If there's an opportunity where a public school, even if it's not on the res, is in close proximity to Indian Country, there is no excuse in the world that is acceptable for why that public school system isn't teaching those students within that school system more about the tribes that reside within that area.

I say that as a former student myself to live in a state with federally recognized tribes within those borders, of which there was no curriculum that spoke to those tribes, their connection to that state, and their present day situation within that state. And that is on acceptable.

So there's two sides to this argument, one from meeting the immediate needs of our native youth, but there's also a more fundamental argument in terms of meeting a larger need of all students as it relates to understanding the very governments that they're learning about in their civics class, you know, federal governments, state governments, County and municipal governments. Well, there's another government in that structure, and its tribal government. And that's the part that's left out of that civics class.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I agree.

MS. HILL: Hi.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: This lady would like to speak.

COMMENTS BY NOREEN HILL

NIAGARA FALLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

MS. HILL: Hi. I'm Noreen Hill. I'm with the Niagara Falls City School District. I'm a Title VII program director.

To mention just a couple of things that I've been listening to. One, to verify your students for your tribal enrollment or heritage, you have a 506 that has to be filled out. And if you know your community well enough, you'll know if there are native students or not.

Do you -

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: It's not our, it's not our community. It's the school district on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

So, if any student claims in the school system's forms that they're of American Indian descent, they get to be incorporated into any one of the programs that we provide for through Title VII, whether they're our tribal members or not.

MS. HILL: Yeah, but your Title VII program ----- you have to have a 506 form that has to be filled out. Anybody can declare they're Native American. Until they fill out their form and log their tribe and their heritage through their grandparents, they don't get the service. And this is where you need to talk to your school district.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Yeah, I can guarantee you that they've never done it, because they're very unaware of it.

MS. HILL: Okay, what about your parent committee? Don't they advocate for that?

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: We've changed the structure of it from having the school system administer most of it through the parents committee, to utilizing our education committee as the parents committee because our tribal members of the parents of our students.

Because of the way that the school system was just blatantly doing what they wanted to, we took over a lot of those aspects. But one of the caveats was that they'll collect the data, the forms, but again, anybody that declares and they don't have any background, and they don't have any way to go ahead and verify whether or not somebody is actually an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe. And they basically use the same standard as the United States Census.

MS. HILL: Now you need to inform your board that they need to give you the 506 forms as an Indian education program so you can track that.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Okay.

MS. HILL: And inform them, if they come in and get audited, they're going to have to pay back all that money for the people they can't account for.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Yes.

MS. HILL: And that's one of the things; you have to work with your board of ed. You have to work with them and you have to work with your superintendent.

Our superintendent is great. I take care of the 506 forms. I have them. I send them copies. I have the right to have as soon as I have a 506 form, I don't care what they're declared as, as a school district. Once their parent fills out their 506 form, they're considered native. And that's the only way they're considered native until I have - give them one of those forms.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Well, they fill out a form, but again, it's self-declared, so -----

MS. HILL: Yeah, but you and your community, you should know -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Excuse me.

MS. HILL: ----- you should know who your native people are. Do you understand what I'm saying?

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Yeah, but I think my point is that we know who our community is.

MS. HILL: Yeah.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: But our community is infiltrated with a lot. We don't have, we're not on a reservation.

MS. HILL: No, neither am I.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: We're a small location, but it's integrated with people that move into there from all over the country. So we may not know specifically who is. And, while they say, yes, I am, I can't challenge somebody from Navaho that says that they're Navaho -----

MS. HILL: Yes, you can; yes, you can.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: ----- because it's not my right to.

MS. HILL: Yes, you can.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Well, see, that's what they didn't explain, that we have the right to go ahead and request from whatever tribe that they claim, that we can send a letter of verification to that tribe to ensure that they are?

MS. HILL: Yes.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: That's news.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Within the 506 form, one of the things that we are instituting this year is a webinar that we'll be talking about: How to complete the 506 form.

Within the 133 audits that we have seen since I've been in this job, I would say over half of them have issues with the 506 form for exactly this reason. The school systems themselves may not be familiar with how to determine who is an Indian and who is not.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: And so how well the form gets completed may be accurate for them, or may be inaccurate and kicked out at the point of an audit.

We do monitoring of our school systems, randomly, across the country. Thirteen hundred programs, and we have five people I guarantee we don't do enough monitoring. But we do the monitoring we can get done.

