

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE

EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY, AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS
CHAIR EMERITUS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0307

WEBSITE: <http://grijalva.house.gov/>

1511 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone (202) 225-2435 | Fax (202) 225-1541

101 W. Irvington Rd., BLDG. 4
Tucson, AZ 85714
Phone (520) 622-6788 | Fax (520) 622-0198

146 N. State Ave.
P.O. Box 4105
Somerton, AZ 85350
Phone (928) 343-7933 | Fax (928) 343-7949

1412 N. Central Ave., Suite B
Avondale, AZ 85323
Phone (623) 536-3388 | Fax (623) 535-7479

FACEBOOK: [Facebook.com/Rep.Grijalva](https://www.facebook.com/Rep.Grijalva)
TWITTER: [Twitter.com/RepRaulGrijalva](https://twitter.com/RepRaulGrijalva)
INSTAGRAM: [Instagram.com/RepRaulGrijalva](https://www.instagram.com/RepRaulGrijalva)

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro & Ranking Member Cole,

I am requesting \$862,813 under the Fiscal Year 2023, Department of Education, Elementary and Secondary Education – Innovation & Improvement account for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe – Language Nest Program, located in Tucson, Arizona. The entity receiving the project is located 7474 S. Camino De Oeste Tucson, AZ 85746. The location of the project is 5100 W Calle Tetakusim, Tucson, AZ 85746.

The requested funding is urgently needed by the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, a sovereign Native American Tribe whose Education Department has been invested in the process of developing an Independent Tribal School System. All of the outcomes of this work address innovation and improvement in the areas of curricula development, teacher training, acquisition of books and computers, arts education, and social and emotional learning activities.

The Pascua Yaqui tribe is committed to designing an independent educational system that centers the students and teachers in Yaqui language, culture, history and its ancestral ways. They have committed land resources for a school site, financial resources to hire a full-time Associate Director of Tribal School Initiatives who will work directly with the Education Director on this project. They recently established an intergovernmental agreement with the University of Arizona which will leverage technical expertise in multiple areas and support the school design project. Additionally, a partnership with Northern Arizona University regarding the Indigenous language acquisition also informs this work.

The allocation of these federal funds will support the independent tribal school system by training ten proficient Yaqui language teachers who will concurrently develop curricula and instructional materials that will innovate the way the Yaqui language is taught to a broader group of early childhood and K-12 learners. After the completion of this program this group will become full-time Yaqui language learners who will meet the following outcomes:

- Achieve language mastery to aid in the development of a Language Nest for early childhood education and culturally relevant companion curriculums for early childhood to first grade.

- Develop song, rhyme and movement routines inherent to the Yaqui environment and culture for early childhood through first grade.
- Develop language proficiency bands for early childhood through first grade.
- Develop companion language, culture math and history curriculum for early childhood to first grade.

This request includes funding for the following: Full-Time Bachelors/Masters level educators (\$471,600), Full-Time Associates or current teacher trainees not yet credentialed (\$163,488) 10% salary offset for Master Language Instructor (\$7,860), Program Supplies (\$25,000), ELA Curriculum (\$39,000), Math Curriculum (\$7,020), SEL Curriculum (\$3,845), Professional Development Training & Travel (\$130,000), Technology -Laptops (\$15,000).

This funding request is vital to the Pascua Yaqui tribe because it will allow educators to participate in a full time, paid learning opportunity, and eliminate barriers to access which have been found to be most frequently sited. As teachers are immersed in language development, they will simultaneously evaluate curricula to develop culturally relevant companion materials to be taught alongside them. For example, as they unpack the Benchmark Advance thematic unit on Government & Citizenship, they would simultaneously explore the history of Federal Indian Law, the Yaqui Constitution, and scholarship about the totemic structure of early Yaqui society to identify inroads for companion instruction.

The need for Pascua Yaqui to establish an independent tribal school system is one that has been well documented for years. A community of children of whom 80% are minimally proficient in Math and English is a community in crisis. The projection for the Yaqui workforce and its very sovereignty as a nation are dependent upon having highly skilled and well-adjusted community members. There are fewer than one hundred proficient Yaqui language speakers and a dwindling population of elders with cultural knowledge, it is imperative that the tribe take action to not only improve the educational outcomes of their students, but to preserve the language, culture and history. I appreciate your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress