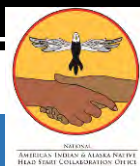


**National American Indian/Alaska Native
Head Start Collaboration Office**



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2016 Survey Results



Executive Summary

The purpose of the National American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Collaboration Office (NAIANHSCO) is to create statewide partnerships and foster working coalitions among all groups that support the AI/AN Head Start grantee population. As directed by the “Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007” (Public Law 110-134), this office has facilitated the improvement and expansion of services to low-income children in Head Start, as well as built linkages between local, state, regional, and national early childhood initiatives and policies. This allows us to facilitate more coordinated approaches to planning and service delivery for AI/AN Head Start communities.

This Needs Assessment endeavors to voice those needs which are most important to the AI/AN Head Start population. For the 2016 assessment, the main areas of requested support were: increased understanding and linkages between state entities and AI/AN Head Start programs; increased support with family engagement; increased access to mental health, addiction, and oral health resources; amplified support with implementation of language immersion classrooms; and expanded access to professional development and credentialing opportunities for Head Start staff.

The NAIANHSCO would like to thank all tribes that participated in this year’s needs assessment, the Office of Head Start for their continued support of our work, and each and every member of the Advisory Council for her/his efforts and dedication in guiding the Collaboration Office’s work.

This document was produced in cooperation with the Office of Head Start (OHS), under cooperative agreement grant #HHS-2015-ACF-OHS-HC-R11-0997, by the National American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Collaboration Office. A draft version of this document was reviewed and approved by the Office of Head Start on September 6, 2016. No official endorsement by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is intended or should be inferred.

Methodology

The needs assessment was developed with input from the Director of the National American Indian / Alaska Native Head Start Collaboration Office (NAIANHSCO) and NAIANHSCO Advisory Council members. A preliminary draft of the survey was then sent to Office of Head Start Region XI Program Manager and Program Specialists so that they could make suggestions for possible changes, additions, or deletions.

The needs assessment survey was sent to 150 grantees on April 29, 2016 and was closed on July 1, 2016. The survey contained a total of 77 possible questions. However, the survey was designed using dependencies, wherein the questions the respondent was asked resulted from their responses on previous questions. Items in this survey were worded as direct questions and included open comment sections so respondents could provide further detail if needed.

Needs Assessment topics included:

- General Program Information
- Early Head Start – Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships & Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
- State Collaboration
- QRIS & State licensure
- Funding Sources
- Local Education Agencies (LEA)
- School Readiness & Family Engagement
- Health
- Transportation & Facilities
- Language & Culture
- Professional Development

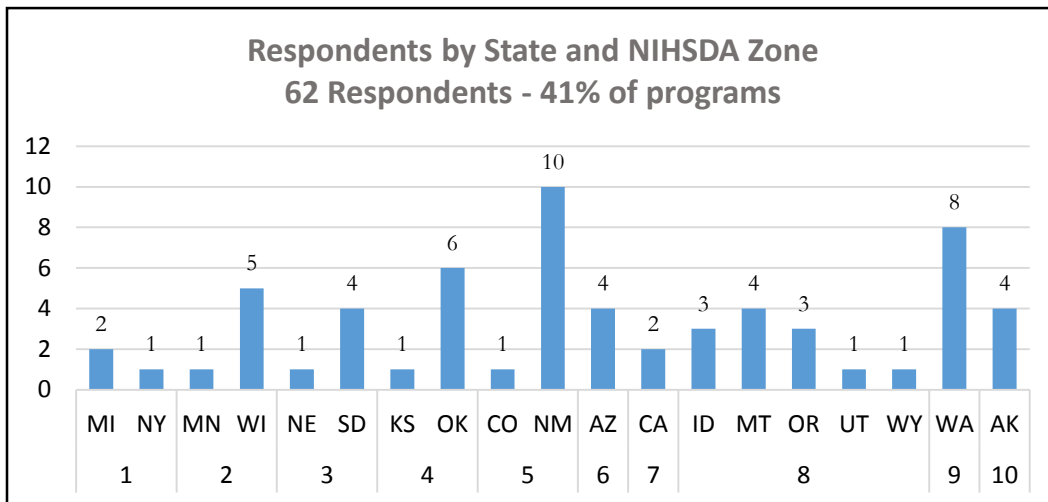
The survey administrator checked returned surveys for missing and duplicate information and conducted the following analysis of the results. Data analysis was completed using Excel and Survey Monkey.

Note: The results reported can only be applied to the survey participants. They cannot be generalized to represent the entire AI/AN Head Start population as a whole.

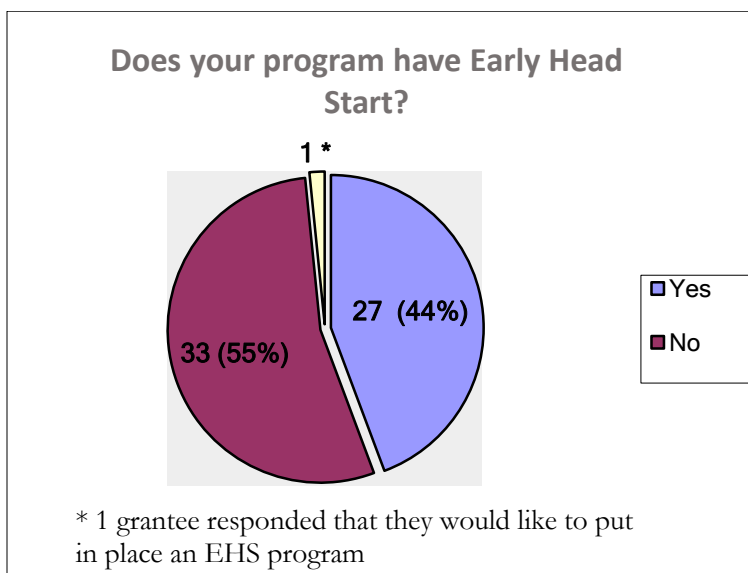
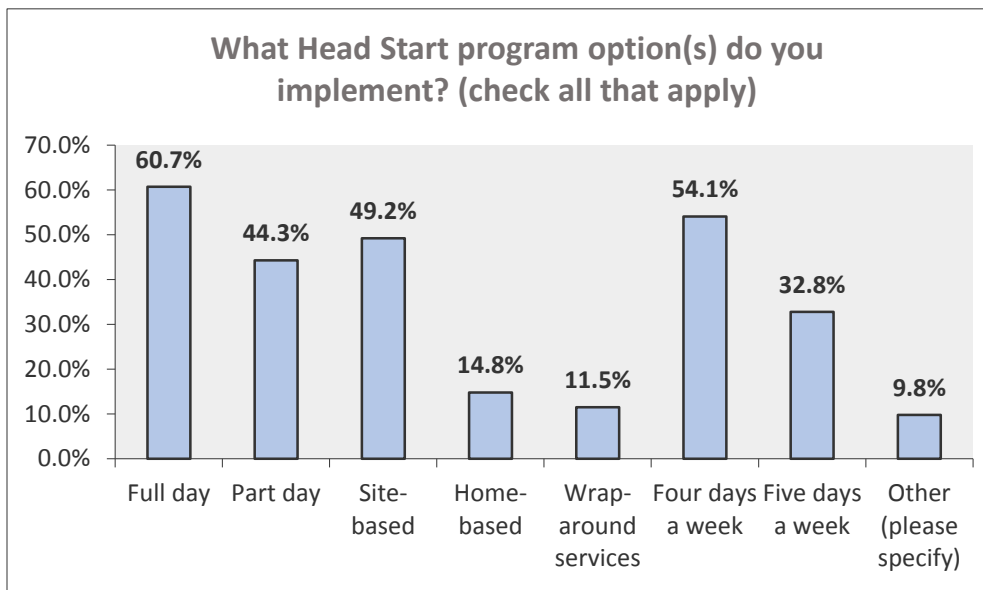
Demographics

Survey responses are broken out by several demographic categories, as follows:

- The number of respondents are broken out by:
 - State
 - NIHSDA Zone
 - Type of program



The majority of Head Start grantees who replied to this survey implement full day programs and they hold classes 4 days a week. Also, 27 (44%) of those that replied have Early Head Start programs.



Summary of Data

Upon analysis of the 2016 needs assessment, there were several priority areas that emerged from the data for Region XI American Indian /Alaska Native (AI/AN) Head Start grantees. One of these areas is the relationship between tribal Head Start programs and their Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO). The 2016 assessment shows that only thirty-seven percent (37%) of grantees have a working relationship with their HSSCO while sixty-three percent (63%) are not currently working with this group. Those that are working with their HSSCO's indicate that they felt supported by this office and rated their relationship as very good. The National AI/AN Head Start Collaboration Office (NAIANHSCO) will work to bridge this gap by continuing to educate the tribal programs, as well as the HSSCO's, on how they can best support each other.

Another area that was highlighted within the state arena was the need to increase understanding of state QRIS systems. A little more than a third of the programs (38%) who responded stated that they were licensed by the state. Those who were not licensed expressed a desire to receive further training on the QRIS system and build closer relationships/improve communication with their state education counterparts – approximately 48% of respondents. Additionally, there was one concern that emerged from the comments section on QRIS. This concern was the duplication of monitoring and reviews by federal and state agencies. The majority of the areas related to QRIS can be improved by strengthening the relationship between these programs and their HSSCO partners as well as closer communication between the state and federal review teams.

