



Outreach to Native Parents Through Title VI

This document is written expressly for Parent Centers and offers many suggestions for how to use Title VI to reach out to Native parents of children with disabilities in your communities.

*This document was produced by Robin Butterfield
for the Native American Parent Technical Assistance Center.*

Outreach to Native Parents Through Title VI

As Parent Center staff you may have wondered:

- What are the most effective ways to publicize our next workshop for Native parents?
- Who knows the Indian community best in our area?
- Who might have a history with the Native students in this school district?
- Who might be able to give us some history of the Native communities in our area?
- Who could be called upon to serve as an advocate for Native parents who need to attend an IEP meeting?

The answer to all of these questions most likely will be staff from one of 1,293 school district Indian Education Programs throughout the United States. One underutilized resource for Parent Centers and special educators is the Title VI, Indian Education Program. Originally funded in 1972 (and reauthorized in 1974, 1988, 1992, 1994, 2001, and 2015), the Indian Education Act targets federal funds to improve Indian education in all kinds of schools, but primarily public schools across the country.

Unique Legislation

The Indian Education Act is unique in the following ways:

1. It recognizes that American Indians have unique educational and culturally related academic needs and distinct language and cultural needs.
2. It is the only comprehensive Federal Indian Education legislation that deals with American Indian education from pre-school to graduate-level education and reflects the diversity of government involvement in Indian education.
3. It focuses national attention on the educational needs of American Indian learners, reaffirming the Federal government's special responsibility related to the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives.
4. It provides services to American Indians and Alaska Natives that are not provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Legislative Changes

The Act authorizes formula grants directly to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), as well as several competitive grants for American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and communities.

- The **1974 Act** was authorized as Title IV and included funds for teacher training programs and fellowships for Native students seeking to become educators.
- The **1988 Act**, authorized as Title V, added Bureau of Indian Affairs schools to those schools applying for formula grants and created an authorization for Gifted and Talented education.
- In **1994 the Act**, authorized as Title IX, required the formula grants to specify a comprehensive plan to meet the academic and culturally related needs of AIAN students.
- In **2001, the Act** was authorized as Title VII, Part A of the No Child Left Behind legislation. The formula grants were to be based on challenging content standards and student academic standards that are used for all students, and designed to assist Indian students in meeting those standards.
- In **2015, the Act became Title VI** when it was reauthorized as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Services Provided

Services provided through the Title VI Formula Grants include:

- Attendances Strategies
- Counseling
- Cultural Resources
- Dropout Strategies
- Learning events
- Native Cultural Activities
- Newsletters
- Regular Parent/Family Meetings
- Transition Strategies
- Tutoring
- Youth Activities/Field trips

So, how can Parent Centers expand their outreach to Native communities using Title VI?

- **Regular Meetings:** Attend a Title VI Indian Education Parent/Family night. Most Indian Education Programs host a meeting for parents and families on a monthly or regular basis as part of their grant requirements. Parent Center staff can get on the agenda for one or more of these meetings to share pertinent information.

- **Newsletters:** Many of these programs circulate a periodic newsletter, and this can be used as an outreach tool for Parent Center initiatives.
- **Posters or Flyers:** Most schools have areas where they allow flyers about various events. Indian Education staff visit school buildings all day long working with students. They may be willing to help post flyers in buildings wherever they go.
- **Targeted Trainings:** Since Indian Education programs work with parents and Indian families, they may be willing to host trainings for Parent Center staff.
- **Expanded Networks:** Many Title VI staff network regularly with other similar Title VI programs to share resources. They can help broaden your outreach throughout their network. These programs also communicate regularly with the Indian Education Office at your state department of education. You can identify the Indian Education contact person and office in your state by contacting NAPTAC by email or phone.
- **Title VI Trainings:** Title VI staff may benefit from Parent Center special education trainings. They are often called upon to attend as parent advocates for families in IEP meetings.

Resources

U.S. Department of Education. (2005). *History of Indian education*. Washington, DC: Author. Available online at: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oie/history.html>

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