

No Child Left Behind: Improving Education in Indian Country

August 7, 2007

Testimony by Bernice Paquin Gutierrez from the Indian Education Department of Albuquerque Public Schools:

Four Main Principles of NCLB

One of the most important ideas within NCLB is holding educators accountable for the education of our native students as well as other students.

1. Greater Accountability for Results:

One form of testing does not fit all students. The NCLB needs to implement multiple forms of assessment to obtain adequate results. Our native students will perform better if we implement the following:

- use multiple forms of tests (portfolio assessment, surveys, projects, presentation, etc.)
- assessment over a longer time period
- accommodations for testing with the following factors:
 - a. language
 - b. perceived disability
 - c. socio-economic conditions
 - d. cultural values
 - e. learning styles
 - f. multiple-intelligence assessments

2. Funding

There's a need for availability of funding for the following:

- highly qualified teachers with reading endorsement
- highly qualified teachers/administrators trained to work with native children
- improved, appropriate, and increased facilities (classroom, materials, environment needs, etc.)
- professional development
- increase number of native teachers and administrators

3. Parents of native children

Parents need to be empowered by educators to be more effective in supporting their children in meeting AYP through the following way:

- transportation
- increased parental involvement
 - a. communication
 - b. multicultural concepts: storytelling, crafts, history, language, careers, role modeling, foods, etc.
- use parents as resources

- choice of programs (charter, local, and/or private schools, etc.)

4. Emphasis on the use of scientifically researched-based, proven effective teaching methods.

The key to the academic success of native children is the utilization of proven effective teaching methods where the teachers are the architects of their instruction. Since 2001, many curriculum programs have flooded the market which are scientifically researched-based, it is now the responsibility of educators of native children to incorporate culturally relevant methods and strategies into their instruction.

- need for Native American research and researchers
- teaching methods