In addition to the area of QRIS, another area of focus within the state structure was the continued need to assist tribal programs with the local education agreements (LEA's) they have in place with their education partners. Approximately 63% stated that they had at least one LEA that needed assistance. The majority of LEAs that had challenges were those that covered the area of disability services. Again, this is an area that can be improved by strengthening the tribal program's relationship with their HSSCO partners. The NAIANHSCO will also continue to support individual programs in this endeavor.

Two areas of concern that emerged at the programmatic level were family engagement and also the need for additional mental health and addiction resources as well as oral health programs. Over a third of the respondents (39%) stated that caregivers were somewhat engaged and commented that they would like assistance with increasing family participation especially in the area of male involvement. The majority of directors (63%) stated they received great support from their community providers; however, they did indicate they would like increased support in the areas of mental health/drug addiction and oral health.

Another topic that arose from the data was the state of facilities at the programs. When asked about interest in the development of EHS-CC partnerships sixty-seven percent (67%) of grantees said they were interested in implementing this program. The main reason the majority of grantees did not pursue this offering was due to lack in sufficient facilities. When asked about facilities later on in the assessment most grantees (42%) stated that they suffered from lack of space and increased maintenance due to the age of their structures.

The Needs Assessment shows that approximately 78% of AI/AN Head Start programs have language and culture curriculum as a part of their program. Most of these, 55%, only had words spoken during the class period while only 28% had full immersion classrooms. This is a substantial increase from the 2015 needs assessment when only 8% of the respondents stated they had immersion classrooms and the

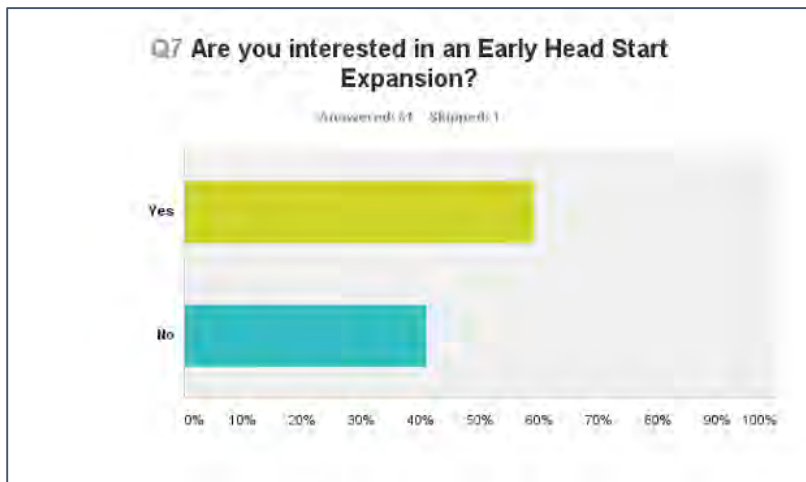
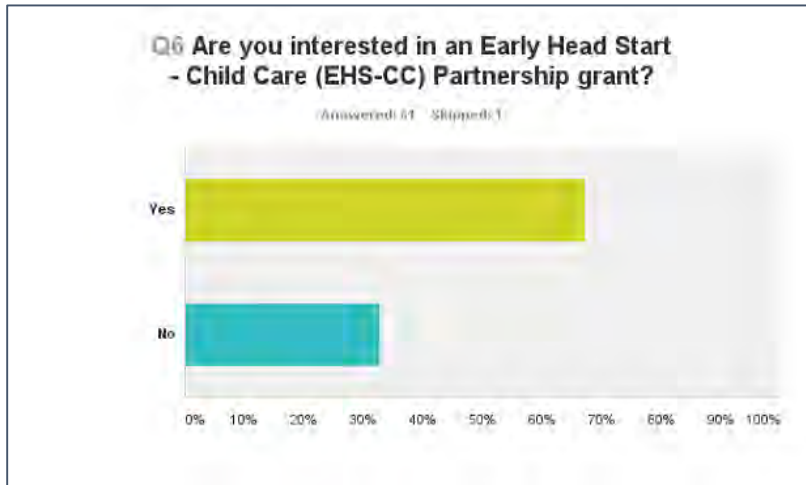
majority of grantees only spoke a few words within the classroom. This is in part due to the focus the NAIANHSCO has placed on supporting our grantees in this area. This office will continue to support those programs that want to establish more productive language programs through our collaborative efforts with our partners (ANA, DOE, OHS, NCCLR, AIHEC) and by providing additional resources to AI/AN Head Start grantees.

In the area of professional development, forty-three percent (43%) of grantees indicated that their local/tribal colleges did not have all of the necessary courses for their staff. The majority of grantees who fell into this category (73%) indicated that there was a need for additional Early Childhood Education courses as well as tribal language and health and disabilities classes. The NAIANHSCO will work closely with AIHEC to ensure the educational needs of our grantees are met through the tribal college network, or through local colleges, and will also continue to support individual programs in their efforts to ensure their staff receive adequate professional development opportunities.

Survey Results

Early Head Start – Child Care partnerships and Tribal Child Care

Out of 61 respondents 41 (67%) were interested in obtaining an Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Grant; 36 of those respondents (59%) were also interested in implementing an Early Head Start expansion. There were 14 respondents that stated sufficient facilities were an obstacle in participating in this type of initiative – 23%.

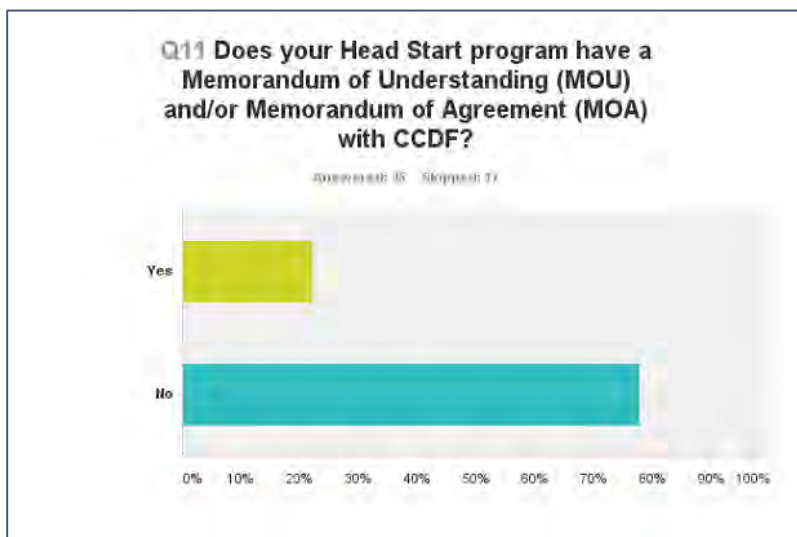
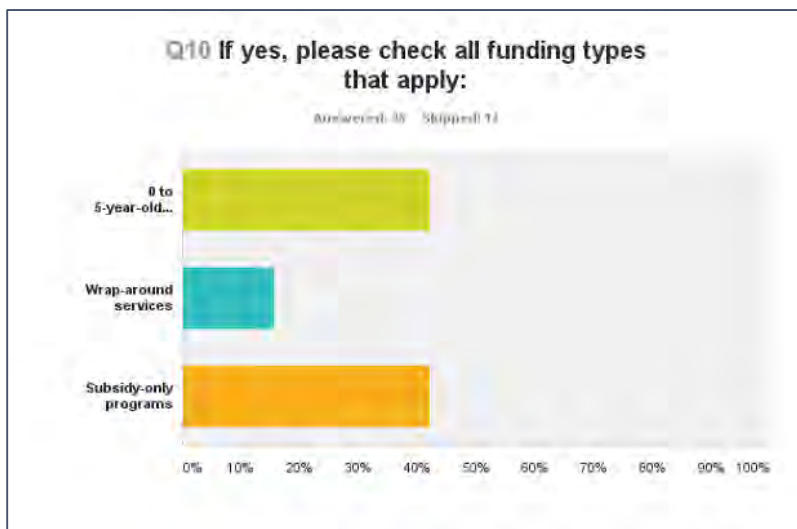
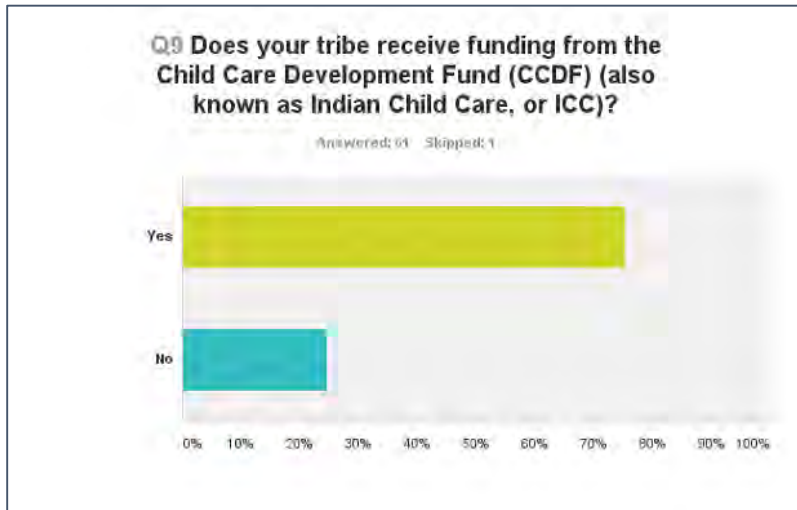


Sample Comments from EHS-CC survey question

- “Although we could use additional slots, our facility only has the capacity to serve 8 additional slots at this time.”
- “I’d like to add at least 16 slots and no we don’t have sufficient facilities to expand.”
- “20 children currently enrolled - qualify. I am seeking funding to expand the facility physically to bring in 30 additional infants/toddlers.”

