



NIEA Legislative Priorities for 2011

Talking Points



SUPPORT THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF NATIVE STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)

Background: The ESEA expired in 2007. The 112th Congress has indicated it's plans to advance ESEA reauthorization legislation and President Obama has stated that education reform is a top priority. NIEA urges that ESEA support the use of Native languages, culture and history as a means to better reach and teach Native students.

NIEA's key priorities for the reauthorization of ESEA include:

- **Improving and Expanding Title VII to Address the Unique Cultural and Educational Needs of Native Children:** Title VII ESEA recognizes that Native children have unique educational needs due to their cultures and backgrounds. Please provide stories describing how Title VII benefits your students.
- **Improving Cooperation Among Tribes, States, and the Federal Government:** It would be helpful to describe why it is important for your tribe or Native parents to be involved in the education of your children and why it is important to strengthen this as part of the reauthorization effort.
- **Strengthening ESEA to Provide Support for Instruction in Native American Languages:** Please describe why it is so important that schools include a culturally-based education that includes classes in language and culture.
- **Improving Support for Teachers of Native Students:** Please provide stories on the challenges that your teachers face and challenges of the community in recruiting and maintaining high quality teachers in your schools. Also, please explain any barriers that your community is experiencing in making sure elders and other traditional leaders may teach in your schools.
- **Improving Opportunities for Parents, Families, and Tribes and other Native Communities to Participate in the Education of Native Children:** Please describe challenges that your parents, families, tribes, and communities face in being included in the education of your children and whether you experience difficulties interacting with state or local educational officials when setting achievement standards, developing curriculum, creating assessment tools and meeting the needs of your Native children.
- **Improving the Measurement System for Adequate Yearly Progress:** Please describe any challenges that your schools face in meeting annual yearly progress. Talk about how these categories are implemented and how they make you or your children feel.
- **Requiring the Collection of Data and Research on the Education of Native Children:** More research needs to be done documenting the benefits of culturally-based education and the role of Native languages in boosting the academic achievement for Native students.
- **Increasing Funding for ESEA, especially Title VII:** If possible, provide stories on the challenges created by lack of funding. These days, we keep hearing that it doesn't make sense to throw money at the problem. However, in Native communities lack of money is often the root of many of the problems.

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW BIE AND TRIBES TO RECEIVE RACE TO THE TOP AND INNOVATION FUNDS AT U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Support legislation that would allow the BIE in consultation with the Secretary of Education to receive between 1-5% of funds from Race to the Top and the Innovation Fund for BIE schools, tribes, and tribal education departments, for activities consistent with these programs, such as addressing inequities in teacher distribution, establishing longitudinal education data systems, improving educational standards and assessments, and ensuring the improvement of failing schools.

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act created Race to the Top and the Innovation Fund administered by the U.S. Department of Education. These programs received billions of dollars under the Recovery Act. Further, the President's FY11 budget requests an additional \$1.35 billion for Race to the Top. Currently, BIE and tribes are NOT eligible to apply for this funding.
- In the 111th Congress, Rep. Betsy McCollum introduced legislation (H.R. 4475) that would provide BIE with this funding for tribes and BIE schools. At your meetings, please urge Members to again support such legislation.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR ESTHER MARTINEZ NATIVE LANGUAGES ACT IN FY11 and FY12

The Esther Martinez Act preserves and fosters fluency in Native American languages through competitive grants to Tribes, Tribal organizations, schools, and universities to develop and bolster Native language immersion and revitalization programs. Research shows that Native children who participate in language immersion and revitalization programs perform better academically than their Native peers who do not participate. Native languages are not spoken anywhere else in the world; and, if they are not preserved, then they will disappear forever. In Native communities across the country, Native languages are in rapid decline.

NIEA requested a \$10 million increase to \$59 million for FY11 to ANA (Labor, HHS, Education appropriations bill) to support Native language immersion and restoration programs, and seeks the same increase for FY 2012. For FY 2010, ANA received a \$1.750 million increase with the directive that no less than \$12 million of the amount provided to ANA should be used for language preservation activities and not less than \$4 million of the \$12 million should be used for language immersion activities. NIEA urges the continuation of at least \$12 million at ANA for language preservation activities and urges an additional \$10 million in FY11 and FY12 for ANA that would also be used for language preservation activities, resulting in at least \$22 million for language preservation at ANA.

