

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

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HEARING ON SB 410: BUILD ACT

PRESENTED BY

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the College of Education at the University of New Mexico (UNM), I appreciate the opportunity to present to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs our support of S.410. The proposed legislation known as the BUILD Act will strengthen language and cultural education, the relationship between the Department of Interior and Department of Education, teacher and administrator cultural competence with Native American learners, access to resources for tribal schools, Bureau of Indian Education schools, and Native American students, and school facility innovation. My testimony will focus on two components of the BUILD Act: (1) Language and Cultural Education and (2) Teacher and Administrator Cultural Competence with Native American Learners. Today, as this Committee reviews this vital and important Act, our hope is that this body will affirm its commitment to excellence in educational services provided for Native students, families, Native Nations, and leadership.

PART TWO: LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

For Indigenous Peoples across the Western Hemisphere, this nation, and the state of New Mexico (NM), Native language and cultural education are critical elements in the concerted cultivation of the educated Native person. Drawing on extensive research with Native youth, families, and educators, Martinez (2010) identified four powerful discourses regarding the construction of the educated Native person: (1) The two worlds metaphor is a popular means of drawing distinctions between what counts as knowledge in the “whiteman’s” and the traditional Indigenous world; (2) Cultural representations and signifying practices from the mainstream affect how Indigenous youth and their teachers construct an educated Native person; (3) Indigenous knowledge (content, values, language, and practice) are at the core of Indigenous youth constructions of an educated person;

and (4) Indigenous youth recognize the politics of what counts as knowledge. Collectively, they emphasize the point that the cultural production of an educated Native person is complex because of the intersectionality of not only race, class, culture, and gender, but also knowledge, epistemology, and worldviews. As Ladson-Billings (2000) notes, “epistemology is intimately linked to worldview” (p. 258).

Findings from the Martinez (2010) study were confirmed in the report *Indian Education in New Mexico, 2025* developed by a team of researchers and educators in 2010. Drawing on extensive research across the state of NM, the team identified eight forms of best practices. Two are particularly relevant to support of this legislation:

Schools that foster the Educated Native Person are those that,

- strengthen cultural identity by promoting and supporting strong Native American values, traditions, culture, and language at the local level;
- have native American adults from local communities who serve as role models and mentors to students;
- provide a foundation for life-long learning;
- create bridges to successful postsecondary opportunities by using college bridge programs and conducting summer visits on college and tribal community college campuses; and
- work with the tribal government to connect careers with community development....

Schools that successfully advance Curriculum are those that,

- make curriculum relevant to Native students’ lives, in multiple ways, by incorporating experiential learning techniques that bring meaning to local places, events and situations;
- integrate Native history, science and philosophy in all courses, for the benefit of all students;
- use information technologies, such as the internet, to direct self-learning and self-awareness;
- integrate textbooks and resources written by Native Americans that are more contemporary and provide for in-depth, critical reading and exchanges among students; and
- diversify learning activities in the arts, sports, and technical vocations. (pp. v-vi)

The best practices noted above are directly linked to the New Mexico Indian Education Act. New Mexico is unique in that it is one of a handful of states in the nation to legislate Indian education in public education.¹

The New Mexico Indian Education Act (NMIEA) was enacted as policy in 2003. The Act is politically significant because of the potential power embedded in the

¹ Montana Indian Education For All; South Dakota Indian Education Act; Arizona Indian Education Act; Wisconsin Educational Act 31; Washington State House Bill 1495; Maine Revised Statute 4706

eleven-part statement of purpose.² Jojola, Lee, Alacantara, Belgarde, Bird, Lopez, and Singer (2010) provide a succinct description of the act:

The *New Mexico Indian Education Act* (NMIEA) was passed in 2003 in an effort to ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments for Native students in public schools. The act sought to develop and implement positive educational systems; enhance the educational opportunities for students and aid in the development of culturally relevant materials for use in New Mexico schools; develop strategies for ensuring the maintenance of Native languages; increase tribal involvement and control; create formal government to government relationships between the tribes and state; and increase parental involvement in schools. The act also created an advisory council to oversee the Indian Education Act. The New Mexico Public Education Department, Indian Education Division contracted with the IESG to examine how well the schools were doing with regard to implementing the act. (p. 1)

A critical component of the New Mexico Indian Education Act addresses the importance of supporting Native American language maintenance and revitalization efforts.

