

STRENGTHENING THE COMMITMENT TO NATIVE AMERICAN, ALASKA NATIVE, AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION

President Obama has made it a priority of the Administration to strengthen the relationship between the United States and tribal governments and to support tribal communities in improving the education of Native American students. The President's November 5, 2009 Memorandum on Tribal Consultation reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to regular and meaningful consultation with tribal officials in developing policy with implications for Native Americans. Over the past year, the Department of Education has held six tribal consultations and developed a Plan of Actions for continuing this nation-to-nation collaboration. The President's fiscal year 2012 budget request reflects suggestions the Department has heard during these consultations, including support for Native American language and culture and increased tribal control over education.

With continued regular and meaningful consultations, substantial support for Native American education programs in the FY 2012 budget request, and the key reforms outlined in the *Blueprint for Reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, the Department would help Indian tribes, States, school districts, schools, parents, and teachers to improve educational outcomes for Native Americans.

- **\$104 million for formula grants to school districts and Indian tribes** to address the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of Indian students through such activities as after-school programs, tutoring, and dropout prevention. These funds support enrichment programs that benefit nearly 474,000 Indian students nationwide. Under the Administration's ESEA proposal, more tribes would be able to access these funds and grantees would have greater flexibility to carry out Native language restoration and Native language immersion programs.
- **\$19 million for competitive grants** to States, school districts, Indian tribes and organizations, and institutions of higher education to improve school readiness and college preparation for Indian students and increase the number of Native American teachers, school leaders, and administrators.
- **\$4 million for national activities**, including research into effective practices for improving outcomes of Indian students, data collection on the educational status of Indian students, technical assistance on implementing successful programs, and support for the Department's tribal consultations to ensure that tribes continue to have a voice in the development of policies that impact Native Americans.
- **A new tribal educational agencies pilot initiative.** The President's ESEA proposal would enhance the role of tribal educational agencies (TEAs) through a pilot initiative to support TEAs in working closely with districts and schools located on reservations. This initiative would allow TEAs to enter into collaborative agreements with States and assume responsibilities for some State-level functions in administering ESEA programs.
- **\$34 million and \$33 million, respectively, for Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native student education programs**, which support projects to improve the educational achievement of Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native students.

- **\$1.28 billion for the Impact Aid program**, which provides assistance to school districts affected by Federal activities, including school districts serving students living on tribal lands. This program gives districts flexibility in the use of these funds, while requiring them to consult with parents of Indian students and tribes concerning the education of their children.
- **\$30 million for tribally controlled colleges and universities, \$15 million for Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions, and \$4 million for Native American-serving nontribal institutions**, to help these institutions improve and build their capacity to serve Native American students. With these investments, the Administration hopes to improve the college access and college completion rates of Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students. The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act makes available an additional \$30 million for tribally controlled colleges and universities, \$15 million for Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions, and \$5 million for Native American-serving nontribal institutions in fiscal year 2012.
- **\$8 million for tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions** to provide high-quality career and technical education to Native Americans, including by training teachers, purchasing equipment, and providing services to students.
- **\$37 million for Indian tribes to provide vocational rehabilitation services** for Native Americans with disabilities who live on or near reservations. These funds help tribes build their capacity to provide culturally relevant services that help Native Americans with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment, particularly those with the most significant disabilities.