NIEA is very appreciative of the Obama Administration's and Congress's support for this crucial program.

- At your meetings, provide stories to describe the efforts of your tribe or community to preserve your language and explain why it is so important to your community and how it helps improve academic success.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR JOHNSON O'MALLEY IN FY11 and FY 12

- Urge Members and staff to help restore JOM to AT LEAST the FY 2006 level of \$24 million for FY11 (Interior appropriations bill). Last year, in FY10, JOM was only partially restored at \$21.4 million.
- For FY11, urge Members and staff to fund JOM to meet actual student population needs and account for inflation and other rising costs. The President's FY11 budget requested \$21.273 million for JOM, a decrease of \$256,000 from the FY10 level.
- Provide stories to describe why JOM is important to your Tribe and explain: (1) how JOM helps in a way that other federal programs do not; (2) how it helps your students achieve academically; and (3) what would happen if the funding was eliminated.

SUPPORT FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR TITLE VII NIEA FOR FY11 and FY 12

- **Urge 5% Increase for Title VII of ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) over the FY10 Enacted Level for a total of \$204.65 million - U.S. Department of Education - Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill**
 - The lack of funding for Title VII is exacerbated by the fact that most Native students live in rural areas with high poverty rates. Title VII provides critical support for culturally based education approaches for Native students. Please provide stories on how Title VII benefits your students and why it provides support in a way that other Titles of ESEA do not.
 - Due to the tight federal budget, urge a modest 5% increase over the FY10 enacted level. NIEA urges that a portion of the increase go toward research studies on the benefits of a culturally-based education, immersion programs, professional development for teachers, and teacher recruitment. NIEA also urges that a portion of this increase go toward funding tribal education departments. NIEA appreciates that the Congress appropriated a \$5 million increase for Title VII in FY10.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR IMPACT AID IN FY11 and FY12

- Urge 5% increase for Impact Aid, Title VIII, ESEA - U.S. Department of Education - Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill
 - Many public schools on reservations are crumbling and should be replaced. NIEA urges a modest 5% increase for impact aid school construction for FY11. The President's FY11 budget requested the same level as the FY10 enacted level.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR BIA INDIAN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IN FY11 and FY12

- \$263.4 Million for Indian School Construction and Repair - Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) - DOI Appropriations Bill
 - Urge funding in the amount of \$263.4 million for FY11 for BIA school construction and repair. BIA's budget has historically been inadequate to meet the needs of Indian students and, consequently, Indian school needs have multiplied. \$263.4 million was the funding level in FY 2005, which was instrumental in reducing the construction and repair backlog. The President's FY11 budget requested a decrease of \$60.1 million for a total of \$52.9 million. At this amount, the backlog will only increase, not decrease. The only way to decrease the backlog is to provide sustained increased funding for BIE construction over a span of time.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS IN FY11 and FY12

- \$10 Million for FY11 for Tribal Education Departments (TED's) at BIA and at U.S. Department of Education - DOI Appropriations Bill and Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill

TED's are authorized for funding at the BIA and the U.S. Department of Education under ESEA but have never been funded. \$10 million – with \$5 million for BIA and \$5 million for Department of Education - is a very modest request which would yield exponentially positive benefits for Indian students and provide tribes with increased input over the education of their children. For FY11 and FY 12, urge Members to support \$10 million for TEDs.

SUPPORT FUNDING FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HEAD START IN FY 11 and FY12

- Urge Congress to support full funding in the FY 2011 and the FY 2012 appropriations so as to trigger the Indian special expansion funding provisions. (such funds can only be awarded after full COLA has been paid to all Head Start programs), and to prevent this program from the funding cliff once ARRA ends in 2011. This amounts to an increase of at least \$1 billion for the entire Head Start program, including but not limited to Indian Head Start.
- Urge that the definition of "expansion" for funding purposes should include not only new positions, but also the establishment of new programs in unserved Indian communities, as well as quality improvements (e.g., increased staffing, professional development, transportation equipment, computer technology/web access, facility renovations and repair, etc.). Requests for expansion should also include going from part-day to full-day, from home-based to center-based, full year services and from Head Start to Early Head Start.