

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF INDIAN EDUCATION

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LISTENING SESSION

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IDENTIFYING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND
MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS: REALITIES AND NEEDS

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MONDAY
MARCH 21, 2022

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The Listening Session convened via
Video Teleconference, at 1:00 p.m. EDT, Phillip
Roulain, Facilitator, presiding.

PRESENT

JULIAN GUERRERO, U.S. Department of Education
AMY LOYD, Senior Advisor, OS
HOLLIE MACKEY, Senior Advisor, OS
MICHELE MATTESON, Tribal Tech
PHILLIP ROULAIN, Facilitator, Tribal Tech

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ALSO PRESENT

DOROTHY AGUILERA-BLACK BEAR
TRAVIS ALBERS
APRIL CARMELO
KIMBERLY DAINGKAU-BEGAY
SHAYNA GURTLE ROWE
LUCYANN HARJO
CLARENCE HOGUE
JOEL ISAAK
STEPHANIE LAROCQUE
PAUL MCDONOGH
ROSE MCGUIRE
CHRISTINA NARVAEZ
CARYN RECORD
SARA ROBINSON
MARK ROSEBERRY
ELIZABETH SATIACUM
HELEN THOMAS
CAROL THOMPSON
TARA TINDALL
SYDNA YELLOWFISH
TESIA ZIENTEK

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

12:59 p.m.

MR. ROULAIN: Good afternoon. Welcome to the U.S. Department of Education Listening Session: Identifying Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs: Realities and Needs. This session is co-facilitated by the Office of Indian Education and Office of the Secretary. This session is now beginning.

Before we begin, some housekeeping items are: all lines have been muted. The listening session audio is being recorded.

Participants will be given the opportunity to present remarks and comments with priority to tribal leaders. Whenever speaking, please announce your name, title, and tribal affiliation.

This is a closed-press event. Please contact 202-401-1576 or email press@ed.gov for questions, if you are a member of the press.

During this session, if you are experiencing technical issues with your sound,

please contact the host through the chat window by using the private chat feature and send a message to Mark Taylor or Phillip Roulain. You may also reach us via email at mtaylor@tribaltechllc.com or proulain@tribaltechllc.com.

This session will also have subtitles.

If you need to activate those, please look under the feature with the three dots at the bottom part of your screen that says more, and then choose closed captioning and choose show subtitles.

I will now turn the session over to Mr. Julian Guerrero Jr., the Director of the Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you very much, Phillip. I appreciate that. Can you hear me okay?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes. Your sound levels are good.

MR. GUERRERO: Great. Thank you so

much.

Well, good morning and good afternoon to everybody who is able to join us digitally. We're so excited to be able to present our third out of four listening sessions we've been hosting here within the last week or so. It's just an incredible honor that I have to be not only introduced to you virtually, but then also be joined by colleagues of mine here at the Department of Education.

I'm pleased to introduce you to Amy Loyd, Senior Advisor with OS, as well as Hollie Mackey, who is also Senior Advisor with OS. I will let both of them respectively introduce themselves.

So Amy?

MS. LOYD: Thanks so much, Julian.

And hi, everyone. As Julian mentioned, I am a Senior Advisor in the Office of the Secretary. And part of my role has been working very closely with the U.S. Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona, on issues related

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to Native education. This is something that he, the administration, and all of us at ED are very dedicated to; learning from you, working with you, and strengthening and improving on behalf of our Native students, families, and communities.

Prior to coming to the Department, I worked in Native education myself. I served as a teacher, a family advocate, and a school and system leader, serving the Alaskan Native and Native American communities in Anchorage, Alaska.

And I know firsthand how important it is to hear from you, our leaders from across Indian Country, about how we might improve our schools and our services in our schools to serve our Native communities. So, thank you for engaging with us today.

I am here today and I'm so proud to be working with this administration because I believe in the power of education to advance equity and justice, and to transform lives and communities. And I also believe in education as a tool for self-determination.

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And all of us at ED want our Native students and families to have the tools, the resources, the skills, and the supports to be able to exercise meaningful self-determination about their own futures, and about the futures of our tribal communities.

So today's conversation about social, emotional, and mental health needs is really foundational to all of this, and I'm grateful to be a part of it.

I'm also the nominee for assistant secretary for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, and look forward to partnering more with Indian Country from that capacity, if and when I'm confirmed.

Back to you, Julian.

MS. MACKEY: Can I grab it from you, Julian?

MR. GUERRERO: Yes, please do. Thank you.

MS. MACKEY: Hi. My name is Hollie Mackey. Like Amy, I'm thrilled to be a part of

these conversations. I think that in any way that we are able to really get at the heart of what it means to have equitable education systems for our Native students, all of the work matters.

And none of it is possible without having input from our tribal communities. Because also, at the heart of what we do is focusing on self-determination and thinking about how to advance that.

So my role is the newly appointed Executive Director for the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities. So in my role I'll be working very closely with Amy and with Julian to help support your voices, to amplify what it is Indian Country wants for our students.

I also come from a background of education. I worked on my home reservation in the Northern Cheyenne. I'm a member of Northern Cheyenne Nation.

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And most previously to this position, I was associate professor of Educational Leadership at North Dakota State University, where I really worked towards thinking about professional development and developing Native leaders for our schools in Indian Country. And as part of that, I served on the National Indian Education Study Technical Review Panel. So I'm looking forward to leveraging the connections that I've made in the past.

Many of you on this call, we've met before. Feel free to reach out to me. We'll provide our contact information later.

I'll turn it back over to Julian now to get us going on the listening session.

MR. GUERRERO: Great. Thank you, Amy and Hollie, both of you, for taking time out of your day. I know that your schedule permits. And please feel free to continue to seek community partnership with the Office of Indian Education, because we certainly welcome that.

Phillip, could I get the next slide,

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please?

Just to give you a little bit of background, and there will be further information on this, to let you know the purpose of why we want to engage in this listening session work.

We want to, for sure, listen more than we talk in today's session, and listen and learn how the U.S. Department of Education, or ED, can better identify and support the social, emotional, and mental health needs of all of our Native children.

This session advances a specific priority, and the Secretary's supplemental priority, which is number four. In essence, to identify culturally-informed solutions that address negative learning environments that are impacting social and emotional well-being.

This is something so incredibly important, not just to the office of Indian Education, but to the U.S. Department of Education at large. And we're looking for pathways to make sure that the informed decisions

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we're making are, one, informed; but then two, also making sure that we continue to build partnerships in the places where they need to happen, and so on and so forth.

With this being said, could I get the next slide? And I'm going to let Amy expand a little bit on some additional topics to this importance.

Thank you, Amy.

MS. LOYD: Sure. Thanks, Julian.

As Julian just said, one of our secretarial priorities is specifically focusing on this from a policy perspective. But I wanted to share some quotations from the Secretary directly about why this work matters, and ground ourselves in the Why for our conversation today.

This is a screenshot from a resource that the Department put out in October around supporting our students' social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs because, as the Secretary says in this quotation, our efforts as educators -- our expectation for all of us

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should be of course the core content areas.

But we have to help our students build the social, emotional, and behavioral skills that they need to fully be able to exercise self-determination, to fully access and participate in learning, and make the most of their endless potential.

And so I love that Secretary Cardona spoke to this directly when we released this, how we can't unlock students' potential unless we also address the needs that they bring with them.

We are whole people. We don't compartmentalize ourselves. We shouldn't be a different person at school than we are at home. We know we carry with us what's been happening at home and what's been happening in our communities.

And we know the pandemic has disproportionately impacted Indian Country, and that many of our students, their families, and communities have been carrying intergenerational challenges related to social-emotional engagement with schools. So the Secretary is very much

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aware of this, and very much committed to thinking about, through a culturally responsive lens, what social-emotional learning means for Native peoples.

Next slide, please.

I love this photo. It's from when the Secretary was visiting Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College. But I also love this quotation, which came from when the Secretary delivered a speech on his vision for education in America and set priorities for the Department reflecting the administration's vision.

And so the Secretary is committed to having our schools ensure that they embed mental health supports in their day-to-day operations in new and innovative ways. And I love that he's put as a goal that every child, every student, and frankly, every learner of any age should have and must have access to mental health supports and services.

And this can take many forms, whether it's through partnerships with community-based

organizations or with others in communities. But this is really something that the Secretary and the Department is committed to doing. And we are so eager to learn from you about how we might go about doing so and serving our Native students in particular.

The administration is deeply committed to honoring tribal sovereignty and to really respecting our nation-to-nation relationship with tribes. So everything that we do in our policy and our programs, and how we're approaching supports for students, we want to make sure that we're reflecting your needs, your vision, your purpose, and doing so in partnership with you.

Thank you so much.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much for that, Amy. We appreciate that.

Phillip, could I get the next slide?

At this point in time, we're going to jump into our segment where we're wanting to listen from the community, which is you, and to engage with you. But a little bit of some

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housekeeping to that end.

One is which, we appreciate this opportunity, and we want you to be heard. As you voice yourself, if you could announce your name, your title, and tribal affiliation for the record.

We ask that elected tribal leaders have the first opportunity to speak and be recognized. So if we could pause for that moment, and then if there are no elected leaders who wish to speak, we'll then switch it over to nonelected leaders.