Professor Christine Sims of Acoma Pueblo is my colleague at UNM. Professor Sims is a renowned scholar on Native language revitalization in research, curriculum, instruction, and policy. In 2003, Professor Sims submitted testimony to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee explaining the need for Native language survival:

For indigenous people across this nation, the significance of issues related to language survival are inextricably entwined with cultural survival. For Native American communities the continuance of cultural values, traditions, native belief and governance systems are dependent on the continued transmission and use of native spoken languages. Unfortunately, for many native people this process has been seriously impacted by various historical factors that have attempted to destroy Native languages and cultures. This has included federal education policies and key events spanning the history of this nation and its treatment of America's original inhabitants. For some tribes, language loss has occurred to the degree that few or no speakers now exist. In other tribes, efforts to maintain and revitalize native languages and stem the pace of language shift are being seriously pursued through community-based and school-based language efforts.

Native American language revitalization efforts in my home state of New Mexico are being implemented by some tribes utilizing community-based approaches to address the need for creating younger generations of Native language speakers. In these cases tribal members in their various capacities as fluent speaking elders, Native traditional leaders and parents have taken up the responsibility of Native language teaching and language renewal (Benjamin, Romero, & Pecos, 1997; Blum-Martinez, 2000; Blum-

² See the website: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/indian.ed/dl08/ARTICLE.23A.pdf> for the entire text of the act.

Martinez, & Pecos, 2001). Some of these efforts have been supported in part by language grants from the Administration for Native Americans.

Among native language communities of the southwest, the phenomenon of language shift is increasingly evident although it varies from community to community in a state like New Mexico that includes 21 different tribes and six major languages. The need for language survival is becoming an issue of increasing concern, even among language communities where the native tongue is still being spoken as a child. Among the five major languages of the Pueblo Indian tribes, the Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Keres, and Zuni, languages have always functioned as the medium of spiritual and cultural life among the nineteen Pueblo Indian tribes that speak these languages. The Athabaskan languages spoken by the Apache and Navajo people are equally vital to the continuation of their cultural heritage. Yet, all are faced with the reality that language survival is threatened by tremendous socioeconomic, educational, and sociocultural pressures in today's society. While initial steps to strengthen and revitalize native language use have been pursued by various New Mexico tribes, the threat of language loss remains constant and warrants continued vigilance.

The uniqueness of Pueblo languages in our state reflects a history of some of the oldest and longest sustained cultures in this nation. Moreover, these languages have existed and still function primarily within a sociocultural and socioreligious community context (Blum-Martinez, 2000; Sims, 2001; Suina, 1990). As such, the oral tradition serves as the critical vehicle by which a community such as mine, Acoma Pueblo, maintains its internal sociocultural organization, its oral histories, cultural knowledge, and spiritual life ways. As well, the theocratic nature of our traditional governance system is dependent on speakers who can use the language in all its domains to encourage, to advise, to admonish, to pray, to guide, and to educate. To lose our language means that everything that is held together as a society will begin to unravel if the native language is lost among younger generations.

The implications of language loss are especially significant given this context where oral language use is still the basis of intergenerational cultural transmission and the foundation of tribal governance. Moreover, the erosion of native languages threatens to undermine the very core of spiritual belief systems that have been the foundation and stability of Pueblo societies through countless generations. The survival of these languages into the 21st century as oral based languages is a testimony to the resilience and wisdom with which tribal elders and tribal leaders have steadfastly refused to give up these languages, despite overwhelming pressures in the last century to abandon them. Their legacy and the future of young generations who will one day take their place and mine as leaders in our tribes will depend upon the steps we take today.

This testimony captured the critical importance then, in 2003, for supporting the passage of Senate Bill 575 and the amendments to the Native Languages Act of 1990

and 1992. At the present time, I understand that S. 410 is seeking to reauthorize the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Act.

Reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Act

On behalf of the College of Education at UNM, we support the reauthorization of this important Act. The reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Act is especially critical for tribal language initiatives that target early childhood populations. While standard federal programs such as Head Start have been the primary provider of pre-school and early childhood education, Native language maintenance has often been afforded less emphasis in these programs in the mistaken belief that earlier and earlier introductions to English will benefit our children. In reality it has resulted in most preschool generations at a loss for Native language development.

