

**OFFICE OF HEAD START
TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

**August 8, 2016
Airway Heights, Washington**

Summary Report

Presented by
Dr. Blanca Enriquez, Director
Office of Head Start

Introduction

As required by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Tribal Consultation Policy and Section 640(l)(4) of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, in 2016, the Office of Head Start (OHS) planned three Tribal Consultation sessions for the purpose of better meeting the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and families. The consultations take into consideration funding allocations, distribution formulas, and other issues affecting the delivery of Head Start services in Tribal geographic locations.

OHS is committed to consultation with Tribes during which elected officials and other authorized representatives of Tribal governments have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input on the development of policies or regulations, the interpretation of existing regulations, or other policies or procedures that affect Indian Tribes. OHS is committed to seeking input from AIAN governing bodies, leaders, and individuals designated by Tribal leaders and incorporating such input into its decision-making process related to all matters that significantly affect Tribes and Region XI (RXI) AIAN children and families.

By Notice in the *Federal Register* dated February 9, 2016, OHS notified RXI AIAN leaders of a Tribal Consultation for Tribes in RXI on August 8, 2016, in Airway Heights, Washington. This meeting was held in conjunction with the 2016 Northwest Indian Head Start Coalition's Annual Conference. The following report reflects introductory remarks by OHS followed by testimony and recommendations of RXI AIAN leaders and representatives. (There will be separate reports for each Tribal Consultation listed above.)

Participants

OHS presenters: Dr. Blanca Enriquez, Director, OHS, and Ms. Angie Godfrey, Regional Program Manager, RXI AIAN

Additional OHS and national contractor staff participated in person and by phone. (See Appendix for a list.)

Tribal leaders and Tribal representatives participated in person. (See Appendix for a list.)

Introductory Remarks

Eric Birdinground, Senator, Crow Tribe, offered the opening prayer.

Ms. Angie Godfrey, Regional Program Manager, RXI AIAN, thanked all participants for attending, emphasized that this is a listening session, and introduced Dr. Blanca Enriquez, OHS Director.

Dr. Enriquez welcomed all participants and expressed her appreciation for the invitation. She said it is an honor to be present. She said they are here to strengthen the partnership on behalf of children and families that participate in the Head Start program. Their presence is a testament to their nation-to-nation relationship, which she values deeply. Their goal as federal officials is to listen to successes, challenges, and desires of those who speak on behalf of the Tribes. Dr. Enriquez's hope is to advance success and seek solutions to challenges with the goal of creating a better world for the infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and families for whom OHS plans and advocates every day

Dr. Enriquez mentioned that Ms. Godfrey works with all grantees through the OHS program specialists and contract specialists attending the meeting. She highlighted Ms. Godfrey's work as Infant and Toddler Specialist in OHS and added that Ms. Godfrey was the Project Officer for Early Head Start (EHS) Family Child Care projects and lead staff for the EHS evidence-based home visiting models, and she invested 5 years as Director of the AIAN Technical Assistance project. Dr. Enriquez also noted that Mr. Robert Bialas, the previous Regional Program Manager for RXI AIAN, has moved to Region IV. Finally, she stressed that she and Ms. Godfrey are here to listen.

Ms. Godfrey provided an overview of RXI AIAN activities and services using a PowerPoint presentation. She also introduced the program and contract specialists; Mr. Mike Richardson, the State Collaboration Director who supports Tribes on language initiatives; and Ms. Rhonda Kindred, who oversees the training and technical assistance (T/TA) contract. Ms. Kindred introduced her staff members. The topics addressed included the following:

- *RXI AIAN Territory*: A map displayed which states have AIAN grantees. There are 150 AIAN grantees in 26 states and 163 grants involving 151 Tribes across the country. Ms. Godfrey stressed that OHS is proud to have the grantees participating.
- *RXI AIAN Background*: There are 92 Head Start-only grantees, 3 Early Head Start-only, and 55 combination Head Start and Early Head Start grantees participating in 26 states. The total enrollment is 22,601: Head Start enrolls 18,200, and Early Head Start enrolls 4,401. Funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 totals \$219,107,319.00.
- *Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grants*: Last year, OHS funded 14 partnership grants and expansion grants for a funded enrollment of 772 (8 partnerships and 6 expansions). A new funding opportunity has been announced. This opportunity is for both partnerships and expansion without weighing partnerships more than expansion. Applications are due on August 24, 2016.
- *Additional Funding Opportunities*: The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is set to increase by 1.8 percent. All programs were eligible, and most funds have been awarded;

some are still in process. COLA increases will be provided to all programs that apply. Duration grant applications were due on June 24, 2016, and are noncompetitive. OHS is assessing these now. They are for existing grantees who do not serve all of their Head Start children for at least 1,020 hours per year and for those who serve their Early Head Start children for fewer than 1,380 hours per year. She further noted that there are one-time funds available for AIAN grantees at the end of the year. These requests are to be sent to the OHS budget office. The one-time funds issued may cover costs to correct health and safety concerns, support the costs of buses, and meet other compelling needs. Grantees should discuss submitting these requests with their program specialists.