Please use the raise-your-hand feature to be recognized for speaking. Let's say if you do have any issues with raising your hand, or if you are raising your hand and we don't see it on our end, feel free to please use the chat box and the chat feature to let us know. That'll help us navigate through adapting to the technology for today's session.

Phillip, could I get the next slide, please?

And for the first question, the first question is, what are barriers that you face when attempting to address Native students' social, emotional, and/or mental health needs? There is a plethora of examples you can pull from. But just to give you an idea of some to start, in terms of time, space, or budget.

So again, the question is, what are barriers that you face when attempting to address Native students' social, emotional, and/or mental health needs?

At this time, I'd like to open opportunity for any comments. Do we have leaders who would like to comment on this question?

Phillip, if you could help me, do we have any leaders who have raised their hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes. Elizabeth Satiacum.

MR. GUERRERO: Excellent. Thank you. Elizabeth? You're recognized.

MS. SATIACUM: Hi, good morning. I am not a Native leader. I have no title of a

leader. I am the Native American Coordinator here at Young Schools.

And what we face reaching the students is space. We are a small community with very little space. Time constraints is huge because everything needs to be planned out, everything needs to be going through the chain of command. It's just like, no, I want to do it; I want to do it now.

So yes, that's me. That's our issue out here in Washington State. And I am with the Quileute Tribe.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you very much, Elizabeth, for vocalizing that. It's very important. We appreciate that.

Phillip, do we have another hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Not at present.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. I do see some folks putting their names in the chat box. If you're wanting to speak, please just write a message in the chat box, I would like to speak, if your raise-your-hand feature is not working.

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MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Dorothy Aguilera-Black Bear.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi, Dorothy. You're recognized.

MS. AGUILERA-BLACK BEAR: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for providing a space for us to give you input.

I'm with the South Dakota project for Bright Start. It's identifying the opportunities in the state to better serve Native American students.

We're also supporting the implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards in the state, which is our standards that are culturally shaped by the elders who participated in that project. Those were approved, I believe, in 2016 by the Board of Regions.

What I've seen in South Dakota in schools is basically very limited use of culturally-informed types of programs. It's more like Project AWARE, those parts of programs.

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Those are limited in the state as well.

But what I see in the community-based organizations, there's some curriculum that's been developed with some community-based organizations that are in some of the tribal communities, the schools serving those communities. Those haven't really reached all the schools that serve Native American students, but it's a start.

And with the Bright Start project, we're actually going to be conducting a landscape report that looks at what programs are out there serving the needs of students, and what curriculum might be used by the schools.

Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Dorothy.

Phillip, do we have another hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes, we do. But before we move onto that, there was also a comment put in the chat box.

No microphone available. Phylicia McDonald, Tribal Education Advocate for the

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Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes on the Flathead Reservation in Montana. I'm a Salish and Kootenai woman continuing my traditional education.

To question one, what we face is being able to be face-to-face with our students. Our reservation schools are spaced up to one hour apart. And lack of service for continued mental health education and therapy.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Phylisia.

And thank you, Phillip, for reading that aloud for us.

MR. ROULAIN: Next is Mark Roseberry.

MR. ROSEBERRY: Yes. My name is Mark Roseberry. I work for the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope. We're on the North Slope of Alaska.

What barriers we face, some is capacity, the need for experienced workers. The need is larger than we have people to fill it. Even our borough has a behavioral health, and our nonprofit for the behavioral health portion, but

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the need is way more than -- they just can't keep up with demand.

And then it's difficult for us to hire people up here. And then when you do, because they're not familiar with the area up here, they don't understand the Native American/Native Alaskan needs and culture. And the way of approaching it isn't necessarily the best way.

We just started a tribal school. A part of that tribal school is a social-emotional element to it, and we have a curriculum in that for it. I know we have some village tribes that are doing wellness court.

But even in that, the capacity is the big issue. And then budget would be second, but I think capacity would be number one because we have budgets that aren't being spent because of that capacity.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you very much, Mark. Being from Alaska, I can only assume it's pretty early right now for you. So thank you for --

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MR. ROSEBERRY: Yes. Nine o'clock or so, yes.

MR. GUERRERO: Nine o'clock? Okay. Well, maybe not that early. But still, thank you for joining us right at the beginning of your day.

Phillip, next hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Tesia Zientek.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi, Tesia. Please. You're recognized.

MS. ZIENTEK: Thank you. Good morning, Tesia Zientek here, Education Director for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

For us, because most of our students at the Citizen Potawatomi Nation attend public schools, one thing we've heard specifically from the Oklahoma City Metro folks -- I saw a few of them join the call -- is that there is a need for those Native American students in urban spaces to have counselor and other mental health assistants.

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But because they're not specifically in any tribal jurisdiction and because they have such a high population of Native American students, I think budget is definitely an issue there, and the source of funding.

So they're not in tribally-controlled schools. They're not in a specific tribe's jurisdiction. But yet, we know that we have a lot of archival students and other types in Oklahoma that attend these public, urban schools who just would need the funding for counseling and mental health professionals to address those needs.

(Native language spoken.)

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Tesia. We appreciate those comments, and especially the emphasis there you have on the urban centers. We will certainly keep them in mind.

Phillip, next hand, please?

MR. ROULAIN: There are no hands presently raised, but there is another comment.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay.

MR. ROULAIN: It says good morning. I am Roseann Ritchison, Student Services Coordinator with the Karuk Tribe. The first issue I see is transportation barriers in getting the youth to life-enrichment opportunities, including after-school support with academics.

Second, I see many students not engaged due to the trauma that COVID caused and the amount of time the youth had without in-person instruction. The youth are still adjusting, and their teachers expect them to be on top of everything they present to them.

The teachers have not been flexible in working the students and allowing them more time to get their work submitted. Many students have received F grades due to the strict guidelines teachers set for the students.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you.

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Tara Tindall.

MR. GUERRERO: Tara, welcome. You're recognized. Welcome back.

MS. TINDALL: Good morning. I'm Tara Tindall. My title is Native American Teacher Leader for Madison Metropolitan School District in Madison, Wisconsin. And my tribe is Ho-Chunk.

One of the barriers in the Title VI program and school-wide is the lack of staff. The student population is less than one percent, and that's similar to the population. As someone said, this is an urban area. And in urban spaces the students experience invisibility. So when we try to set up programs, we always come up against the lack of staff.

For example, we wanted to set up for a program where we talked about the kids' mental health. But we didn't have a Native mental health staff person. The parents were pretty insistent that it be a Native, because they're the ones who are going to understand the students and where they come from.

The other problem that someone mentioned is about teacher professional development. Again, we lack Native staff, Native

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presenters. We try to bring them in from the community as much as we can.

And then with the curriculum, I see a lot of times when there's a push for Native culture, then there's a tendency for the school to respond by placing Native American culture and history with other cultures, like African American history and Hispanics. They don't see that importance to keep Native American history separate.

Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Tara, for your comments.

Phillip, next hand, please?

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Stephanie LaRocque.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi, Stephanie. You're recognized.

MS. LaROCQUE: Hi. I am a school psychologist from Turtle Mountain Elementary School in Turtle Mountain, North Dakota. I am a member from the Turtle Mountain and Piegan

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Tribes.

I think when looking at the question as far as the barriers, I am one of three school psychologists through the BIE. And I think there needs to be an examination of the position, creating more positions possibly. But the larger picture is also funding for school psychologists nationally.

In North Dakota we do currently have a school psychology program at Minot State. However, the funding was cut, and it just recently received funding again. So they have their first class right now that is actually in session.

Also Morehead State University, that is on the state border between North Dakota and Minnesota, also had a school psychology program but their funding was also cut.

And there's such a dire need for social-emotional services and school psychologists that is their training, with Special education law, social-emotional needs,

and the mental health needs of students.

I think the larger picture would be trying to maybe grow our own school psychologists from our own communities. But also, the need for the funding for the school psychology programs across the nation.

Our school system is a K through 12 school, and just at the elementary we have close to 800 students. And the ratio for school psychologists to students, roughly on the lower end it should be one school psychologist to 500 students. So when we're looking at the ability to provide services, it's spread very thin.

Also, you're looking at school psychologists in the school, but school counselors are also spread very thin. So I think the increase -- if there's any way to look at growing our own school psychologists and school counselors, but the larger picture of the funding and budgeting for those programs nationally.

And that was all I wanted to say.
Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much, Stephanie. We appreciate those comments.

Phillip, are we okay on time?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes, sir. Next, we have Carol Thompson.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi, Carol. You're recognized.

MS. THOMPSON: Hello. So I'm Carol Thompson. I am an Indian Education Director at Bagley Schools in Northern Minnesota. A recap on where I'm from: I am located off reservation, but we are located between Red Lake, Leech Lake, and White Earth, with the majority of our students from the White Earth reservation.

I brought Native mental health into Bagley Schools when I started here six years ago.

I used to have a really good relationship with them. This year it seems like I'm fighting with them a lot. They're unresponsive. There's been a lot of issues back and forth.

We have a meeting scheduled for next week finally, after eight months of going to

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Tribal Council saying hey, you know what; you got on us when you said we did not have a relationship with the tribal programs, and now they're ignoring us. We've had students that have come and said our therapist isn't here. Our case manager is not here. We need to talk to somebody.

COVID has created a lot of mental health issues. There's been a lot of issues with grades, self-esteem, that social-emotional part.