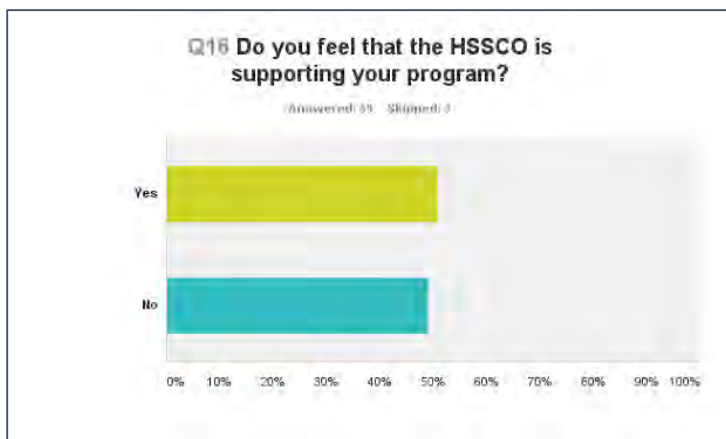
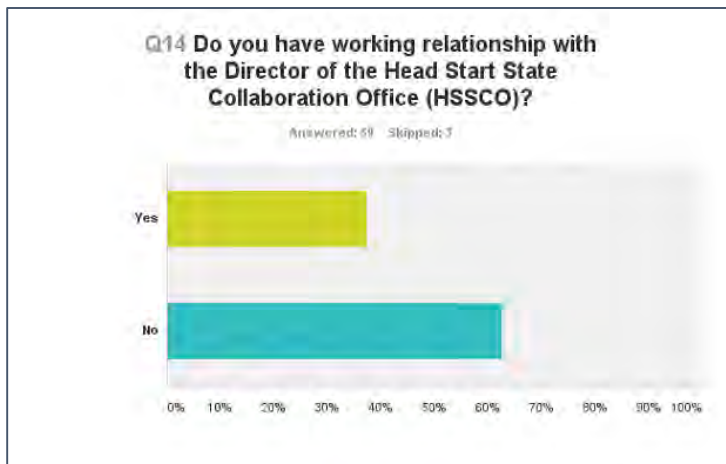


Of 61 respondents, 46 of them (75%) receive funding from the Child Care Development Fund - CCDF (also known as Indian Child Care) and the type of funding the majority of respondents received were for 0 to 5-year-old site based programs or subsidy only programs. Only 10 respondents (22%) had an MOU/MOA in place with CCDF.

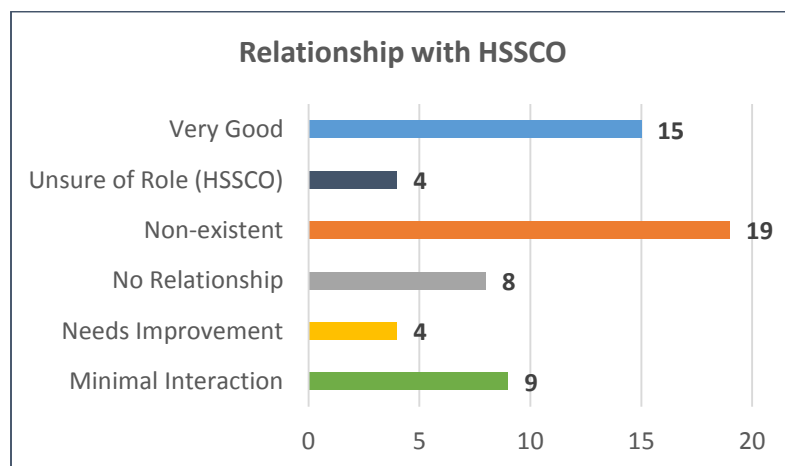


Relationship with Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCO)

Twenty-two (37%) of the 59 respondents stated that they had a working relationship with their state's Head Start Collaboration Office (HSSCO) and 30 respondents (50%) said they felt their state's HSSCO was supporting their program well.

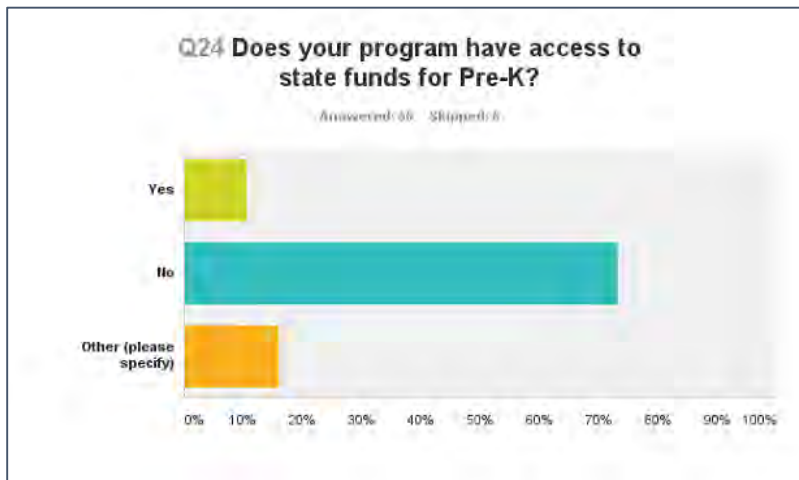
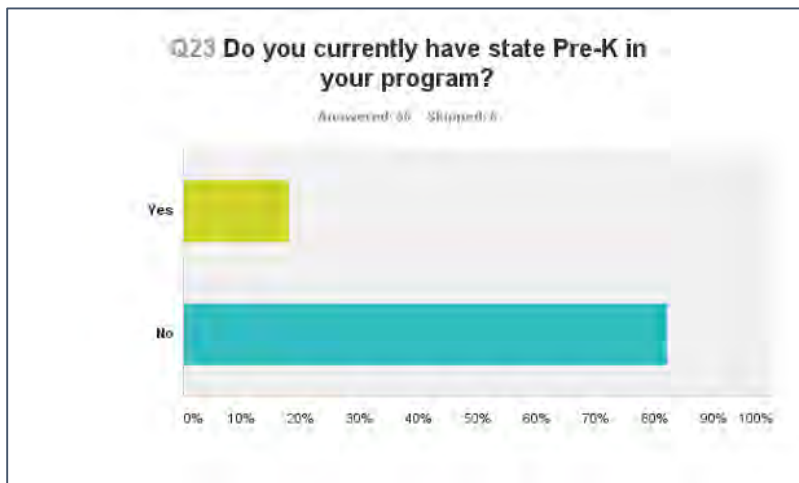
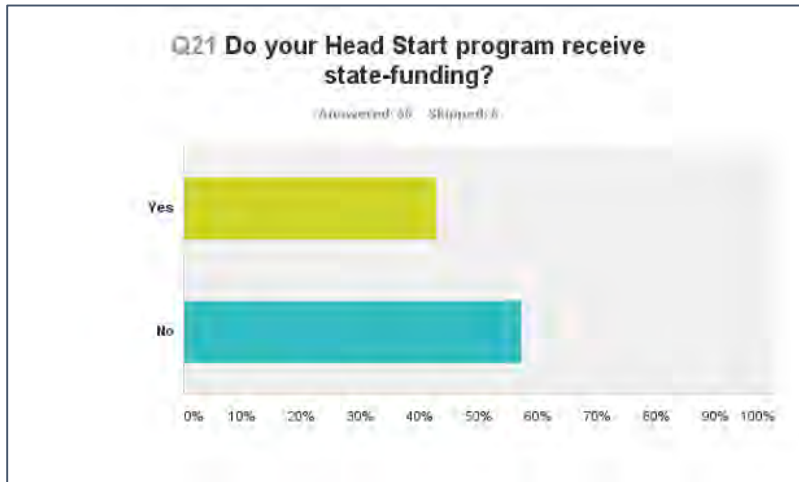


Respondents were asked to describe their relationship with their Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCO). The majority of respondents (19 (32%)) stated that they were not aware that a HSSCO existed in their state; however, those respondents who did have a relationship (15 (25%)) with their HSSCO rated it as very good. Other grantees said that they were aware of the HSSCO, but that they either did not have a relationship with this office or that they had minimal interaction with them.