- *RXI Monitoring Data:* Ms. Godfrey noted that OHS is happy about the monitoring improvement in all AIAN programs. Although there are issues with areas of noncompliance and deficiencies, AIAN programs performed well during reviews. Ms. Godfrey cited the findings by deficiency category for AIAN reviews. There were 150 reviews, and all programs are getting reviews on an ongoing basis
- *Issues from Previous FY 2016 Consultations:* Ms. Godfrey mentioned the importance of hearing from the field about what OHS can do better in the future and how to support programs to help AIAN communities. She said certain issues from previous meetings rose to the top of the concerns raised previously:
 - *Preservation of Language and Culture:* There is loss of identity due to loss of culture and language. Mr. Richardson has been working on language immersion, preservation of language, and working on the systems programs need to support the youngest children from birth forward in learning Tribal languages. OHS has been addressing Tribal language matters with him and with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning (NCECDTL). All programs should have received the language report, which features Tribal programs engaged in language practices. (*A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start* is available at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/aian/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf>.) The report was sent to the field and to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Secretary's Office as a resource. In 2014, there were 13 programs that reported that they were engaged in immersion. In 2015, there were 17 programs. This year, 2016, there are 40 Head Start programs engaged in language revitalization and preservation.. She stressed that OHS admires the strength that AIAN language and culture bring to individual programs. All language curriculum efforts are in alignment with OHS and the Standards.
 - *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) Monitoring and Reviewers:* OHS has heard many times about how inappropriate CLASS is for programs and how difficult it is for staff working with children to reconcile the beliefs and traditions of AIAN programs with CLASS monitoring and observations. OHS has started working on this issue. In working on AIAN Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), there was an effort to train CLASS observers about AIAN programs. Furthermore, there will be fewer monitoring reviews in 2017. This year the monitoring team performed 2,200 reviews; they will perform 500 next year in all Regions to allow alignment with the new HSPPS. This change in schedule will offer time for conversation with the monitoring team about how best

to review AIAN programs. OHS also is discussing recruitment of native reviewers for CLASS and monitoring. There are fewer AIAN reviewers than there have been previously. OHS wants to ensure they hire more AIAN reviewers who are trained for both CLASS and monitoring reviews.

- *AIAN Facilities Assessments:* The assessment was thorough and involved 147 AIAN programs that were eligible for assessment. A total of 439 facilities (87 percent of the 506 facilities in those programs) were assessed. OHS learned, as reported at consultations and meetings, that age and severe weather are the biggest challenges. Ms. Godfrey stressed the need for programs to talk to their program specialists about one-time funding to assist with facility challenges. The facilities report was sent to Congress on June 20, 2016, and OHS is hoping this will lead to more funding to improve facilities. OHS also has hired two new consultants to assist with facilities work. They will work with the T/TA contractor, ICF International, and Ms. Kindred. Their specialties are environmental health (Mr. Bruce Chandler) and architecture (Mr. Stephen Kellogg). Ms. Godfrey stressed that a great deal of work has been accomplished to support OHS's interest in improving Tribal facilities.
- *Teacher Qualifications:* Ms. Godfrey said that all want teachers to be qualified and that there are a variety of opportunities for training and certification. OHS is trying to determine how best to meet the needs of individual Tribes who may want staff to learn the language of the Tribe. Some Tribes may want a credential that includes specific language courses important to the Tribe. OHS is looking at language as part of the credentialing process for AIAN Head Start and Early Head Start and is working with NCECDTL on teacher credentialing and professional development.
- *Enhancement of Mental Health Services in RXI:* As a result of earlier consultations, Ms. Kindred and her ICF team are collaborating with the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness and two experts from Georgetown University. They plan to invite five to seven AIAN Head Start and Early Head Start programs to discuss their mental health issues. OHS then will target individual programs for assistance based on feedback and interest.

Testimony and Comments of RXI AIAN Participants

A. Preservation of Language and Culture—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- OHS must identify existing programs and plans to provide AIAN Head Start programs with language support, identify technical tools to use to serve language revitalization programs, and provide access to existing scientific data about Tribal languages consistent with the Head Start mission and resources. He thanked Mr. Richardson for his diligence on this issue and said he appreciated the work of the OHS leadership and staff.
- The retention of language and culture is not given the place it deserves. Each Tribe is different, and assistance is needed to help with parents and children on language using a multigenerational approach. It takes training to work on this issue.