If you still feel like there is a problem at your school, contact Bernard Garcia.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Okay.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: And Bernard Garcia is the group leader for the Title VII formula program, and his address is on the flyer, and she has a copy to be able to distribute to people.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Thank you, because we didn't have any of that information prior to we've had a lot of transitions over the past several years.

And I was wondering, with regard to ----- is there any funding that's available for students that leave the public school system to go to private boarding schools or private schools for a better education?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: At this time, I'm not aware of anything that is available along that line. And yes, I know that that has been a question that I've heard before.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Okay. And with regard to incorporating or expanding our school systems, until just recently, our tribal government head made an incorrect assumption that the only services that can be provided through our tribal government are to people that live on the island of Martha's Vineyard. But that isn't true.

So, therefore, where we have pockets of our tribal members that may not be living on Martha's Vineyard, we'd like to be able to provide the same level of tutoring, cultural sensitivity, and everything else that we provide for, on the island.

Is there a place or a website that I could go to, in order to find out how to start that process?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: As far as finding them -----

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Yes.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: ----- I don't know how that would be done. I assume you have a tribal role that you maintain as a tribe.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Oh, we know where people are -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: You know where your people are.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: They're from DOE -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Okay.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Or -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: So then it depends on whether there's an interest in creating a Title VII program. You need 10 students in a school district, and yes, you can file that application. And the location ----- again, Bernard Garcia is the group leader for the formula program.

MS. WATSON: Just remember, though, you may be pulling money from your school district to send to those 10 kids.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: But they're tribal members, so they are our people.

MS. WATSON: Well, yeah, I know. I just want you to understand that they're not going to get additional monies for those things.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: It doesn't, well, yeah, that's what we always get with all the agencies. It may not mean an addition to money, but thank you. But the problem is that we've had 75 percent of our tribal membership have not been serviced with any of our programs and services for over 25 years.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Right.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: So we have to move, shift, change, and stretch that dollar, I guess.

But thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Both of you are right, and yes, that does not have, we do not have an increase that we foresee at this time. However, our numbers are steady. Our numbers have inclined upward over time, so I don't believe - I think there's a strong argument for that.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Thank you very much, and thank you for hosting this forum. And again, I apologize for being late.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: We're glad you're here. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT: Could you refresh my memory on an Indian education? Is it descentent, heritage, member? What does the law require?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The child is the person that we begin from. If the child is an enrolled tribal member of any federally recognized or state recognized, then they are eligible. If their parent, one parent, meets the same criteria, they would be eligible.

PARTICIPANT: But then it stops there; no?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Grandparents, as well.

PARTICIPANT: Does it stop there?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT: So they would technically be a quarter.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Pardon?

PARTICIPANT: A quarter by that point, do you mean?

PARTICIPANT: Well, no. We don't, as you know, go by blood quantum, so I'm struggling with what terms are being used. As money gets smaller, so is our nation because Indian Health tends to say, well, it could be some areas, whatever the tribe decides.

But you know, you gave me my answer; descendent stops at a grandparent -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

SPEAKER: ----- that's enrolled in a federal or state recognized.

MR. CARROLL: You made the comment that there are five FTEs or whatever the case may be that are auditing the ----- 10 FTEs - that are doing the audit of this program. Did I hear you correctly? To make sure that information is being -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: You're talking about staff members on my no, there are five within the formula program.

MR. CARROLL: That are doing the auditing to make sure that this is -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MR. CARROLL: I guess the reason why I pause on that is because I make this statement recognizing that I may not be fully informed or may not be recollecting all the information at this point -- -- but I recently moved to Tennessee, which is where the USET headquarters are, three years ago, and enrolled my children.

I don't ever recall being asked, I know I was asked what ethnicity or race I was checking off in the box, but I don't ever remember a question being asked about enrollment. I don't think I was

asked that. So if I'm not being asked that, is there an entire school system that is not asking the appropriate questions to get dollars within that system to -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: My suspicion is you're right.

MR. CARROLL: I mean, I don't want to cause alarm. I may just not be recalling it, but I just don't recall that question being asked.

I'm going to go ask now and find out, but.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Ask them if they have a 506, Education 506 form on file for your child.

PARTICIPANT: Now the form is for one school calendar year; correct?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: No. The forms -----

PARTICIPANT: How many years -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Because the child's heritage doesn't change -----

PARTICIPANT: No; true. But they could be in or out of that school -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes, but -----

PARTICIPANT: ----- or they could transfer.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The 506 form declares eligibility.