I just got an email from a teacher again today where a student who doesn't talk to anybody, doesn't say anything, was on the verge of tears because we have the end of quarter on Friday. They're struggling. He stated that he only gets in trouble at home because his grades aren't up. It's a whole process. It needs to be a wraparound process, and it's not.

And it's not because there is a lack of staff. The students have identified to me it's the inconsistency in staff. There's been a lot of turnover from their case manager to their

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therapist because they move. They didn't want to meet with any --

MR. GUERRERO: It sounds like we lost your audio there. I apologize.

Phillip, is that our end or the speaker's end?

MR. ROULAIN: I apologize for the glitch. Please continue, Ms. Thompson.

MS. THOMPSON: Okay, yes. It changed me from a panelist to an attendee, and an attendee to a panelist. So I'm not sure what happened.

But it's the inconsistency of the staff. And the kids don't want to meet with somebody new every two months. They get comfortable with somebody and then they change, and then they have to start all over again. And then they get comfortable and then they change.

They didn't want to meet with somebody from behind a screen. They want -- sorry, that's our bell, passing time. They want to have somebody that they know is going to be there.

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They don't want to have to pour their heart out to somebody new twice, three, four times a year.

And they want somebody who is going to be there in person, because we are social people.

We don't want to sit behind a screen all the time.

We have spacing for the staff to be here. We have scheduled times for the staff to be here. We've worked with the tribes. We've worked with the county to make sure that there is money in the budgets for staff to be here. We just need consistency. So that's our issue.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much for illuminating that issue. Because it's one thing just to have the position filled, but it's another thing for that consistency, as to your point, in terms of longevity of these positions, and their impacts and responsibilities. Thank you so much, Carol.

Phillip?

MR. ROULAIN: There are no more speakers with their hand raised presently.

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MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Great. I did see a question in terms of written comments.

I'll pass this opportunity to answer that question, and to let everybody else know on today's session that our office will accept written comments to any of these questions for any of the listening sessions, whether it was the ones you may have missed last week or today's, or even tomorrow if you miss that.

You can still submit written comments by March 31st, which is the last day of this month, no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. So we will do our due diligence to make sure we capture all input, whether that's written comment or vocalized today.

Any additional hands that have come up, Phillip?

MR. ROULAIN: No, sir. Not at this time.

MR. GUERRERO: Great. All right. Well, let's go ahead and move to question two. We'll take the surplus of time and dedicate it to

the other questions.

With that being said, for question number two I'm going to hand off to my colleague, Amy Loyd.

MS. LOYD: Thanks again, Julian.

Kimberly, I see your comment in the chat, which really does help lead us into this question. I'm so glad that you put it there and hope that you are willing to share that.

This question is really about the Secretary's supplemental priority around addressing negative learning environments that are impacting the social, emotional, and mental health well-being of Native students.

So what are the challenges that you see associated with these negative learning environments? Some of this has come up already in conversation, but really zeroing in on: what does it take for our schools, our classrooms to be a place of wellness and connection, and supportive of our social, emotional, and mental health? And what are you seeing; where are you

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seeing gaps?

Phillip, do we have any hands raised?

MR. ROULAIN: No. At present, there are no hands raised.

MS. LOYD: Kimberly, I'm going to take the moment to read your comment because I do think it is a direct response to this, and it's something that others have mentioned too.

The comment is that a constant barrier is the students always feel like they're the only one in their school. The sense of belonging is not there for Native students. And as mentioned, funding is needed to address the lack of Native American understanding in history knowledge, cultural sensitivity for teaching staff and administrators. But to specifically address the social-emotional learning needs of our Native students, because they are our future tribal leaders.

MR. ROULAIN: Kimberly Daingkau-Begay.

MS. LOYD: Oh, great.

MS. DAINGKAU-BEGAY: Yes. Thank you,

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Amy, for addressing that. And thank you again to the OIE for providing the space for us to address these issues that are affecting our students currently.

One of the main challenges that I hear over and over in working directly with our students is that sense of belonging, that they don't feel that they belong in that classroom or in that particular school. And the barriers that they face in trying to address those things.

For instance, one of the main things that I always emphasize is the Native American history that is not being taught or shared as much as needed to. Because we are the first peoples of this land, we are a part of this history. And the United States' history is a part of our history, and that we have built this country alongside that. So having our students to hear about their history or to hear about their culture.

Specifically, I always emphasize about acknowledging and respecting the local tribes

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within the area from where you are from. I'm originally from Oklahoma. But I always acknowledge the Tohono O'odham and the Yoeme or the Pascua Yaqui people, because that is the area that I am from, to help the students understand their history, whether they're a part of this land or if they're visitors upon this land. But helping them feel that sense of belonging, that they are important too.

Your history is important too. If you don't know your history, I encourage them to learn about that history. It makes a significant impact in addressing this with the teachers that these students are a part of in their classrooms.

I had one teacher who responded back to me saying she spoke to the student in their tribal language and told them hello. She said it was like radars just went up on the student's ears, because it was acknowledging her and acknowledging her as a person, not a statistic, not a number receiving funding, having these numbers or statistics that many of our students

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feel.

And even the parents feel that their children, that's all they're being counted for. With a lot of the funding that we receive, we have to get the student counts. But it's not just about being a number or a statistic.

It's about acknowledging our students and understanding they too need that embracement within the classroom, and who is there to provide that to them. So I guess I'll let somebody else --

MS. LOYD: Hear, hear, Kimberly. I'm so grateful that you shared that. Yes. Having our students be seen, honored, valued, and engaged, and bringing who they are and their cultures, traditions, and values into learning spaces is important. It's so important for our young peoples and our adult learners' well-being.

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Joel Isaak.

MR. ISAAK: (Native language spoken) for letting me speak with you today. I work as the tribal liaison for Department of Education, a

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Kenaitze Indian Tribal Member, and Dena'ina.

There were a couple of things that I wanted to just share from what I often hear from tribes across our state here in Alaska. One is the need to recognize our indigenous knowledge and our elder skill sets to address this area.

There's often a lot of frustration expressed in needing to decode how our traditional ways of teaching youth have embedded social-emotional well-being at its core. And tribes can articulate that, but it takes a lot of time to do that. And often times there's a lot of push back, whether that's evidence-based or if we've done studies, and all those kinds of things. So I think that's one of the barriers.

The other that has to do with student count is, the conversation around blood quantum is very damaging to our students and our communities. Funding is using data based off of blood quantum. And I know that many federal programs have moved away from that, but some of our state programs still do. So there's still

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some tension between that when it comes to data.

The last one that I think comes up in this area is, there are certain federal monies that sometimes -- I don't have specific names of whatever program it is -- when Alaskan Native language or singing, dancing, and drumming is not allowed to be used in this area.

It's part of the history of silencing our people, and not realizing that the boarding school era forced assimilation to English-only policies have been very damaging to our students' social-emotional well-being, and that connection between family, adults, elders, that kind of thing.

So I appreciate the time to speak with you today, and bringing those voices to the table who aren't able to be here today.

MS. LOYD: Thank you so much, Joel. That's important. The Secretary and the President have recognized the long-standing challenges that education policy has historically been a tool of oppression, assimilation, and

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stripping away culture and language.

We are in a place where we want to work with you and with tribes to transform that, and have our education be in service to tribes in places where students can be seen and grounded in who they are and where they come from, connect with their elders and their communities to help determine where they're going. But there's no denying that our history is very challenged, and that trauma lives on today in our students, families, and communities.

Phillip, are there other hands?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes. Mark Roseberry.

MR. ROSEBERRY: Yes. This is Mark Roseberry. I've been in the school systems. And here on the North Slope, we've done a lot of things to incorporate the culture into the public school system.

The challenge we have is the teachers are not from the culture. And there's this -- the students live one way outside of the school, and they have to come in and live a different way

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in the school. And they don't always do that, but it's perceived as -- we've looked at the number of office referrals and things like that.

The Inupiat students are some of the most respectful students that are going to do the right thing. It's just they operate in a different manner. So in a more Western way where the teacher is going to be directing and saying, go do this, and expect the student to comply immediately, here on the North Slope you've got to give that student time. They deliberate that.

They're going to do the right thing. But if you're standing and hovering over them until they do, it's aggressive, and they'll end up being thrown out of the class. And I see that all the time. We watch these things happen.

It's a clash of cultures, not that either one is wrong. They're totally different and different world views. And when you force a student to come into a different world view, and then expect them to comply when they really don't even understand what they're complying to, it's

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really hard on them. And it creates a socio-emotional issue.

I've watched this where in one of the villages, this one family, the students would come to school and, boy, they would be acting out constantly. But if you go into their home, they're cleaning. They're respectful. They're like these little angels.

And you have to ask, what is the difference? How is it that they turn into these students that are getting in trouble all the time once they walk through the doors of the school?

We really do need local cultural representation in schools. That's one reason why -- going back to the tribal school, that's one reason we're doing that. We just can't see when you have people coming in and constant turnover how we're ever going to get there, because we've been trying to do that for the last 40 years.

MS. LOYD: Thank you, Mark. And understanding what a negative learning environment is, and recognizing that what might

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be seen as positive learning environment in a Western context might not work for Native students. So helping our educators understand much more culturally-responsive practices, that's essential.

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Christina Narvaez.

MS. NARVAEZ: Hi. Good morning, everyone. Thank you. I'm Christina Prairie Chicken Narvaez. I'm Lakota but I currently work in Miwok.