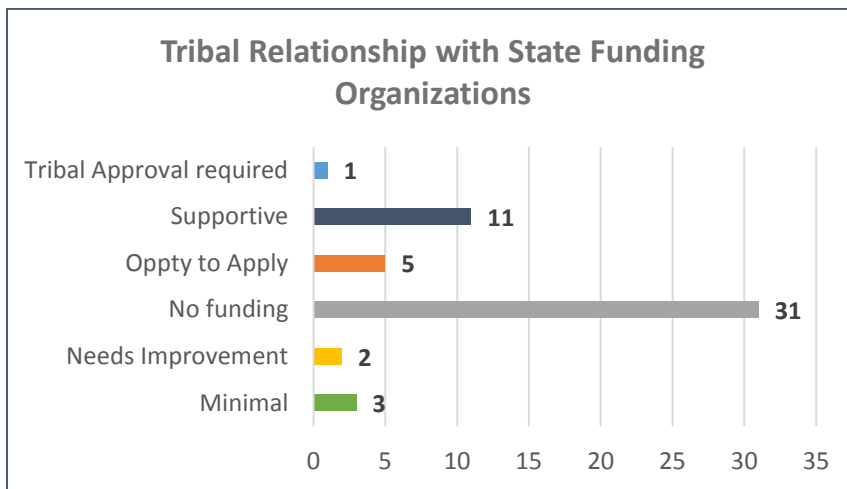


State Funding of Head Start Programs

Of 56 respondents, 24 (43%) stated they received some type of state funding. Some of the funding sources listed were: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Head Start state supplements, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and various state grants. Only 10 (17%) of the 56 respondents had State Pre-K's within their programs. Only 6 of the respondents said that they received state funds for Pre-K's.

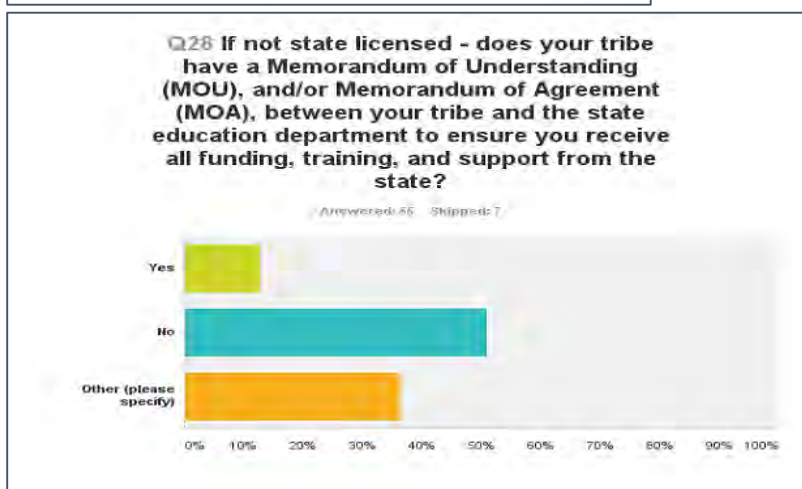
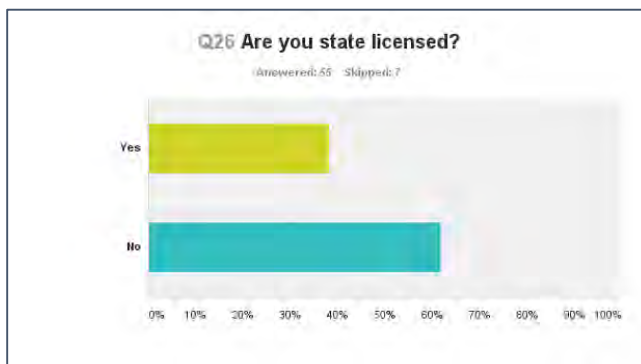


The majority of respondents – 31 (52%) – when asked to describe their funding relationship with their State government, stated that they did not receive state funding for their Head Start program. Eleven of the respondents (20%) said they had a very supportive funding relationship with the state and the other grantees who responded (11 (28%)) had a minimal funding relationship with the state or the opportunity to apply for funds.

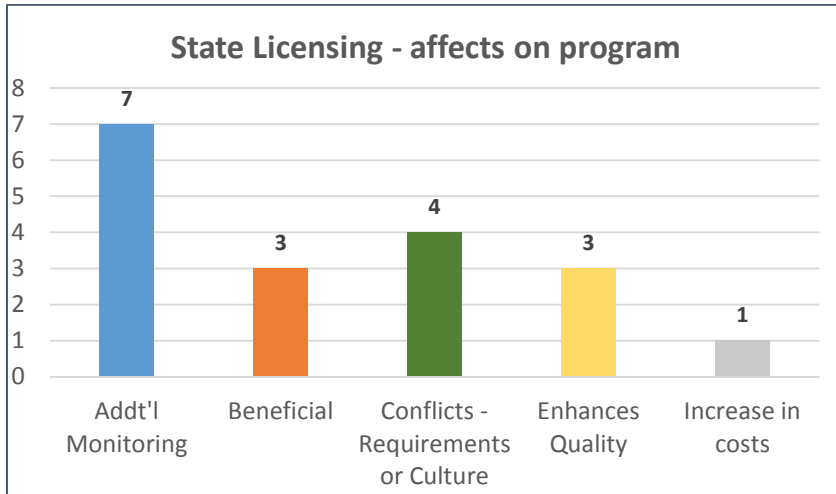


QRIS / State Licensure of Head Start Programs

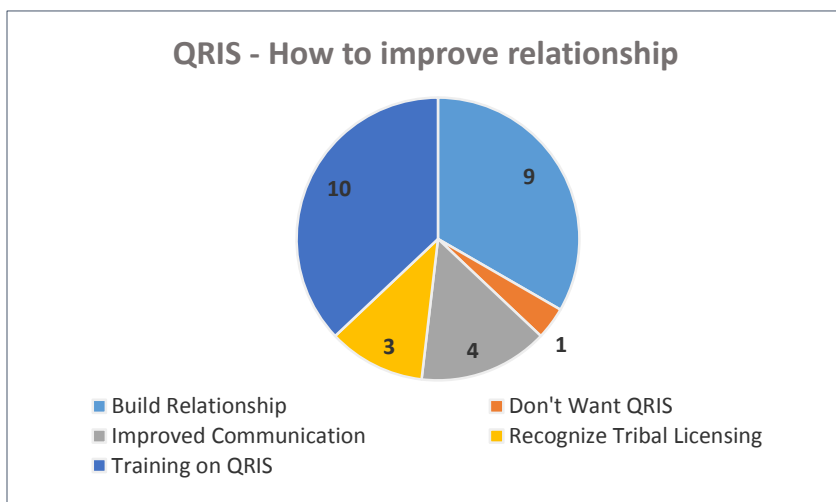
Out of 55 respondents, 21 (38%) stated they were state licensed. Of those respondents that were not state licensed only 7 (12%) had a formal MOU and/or MOA with their state education department. Of the 20 respondents that responded “Other” to this question they either had a tribal certification, were working on their state licensure, or had LEA’s in place with the individual school districts.



The grantees were asked about how state licensing affected their programs. The majority of respondents (7 (33%)) stated that it resulted in additional monitoring requirements. The next highest group (6 (28%)) said that being part of the QRIS system was beneficial to their programs and improved quality. The other respondents state that there were some conflicts between federal and state requirements as well as cultural irrelevancy of some requirements.

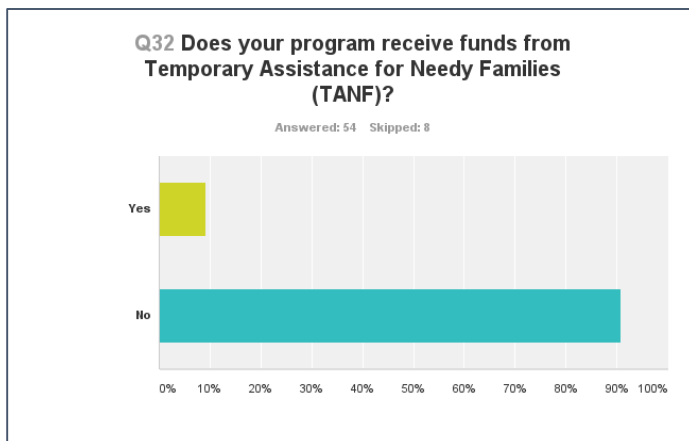
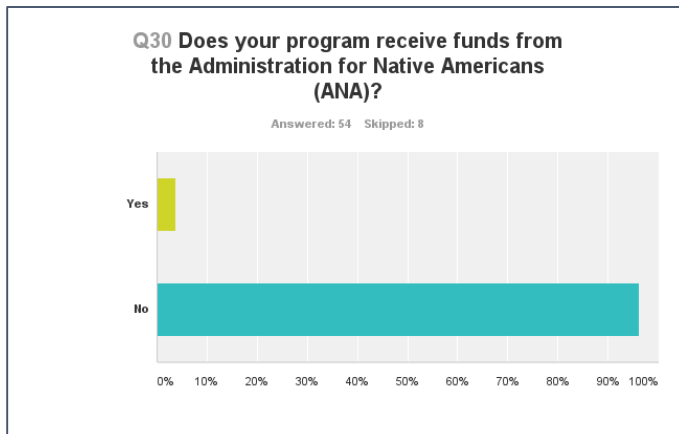


Grantees were then asked how they would like to improve their relationship with the QRIS process. The majority of respondents (10 (21%)) stated that they would like to receive more training on the QRIS system and become more familiar with the resources and requirements. Of 48 respondents, 9 (19%) stated that they had not interacted with the state on the QRIS system, but they did express a desire to build a stronger relationship with them in this area. Four respondents (8%) commented that they would like to improve communications with the state on QRIS if they were already part of the system. Another four respondents (8%) stated that they did not want to be part of this program or that they wanted the state to recognize tribal licensing instead of QRIS / State licensing.