PARTICIPANT: Correct.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The Part 1 of the application, back to the G 5 system I'm sorry; back to the easy application ----- Part 1 of the easy application declares the number of children they have enrolled this year.

PARTICIPANT: School or calendar year?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Two different things. So they have to be 506 eligible; they have to be in the school this year.

PARTICIPANT: Full year, part year, or how does -----

MS. SILVERTHORNE: There is a count period. They have to be in the school during the count period.

PARTICIPANT: The law states a count period.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. Thank you.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Now is that a requirement of all schools, all schools throughout the country, or all school systems throughout the country -- they're supposed to take that assessment and fill out this form? And if it's not, shouldn't it be? And what do you need us to do to make it be?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: All schools are eligible to do this. And should they be? I think so, because it provides, back to a few moments ago, that acknowledgment and recognition for every child that's eligible.

One of the concerns that I have as I watch this process is that we need to be looking for all of our children because, otherwise, entire programs are based on only a segment of that population. If, in fact, we are missing the gifted and talented of American Indian youth in this identification process, then all we are doing is talking about the student who's in need of assistance and help, and that skews the discussion.

So, unless we are talking about all of our children, then we change the picture of who we're trying to address.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: I think part of the problem is, at least in my tribe and in my understanding throughout the years, that it appeared that only if you had a reservation within a particular public school system, that's the only time that it was applicable.

And I don't know if that was the rule before or not, but clearly, in our case, as I mentioned, only 25 percent of our tribe's population live on the island. Seventy five percent live outside that of that area, but an overwhelming majority lives right through the water in the Elizabeth Islands to the mainland, where people would go for school, for work, and for their futures.

So we have twice to three times the number of native students in the New Bedford School System or in Southeastern Mass. than we have on the island, and yet they've never, ever, to my knowledge, or at least when my nieces and nephews were going to school, they never once asked those questions.

So, the more I think about it and the more of the discussion, the more frightening it is that we potentially have been losing so many of our gifted native students because our mindset has always been, from our perspective, only on the island, and only in the school district that the kids, where the reservation would be in that school district. You know, because again, we are in more public schools than in Indian schools where they'd have that clear understanding.

And it just leads me to what's going on in Rhode Island with Narragansett, what's going on up in Maine with the Maine tribes, in Connecticut and everything else, as well as the Cape. So our experience is mirrored throughout the colonial tribes. And I think we've probably all been under the misconception that it's only one narrow area and not broad based, as it should be.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I agree. And the misconception is, over time, changes, and it depends a great deal in each community on who the person is that's listening to the regulations or the discussions. And it's not going to change, as near as I can tell. It's a process of all of us communicating more broadly and with better information.

MS. WATSON: I think, just to answer your question when you asked, does every school have this, like she said, every school is eligible but they have to actually come up with the idea to apply, and that just may be the instance.

You know, people just, maybe they didn't know there were Indians in their school or they're going to claim they didn't know. Or maybe it was just too much trouble to apply or whatever. Because I know at our school, Stockbridge, I went to that school, and we never had a formula grant until maybe 10 years ago.

So they're always there, but people just maybe were not aware of them and didn't apply for them.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: My family makes up half the, half the requirement.

MS. WATSON: Yeah. And as long as there's 10 students in those schools, they can apply.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed in 1965, and formula programs have been available from that time until now. So it's been out there. Regulations and statutes have adjusted and changed, the title number has changed, but the law itself has been in place that long.

Part of the change in numbers happened with No Child Left Behind.

, as school districts were required to identify and disaggregate the information about the population that they served. Suddenly, they were confronted with American Indian children, and they had to be held accountable for how well those children did. That has placed a different responsibility back to those same administrations.

Not the full answer, but at least it's a part of the puzzle.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: And it's part of the solution.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Thank you.

MR. COOK: I've got a couple questions in regard to Title VII. I would look for clarification on what is the role of the LEA, and what is the role of the parent committee? I'd like to get some clarification on that, please.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: The LEA is responsible to recognize that it has Indian children, and on their behalf, prepare an application.

The parent committee is responsible to work with the school and to inform the school the kind of concerns they have for the education of their children. The application cannot be submitted unless the parent committee has signed off on that form. That is a requirement. So what it does is, it instructs the school how to apply. It instructs the parent committee in taking on that responsibility for their children.