Something for me that's kind of been a challenge has been -- but also a good part of the work that we've done is -- we've been able to use outside funding, outside of our Title VI funding, to fund tribal educators and their local practitioners in the community that are professionals in their field, and specifically of California Native history.

And they've been able to go into the classrooms and provide history lessons, games, different things, sort of like a partnership with

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teachers so they can do it at the request of teachers. And so it's an easy process we have set up. It's been going well.

But I think the thing that's been hard is that the teachers who are taking advantage of the opportunity are teachers who are kind of already trying to implement some of this history and practices in the classroom, but it's not something that we can mandate for all teachers to bring into the classroom.

So I think there's sometimes the balance of -- I know that unions are important for our schools and their functionality. But I think sometimes they also can get in the way sometimes when you want to -- when people need to learn this history and need to implement it in classroom. But it's hard to do that when people aren't ready to do it. So I think that's kind of been a challenge for us.

MS. LOYD: Thank you so much, Christina.

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Carol

Thompson.

MS. THOMPSON: Again, Carol Thompson, Bagley Public Schools' Indian Education Director and White Earth enrollee.

So the challenges that we feel here, again, I hear it in everything that everybody's stated. We do have a Native American history class, but we -- I sat down with a history teacher and we wrote that specific to our local tribes here. We actually have a visit to a tribal administration and tribal court to hear the history of White Earth on Thursday because we feel it's important.

But we only have eight students in a high school of 450 that opted to take that class.

So it's not that we're not offering the class. I don't know if they're just not finding it pertinent. We've made changes. We offer an online Ojibwe class. We have pieces that are imbedded into it.

I know I saw that Ms. Tindall had a piece in there about how curriculum is something

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that she has to do along with being a program administrator. The same goes for me. I'm stretched so thin. I have six grants underneath me. I'm Title... I'm our state grant administrator. I do the World's Best Workforce for the school. I have all these other grants. Our Johnson O'Malley doesn't get done if I don't do it for our parent committee. There's just all these pieces that need to get done that don't get done if I don't do it.

Our students come to see me because, again, within our school district, we only have three Native American teachers. I'm not a teacher. I'm a social worker. So I'm about making these connections and finding resources for everybody. But it's one of those pieces that's affecting our students because they want to come talk to me.

I had a student emailing me on Thursday saying where are you? I came to school to come see you and you're not here. And I had to send her to a non-Native staff member because

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I wasn't here, and she hasn't been to school again since. And I don't know what to do about that because it's out of my control.

So when we talk about the negative learning environments, these are all pieces that are out of our control, because we don't have the staff here that our students are speaking out.

MS. LOYD: Thank you for that, Carol, and thank you for all that you're doing and the many different hats you wear. I saw in comments previously the notion of burnout and how real that is, and just capacity to support students.

We're down to the final 28 seconds, Phillip. Do we have other hands raised? I want to be mindful of time.

MR. ROULAIN: There are no hands raised presently.

MS. LOYD: Okay. We're also capturing everything that's in the chat. So if you didn't have a chance to speak to this question, we welcome your comments in the chat, as Julian mentioned. We welcome written comments as well.

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The Secretary has charged us with being a service organization. So this is by no means a one-and-done conversation. If other things come up, if you want to speak with us about any of these questions, know that we at the Department are here to hear you, and to work with you to think through them and work on them.

But I will pass it to my colleague, Hollie Mackey, to take us through question number three.

MS. MACKEY: Thank you so much.

And just as a reminder, this is an opportunity for you to be heard. So when you speak, please just make sure that you declare your name, your title, and your tribal affiliation for the record.

Again, we'll ask the question and provide some time for tribal leaders to be recognized first. And then after that, we'll have opportunities for others who would like to contribute.

Next slide? Thank you.

So our third question is, what are the ways that the Office of Indian Education can best embrace a whole-Native-child model where Office of Indian Education grants can support the social, emotional, and mental health needs of Native students?

As you're thinking, as a reminder as well, you're welcome to put comments over in the chat. We're recording those as well, and they will be included in our conversations moving forward with how we can best support you out in the field.

MR. ROULAIN: We have a hand raised. It's Shayna Gurtler Rowe.

MS. GURTLER ROWE: Hello. Thank you for taking this time. I'm Shayna Gurtler Rowe and I'm the Tribal Administrator of Nenana in Alaska.

What I see that OIE can do would be to have more training for our faculty and staff in the school regarding being trauma-informed, and more education for the staff and faculty

regarding our culture.

We have a very high percentage rate of Native students. I think it's 92 percent here, I believe. And we do have a living center for high school students. And I think better education for the faculty and staff regarding trauma, being trauma-informed, would be beneficial to support the whole Native child.

Thank you.

MR. ROULAIN: We have Carol Thompson.

MS. LOYD: Carol, go ahead.

MS. THOMPSON: I'm sorry. I must just not have put my hand down.

MS. LOYD: We can open this up to all participants, anybody who is in attendance who would like to have a comment on this one.

Again, what are the ways that Office of Indian Education can best embrace the whole-Native-child model where grants can support social, emotional, and mental health needs of Native students?

I see we have a hand up.

MR. ROULAIN: Yes. Sydna Yellowfish.

MS. LOYD: Fantastic. Sydna, go ahead.

MS. YELLOWFISH: Good morning, good afternoon. Sydna Yellowfish, Edmond Public Schools, Edmond, Oklahoma, Otoe-Missouria here in the state of Oklahoma.

A couple of things I wanted to mention is, of course, funding; funding for our grants to hire staff to be able to help us deal with those particular things that we've been discussing today. I know that with our staff here, we have a dedicated staff to college and career readiness. We have a dedicated staff to a cultural awareness component.

And that doesn't leave -- I mean, there's also your everyday duties; being out there at the schools, sending emails, setting up after-school activities. We do after-school tutoring. So additional funding that can be dedicated to a staff person to help us address these particular needs.

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And I want to say especially, we're in a metro area, the Oklahoma City Metro Area. We did our collaboration and tribal consultation meeting with about 15 tribes represented that came to our virtual meeting.

We have over 12,000 Indian kids just in the metro area. And one of the things that we suggested or we tried to ask for is that -- these are their tribal citizens, but they're in our schools here -- to help get us a person that we would be able to send them to when we have these very dire needs that many of us have dealt with within the past couple of years.

We're here. We're on the ground. We're in the schools. And we have those students that have these very specific needs that maybe some of our staff may not be able to deal with, because they are not the person that's trained in trauma or trained in mental health area needs.

I also wanted to share one comment. Some of our directors in the metro area could not get on. One of her comments that she emailed is,

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their district needs to find or hire counselors/social workers with the knowledge of culturally appropriate methods to address those concerns.

So again, it's probably covering question one, two, and three. But also, with OIE, to have them help us to be able to address all these specific needs of our students. Thank you.

MS. LOYD: Thank you, Sydna. I think it circles into Sara's comment as well. There's not one model that we need to think about. We have 574 different tribes. We have descendency. We have people who are familiar with their culture, people who are unfamiliar with their culture.

And we really need to think about how to best support a -- what a whole-Native model would look like in the context where people are serving, as opposed to assuming that there's one pan-Native model that we can approach it with.

Do we have another hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Yes. Paul McDonogh.

MS. LOYD: Paul?

MR. McDONOGH: Good morning. My name is Paul McDonogh. I am from Anchorage, Alaska. My tribal affiliation is with an Alaska Native Sugpiaq Tribe. We're from the Village of Perryville, but I work in Anchorage.

I wanted to talk about, I like the idea of the whole Native child. Recently we attended a seminar where one of our elders said it's the community first. And no matter what's happening in the schools, if the parents don't connect into this process, then you're going to lose it every time the students go home.

So we've begun investing in grant opportunities for the parents. And it's raising a lot of eyebrows about, should the schools be spending money on parents and not students. But I think from a Native community perspective, it's absolutely appropriate.

So we're focusing on teaching the parents how to connect with school resources, and

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teaching the parents how to connect amongst each other. And I'd like to see more attention to funding sources from OIE that really help the parents get involved in what we're doing, as well. Because if you leave them out, according to this elder, it doesn't really matter what's going on in school.

That's all. Thank you.

MS. LOYD: Thank you.

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Clarence Hogue.

MR. HOGUE: Yes, and good morning, it's still morning here. I'm calling in from or listening in from Albuquerque currently. I'm originally from the Navajo Nation, but I currently live and work in Albuquerque.

So a lot of, in the last 20 years or so, I had the opportunity to work in schools, specifically charter schools. And so there is a school here in Albuquerque, the Native American Community Academy, that had -- that I had the opportunity to work it -- to work at.

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So I worked in different positions, starting as a culture and language teacher teaching the Navajo language, and then I also did after-school programs, and then I also did -- worked with the high school students in doing college engagement work.

So I have some familiarity in working in the school setting.

Currently I do support another charter school as the governing board member, so I'm kind of also looking -- or getting experience kind of doing some other aspects of school governance and supporting schools and children, and staff. So I see a lot and I hear a lot.

But I think my thing, so the one school I'm affiliated with, it's a dual-language learning model charter school for trying to teach both Navajo and also English, but still, you know, try to meet all the goals and the -- but we're supposed to stay in compliance with by the Public Education Department.