In retrospect, many tribes are now reconsidering how important it is for young children to establish a firm foundation in the Native language and this has moved an increasing number of them to initiate early childhood language initiatives. However as in school based language programs there is much needed support for continued professional development for preschool and early childhood educators, teachers and families about the efficacy and benefits of dual language education. There is a need for innovative approaches that will support the development of children's native language, as well as their cultural knowledge.

In New Mexico we have two such innovative efforts: the Keres Children's Language Center (KCLC) which is a Montessori School established three years ago in Cochiti Pueblo for 3-5 year old Cochiti children. In this school where Keres language is used as the medium of instruction, the children have made tremendous progress in learning the language and the teaching staff has added a Kindergarten and a First grade level to keep up with children's language progress. In Jemez Pueblo, the Tribal Council has mandated that their Head Start Program make the transition to a full Towa immersion program in order to maintain the Towa language among young children.

These are examples of new initiatives that tribes have implemented *but* they continue to need training and technical assistance support that will help them build their internal capacity to teach language and to support the long-term sustainability of these efforts in their communities. At UNM, the American Indian Language Center currently works with six different tribes on Early Childhood language efforts. This has been in response to a major absence of teacher training programs that have Native language development as a major focus.

We recommend for **Language and Cultural Education that the BUILD ACT provide the *expansion of the Esther Martinez Act to include a specific focus on training support for Early childhood teacher training program staffs and language speakers in collaboration with tribal colleges and universities that have faculty expertise in Native language development and early childhood education.***

Fluent Speakers Teaching Native Languages

A second component of language and cultural education in the BUILD Act emphasizes the importance of tribal leaders and members to teach Native languages

in schools. Through the efforts of Christine Sims, Carlotta Bird, and other advocates for the revitalization and maintenance of Native Languages in New Mexico, we have the 520 Alternative Certificate that was established in 2002 as a result of the NM Indian Education Act. This process allows fluent speakers to teach language in NM public schools. The tribe determines the proficiency of the Native speaker who applies for this certificate and the NM Public Education Department follows the lead of the tribe in issuing this three year and nine year renewal certificate.

A critical aspect of this process is the *training* that is needed for speakers who have never taught language in a school setting. This is currently available to tribes in NM through the UNM American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center. It is the only Center in NM presently offering these services as an Institution of Higher Education and does outreach to all 22 tribal nations as well as other tribes outside the state through its summer Native American Language Teachers' Institute, ongoing workshops and training. In order to support the continued growth and expansion of these school based language initiatives its important that there continues to be ample resources for training and technical assistance available to tribes.

We recommend for **Language and Cultural Education that the BUILD ACT provide the *support for training collaborations between tribal nations and local tribal colleges and universities with faculty expertise and training experience working with Native language initiatives to help continue the development and expansion of these efforts.***

Modification of Standards, Assessments, and Pedagogy for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

The third component of language and cultural education in the BUILD Act seeks to allow standards, assessments, classroom lessons, and teaching strategies to be modified to accommodate diverse culture and language learning needs. As indicated in the empirically-based reports and articles generated by Cajete (1997), Sims (2003), Jojola, Lee, Alacantara, Belgarde, Bird, Lopez, and Singer (2010) and Martinez (2015), it is clear that curriculum, instruction, assessment, and policy must be modified to serve the growing needs of an increasingly diverse K-12 Native American student population in states like New Mexico.

New Mexico is the geographic site of 22 sovereign Native Nations. Students in Pre-K to 12 settings in our state can be found in both urban and rural settings attending schools that are tribally controlled, schools that are in transition from BIE to tribally controlled, schools in large urban areas, schools in cities and towns that are adjacent to reservations (also known as border towns), private and parochial schools, charter schools, and boarding schools. A Native American student in New Mexico, for example, can attend a public school in a district like Zuni Public Schools where Native Americans – mostly Zuni – are 99.2% of the total enrollment or attend a public school in a district like Albuquerque where 115 different American Indian/Alaska Native tribes comprise the 5.1% of total enrollment. In addition, it is equally important to recognize cultural education that takes place within specific Native Nations through active participation in culture-specific ceremonial life. This

non-western centered education imparts centuries-old knowledge and skills that predate European contact.