Does that answer your question?

MR. COOK: ----(No response.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Is there more to that question?

MR. COOK: That's yeah yeah, you've got most of that. Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I'm not sure how our recorder's going to translate that.

(Laughter.)

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Are there other comments?

MS. HILL: Hi, I'd like to make another one.

In New York State, we started a New York State Indian Education Association, and it brings all the Title VII programs across New York State together, and we've worked together for about the last 30 years to address the issues from each school district or tribal community.

What we do is we sit down, we discuss concerns that we have in each area; then we're letting the principals from the school district know some of the issues that we have. They're the ones that are starting to look at how to input our Indian students and keep track of them, to get our numbers for different grants and state aid. Our state, New York State Indian Aid is part of it, so he's aware of a lot of the things.

So a lot of things I've been hearing today is: you need to get together as a state agency or as a state community and start getting your politicians involved as a whole, and then your school boards, getting them involved with your parents. And you're going to move faster than just trying to fight individually with each school district or each reservation. And we found that it makes a big difference. We're working, some of our committee members are working with the New York State Education Department on trying to get some of our language accredited for our students. We've had quite a few things.

But it's pulling together as educators and bringing it together and keeping them aware that we're here; we're watching what's going on. Bringing your principals in and making them aware that there's committees, and we're concerned.

My school district I have a great school district I know board members; I work with them. As superintendent, I work with all of the administrative. We're just starting a new at one time,

each school would enroll the student ----- now we're going to a centralized enrollment. So they will have the 506s. They will know, once there's a native student, that they need to have that filled out, and then it will be forwarded to me, and that way, I will track.

So a lot of the concerns that I've been hearing, I think if you get together at the state unit and start working with all the people involved in the education for your students, it will make it a lot easier for you in some of the struggles you're having.

Thanks.

MR. CARROLL: Just one comment I would like to make - that I believe ties in to the gentleman's question about LEAs and TEAs.

The obvious first step in addressing some of these concerns that we're putting forward do have to do with working towards stronger collaborative relationships with your LEAs, your local education systems.

However, the concern that I have is that, I think if we're honest in this dialogue, we also know that there are limitations to how far they're willing to go. And we see that demonstrated through their pushback in terms of federal oversight and involvement in state education decisions. States want the authority and ability to make those education decisions at the state level and then within their local school districts, and not being driven by federal mandates and federal guidance. We all know that.

We also know that in most situations, there isn't a tribe in sight in these LEA districts for them to have that initial awareness of what Indian Country needs, challenges, opportunities, even art.

So, really, where part of the longer term solution resides is in this notion of TEAs and in giving us as tribes the same authority as given to LEAs. That's the only way that we're really going to be able to make sure that curriculum for our students is done in a manner that meets our unique individual circumstances. Now I'm not even talking about a cookie cutter for all Indian Country. I'm talking about five or six separate and distinct educational decision processes that we should have the ability to do.

It goes back to again, I'm going to use your own language earlier about government to government. Well, the government to government is not between us and the states; it's between us and the feds, and the feds need to recognize that we should have that authority and right to make these educational decisions on our own, as well as accompanied with the necessary appropriated dollars,

which is why I was parking on this whole discretionary discussion, to make sure that we can fulfill that. It's of no value to us if there's a policy that's not accompanied by appropriated dollars to be able to execute on that.

So I know that in what we've submitted, we've pushed for this TEA concept of giving tribes the authority to have that same level of decision making authority as the LEAs have.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

A note as far as the TEA program: That is actually the role of the SEA that they are endorsed with, not the LEA. And so they go into the LEA in place of the state, and that's how the four programs that are operating now, that's how those agreements are being drawn.

MR. COOK: -----I see.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: And granted, until we have greater funding in that realm, we're still in a pilot program, but that is hopefully what this pilot program will provide, good experience and good information to be able to do it.

MR. COOK: How many are in that pilot?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Four.

MR. COOK: -----Four. And I don't think that any of those four are pilots within this region, are they? Or am I wrong?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: They're all in the Western part of the United States: Idaho, Oregon, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, only because those are the ones that applied.

MS. OOASAHWEE: The contact information is up here if you want to jot down Bernard's number or Joyce's number.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: We can take a break and come back and see if there are any thoughts you'd like to continue discussion about, or we can look at wrapping up the afternoon.

MS. WATSON: I'm a wrap. I won't be coming back, so I'm a wrap.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Okay. Are you headed to the golf tournament?