OHS Response: Dr. Enriquez noted that a Tribe can individualize to meet the needs of the Tribe. In 2016, programs can rebuild, reinvest, and reinvent based on

the new HSPPS to be released in August, which allow greater flexibility. The Tribe can design the kinds of instructional programs and family services they want for their children.

- Tribes have struggled for years to include language in the Head Start program. Tribes should be able to certify language speakers in the way that teachers are trained and earn the child development associate credential.
- The HSPPS also are contrary to the traditional way of life. The Creative Curriculum does not reflect the Tribal people and does not teach native ways. She wants to figure out how to do both.

B. Facilities—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- Crow Tribe's biggest need is facilities because there has been a population boom. They have an ancient boiler, which is problematic. They have Tribal land but need funding for facilities.
OHS Response: Dr. Enriquez stressed the need to submit a one-time funding request to address their needs in the short run.
- Crow Tribe has facilities in dire straits. They do not have room for the youngest children, and the boiler is a problem. They need action and assistance. A modular facility is important to build so the Tribe can serve more children. They serve 200 children in their center.
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe facilities are in bad shape, but they are still using them as a place to teach children. He expressed appreciation for OHS attendance and for Program Specialist Lula Howard's work.
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe's facilities are poor. How can anyone expect children to succeed if they are not given proper facilities? Conditions matter. Good playgrounds help imaginations run wild. In their facilities tiles are missing, carpeting is torn, and they must share the building with other groups for activities. Children are being sold short and growing up in unhealthy conditions.

C. Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- Parents and some grandparents are addicted to methamphetamine.
- There are many children who need mental health assistance, and now methamphetamine is a bigger problem than alcohol. Seven out of ten babies are methamphetamine positive.
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe has children of parents using methamphetamine being abandoned in hospitals and then brought to the reservation to be raised but not with their parents. This is a big problem.
- The methamphetamine epidemic affects staff who may not feel safe going into homes. He wants to ensure that no family or child is neglected, even though the methamphetamine epidemic is affecting so many communities.

D. Funding, Reimbursements, and Expense Categories —RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- Cook Inlet Tribe lacks resources and does not have casinos. More than 40 percent of the Tribes do not have economic support. Contract support costs should be funded without a cap; they count against the 15 percent cap, and this does not make sense. The grants should not be competitive, and the Tribe cannot afford good grant writers. The Tribes are a trust responsibility of the federal government and should not be treated as nonprofits. Also, federal funds cannot be used except to include 638 contracts and community development block grants. He asked why all Bureau of Indian Affairs funds and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds could not be used as a match. Those funds are from the state, not the federal government, and should be eligible for match.

E. Teacher Qualifications, Training, and Compensation—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- EHS teachers are difficult to obtain. There is no pool for recruiting. There are people willing to teach, but they lack credentials and background.
- Teachers leave the reservation after they are educated because the wages are not appropriate.
- Funding is needed for better teachers and bus drivers.
- Teacher retention is difficult, and they need higher wages. Teachers cannot afford available health packages due to low pay.
- Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe is concerned about teacher certifications and low wages. They need funding to develop a resource pool for teacher education.
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F. Miscellaneous—RXI AIAN Participant Comments

- *Income Guidelines—*
 - Cook Inlet testified that income guidelines for Alaska are not fair to the families in rural and remote Alaska who face extremely high costs for purchasing items to meet basic needs. The guidelines for Alaska should be modified so families qualify under a different income standard.
- *Disabilities*
 - Crow children with autism are facing discrimination when they go to the public schools. The trend is to integrate Tribal children into public settings, but their needs are not being met in the public setting.
 - processed foods purchased from vendors. They want to sustain themselves with their own local foods.
- *Collaboration and Partnerships—*
 - Tribes should have time in the consultations to meet together and discuss how to help one another. They should get involved in self-determination and collaborate to assist one another. Some Tribes benefit from gaming and should help others. Others can reciprocate by helping other Tribes with language revitalization. Tribes should be proud of their heritage and their identities.

Conclusion

Ms. Godfrey noted that a great deal of valuable information was shared at the consultation. She thanked participants for their specificity and noted that suggestions were creative. She appreciated their passion and realism. She looks forward to working with Tribes to forge a new path as part of their partnership. She encouraged them to submit the one-time funding requests and noted that their testimony about their challenges and needs was powerful.