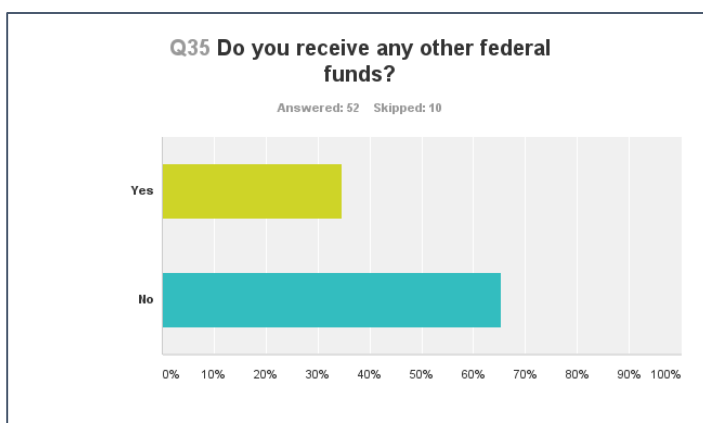


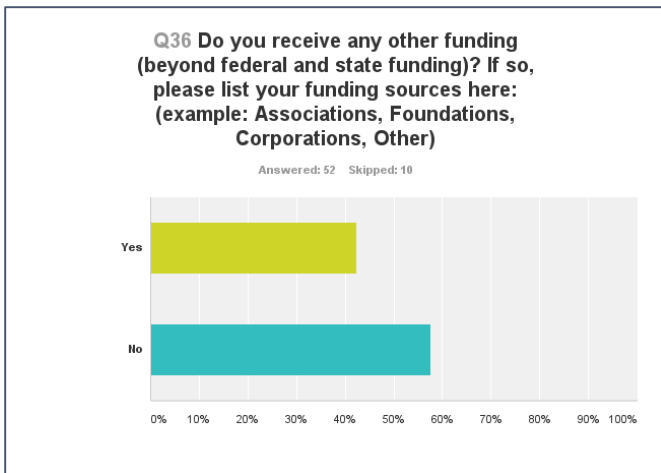
Funding Sources

Of 54 respondents, only 2 (4%) received funding from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) and 5 (9%) received funding from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). None of the 5 individuals who received TANF funds had their enrollment impacted by the receipt of this money.

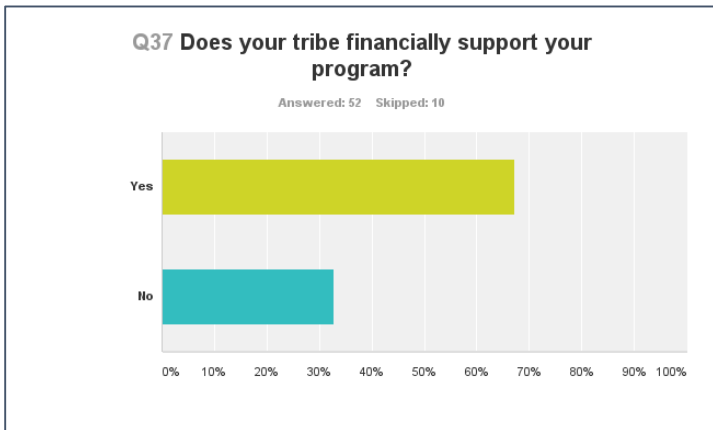


There were 18 respondents (33%) who stated they received other types of federal funding such as: CACFP, BIE, and USDA. There were also 22 respondents (41%) who replied that they received funding from several nonfederal sources such as: Tribal funding, school districts, small grants for items such as books, and various foundations donated funds (Kellogg, Farm to School, Johnson O'Malley, and Robert Wood Johnson).

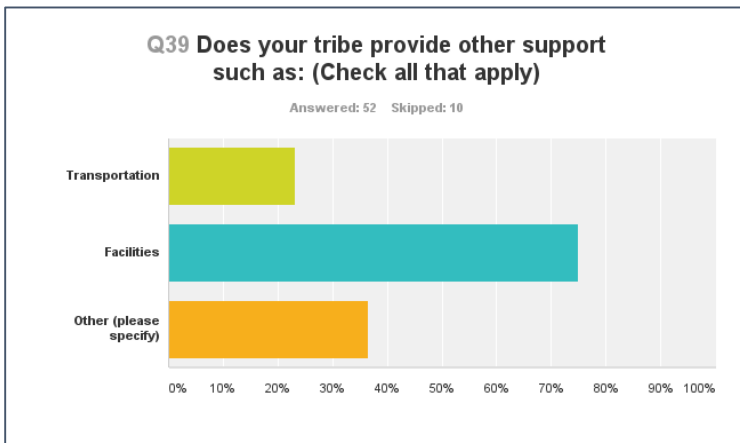




Of 52 respondents, 35 (67%) stated that they received financial support from their tribe. Out of those respondents that received tribal funding, the average percentage was 33% of their program costs. Most tribes received between 20 to 50% of their funding from the tribe.

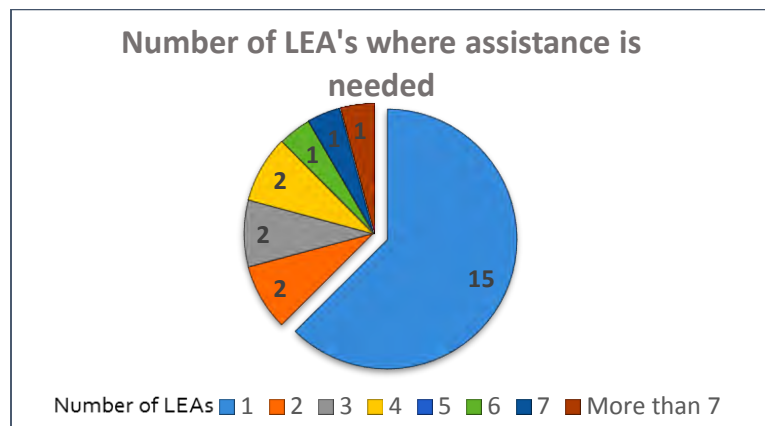
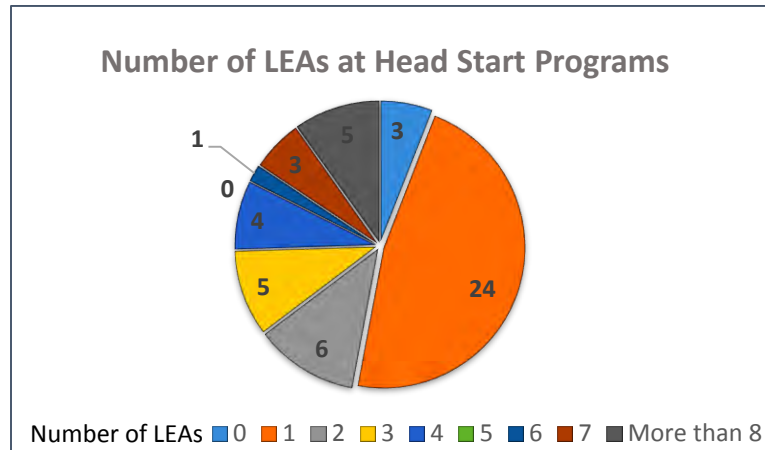


Of 52 respondents, 51 (98%) stated that they received other types of support from the tribe other than financial support. There were 12 tribes that received assistance with the transportation of their children and 39 tribes that received support for their facilities. Other types of support included: disability specialists, food, cultural activities, maintenance, and personnel (accountants, lawyers, janitors, and human resources).

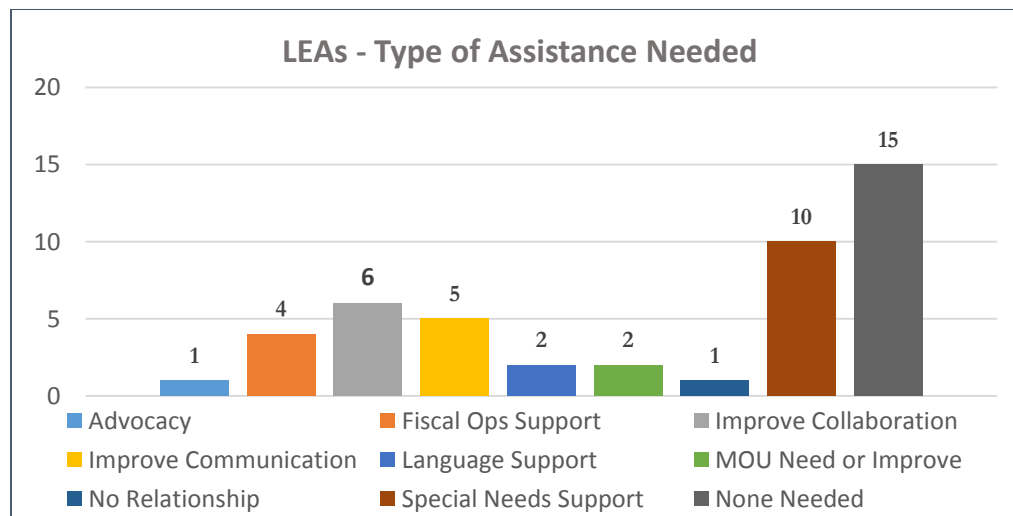


Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

There were 33 respondents that stated they had agreements with their Local Education Agencies. The majority of respondents 24 (72%) only had one current LEA in place while 5 programs had 4 or more LEAs. Out of the respondents that had LEAs, 15 (63%) stated that they needed assistance with one or more of the LEAs in place with other educational entities.