In a recent study conducted by Martinez (2015), she found that Native students who attended a high school in a border town in northern New Mexico navigated their way through the public school by balancing, and sometimes, compromising their values as Pueblo People with mainstream values embedded in public high school life. For example, being excused from school to participate in a range of cultural activities and ceremonial life was a point of contention for the students, their families, the leadership of the Pueblo Nation and the public school leadership. The following is an excerpt from Martinez's study:

Researcher: So do you think the teachers know about the culture of your pueblo?

Student #1: Kind of, but not really because they think that we just miss school to miss school sometimes, but we're not missing school to miss school. We're going out and doing our thing. So, but yeah, they need to be more understanding.

Student #2: They don't really get what we do. Like how they were mentioning earlier this morning by saying that even if we attend religious doings or anything, they'll still mark you absent.

Researcher: Is it an excused absence though?

Student #2: Huh-uh. Like they used to, but then now they're just thinking that we're saying that just to stay out of school.

Student #1: Yeah, like if I went up there they would have just marked me absent for no reason: "He didn't come to school just because he didn't come to school."

Researcher: Even though you are getting an education about what we need to do up there.

Student #3: Like last year they wanted from something from the Governor [from the pueblo] that we do have to do this.

Student #2: Yeah, like they want proof from like the Governor and that's pretty crazy. Like they know about the main feast days. There ain't going to be school that day, but we have like other doings within that. They think that we just have only a certain doings that they know about, but they don't think about the stuff that we do in secret.

Researcher: So if you guys [*participate in a multi-day ceremony*], it's like a big hassle.

Student #2: Like for that, they know about [it] so they'll excuse you for [it], but like if it's for [*other ceremonies or cultural obligations*] or anything like that, they won't understand and you can't tell them everything.

The ceremonial calendar of the Pueblo Nation referred to by the students in the study does not coincide with the academic calendars in public and private schools. This results in the necessity of students, staff, and faculty who are from the Pueblo Nation and who participate in the ceremonial life to be absent from school and work. More often than not, this is a major decision because absence from one – ceremony or school/work – will most likely result in some form of punishment at one extreme or missing out on an opportunity to earn a wage. Finally, it is important

to note that in the context of diversity among Native American students in New Mexico, it is important to acknowledge that there is a continuum of cultural and traditional experiences among Native youth. Some students enter school with a strong tribal specific linguistic and cultural foundation while others may not have any knowledge of his or her Native language and/or cultural traditions.

PART THREE: TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE WITH NATIVE AMERICAN LEARNERS

Pedagogy is the art of teaching. As a former high school teacher for over 15 years, associate professor of teacher education in the field of secondary social studies education, K-12 curriculum writer, Associate Dean of Educator Preparation and Development, and educator of Native American Studies at a state juvenile detention center, I am a firm believer of the critical importance of the connection between cultural competence and academic achievement for Native students. Cultural competence speaks to the engagement of educational leadership, faculty, support-staff, community leaders, students, the state (local, state and national), and families in acknowledging community cultural wealth. Yosso (2005) developed a six-part Cultural Wealth Model that educators can employ in framing their interaction with students.

1. Aspirational capital: The ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. Linguistic capital: The intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style.
3. Familial capital: Those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition.
4. Social capital: Networks of people and community resources.
5. Navigational capital: Skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind.
6. Resistant capital: Those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality. (pp. 77-81)

Through this model, Yosso provides guidance to school districts and colleges of education that prepares K-12 educators in culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy. A culturally competent educator and administrator will recognize the integrity of the cultures represented in their schools. Specifically for Native People, this is particularly important because of the unique political relationship that we have as sovereign Nations.

The College of Education at the University of New Mexico is unique among Research I universities across the nation because of the number and quality of Native tenure-track and tenured faculty.

- Glenabah Martinez (Taos/Navajo): LLSS and Associate Dean
- Christine Sims (Acoma Pueblo): LLSS and American Indian Language and Policy Center
- Lorenda Belone (Navajo): Health Education and Exercise Science (HESS)
- Carlotta Bird (Kewa): American Indian Language and Policy Center

- Greg Cajete (Santa Clara Pueblo): Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) and Chair of Native American Studies Program
- Terri Flowerday (Lakota): Educational Psychology
- Joy Griffin (First Nations Blackfoot): HESS and Special Assistant UNM Division of Equity and Inclusion
- Cathy Gutierrez-Gomez: Early Childhood Multicultural Education (ECME)
- Tyson Marsh: TEELP
- Robin Minthorn (Kiowa): Teacher Education, Educational Leadership and Policy (TEELP)
- Shawn Secatero (Navajo): TEELP
- Vincent Werito (Navajo): LLSS

Native faculty in the College of Education is an active group who meet on a regular basis to address the preparation of Native and non-Native students for professions in Education.

In 2015, the faculty met for two days and engaged in thoughtful, critical dialogue about the preparation of teacher candidates. Our rich experiences as Indigenous men and women, educators, and scholars guided a discussion that has been at the forefront of Indigenous Peoples since the early periods of colonization and the introduction of Western education as a colonizing tool. Greg Cajete provided us with a paper that he authored in 1997, *Strategy to Incorporate Native American Content into College of Education Programs*. The intended audience of this paper was UNM's College of Education.

Two primary factors have fundamentally changed the role of New Mexico Indian Tribes in the education sector. They include:

1. The State of New Mexico's educational obligations to New Mexico Indian Tribes, which are currently being re-negotiated or otherwise redefined. The new roles for education will be difficult to meet for a relatively inexperienced state government and the University of New Mexico College of Education Faculty without adequate training or the development of a proper understanding of pertinent issues.
2. The State of New Mexico and Tribes through the New Mexico State Department of Education and the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education are engaged in a process that is expected to redefine the relationship between New Mexico Tribes and the State of New Mexico....

A variety of new skills and knowledge are required to help New Mexico educators meet the needs and challenges of these new roles. New Mexico Tribes require people who can develop infrastructure, broker the creation of culturally appropriate partnerships, and help their communities understand how to meet their new responsibilities. New Mexico schools serving Indian populations require people who can effectively interact with New Mexico Tribes and help to establish parent and community obligations to New Mexico Indian Tribes. (p. 1)

In a review of the current status of Indian Education in New Mexico, it appears that the major points identified by Greg Cajete in 1997 are still relevant in 2015.

Furthermore, according to the New Mexico Public Education Department’s Indian Education Division, the number of American Indian teachers in New Mexico has decreased from 631 in school year 2007-2008 to 579 in school year 2009-2010. In the College of Education, there is a serious underrepresentation of Native American pre-service teacher education students in secondary education at the University of New Mexico. Drawing from the College of Education’s Research and Information Management database the following information is evidence of the low numbers of Native American students in both programs but markedly in secondary education:

Semester	Elementary		Secondary	
	American Indian	American Indian Only	American Indian	American Indian Only
Fall 2010	43	39	9	9
Spr 2011	34	29	8	6
Fall 2011	37	31	6	6
Spr 2012	42	33	5	5
Fall 2012	43	36	6	4
Spr 2013	32	26	4	2

Note: Not census data, but point-in-time only

Note: The column labeled “American Indian” includes students who have selected American Indian and one or more races/ethnicities. The column labeled “American Indian Only” selected only the American Indian race category.

Note: Only baccalaureate students enrolled and registered at the ABQ campus are included, and have an Elementary or Secondary Education program selected, for the given semester.

Native faculty recognizes the urgency of preparing Native and non-Native teachers and administrators to provide Native American students in New Mexico with a quality education. It is in this context that we proposed a list of twenty-one student learning outcomes that pre-service teacher education candidates should meet in their programs of study for certification from early childhood to high school.