So, but I think what I'm thinking is,

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we talk a lot about this only a child, and I think like the gentleman that just said before me, I think we do need to start with the community first, and have a lot of what we're trying to teach and how our curriculum is being developed in the school setting be informed by the community people, by the parents, by traditional elders, as -- and also the medicine people in our community because they're the knowledge keepers, and they're -- they have so much wisdom about a lot of these things.

You know, I think sometimes we try to use a lot of like Western models to try to get our answers from, but I remember I had a cultural mentor who often said to me that, you know, our traditional ways are so old that, you know, when we start talking about them then they become new again, you know?

So, it's like, we're trying to do things and sort of think of them as new things, but they've always been a part of us. We've just sort of forgotten them and we've gotten away from

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them.

So we need to go back to those things, those teachings, and so a lot of those things I think we just need to have conversations in our community to really build models and programs that -- you know, that are those things are at the foundation of what we're trying to do for our students and our families. And language be a very important part of that.

You know, I know a lot of our tribes are dealing with language loss, and we're doing a lot to do the language preservation and revitalization programs, and I think that's something that's very important that we got to keep doing.

But I think when you speak your own language, and I -- you know, I think I was blessed to -- you know, to have Navajo as my -- Navajo -- sorry, Navajo as my first language.

Growing up as a small child I kind of have that experience, and I know today a lot of our students don't have that, but I think when

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you speak in your own language, conceptually things -- you understand things very differently, so when things are presented to us in -- using the English language, we use a lot of terminology, we use a lot of things, you know, but when you're thinking about it in your own language, it means different things, and so that's why I think it's really important to try to involve more of your elders and more of your traditional people, your medicine people because they're going to come up with certain ways of approaching things that maybe you hadn't thought of when you -- that you didn't think to think of.

So that's just something that I wanted to put out there, but thank you for the opportunity to speak. Yeah.

MS. LOYD: Thank you, and we have a couple of comments. Having regional resources the districts could access, I think that's a really excellent idea there.

And then we have some additional barriers that were listed, and one of the things

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that really struck me is the coordination between tribal entities is something that we've heard come up over a couple of listening sessions, and it seems to me that even thinking about the best way to embrace this model or think about ways to fund different whole native child approaches, we really need to be mindful of those relationships with tribal entities.

Do we have other comments on this one?

MR. ROULAIN: There are no hands raised presently.

MS. LOYD: So if you have additional comments that you would like to push towards Question Number 3, you're welcome to do so in the chat, and you're also welcome to do that in the public comment, which all that information will be provided at the end of the listening session.

So I will turn it back over then so we can shift over to the next question.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much, Hollie. I appreciate that. Phillip, could we get the next slide, please? Okay.

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So for Slide Number 4 -- or excuse me, Question Number 4, what are types of activities that you have conducted or witnessed in action that you believe are having a positive effect on the social, emotional, and mental health impact of Native students?

So now, you know, really transitioning our thinking to think -- to see, you know, what are those promising practices that are out there that you've seen and that you've heard of?

What types of activities have you conducted or witnessed in action that you believe are having a positive social, emotional, and mental health impact of Native students?

And the floor is --

MR. ROULAIN: We have Elizabeth Satiacum.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Hi, Elizabeth.

MS. SATIACUM: Hello. I am Elizabeth Satiacum with the Yelm Community School District in Yelm, Washington. I am the Native American education coordinator. And I think the best

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thing that I have done in my -- I've worked a lot of public schools out here in Washington state.

And one of the best things that I have done here with the schools, with the parents, with the community is teaching of the medicine wheel. You know, working with the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual person, each person individually.

And, you know, there's a -- it makes a lot of people think, you know, about how they -- how -- if their medicine wheel is off, that it not only affects themselves but it affects all those people around them, and it makes them more aware of who they are and who they affect.

So, I really have been teaching the medicine wheel for a few years now, and it has a whole lot of different perspectives for Natives and non-Natives alike. So thank you for letting me share.

MR. GUERRERO: Absolutely, Elizabeth.

That's very powerful. Thank you for sharing that model for us. Phillip, any additional

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hands?

MR. ROULAIN: Travis Albers.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Oh, and one moment. Just before we move to you, Travis. I see that the court reporter's asking if you could spell the three tribes you mentioned in your comment, Elizabeth. Could you do that for us, just briefly?

MS. SATIACUM: Yes.

MR. GUERRERO: Or if you could put it in the chat, then that'll work just as fine, too.

Okay. All right, we'll let you do that in the chat, and then Travis, back to you, sir. Thank you.

MR. ALBERS: Hi, Travis Albers. (Native language spoken.) Hello relatives, my name is Travis Albers, I'm an enrolled member of Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa here in North Dakota, but raised in Cheyenne River Reservations in South Dakota.

I currently work as the cultural and wellness advocate for -- and the Title 6

coordinator for Mandan public schools here in North Dakota, and some of our activities we've been doing at the elementary and middle school and high school levels is called our Four Directions Group, and what we do in there is we do lessons kind of based on our Native American history and stuff like that, but we do -- we call it the Four Directions because we want to encompass, we want to include everybody.

We talk about diversity and inclusion and things like that.

And we have 4,000 kids through our K through 12 and in our middle school we have about 400 kids, and we have -- we are meeting once a week and we usually have about -- over 40 kids, and a lot of not -- a lot of non-Native American students, and the good part of that is when we talk about Native American history and culture, our Native students will add to what I'm talking about, you know, if we're talking about significance of long hair or, you know, our -- what our Four Directions means, our Lakota

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values, and stuff like that, so it's good to see our kids -- our Native kids step up and actually be part of the process of teaching our Non-Native students and, you know, when you hear -- when you get that better understanding of why are cultures different or how are different, you know, then the communication's better, and you know, and their relationships are much better.

So that's -- those are the things that we've been doing for the last couple years and it's -- it seems to do really well. Thank you.
(Native language spoken.)

MR. GUERRERO: Wow Travis, thank you very much for that powerful story, we appreciate you illuminating that practice for us. Phillip, any additional hands?

MR. ROULAIN: Next we have Caryn Record.

MR. GUERRERO: Hey Caryn, good to hear your name. Welcome.

MS. RECORD: Thank you. Hi Julian.
Thank you all for having this meeting today. And

am I able to be heard at this time?

MR. GUERRERO: Yes.

MS. RECORD: Okay, yes.

MR. GUERRERO: Yeah.

MS. RECORD: I'm with Moore Public Schools, Moore, Oklahoma, Title 6 in Johnson O'Malley.

For this question of high -- of witnessing in action positive social, emotional total health impact on our Native students, one thing that we're trying to do is just really highlight our students.

We have a couple different ways that we're doing this. We have a contact at each of our schools, personally on-site, for our Native students at our elementary and junior high schools that go through eighth grade.

We have a tutor on-site at each school, and they're also a contact -- you know, they will tutor students, and then also be a contact for parents and students. They also, besides tutoring, will have cultural activities

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and events that they'll lead.

Then we have secondary sponsors that just help keep in touch with the students. The secondary, they will have like a lunch time together, they'll -- they're able to meet the other students at their schools.

We're a large district with around 30,000 students in the whole district, and we have right at 3,000 Native American students enrolled in our school, so there are a lot of -- we have 35 schools.

Also, so it's a large district, there are lots of students, but this way at each school, you know, students can meet other Native students there.

Then we have family events also. When we have an event in the evening, we'll have food, we invite the families. Like was mentioned earlier, you know, getting the families involved as much as possible.

We have a JOM princess, and that's been a really neat way to get people involved,

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you know, having that person be a person that in the community our princess will, you know, represent at events, then we also have students that will go to, you know, like parades and different things.

And then we also have a youth powwow that has been going on for the last several years, and this highlights students 18 years old and younger, so it's a little bit different than some of the other powwows where we're really focusing on our youth, and it's not just our students in Moore, but others can come and participate and have this -- a Saturday powwow.

So those are some things I just feel like that helps highlight our students, let them know that we're in touch with them.

During the pandemic, we had some virtual events like art contests that were done virtually, and we just had the entries come in and we did, you know, during Native American Heritage Month, we had different things for each day, like, you know, highlighting a tribal

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shirt, wearing their favorite beaded jewelry or things like that, and we had pictures, and then we have a Facebook page where we can, you know, post those and talk about the kids, and if they're involved in sports or other activities, we just try to highlight them and get the families involved, too.

Thank you all for letting me share.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Caryn. We appreciate those examples. Phillip, the next hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Next is Tara Tindall.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi Tara. You're up next.

MS. TINDALL: Hi. Tara Tindall, Native American teacher leader for Madison and enrolled Ho-Chunk.

There -- of course Madison is an urban area, and pre-COVID, we were sponsoring parents and families and students to attend indigenous food summit, and that was a really positive experience for the students.

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We now are sponsoring a virtual indigenous cooking class where the families or the parents participate. Participation is required.

We also -- pre-COVID, we had very many in-person social gatherings around an indigenous meal where families were involved.

One thing that I learned regarding outreach is to avoid the terms -- the term, like the program provides this for your student, because somehow a lot of the urban Native families, they get this -- there's a stigma, like that we're offering a program for them, so instead, we learned to say we need your help by enrolling your child, and then we get more positive results.

Some of the parents took it upon themselves to initiate an indigenous three-sisters garden.