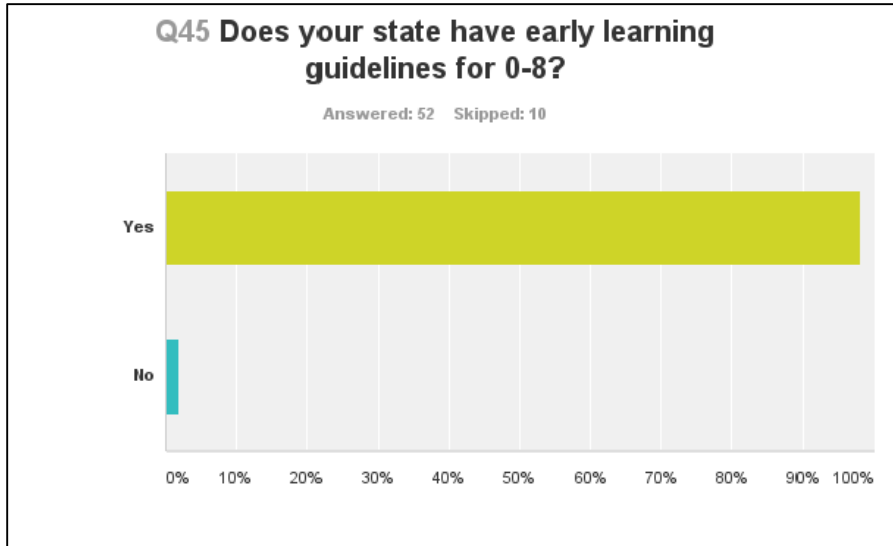


The majority of respondents who needed assistance with their LEAs stated they needed it the most in the area of special needs and disabilities. The second largest area of requested assisted was in the improvement of collaborative efforts and communication with the state in areas such as trainings, information transfer, and roles/responsibilities.

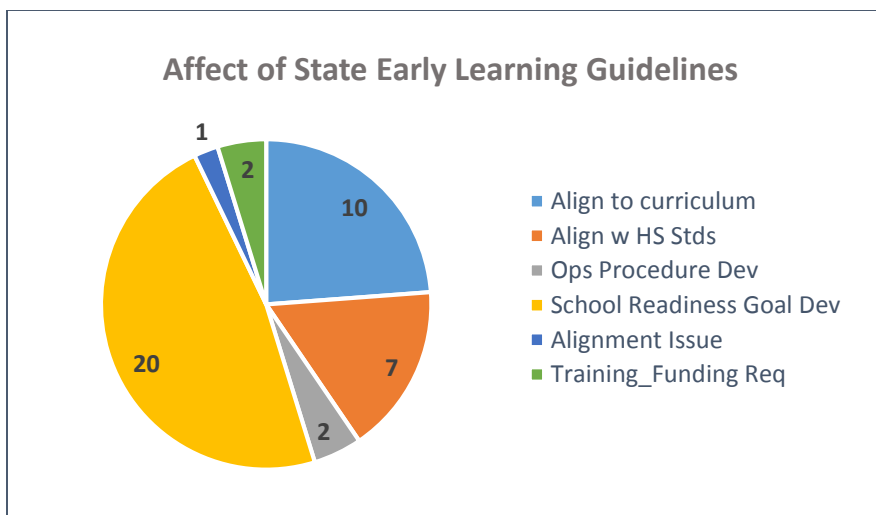


School Readiness

Out of 52 respondents, 51 (98%) stated that their state has early learning guidelines for children ages 0-8. One (1.92%) respondent stated that their state does not have early learning guidelines for children in this age range. This individual stated that their state only has early learning guidelines for children ages 3-5 at this time.



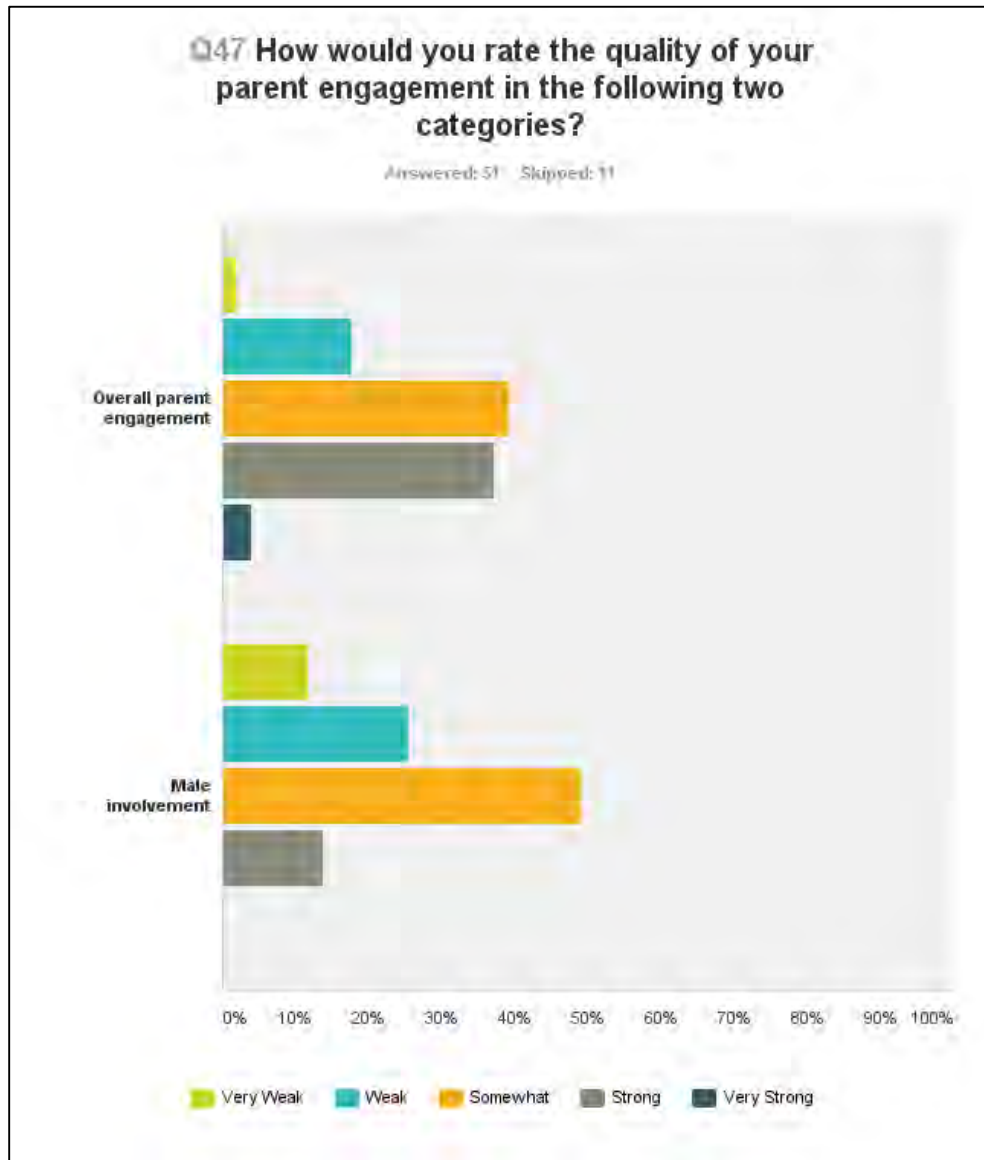
The majority of comments, 39 out of 42 respondents (93%), said State guidelines had a positive effect on AI/AN Head Start programs. Most of the programs stated that they used them as a point of comparison and they aligned well to their curriculum, school readiness goals, and federal requirements.



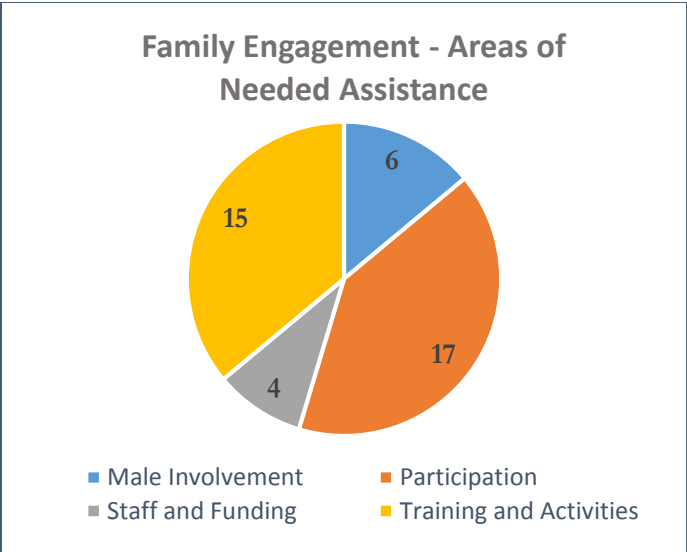
Family Engagement

Of 51 respondents, 2 (3.9%) stated that overall parent engagement is very strong, 19 (37%) stated that parent engagement is strong, 20 (39%) stated that parents are engaged “somewhat,” 9 (17.65%) respondents stated that overall parent engagement is weak, and 1 (1.9%) respondent stated that overall parent engagement is very weak.