MS. WATSON: No, no. All I can do is drive a cart.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: All right. Yes.

Off the record.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 2:56 p.m. and reconvened at 3:01 p.m.)

MR. CARROLL: So, just two final comments for the record. Specifically, I know this isn't necessarily an ESEA reauthorization consultation. But, one, this ESEA reauthorization offers the opportunity for Indian education to be looked at in a much more creative and innovative way than it currently is dealt with. So that's one perspective.

The other perspective is, you know, when the United States signed on to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, acknowledging indigenous people of this country, ESEA also offers a broader opportunity when you're talking about honoring what they recognize as this sacred trust relationship. It starts with a proper telling, which is really justice arguments of Indian country, when all children start within the public school system.

So ESEA offers an opportunity for the United States to put forward a creative and innovative way to redo its history civics courses to really engage all families on - not only Indian Country history, as I stated earlier - but also current day civics and issues. And that is something that can be advocated from within, because that's not a lobbying issue. That's a justice and moral ethical argument of what we should be doing as the United States to back up our position on support of UNDRIP in recognizing the rights of indigenous people within the countries.

Thank you.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: I guess, to echo that, making sure that how do we work towards getting the history of this country correct? The history of this country started with not only the people in Virginia but also our people, the Wampanoag.

Our history books in around fourth to sixth grade generally speaking, in fifth grade - read ---- has an illustration, incorrect as it is, of Pilgrims and Indians, and a Pilgrim stepping foot on a rock, Plymouth Rock. They go on and talk about the first Thanksgiving with complete misinformation. And then they propel themselves a century and a half forward to the American Revolution. Within that

century and a half of the atrocities and the oppression and the acculturation that was perpetrated against our people even back then.

Then we continue through American history, as the United States wants us to believe it. Our children are dramatically impacted by that. Typically speaking, even our best students get thrown out of class at least once in History. That's our job to do. But on top of that, what we find is that it also lends to the ignorance not only of the general public but the legislators and everybody else that we are involved with.

And I think that through the Department of Indian Education or the Office of Indian Education might be the way for us to get Indian Country's story, our story, told, and not the United States' rendition of the history of this country, but Indian Country's true, accurate account of the impacts to us through the formulation of this country.

Thank you.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I need to share with you because you're talking about some things we talked about this morning, one of the challenges we have from the federal government is that during the creation of the Department of Education, one of the reasons that it got created or had permission to be created became the debate over whether the federal government was going to then tell the states how to do education. And so curriculum is one of the few pieces that we are statutorily told we cannot be involved in.

I thought the same thing; I thought that there would be a place for conversations about curriculum from our offices, and unfortunately, that isn't a place where that will come from. It truly does start with your states.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: And our state has tried to be a little bit more progressive since the '70s, but still failing miserably.

But maybe, if the federal government Department of Education, Department of Indian Education can't mandate that because the statute says no, maybe it would be that repository that we as tribal nations in Indian Country can say, well, there is this resource that you can go to; it's called the Department of Indian Education, and they do have a tribal perspective of history that would be able to be incorporated. You're not telling them that they've got to do it, but if it's available, we can at least

guide and direct them to where it might be, and work on trying to develop some sort of nation approved type of history, because we all have our own history and the impacts.

But then, if we are providing it to you as the resource, as the repository, then we can advise school systems and/or students I mean I get students from, you know, K through doctorate you know, I'd like to learn more about your people; how do I do that? It's like, that's one person. But if a school system is teaching accurate history, it makes it that much easier, and they don't come knocking on our door individually.

MR. CARROLL: So what I'm hearing, then, recognizing what you just said earlier about the role of the Department of Education and what you guys can and can't do this number may be wrong, but I think it's generally in the right vicinity but if a quarter of the counties in the total United States, or less than a quarter of the counties in the United States, have tribes residing within their borders, that's a pretty steep uphill battle, convincing your local states why it's important to have Indian education, Indian history as part of their curriculum.

I guess ----- not calling you absurd ----- what I'm hearing is the absurdity in what you just said, though, is that these are federal tax dollars going to the states to provide the very curriculum that we're talking about. And to me, as a United States citizen, who pays in taxes, that's unacceptable.