Every year, we have what's called All City American Indian Graduation Celebration, where we honor kindergarten, fifth, eighth, and

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twelfth, and college, and this is city-wide, so it's not just one school. It includes everyone in the county.

And there's community collaboration, and planned effort with various sponsors. We also work in collaboration with JOM to co -- who co-sponsors and co-plans some of these events. Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much, Tara.

That was a very powerful nugget of wisdom there in terms of, you know, the suggestion for we need your help versus the we're giving this to you or your student has been identified for this program, as it does sound very -- reinforcing the stigmas that do exist out there, so we appreciate that input.

Phillip, next hand, please.

MR. ROULAIN: It would Sydna Yellowfish.

MR. GUERRERO: Hey Sydna, good to hear your voice -- or, and your name. So, go ahead.

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MS. YELLOWFISH: Hi. Nice to see your face. All right, just a couple things.

Pre-COVID, you know, we did a lot of activities, cultural activities, such as our metro handgame tournament, we call -- used to have spring fling, which involved cultural activities that were set up for students, community members to come in and participate.

Of course we've been doing our language program for the past 11 years, but however after COVID hit, we had to try to figure a way, how are we going to still connect with our families, and as a result of that, with our staff collaborating and working together, we developed virtual tribal videos that are available on our link, and they're at the public schools under Indian Education Program.

And these tribal videos were sent out to all of our families by our staff that included activities to help keep them engaged with us during COVID days.

We also developed tribal guides to be

used for educators, and that's listed on our educator dashboard for our teachers, and that was also collaborative work with our staff in reaching out to various tribal representatives that could assist us with information, photos that we could use for these tribal guides for educators, parents, whomever we want to use those to help educate about our tribes, and keeping our parents, teachers involved, keeping them engaged so that we could try to -- when we could not go into the classrooms with our cultural consultants, you know, something had to be figured out, how are we going to still connect with the classroom?

So those are some of the things that have been developed. I know I'm missing out on a few things as well, but those are just a couple of the things, and we're gradually opening up, we're getting back.

Tomorrow night they'll be doing a ribbon work making workshop with some of the young ladies that come every Tuesday for

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tutoring, and we still have them doing tutoring for the past couple of years, it's just on a limited basis now. So just wanted to share that.

Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Well thank you, Sydna, we appreciate you sharing those examples. Thank you so much, and we are going to actually go ahead and move to the next question, Phillip.

If I could get the next slide, and we'll proceed to that, and if I had missed you, again, feel free to throw your answers and your input into the chat, and/or provide written comments by email.

So for Question 5, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Amy Loyd.

MS. LOYD: Thanks again, and can I just say how energizing it is to hear about all these examples across the country of great things that you're doing with our young people and our communities? Thank you for sharing those examples.

We're pivoting to Question 5, which is

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about, it's like what specific social, emotional, and mental health skills or areas need support? Because we're working on identifying ways to support Native students across the country.

You know, are there particular skills that you've surfaced in your work with students and families and communities that are coming up as real needs that we need to consider, and what we might do?

And there are some examples here of some kinds of skills that might be, you know, things that you might see, or there might be other things, too. So any particular skills --

MR. ROULAIN: We have Mark Roseberry.

MS. LOYD: Terrific.

MR. ROSEBERRY: Yeah, Mark Roseberry. I work at Inupiat community in the Arctic Slope.

MS. LOYD: Yeah.

MR. ROSEBERRY: I guess I need to keep saying it every time, I'm not sure. Anyway, one of the areas that I see that our students is in their -- the culture identity is huge. I think

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there's research on it.

I think that takes in a lot of these things, although mindfulness and learning how to deal with stress, you know, addressing, you know, relationships. You know, some of the things that you put on here are a lot of what we have, but I will say this.

Because we each of our youths have different places that they've come from, their -- I -- you know, I don't know if I could pinpoint any one area because it's as vast as the needs of our students, but I do know that cultural identity is extremely important, and with that, without having that, you know, who our new students are, they -- they'll tend to -- will see these other things, like low self-image and self-esteem, not believing that they can do the same thing as any other student, therefore not trying, being disengaged, depressed.

And then, you know, even up here on the North Slope, we have the long periods of darkness and then the light comes up, and that is

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-- that has a physical effect and we tend to see things like depression and suicide actually when the sun comes up, and I think there's even a psychological reasons that may happen for that thing.

So there is some areas like that to address youth.

MS. LOYD: Thank you, Mark. You know, recognizing the research really does speak to students who are grounded in cultural identity. That's a strong protective factor in their lives, so I appreciate you bringing that up, and you're right about depression, anxiety.

I'm seeing other comments that are plus one-ing you on that, cultural identity in particular. Phillip, do we have other hands raised?

MR. ROULAIN: Next is Sara Robinson.

MS. LOYD: Hi Sara.

MS. ROBINSON: Hi, can you hear me?

MS. LOYD: Yep, loud and clear.

MS. ROBINSON: I'm Sara Robinson. I

work with the Language Orthography Program for the Eastern Shoshone people on the Wind River Indian Reservation. We're in Western Wyoming.

MS. LOYD: Okay.

MS. ROBINSON: And what I believe our children and our young people really need support in is this whole continuing, and sort of a level of lateral violence and lateral oppression, you know?

And I have seen some comments, you know, when those of us who live on reservations who have border towns who've always lived here, our relatives, our ancestors have lived here and these are for some of us, our homelands, ancestrally.

And yet because of the systemic racism that is -- that we are dealing with, and the colonialism that -- it still exists, we see lateral oppression and lateral violence between relatives, between tribal members, and it's one of our biggest downfalls because when you -- I mean, just as you think back in history, that's

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always been a mode to conquer us as indigenous and as tribal people, is to make sure we fight each other, make sure that we see -- we're so busy in our own struggles with each other that what the government is doing or what white society is doing where we're not mindful of and we're not paying attention to, yet all the while bringing us down, and I think our children -- and it goes along with a lot of things that have already been said -- and about the self-awareness and our own relationship skills that even today, we are still doing this to one another, and it's our young people who are being victimized by it.

So thank you.

MS. LOYD: Sara, that is such an important issue to raise, thank you so much. The lateral violence is critical.

I mean I think about all the analogies we have about this, and, you know, how we might support our students to learn to lift one another up instead of tear one another down.

MR. ROULAIN: Next is Rose McGuire.

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MS. LOYD: Hi Rose.

MS. MCGUIRE: Yeah, good afternoon. I'm Rose McGuire and I'm a citizen of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation in South Dakota. I work for the Denver Public Schools, and through the years are -- used to be Indian Education Program, now it's the Native American Cultural and Education Department, so I'm the director of this department, which we do that -- the district matches funds with Title 6, and our state grants, and also our -- more recently our stimulus funds.

But anyway, this year and past years we have found with our Native students is there -- they are -- our students are all over the district and it's miles and miles away, so it really has been difficult to get our students together to meet one another and find out that really discuss what they want -- their identity and what they're doing in their schools.

So what we established a couple years is the focus goals, and that has led into this year that we'd all have the Native American

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learning community within each high school, which we have staff that support that. They're called cultural equity specialists.

But anyway, what we do -- and our students attend those classes and they get credit for it, elective credit.

And this is the way we have really been successful at getting a group of our Native students together, and so we can discuss ideas like American Indian history and culture and traditions, and through this program too we also have not only our specialists who are highly educated -- and some are school psychologists as well -- so we've done the Hope Program, which is a suicide prevention and substance misuse, and we incorporated that, which is a very Native curriculum program so everybody knows about it.

And we've tied that in with Why Try, which is a problem-solving curriculum, and so we've tied those two aspects together.

And when we do these sessions at a talking circle, most of our students participate.

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It is a trustful environment because our students and our school psychologist, they've known them in the past to see one another part-time.

But anyway, what the school psychologists do is when we have the classes, they get to know each student, so when they can meet them personally on an individual basis where they do have issues that need to be addressed immediately, and our cultural specialists do almost the same.

And we've had activities like beading, ribbon skirts, drum making.

We've had the young men sitting at the drum. In fact, at the March powwow this past weekend we saw our young men sitting at the drum, which was really, really honorary for them.

And also with the Native American Cultural Committee, our groups, what we do is like there's a bill coming up, Bill 150.

It's to address the missing and murdered women, indigenous women, but also

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senators presenting that, we're having -- we also build leadership skills within those groups so we have some of those students that are going to present and talk, so we incorporate leadership as well.

Thank you very much. I just wanted to share that with you. It's been so long and so many years since we've been working on just having the -- wanting the district to support our efforts and our students become more visible in the schools where they attend.

MS. LOYD: Thank you for all of your work in that, Rose.

I'm sure that Denver public schools is much enriched because of the work that you're leading and working a partnership with others to do, and I love that you're focusing on leadership skills in addition to all the other foundational aspects that our Native students need, but, you know, how to not just think about ways that we're meeting mental health and social, emotional needs, but also setting our students up to be,

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you know, the current and future leaders who we know they are.

MS. MCGUIRE: They really are. They're taking on the challenge.

MS. LOYD: Yeah.

MS. MCGUIRE: They're so proud of themselves. Yeah.

MS. LOYD: Yep. And you got a plus-one on the Why Try program. That's great.

MS. MCGUIRE: Yeah. Oh I try. Yes.

MS. LOYD: Are there hands raised? We have some good comments in the chat, too.

MR. ROULAIN: Next is Helen Thomas.

MS. LOYD: Helen, hi.

MS. THOMAS: Hello, my name is Helen Thomas. I am a citizen of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, but I live and work in Phoenix, Arizona for the Arizona Department of Education for the Office of Indian Education.

And I just wanted to build off of the first two initial responses to this question where I think it would be helpful to have

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resources that identify connections between cultural strengths, different values and practices, and the social, emotional competencies that you have here on the screen just so that educators, school leaders can really be intentional about taking a culturally responsive approach to SEL and really combating that deficit mindset that our Native students are missing skills or they're in need of skills, when we know a lot of those skills exist in our communities, how can we make space for them in schools?

So I know that's some work that the Arizona Department of Education is in the early stages of exploring, but it would definitely be great to have additional resources.

And then building off of I forgot the name of who spoke to this, but just the need to understand why there's lateral violence, why there's certain needs in Native communities.

I think having professional learning around historical trauma, and the history of colonialism, things like that, could really shed

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light on the context of these needs and why they're there, again to combat that deficit mindset that something's wrong with our Native students, and instead thinking through like, something has happened to our communities, how do we move forward while still recognizing our strengths?

MS. LOYD: Here, here. I love the strengths-based approach, and would love to learn from what Arizona's doing in cross walking between traditional values and cultural connections, and social, emotional, you know, supports and skills needed in classrooms.

You know, we have many more questions we want to ask you so I'm going to turn it back to Julian to keep moving to the next question, but again we would welcome follow-ups on any other specific skills that you have seen or identified or that come to you after today's session.

But thank you everyone. Julian, I'll pass it back to you.

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MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Amy. I appreciate that. Phillip, could I get the next slide? So we are at Question 6, and we for sure have 6, 7, and 8, and a little bit less than 30 minutes remaining.

We do want to at least spend five or so minutes for myself and Hollie to be able to walk through some brief reflections with you because not only is it important for us to hear from you, I think it's also important for you to kind of hear that we are taking notes and that we actually hear you, and that we're resonating with a lot of what you're already providing to us.

So that's -- we want to work with what you're already giving to us in a good way.

So for Questions 6, 7, and 8, we'll try -- we'll be a little bit more brief than what we've usually been doing for these -- the last five questions, but all for the sake of making sure that we end today's session on time.

So for Question Number 6, it is, how can the OIE, Office of Indian Education, support

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your local social, emotional, mental health initiatives that embrace the whole Native child?

So, you know, in the previous question, we've heard all the positive opportunities and examples, questions before that we've heard of the challenges and the barriers, and then thinking about this question, I want you to just imagine -- not all of our school districts across the country, but think of your local institution of higher -- of education, and think about how the Office of Indian Ed and how we can support your success at your level.

So again, the question is how can the OIE support your local social, emotional, mental health initiatives that embrace the whole Native child? And with that, I will open it up. The floor's open. Phillip, do we have any hands?

MR. ROULAIN: Not at present, sir.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Thank you, sir.

MR. ROULAIN: We have Mr. Mark Roseberry.

MR. ROSEBERRY: Yeah, this is Mark

Roseberry, again I think for us, or for iTask, OIE could recognize our tribal efforts for tribal school, even though it's not a BIE school or whatever.

And this also helps because we will be hopefully developing a relationship with the LEA, but, you know, that's going to be a work in progress and we don't want to wait for the LEA because it's been -- you know, just from our perspective it's been decades and we haven't got to where we need to be.

And so I think OIE can -- if we -- they can support individual tribes when they start going the initiatives, or even setting up tribal schools will be helpful.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Mark. We appreciate that. Phillip, any additional hands?

MR. ROULAIN: Not at this moment.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. I do see a -- some comments. Tara Tindall.

Need resources geared for Native students. Only regarding LGBT and the resources

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there. Absolutely. And yeah, yeah. And I see a comment here from Amy as well on the 2SLGBTQIA, as well. Very important to not only acknowledge but also embrace the inner -- intersectionalities there.

Any additional hands that have come up, Phillip?

MR. ROULAIN: No, sir.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. And we have a great amount of folks who've joined us today and who are still online with us. Thank you for staying connected and if you haven't spoken yet, I encourage you to be brave, and feel free to speak your mind in this place.

This is a space for you to voice yourself to make sure that we hear things that are occurring at the local level.

And I see some more comments in the chat here from Heather. Teachers have so many demands for math, ELA, minutes, and are hesitant to integrate a CL into their day.

Hard to ask them to do one more thing,

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not enough staff to have more people come into classes and do SEL lessons. Acknowledged. Thank you so much, Heather for mentioning that.

And I see a comment from Roseann, saying I believe the youth should be allowed to participate in cultural mental health wellness activities without penalty from their teachers. They should be excused from assignments due to their participation in these activities. Thank you for that comment, Roseann.

And Alicia, the plus-one to the intersectionality for LGBTQ biracial issues. Thank you.

And Laurie, it's I work with a team of school staff to address student assistance and various challenges.

Are we able to get a copy of these slides? Yes. We will make a copy of the recording of today's sessions available on our OIE YouTube channel.

We'll do another announcement once all four sessions have concluded, and then we, you

know, put together all of our notes and put together, you know, all of the recommendations and input we've received, we'll place all of that in a place that is accessible online and we'll announce that link via our newsletter and digital list service as well.

So yes, there will be a recording, and we'll make sure folks can get access to that.

MR. ROULAIN: Julian, up next is Sydna Yellowfish.

MR. GUERRERO: Great. Hey, Sydna.

MS. YELLOWFISH: Hi, I just want to voice this for Linda Habada El Reno -- she's Cheyenne Arapaho -- to increase funding so that we're able to hire social workers and counselors to address these needs. Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Sydna, and tell Linda I said hello. Thank you.

MS. YELLOWFISH: I sure will, thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. We are sitting at a half a minute left. For the sake of time,

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let's go ahead and proceed to the next question, Phillip, Question 7. And I will hand it off to my colleague, Hollie.

MS. MACKEY: Thank you, Julian. So Question 7, what are some school climate strategies that have had positive and transformative impacts in your local school community?

So some things that you have done specifically, been involved in, or witnessed in your community that had a positive and transformative impact on school climate.

And as people are thinking about this, I know we've already heard a lot of really fantastic initiatives that likely did impact school climates, so you're welcome to reiterate those in the chat. I see we just had a hand go up.

MR. ROULAIN: Elizabeth Satiacum.

MS. MACKEY: Elizabeth?

MS. SATIACUM: Hi, me again.

Hey, what we do is there's a lot of

public schools, and there is four of us in the nearby four school districts that Native American land is on, Native American coordinators, all of us that wear the Title 6 hat program -- we've decided to collaborate and make an alliance for our students because we are such a small -- Native Americans are such a small population in our area that if all four of us can have a strong front and feed off of each other, that we can be strong for our students.

And that is really helping, and I'm hoping -- you know, looking forward to the rest of this year and the next school years to come. If that answers your question.

MS. MACKEY: It does, and I see we have a comment in the chat citing an example of a school that provides time for SEL during the regular school day, rather than all after school programming. Another hand?

MR. ROULAIN: Lucyann Harjo.

MS. MACKEY: Lucyann, go ahead.

MS. HARJO: Hi, good afternoon. I

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just joined the webinar or Zoom meeting, so I don't know if this has been mentioned already.

Our district created a diversity enrichment council, and we worked on learning about the different student groups we have in our district.

We have about 15,000 -- over 15,000 students, and diversity enrichment, and inclusion -- there are workshops that teachers are, you know, encouraged to take and there's student support and professional development, each school -- there are 26 schools here -- and we're focused on hiring teachers of color.

You know, about 86 percent of our teachers in that district office are white or Asian, so we are working on promotion of hiring Native teachers, African American teachers, Asian teachers because we want our teachers in our district to look similar to our student population so that -- that's one of the things that has really helped our district to learn -- it improves the school climate.

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MS. MACKEY: Okay, I saw we had one other hand. We have time for one more comment.

MR. ROULAIN: Tara Tindall.

MS. TINDALL: Hi, thank you.

Just an FYI that thinking about the positive during a pandemic is really difficult because it's so easy to get into all the hardships and struggles, but one of the positives for our district Madison, in Madison, Wisconsin, is the superintendent has vowed to support a land acknowledgment plaque be placed at every school building in the district, and we're in the process now of planning a land acknowledgment dedication this coming spring.

So, at least that boosts my morale. And then they also are -- oh, the superintendent even vowed to participate in Wisconsin Indian training.

The Curriculum Instruction Department is adding money for training of teachers regarding Wisconsin Indian and American Indian History because the parents are insisting that

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the teachers not be teaching the content unless they are trained. Thank you.

MS. MACKEY: Thank you for those comments, and I do think it is important to note that it's sometimes difficult to identify the positive when we're in the midst of a pandemic that is still affecting so many, so I appreciate your comments there as well.

I'm going to turn it back over to Julian for Question Number 8.

MR. GUERRERO: Great, thank you, Hollie. So for the last and final question, is please describe ways that the Office of Indian Education can support the professional educator workforce as it grapples with educator turnover due to burnout.

So, in some of the first initial questions we heard a lot of input around the educator burnout, the turnover factors that are placed on the communities, and this is something that our communities have to address and work through, and if you could please -- any

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additional folks who want to speak to this, please describe ways that you feel the OIE can support the professional educator workforce as it grapples with the educator turnover due to burnout.

Do we have any volunteers?

MR. ROULAIN: April Carmelo.

MR. GUERRERO: Hi, April. Welcome. You're recognized.

MS. CARMELO: Good morning. My name is April Carmelo. I'm from Shasta Union High School District in Redding, California. I am (native language spoken) and Wintu and Maidu.

I'm a citizen of Greenville Rancheria, a very small rancheria, a little over 170 people.

I am the Title 6 Indian education coordinator and one of the things -- I'm going to answer the question -- one of the things that we started about four years ago was called the American Indian Advisory, made up of tribes and local Indian organizations in our Title 6 program.

So a way that OIE can support

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professional educator workforce as it grapples with educator turnover due to burnout is to help support the work -- especially the work like our American Indian Advisory Group is doing.

We're providing training for teachers in a seven-county area, not just in our county alone. But provide funding to help support that.

We bring in other Indian educators to address specific needs in our area, and we struggle to provide any type of financial support because our budget is already so tight as it is that we're reaching out to other agencies to do that, but the funding would be great so that we can bring in other Indian professionals to help support what we're doing.

One of the items that we're doing is addressing the boarding school era, addressing legislation that was recently passed in regards to having our students excused for when they attend ceremony because if any of our students were attending ceremony, they were unexcused, and so we actually got legislation passed in the

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state of California so that they could be excused for that time away.

But just supporting the training and the work -- and I can send information about that -- we've trained over 180 teachers, and in collaborating, helping create that K-8 curriculum and 9-12 curriculum, as well, because it costs a lot of money to get people to be able to put that curriculum together, and you know, get the approval from tribes, is this okay, is that okay?

It's a lot of time and a lot of effort to make that happen, but one of the things that we're running into is that we have a lack of Indian people on those boards, whether it's school boards or county boards, or things like that.

We really need people in those key positions to help some of this go through and pass on not just an annual basis, but sometimes a two- and four-year basis to help us move our work forward, so we need money in that area as well.

Right now we're struggling with our

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county superintendent who is a huge supporter of us. We're running into white nationalists that are anti-everything that has to do with Indians.

And so, we need help in that area as well. The work that we're doing is moving, and it's a long time coming but we need financial support. Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, April. We appreciate those comments. And we have time for one more question. We have a few -- less than a minute, but please, do -- Phillip, do we have another hand?

MR. ROULAIN: There are no hands raised at this moment.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. No hands.

MR. ROULAIN: And I spoke too soon.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Who --

MR. ROULAIN: So next is Tara Tindall.

MR. GUERRERO: Great. Tara?

MS. TINDALL: Okay, I think I'm going to repeat some of the things that were already said, but to address the national problem that

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there's -- a school has one Native staff, that they not be stretched beyond reasonable limits to address both the American Indian Program and American Indian curriculum initiatives, and help with funding grants for Native teacher programs, and mental health -- Native mental health professionals.

Here's that -- one that's really close to my heart is having American Indian books in the library. Right now there's no funding set aside for school library use to have American Indian books or resources.

And also curriculum, money for curriculum and development across agencies, to have collaboration between state psychologists. Thank you.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you, Tara. And is that the remainder of our hands?

MR. ROULAIN: There was another hand raised that has gone down. Now it's still at Tara Tindall.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. What -- oh --

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the person --

MR. ROULAIN: No, I'm sorry. Kimberly Daingkau-Begay's hand is back up.

MR. GUERRERO: Okay. Kimberly, you're going to close us out on the last comment.

MS. DAINGKAU-BEGAY: My apologies. I forgot to push the unmute. Very quickly, I just want to acknowledge on what our state for the state of Arizona with our Office of Indian Education, and maybe it could be a model of how the federal level could help and assist with the rest of the states that -- with the -- from the Office of Indian Education, but with our OIE, we actually have several sessions that we have with Indian education stakeholders.

One is our programs and policies for Indian education stakeholders that we have on a monthly basis that's every fourth or third Monday of the month.

We also have a national Johnson O'Malley forum -- I'm sorry, a Johnson O'Malley forum with the national representatives and the

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federal representatives where it provides space for Indian educators to voice their concerns or any challenges or barriers that they face, and with that comes with the educators who are directly working with the students and in these school districts, and with the schools themselves.

So it helps I guess vent out those problems that we each face as educators, and to work together as a team of what can we do to solve these problems, or what can we do -- what solutions are there to any of these barriers that we face as educators?

So it's just, you know, acknowledging that space of what our -- what we're doing here within our state to provide that space for our educators, and I just wanted to acknowledge that. That's one way of how we do that.

MR. GUERRERO: Wonderful. Thank you so much. We appreciate that comment, and that's going to be the -- it for our vocalized comments for today, however again there'll be reminders,

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like at the end of this.

We're going to move into the next segment of today's presentation with the remaining amount of time of seven minutes, so less than seven minutes. Phillip, can I get the next slide?

And like I'd mentioned before, we wanted to give a short amount of time for some brief reflection and there are two simple questions that myself and Hollie attempt at answering.

And the first is, what did we hear from today's participants, as well as how can Department of Education or ED help the Indian education community leverage federal resources for their programs?

And I think just in a short summary, you know, we've -- this -- today's session has been great, very phenomenal in terms of what we've heard, and very representative across the country.

You know, I was trying to make note of

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the various states and communities within those states that are present virtually today, and I heard from voices from California, the Karuk, Wintu and Maidu, then Wisconsin, a White Earth reservation, Ho-Chunk, Alaska Kenaitze, North Slope Borough, as well as Anchorage metro area.

Oklahoma, the Edmond-Moore-Norman metro areas, New Mexico and Albuquerque, South Dakota, Cheyenne River, Wyoming, Wind River Reservation, as well as Colorado, the Denver metro area.

And, you know, thinking about -- oh, and also Arizona if I hadn't mentioned that yet with our last comment, and you know, thinking about all the numerous amounts of challenges we could see, and although they seem immense, they're nothing compared to the power of resilience that lay within the tribal communities that are experiencing these realities.

And their tribal histories, traditional ways are indeed old, and that when we talk about them so much, I heard that, you know,

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they return, that there's a renewal again, that it's important to not forget where we've come from, and that's the power held in -- inside of each and every one of our Native students, our Native children in schools throughout the country today, and it's living inside of them, living inside all of us as a living memory.

And I -- we've heard a lot of input in terms of folks having interest in the whole Native child, and this is an opportunity to really prioritize the value of community first in the work that we do, and if parents aren't connected to the process, then we lose in this effort to help revitalize partnerships in public education.

And as well as avoiding terms such as, your student has qualified or, you know, has been identified for this program, as it may inadvertently stigmatize services to them, but instead, these -- the programs helping, they're reaching out to the parents, saying, we need your help with something and, you know, students live

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one way outside of the school and another way in the school, and it's important to think about our work and how we try to build those experiences not to be two different stark experiences, but one in the same, with the student to feel supported as a whole and in any environment, and that they are well connected or find pathways to become connected to their culture if they are not connected.

And ultimately that representation matters in all experiences that affect the Native child.

So, this just reminds me and it helps me realize for myself, my team, my colleagues here at the department that there's great work in front of us, and that there's much to do, but that's the beauty of getting -- having the privilege to work here at the U.S. Department of Education to make sure we hear you and we take into all of this into our plans moving forward. Hollie, would you also like to --

MS. MACKEY: Yeah, I think just being

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mindful of time. You know, I would echo everything that you had said, and a couple of things that really stood out to me is this idea of time and space that we started with, right? Thinking about SEL as an add-on, culture and language is an add-on.

We don't have the resources, we're not getting the information out in ways that are helpful, particularly thinking about supporting our Title 6 coordinators in the ways that would be most helpful.

And then also different organizations that have come together or community-based organizations, or some of the indigenous education non-profit work that goes on.

You know, they typically aren't considered in our funding, and I heard different comments and saw different comments on the side that looking at how we can expand our funding perhaps to include these groups differently, and include them as part of a primary sort of funding goal as opposed to secondarily to SEAs and LEAs.

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And then just in closing, I think what really resonated with me throughout all of the comments were special attention is needed with our two-spirit LGBTQIA students, looking at gender identity, looking at intersections, and knowing that we need to do better by our students in this area.

And I do know that there is coming up this month, the first ever U.S. Department of Education webinar that's specifically focusing on transgender students, and so I would encourage you to look for that information.

I don't have it handy, and I didn't know I would be needing it for this session, but I only found out about it this morning, so I would encourage you to look at that.

But we just really appreciate you sharing all of your time and all of your thoughts, and we know that the work that you do is important, and of course we know many of you, and we know what you're doing every day in the field, and so when we engage in these types of

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conversations -- I can speak for Amy as well -- it just fills us with so much hope and provides us the energy and the platform that we need to really advocate for you, and to advocate for our students differently.

MR. GUERRERO: Thank you so much, Hollie. I appreciate that. And -- oh, thank you Phillip for changing the slide to written comment period.

The last bit I'll say here is that, again, if you did not have a chance to vocalize your comments today, you can continue to put them in the chat this last remaining minute, and/or definitely send us written comments to our email via email at indian.education@ed.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, March 31.

So again, you can email us at indian.education@ed.gov. With that being said, thank you so much for joining today's session.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 3:00 p.m.)

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