There were 0 programs who stated that male involvement is very strong. The majority of respondents (25 (49%)) said that there is “somewhat” of a male involvement. One respondent stated that last year, half of their Parent Policy Council was male and that this year, they still participate, but not at the level they did last year. Two respondents said they are working to improve their male engagement.

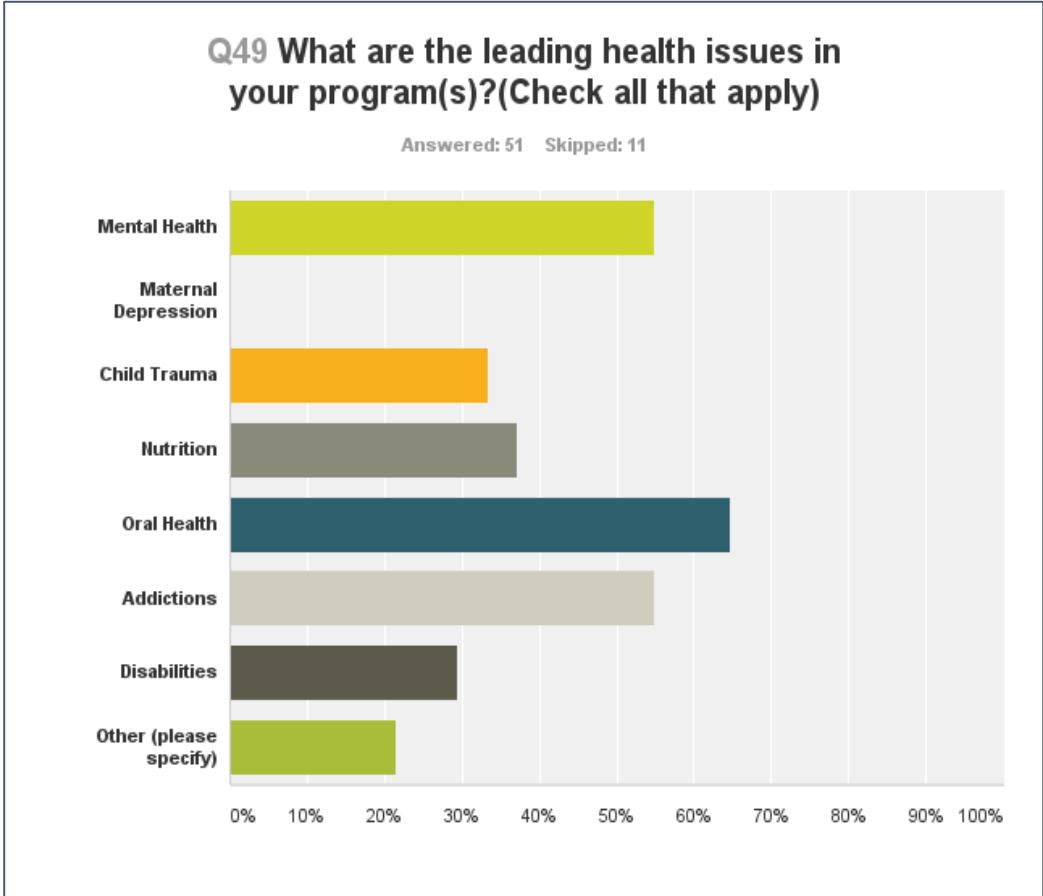


The next chart shows the breakout of areas where grantees stated they needed family engagement assistance. Of 49 respondents, 17 (40%) stated they would like general assistance with increasing family participation. Other grantees said it would be helpful to receive information on activities that could help increase participation as well as training on family engagement techniques while others specifically wanted information on how to increase male participation.

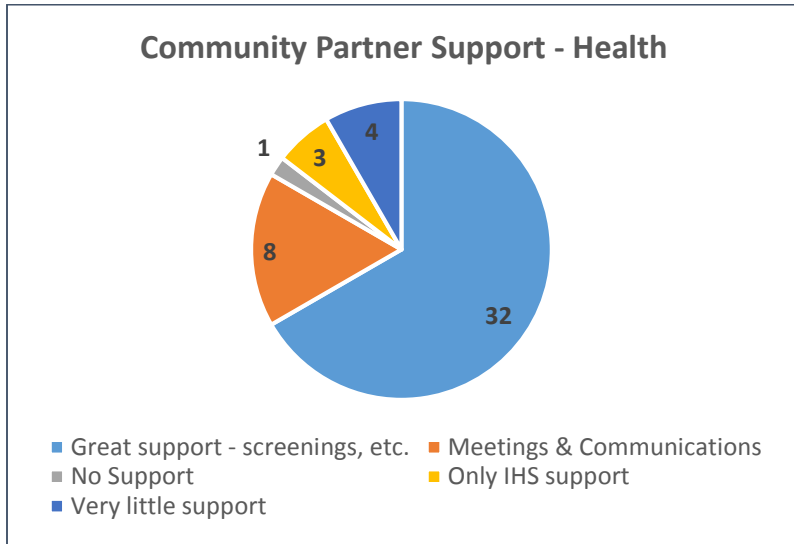


Health

Of 51 respondents, the majority (33) stated that oral health is the leading health issue in their program. The second largest area of need was in mental health and/or addictions. There were 28 (54%) respondents that stated these were their leading health issues. Of 51 respondents, 19 (37%) stated that nutrition is their leading health issue and 17 (33%) stated that child trauma is a problem within their community. Those who responded “other” specified common colds, the flu, diabetes, heart health, obesity, behavioral concerns of children, asthma, and head lice as other leading health issues.

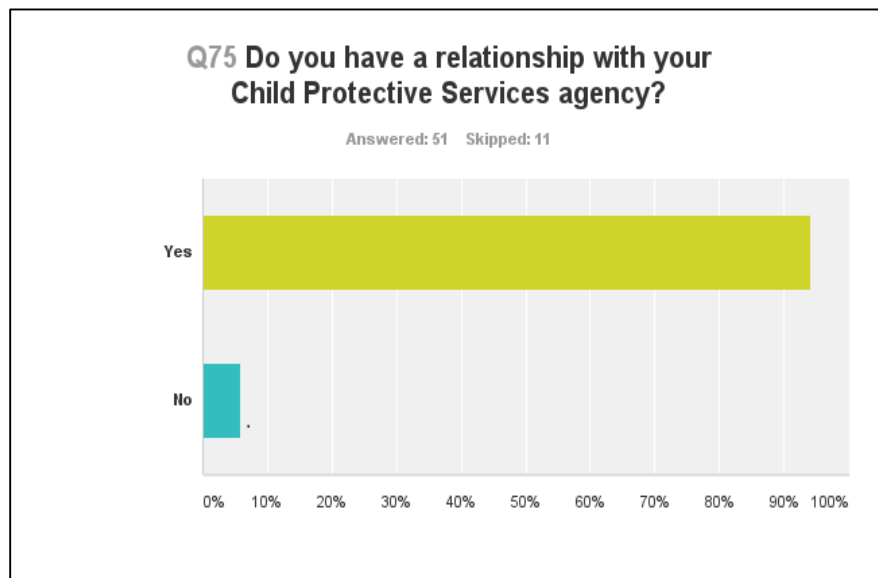


When asked to describe how community partners supported their Health Service Advisory Committee the majority of grantees (32 out of 51 respondents (63%)) said they had great support: regular screenings, referral assistance, and help with development of policies and procedures. The rest stated that they at least had active participation of community partners in their meetings and support from Indian Health Services (IHS), while a minority of grantees (5 (10%)) said that they received very little to no support.



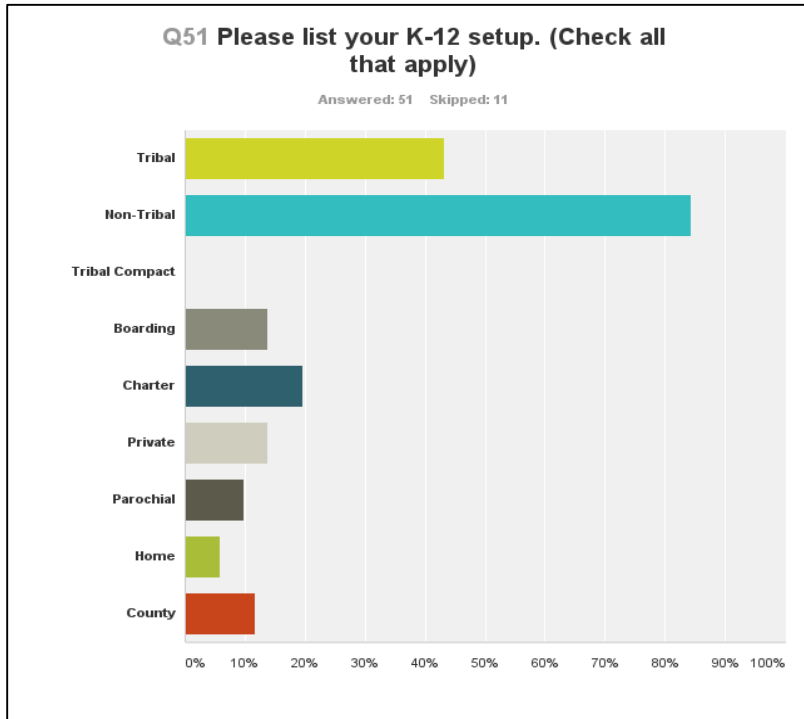
Child Protective Services

Of 51 respondents, the majority, 48 (94%) said they have a relationship with their Child Protective Services agency, in comparison to 3 respondents (16%) who stated they did not have a relationship with this agency.