1. Knowledge of twenty-two Indigenous Nations in New Mexico, Arizona, & Utah
2. Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples in the Southwest
3. Knowledge of various Indigenous language families
4. Awareness of unique political status of sovereign Native Nations
5. Knowledge of legal/educational aspects of sovereign status: e.g., New Mexico Indian Education Act, policies, treaties
6. Awareness of intersectionalities e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
7. Awareness of geographic location e.g., urban & rural
8. Awareness of the continuum of cultural and traditional experiences among Indigenous youth/students
9. Knowledge of the impact of historical trauma and colonialism
10. Knowledge of white privilege and social justice

11. Awareness of Indigenous epistemologies and ways of knowing and being (disposition)
12. Recognition of the role of elders, families, community, and culture of Indigenous children
13. Recognition of the centrality of spirituality and ceremonial life in Indigenous communities/cultures
14. Knowledge of Indigenous philosophies as it relates to education
15. Knowledge of decolonization and the role of education in decolonization
16. Knowledge of Indigenous methodologies (pedagogies and research e.g., story telling and participatory action research)
17. Knowledge of demographic shifts that contribute to the complexity of learning
18. Awareness of protocol in working with Indigenous families and Nations
19. Knowledge of the fluidity of educational structures and systems e.g., BIE, contract, tribal, charter, public
20. Knowledge of professional requirements e.g., licensure, dossier, NES, etc.
21. Knowledge of persistence of P-20 education and mitigating factors

The report and twenty-one student learning outcomes were presented to the College of Education's Curriculum Consensus Committee (CCC) in October 2015. The report was seriously considered by the CCC and the programs of educator preparation – early childhood, special education, physical education, elementary education, and secondary education – in revising the scope and sequence of curriculum for teacher candidates. We are currently engaged in identifying ways that the student learning outcomes can be embedded in existing educator preparation courses and field experiences.

The College of Education at UNM is actively addressing the creation of a pipeline of students from secondary and post-secondary settings to professions in teaching, administration, research, and health policy. The following initiatives are representative of the commitment Native faculty have made to improving American Indian Education in New Mexico:

- **The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center** established in 2008 by Dr. Christine Sims to provide Native Nations in New Mexico with technical assistance in program planning, language curriculum development, public advocacy on language issues. In addition, the Center trains Native language speakers to prepare and teach their Native language through on-site and on-campus workshops. The Native American Language Teachers' Institute (NALTI) is another initiative of the Center that provides a one-week intensive professional development session in second language learning principles, language immersion strategies, and language curriculum planning. A recent special project directed by the Center is the *The Early Childhood Pueblo Language Project (2012-2014)* and the *NM Tribal Language Resource Project (WKKF Funded)* aimed at support for language immersion initiatives for children 0-8 years of age, through mentoring of community members in language teaching and resource development. The Center is also engaged in active language native initiatives in New Mexico including: The Language Immersion Nest at Cochiti Pueblo, the Towa Language Immersion in Walatowa

Head Start (Jemez Pueblo), the Keres Children's Language Center (KCLC) Montessori School at Cochiti Pueblo as well as language inclusion in some tribal Head Start or Early Childcare programs.

- **The American Indian Educator Mentor Program** was recently established by Dr. Christine Sims and Dr. Glenabah Martinez in 2015. The program is a two-year initiative providing support for New Mexico American Indian undergraduate students pursuing a teaching degree in elementary or secondary education. The purpose is to increase the number of NM American Indians teaching in New Mexico public schools and provide a support network that will enable individuals to successfully complete teacher preparation programs.
- **The Early Childhood Transformational Action Group (TAG) at San Felipe Pueblo** is guided by faculty in ECME and LLSS including Dr. Cathy Gutierrez-Gomez and Dr. Christine Sims. The goals of this group are to establish an authentic collaboration with our San Felipe colleagues, to facilitate educator capacity within the San Felipe community, to learn by co-engaging in praxis with students and cooperating teachers, and to discover new levels of responsiveness and attunement to diversity in our student teachers for serving families of New Mexico.
- **The Early Childhood Program at Isleta Pueblo** is directed by Dr. Cathy Gutierrez Gomez. She has been providing professional development to the Isleta Head Start Program since 2011. The program is designed according to program and classroom staff needs. It includes seminars on topics such as best practices, cultural responsiveness, classroom and behavior management and addressing individual professional development needs. In addition the program provides academic advisement and support for those seeking degrees in early childhood education.
- **The Promoting Our Learning & Leadership and Empowering Our Nations (POLLEN) program** is directed by Dr. Shawn Secatero and it is designed to enhance educational leadership skills and knowledge for Native American teachers who aspire to be district and school administrators. Courses in this program include Native American leadership and administrator licensure content.
- **The Native American Educational Leadership (NALE) Ed.D. Cohort Initiative** is directed by Robin Minthorn. The purpose of the NALE cohort is to enable UNM COE, TEELP and the educational leadership program to address the specific needs within the tribal and broader Native American educational leadership needs in New Mexico. NALE will demonstrate UNM's commitment to the Native American tribal and urban communities needs surrounding Indian education. The intentional curriculum and program development will look to address the unique needs of the communities across the P-20 pipeline while increasing the number of Native American administrators across the education spectrum in New Mexico, nationally and internationally.
- **The Indigenous Research Lab (IRL)** is directed by Dr. Terri Flowerday and was created in 2014. It is a new research lab in the College of Education at UNM. The Indigenous Research Lab (IRL), housed in the Educational Psychology Program,

