

American Indian Language Policy Research & Teacher Training Center

Past Funding Partners: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, McCune Foundation, National Science Foundation, BIE Language Immersion Study.

Agency Collaborations: U.S. Department of Education, NM Office of Indian Affairs, NM Higher Education Department, NM Early Childhood Education Department, National Historical Publications & Records Commission.



Dr. Christine Sims, Associate Professor/Center Director

Contact: csims@unm.edu

Hannah Russell, Project Coordinator

Contact: russellh@unm.edu

Mission

Established in 2008 by Dr. Sims, The Center serves as a local and national center of collaborative research that examines major policy issues affecting the survival and maintenance of American Indian languages.



- Native language teacher training and technical assistance supporting American Indian tribes engaged in language maintenance and preservation initiatives.
- Language Advocacy work on behalf of NM and other tribes.
- Bringing together the academic resources of the University's College of Education, veteran practitioners in Native language teaching, tribal leaders and members of indigenous language communities in support of Native language efforts.

Current Research Collaboratives

- UNM RPSP American Indian Language Resource Project (2022-23)
- Native Oral Histories Archiving Project, 2023 Congressional earmarked funding.
- Institutional Partner: Bureau of Indian Education, Western Region Language Immersion Initiative. A one-year research project of language immersion efforts in NM BIE schools (2018-22).
- Institutional Partner: 2019 FACES Survey of Region XI AI/AN Head Start Programs. Revision of 2015 Survey. On-going.
- Institutional Partner: Tribal Early Childhood Research Center Steering Committee, University of Colorado Sch. of Public Health.

Partnerships with NM Language Initiatives



- Walatowa Head Start Immersion Program in Jemez Pueblo. Federally funded Head Start Program. Transition to full Towa Immersion since 2015.
- Keres Children's Learning Center (KCLC), Montessori School, Cochiti Pueblo. Private foundation and parent supported. Established by Trisha Moquino in 2012.

Ancient Languages and Oral Traditions of New Mexico

KERES	TOWA	TEWA	ZUNI
• Acoma	• Jemez	• Ohkay Owinghe	
• Laguna			
• Santa Ana	TIWA	• Santa Clara	ATHABASKAN
• San Felipe	• Taos	• San Ildefonso	• Navajo
• Santo Domingo	• Picuris	• Nambe	• Mescalero Apache
• Cochiti	• Sandia	• Pojoaque	• Jicarilla Apache
• Zia	• Isleta	• Tesuque	

Native American Language Teachers' Institute

- Annual summer institutes for Native language teachers.
- Materials development, language planning & language teaching workshops year-round virtual and in-person.



Advocacy for Native Language Issues

Tribal leaders, parents, and elders play significant roles in determining how languages will be taught, what needs to be taught, and where schools are involved, who will teach the language. The implications for state educational agencies to recognize tribal direction for language initiatives is especially important when these extend into school settings. Examples of our advocacy, support, and work in this area include:

- Expert Testimony on behalf of HB 60 Salary Parity for NM Native language teachers (2022 NM House Education Committee)
- Native language summits at NM La Cosecha Dual Language Conferences, NM Association for Bilingual Education.
- NM Bilingual/Biliteracy Seal development Work Group (2013-2015)
- Position Statement on *Early Childhood Education: Implications for Indigenous Language Communities* for NM Majority Coalition, (August, 2018).
- Oral and written testimony submitted before U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Washington, DC (August, 2018). Legislative Hearing on *Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations*.
- Invited member of National Advisory Council for American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Programs (2017 to present)

School-based Language Instruction & Community Programs



Language	District (# of Schools)	# of Students
Jicarilla Apache	Dulce (1)	397
Keres	Bernalillo (6) Grants Cibola County (1)	475+
Navajo (Diné)	Bloomfield (4) Central Consolidated (15) Cuba (3) DEAP (1) Dream Diné Charter (1) Gallup McKinley (35) Farmington (15) Jemez Mountain (1) Magdalena (2)	5,807
Tiwa	Peñasco (3)	38
Tewa	Espanola (3) Pojoaque (5)	334
Towa	Jemez Valley (1)	91
Zuni	Zuni (5)	778

- Tribal Culture/language programs
- Language Immersion classes in BIE schools
- Language instruction in Head Start Centers
- Navajo Immersion school: Dream Diné Charter School, Shiprock, NM

Source: Language and Culture Bureau (NM PED) 2018.