So, to the point that she was making about, there should be certain requirements, like there is for any other type of grant or contract across the board we're all living in the world of logic, models and outcomes, and data-driven methodologies why is it that the states don't have to prove that they've built in a proper telling component in order for them to receive any dollar of educational monies? Should it be at their complete discretionary authority to be able to do that? Because, if it is, then we need to start making this argument that we should be held to the same standard to have full rein to use dollars however we choose, as well, which we don't. We've got every chain that you can think of, in terms of guiding what decisions we can make.

So there clearly seems to be an opportunity as part of ESEA reauthorization to seek a legislative remedy requiring states to have some sort of required Indian Country history requirement in order for them to receive any federal funding for education.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Absolutely.

MR. CARROLL: That's right ----- driven by Indian country.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I would recommend taking a look at a few states where things are changing, and that would be Montana, Washington, Nevada, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

PARTICIPANT: Are all those states with Indians in them?

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Yes, they are.

MS. WATSON: Well, I just wanted to ask you quickly, in Massachusetts, do you provide any kind of augmented curriculum for, you know, for the school? Because I know New York State is not always the best with things, but I do know that they do a pretty good job of getting our Haudenosaunee history and culture into the school; maybe only in the fourth grade, but they get it. I know that the Onondaga Nation was very influential in getting that gathered, those materials together and everything. So every school in New York State is given this curriculum, and they are to teach it.

Does Massachusetts do that? I mean, have you guys provided Massachusetts with any kind of materials that you want distributed to the schools?

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: The last time that I'm sure it was done, when people were really focused in on it, was in the '70s. It has evolved. But I think that there is way too much discretion left up to the individual school systems as to what they want to pick and choose. I think they were given a framework, and other things became, I guess, more of a focused priority. I can only say that, because I've haven't been that engaged in what the education curriculum has been.

But because each of the school systems within the Commonwealth has a lot of latitude, some say none, even though they're mandated to. There's no one bird dogging, watching them, or ensuring that the curriculum is being taught because it was through the Commission on Indian Affairs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sometime around 1976 or '78 that it was mandated through the Commonwealth that all schools are required to teach some aspect of Wampanoag history in the school system.

MS. WATSON: Well, that was in '72 when the law was passed.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Pretty much, like in '76 and whatnot.

But since then, because of the composition of potentially the Commission on Indian Affairs, because of the interest and/or the lack of people, human bodies, to sit there and continue to

grow it and standardize it to where it's at a level and continues to get revisited and updated and upgraded, I don't know where that's at.

MS. WATSON: Okay.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: I do know that our school system on the island teaches this Sybil Ludington thing, and it's the most offensive thing I've ever come across in my life.

It tells about how the Indians have been on this land for hundreds of years which is thousands of years.

The Seminoles are selling maps to the Fountain of Youth.

They have the Oneida doing some sort of crazy dance.

I mean, it's just totally, it's supposed to be a fun learning tool for history, for a young woman who did something for Paul Revere, and it's set to music. And it's usually apparently, it's a national play. I only found this out when we put our foot down at the school system and said, absolutely not; you will not do that anymore. And they made fun, and they said, well, you gave us your land; we gave you the mumps, and they made light of germ warfare and the kind of stuff on our peoples.

But it was written, I guess, in the '90s or earlier, and it's been circulated throughout the school systems nationally since then. Individual pockets of schools may use it, and others may not, but I was just really horrified. What was there and the understanding of people at the time those agreements were being made is one thing; the evolution and the successes of those people who had a common mind and goal has changed.

So, unless there's continuity and here's again where they get continuity with government ---- is to memorialize it through law or statute. That's the way it's going to be able to stay that way so that none of that offensive stuff can be factored in because, 'oh, we're doing an Indian thing; look, we're teaching it in History. Yeah, Seminoles sold maps to the Fountain of Youth. That's what they do; that's what the song says.'

The challenge is with our kids. When we brought it up to their attention, with that, you know, remove it or change the lyrics and at least, instead of hundreds of years, say thousands of year.

They said, well, we can't change it.

And it's like, why? Melodically, there's no difference between "thousand" and "hundreds."

You know, and, well, the children may not like it.

I said, excuse me; the children may not like it?

MS. WATSON: What?

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: So you can rewrite history and say these awful and offensive things to us, and insensitive things, and if the children don't like it, you're not going to change it to be correct? In 20 years when they're adults and they're sitting around, they're going to talk about some bogus history that they learned in a fifth grade song, and say, 'We had Indian kids in the class; they didn't object, so I guess what we learned in school must be accurate.' That's part of the challenges all of us face.