Dr. Enriquez recognized that the OHS RXI AIAN program specialists were in attendance at this Tribal Consultation, and she said that she believes it is important to work hard to strengthen knowledge and communication at the Central and Regional Offices. The consultations offer opportunities for dialogue. She added that the revised HSPPS should be released by the end of the summer. Their release will help to align systems such as monitoring. She thanked Tribal leaders and members for attending.

Mr. Birdinground, Crow Tribe, closed the meeting with a prayer of thanks.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations from RXI AIAN participants to OHS.

RXI AIAN Participant Recommendations

Preservation of Language and Culture

- Omaha Tribe asked that OHS identify existing language enhancement programs and develop plans to provide Head Start programs with support for language revitalization. The Tribe suggested that OHS identify technical tools to use to support language revitalization programs and provide access to existing scientific data on this topic that is consistent with the Head Start mission and resources.

Funding, Reimbursements, and Expense Categories

- Omaha Tribe, Cook Inlet, and Northern Cheyenne Tribe expressed the need for additional funding and removal of the cap on administrative costs.

Miscellaneous

- *DRS*—Cook Inlet requested that Tribes found to be in the lowest 10 percent of CLASS scores receive training funds to support their improvement instead of being assigned to DRS.
- *Income Guidelines*—Cook Inlet asked that the income guidelines for Alaska be modified so families qualify for Head Start under a different income standard.

Tribal Consultation Participants

Federal Staff and National Contractors

Last Name	First Name	Position	Organization
Boykin	Trevondia	Program Specialist, Region XI (RXI)	Office of Head Start (OHS)
Curtis	Jennifer	Early Childhood Manager	ICF International
Enriquez	Blanca	Director	OHS
Gardner	Valerie	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Godfrey	Angie	Regional Program Manager, RXI	OHS
Henderson	Phyllis	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Howard	Lula	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Jensen	Caitlin	Project Officer	Head Start State Collaboration Office, State of Washington
Kindred	Rhonda	Training/Technical Assistance Director	ICF International
Richardson	Mike	Director	American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) National Head Start Collaboration Office
Schultz	Janet	Monitoring Specialist	Danya International, LLC
Terry	Nicole	Grants Specialist Manager	ICF International
Walker	Cynthia	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS
Williams	Bianca	Program Specialist, RXI	OHS

RXI AIAN Tribal Leaders and Representatives

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Anderson	Lucie	Policy Council Member	Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe
Armstrong	Minetta	Director, Early Head Start	Blackfeet Tribe
Bear Ribs	Carmelita	Director	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Birdinground	Eric	Senator	Crow Tribe
Blood, Jr.	Charles	Chairperson, Parent Policy Council	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation (CSKT)

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Christopher	Jeanne	Director, Early Childhood Services	CSKT
Corbine	Anna	Policy Council Member	Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe
Doney	Julia	Director, Head Start	Fort Belknap Indian Community
Enemy Hunter	William L.	Chief Executive Officer	Crow Tribe
Fox, Sr.	Joe	Tribal Council Member	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Fritz	Mary Ellen	Tribal Board for Head Start	Cook Inlet
Harrison	Rick	Tribal Council Member	Cook Inlet
Headswift	Benjamin D.	Tribal Council Member	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Johnson	Janelle	Program Supervisor	Lummi Nation
King	Sheldon	Tribal Council Member	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Left Hand	Les	Director, Head Start	Crow Tribe
Littlemouth, Sr.	Ernest	Tribal Council Member	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Lupa	Patricia White	Educator	Nez Perce Tribe
Malcolm	Karen Lee	Engagement Specialist, Head Start	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Marshall	Glenda	ECP Director	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Martin	Nancy	Board Secretary	Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
McDonald	Jennifer	Compliance Officer	Blackfeet Tribe
Morris	Rodney	Elected Official	Omaha Tribe of Nebraska
Northburg	Deborah	Tribal Council Member	Cook Inlet
Oatman	Jennifer	Director	Nez Perce Tribe
Pretty Paint	Frances	Grants/Contract Specialist	Crow Tribe

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
Rowland	William	Tribal Council	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Schlender	Jason	Tribal Council Member	Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe
Sharlow	Doris	Education Coordinator	Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe
Stiffarm	Jonny Bear Cub	Volunteer, Head Start	Fort Peck Tribes
Switzler	Valerie	Tribal Council Member	Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Walksalong	William	Tribal Administrator	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Walls	Rainie Dee	Grants and Contracts	Fort Belknap Indian Community
Wilson	Michelle A.		Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe
Wirz	Connie J.	Early Head Start/Child Care Manager	Cook Inlet
Wolf Black	Clyde	Program Director	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Wolfe	Clifford	Tribal Council Member	Omaha Tribe of Nebraska
Wood	Viola	Director, Head Start	Fort Peck Tribes