has Native American faculty and graduate students working together on research projects that increase awareness of Indigenous issues in education. The goal of the IRL is to support Native American graduate students in their development as researchers, and to serve Native communities through research projects that address educational needs in Native American schools. The lab explores the ways in which the unique sociocultural history and environment of Indigenous people of America impact current issues in education and research. More specifically, research in the IRL examines how language, culture, and identity affect teaching and learning, motivation, and achievement for Native students.

- **The Family Listening/Circle Program: An Intergenerational Family Prevention Program** is directed by Dr. Lorenda Belone and Dr. Nina Wallerstein. The program is designed to focus on addressing community wide substance use/abuse challenges through enhanced child-family communication and coping skills utilizing traditional dialogue, indigenous languages, and empowerment approaches.

We recommend for *Teacher and Administrator Cultural Competence With Native American Learners that the BUILD ACT provide:*

- *Support for university-based teacher preparation program initiatives focused specifically on developing teacher and administrator cultural competence in working with Native American students; building teacher pipelines to attract Native American students into the teaching profession; provide incentives to build cadres of Native American teachers who have a vested interest in staying in their communities and preparing the next generation of tribal leaders, scholars, and educators.*
- *Support for collaborative initiatives between tribes and local Colleges of Education to provide TA and capacity building that will assist them in successful planning and implementation and operation of their own schools, prepare and train tribal education leaders and administrators who can contribute to making significant improvements in the educational learning environments of their schools and communities.*

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION

The focus of my life's work as an educator, researcher, and curriculum writer has been centered on diversity and the education of Indigenous Peoples. My approach to teaching, conducting research, and work with educators at UNM and across the state and region is grounded in critical educational studies and motivated by a spirit of love and compassion. I was born and raised at Taos Pueblo where I learned about my cultural and linguistic traditions through daily life. My parents and grandparents were instrumental in teaching me how to speak my Native language, how to conduct myself in ceremony, and how to live in harmony with the earth.

My grandparents, Annie and Joe Sunhawk Sandoval shaped this spirit of love and compassion that I have held throughout my work in education thus far. Throughout my life, I heard my grandfather talk and pray about love and compassion for humanity. He taught his grandchildren to seek the goodness in people and to let love and compassion guide our life's work. My grandmother also emphasized the importance of love in one's work with youth. My grandparents were students at Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) at the beginning of the twentieth century when deculturalization and "Americanization" were at the core of their educational experiences. In my grandmother's stories about life at SFIS, she spoke of formation marching before sunrise and speaking our Native language in secret with other girls from our pueblo at Taos. When I told her that I was unsure if I had chosen the right profession during my first year teaching at Rio Grande High School in 1985, she said to me in our Native language, "Just love them. Show your love to your students and let them know that you are there because you love them." Given the political, social and economic conditions of the early twentieth century when Native Americans in New Mexico were not U.S. citizens until 1924 and did not have the right to vote until 1948, I realize the enormity of the significance of cultural survival and the determination to preserve autonomy in all aspects of life as Indigenous Peoples.

I applaud this Committee and U.S. Senator Tom Udall for taking action on the quality of education that Native American students, families, and Native Nations receive. I believe it is in this spirit of love for humanity that injustices can be addressed and corrected for our youth, families, and Indigenous Peoples as a means of ensuring educational justice and equity. Thank you Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice-Chairman for granting me this opportunity to speak to you today. I look forward to addressing any questions that you or the committee members may have.

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