But we don't know what we don't know, and I didn't know this went on until my daughter was in fifth grade. Then we pulled the plug on it and I thought it was gone. And then we were in Poarch Creek, and I was pacing like a panther because they were calling me up saying, they're running a play again, and they said they were on the phone to the Superintendent of Schools, and they pulled it again.

But he was clear. We were clear. But the new principal found it and said, why aren't we doing this? It was amazing.

MS. WATSON: What in the world?

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: It's amazing. So I don't know what the answer is, except for maybe getting our people in our community in to readdress it with the states, and -----

MS. WATSON: Yeah, I would get your tribal education department to contact the Massachusetts Department of Education and find out exactly what materials they are distributing, you know, to get all of the kidsole in the public schools to learn about your peoples. You know, and it's not just to educate your children. It's for the entire school district.

I know, like for Oneida, we invite schools in. Everybody wants to come in November because that's Native American Heritage Month. But, you know, we do about 20 schools in the months of November and December. They come to the cultural center, they make a corn husk doll, and they learn a lot a bit about the Haudenosaunee and how we joined and all that.

But I will say ----- I was just sitting here thinking about it ----- it may be the same curriculum they teach down on Long Island for the Shinnecocks.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Right.

MS. WATSON: So I don't know if New York State has incorporated any type of Shinnecock history and culture, or, you know, Poospatuck, or I mean there's other tribes besides the Six Nations.

MS. ANDREWS MALTAIS: Right.

MS. WATSON: So I was just thinking about that. Do they teach the Haudenosaunee down on Long Island?

I'm just like, oh, my God, maybe they are.

PARTICIPANT: I guess I could share one positive thing about New York State.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Thank you.

(Laughter.)

PARTICIPANT: I will do that.

Last ----- I believe it was last fall the Hispanics were able to get through legislation sort of like a gold seal that could be attached to a New York State diploma in recognition of their being bilingual and being able to speak.

And my friends I have a few friends in Albany that had lived here stated that each nation within New York State should advocate that their students also get, that have learned their language, just as a recognition. So, thank you Latinos.

But that is part of it. As a melting pot, we do need to work together with other nationalities because the I don't know another word than (Native word spoken) are becoming a minority.

MS. WATSON: But I can just New York State: How do I know you're fluent in Oneida?

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

MS. WATSON: I know you're fluent in Spanish because I've got 15 Spanish people here that will say that. Well, who's going to say this girl is fluent in Oneida? I can just hear it already.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: Then that takes the authority back to the tribes that are responsible for those languages, and hopefully, that conversation begins. In chipping away at every little corner, eventually, there actually can be real change. With the state of Montana, they accept from each of the tribes the recommendation on who is the fluent speaker and who is eligible to teach.

MR. CARROLL: I lied; there is one additional thing I want to say.

(Laughter.)

MR. CARROLL: So, even though this isn't education specific, that last comment prompted this thought for me because one of the other things that we were just recently talking about here within the walls of USET is the immigration reform debate that's going on right now. My comment isn't necessarily about the immigration reform piece of it, necessarily, but it's, I know, one of the things that we've been talking about and I want to be clear, this is not a formal USET position at this point.

Let me qualify this by saying that I myself am married to an immigrant woman. But it is my firm belief that as part of any immigration debate and reform movement that occurs, since we talk about this melting pot and people coming around, from around the world, in order to become a United States citizen, part of that citizenship test should require indigenous knowledge components, awareness about the people who reside in the very land in which you are now calling yourself a citizen.

That is 100 percent absent right now in our United States citizenship test, in terms of a requirement for new ----- so we've got this historical issue of United States citizens, Americans, having, being for the most part ignorant to their own history as it relates to the indigenous people. Let's not perpetuate that with new citizens, and let's get them properly educated and aware about the very people in the place they're going to call home.

MS. WATSON: I think all the Congress people ought to take a citizenship test.

MS. SILVERTHORNE: I thank you for having the first opportunity to have more of a down home conversation at the table, and I appreciate it. I thank you for being here and staying with us for this long.

So, with that, we'll close the tribal consultation for today. Let me tell you, though, before we do that, that there will be another tribal consultation that will take place in Northern California sometime in August. We are attempting to get the date and location confirmed. We are also working with the Navaho tribe for a date and time, possibly mid September, in Phoenix. So both of those dates are coming up in the future.

So, thank you.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter adjourned at 3:21 p.m.)