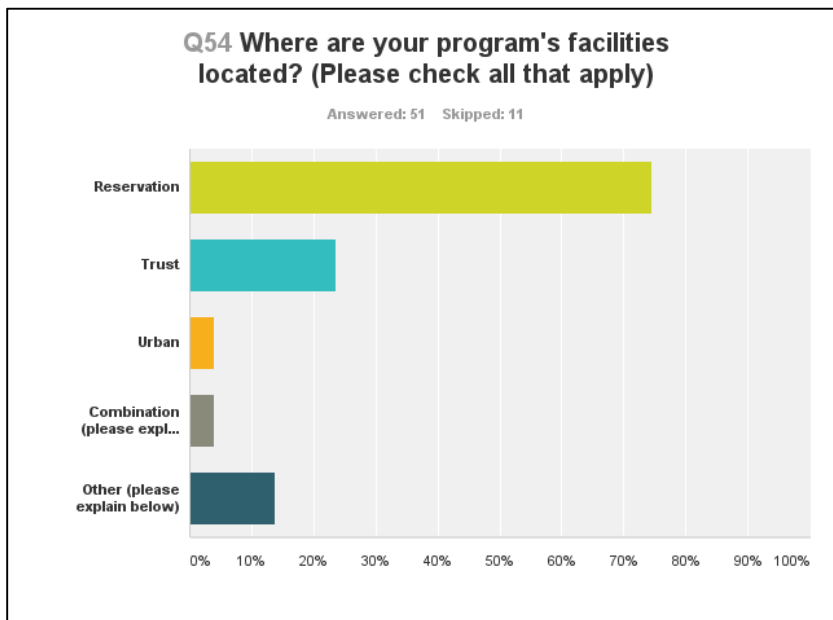


Transportation & Facilities

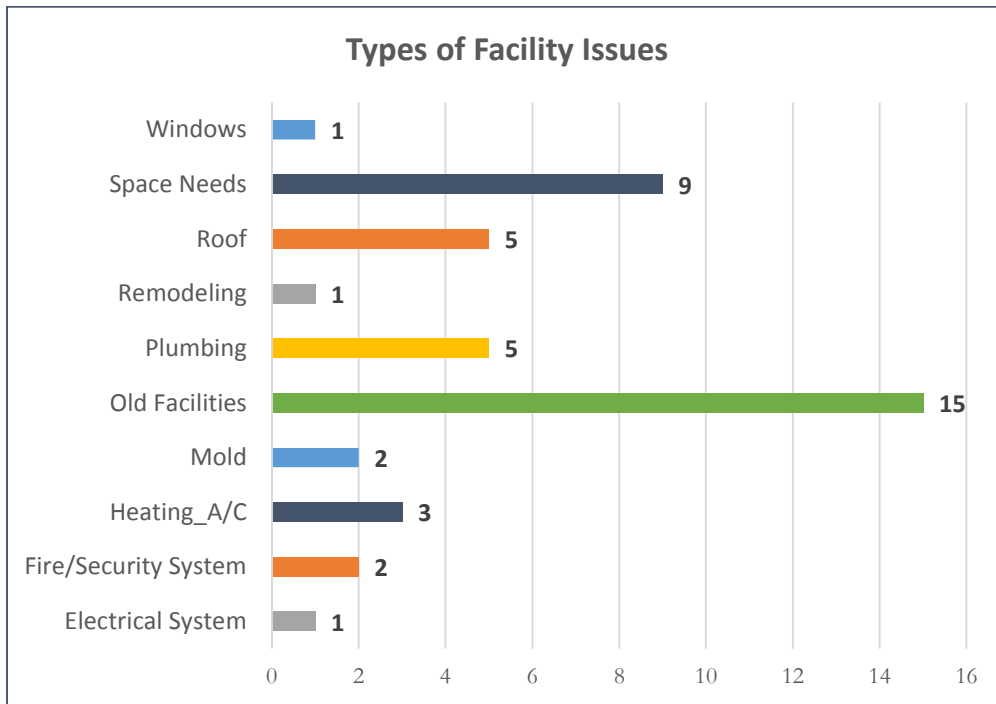
Of 51 respondents, the majority of respondents (43 (84%)) stated that their K-12 setup is non-tribal, but 22 of the 51 respondents (43%) stated that their setup is tribal. Ten (19%) of the respondents have a charter setup. Seven (13.7%) of the respondents have a boarding setup. Six (11.7%) have a county setup, but none of the respondents have a tribal compact K-12 setup.



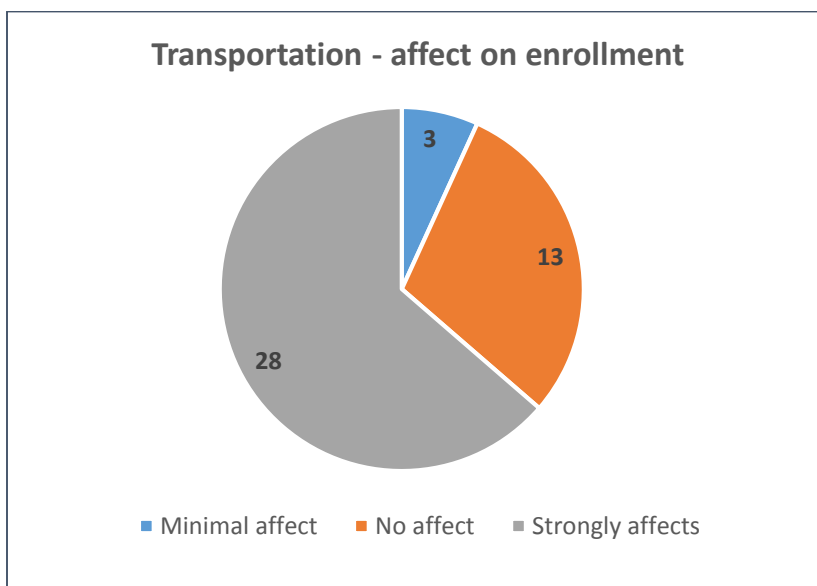
There were 38 (74.5%) of the 51 respondents that stated their program’s facilities are located on a reservation. Twelve (23.5%) stated that their program’s facilities are located on trust land, and two (3.9%) stated that their facilities are in an urban setting. The respondents who answered “combination/other,” stated that their facilities were located on: villages, fee land owned by the tribe, rural locations, and/or a combination of either trust and non-trust land or reservation and off-reservation.



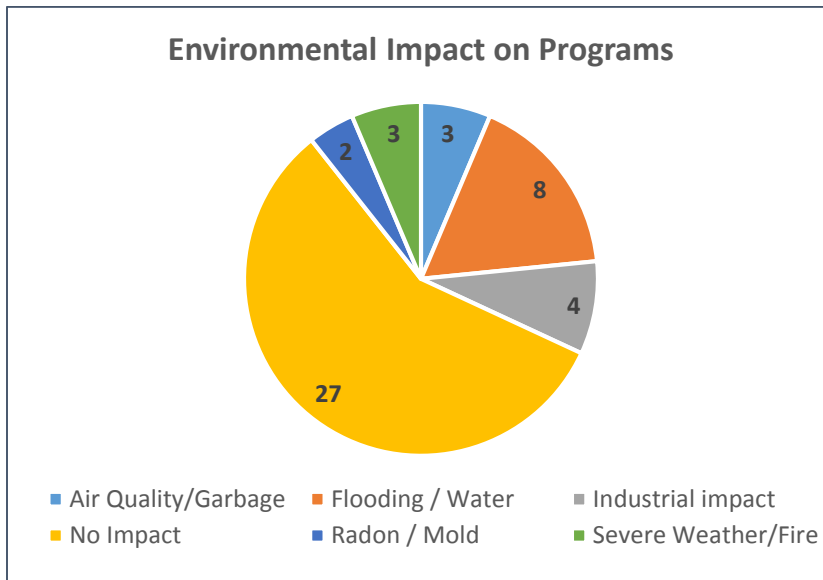
The grantees described various issues they had with their current facilities, but the majority of them (42%) stated that overall the facilities are just old and they constantly are in need of repair. Many of the building have been in use for 20 years or more and need to be replaced. The second largest area of concern was space. Programs stated that they did not have enough room to handle current enrollment needs or plans for expansion of services.



When asked about the affect transportation had on their enrollment, the majority of respondents (28 (55%)) said that it strongly affected enrollment. Most of these respondents were located in rural locations where there were long distances between the Head Start program and student’s homes or parents lacked transportation resources.

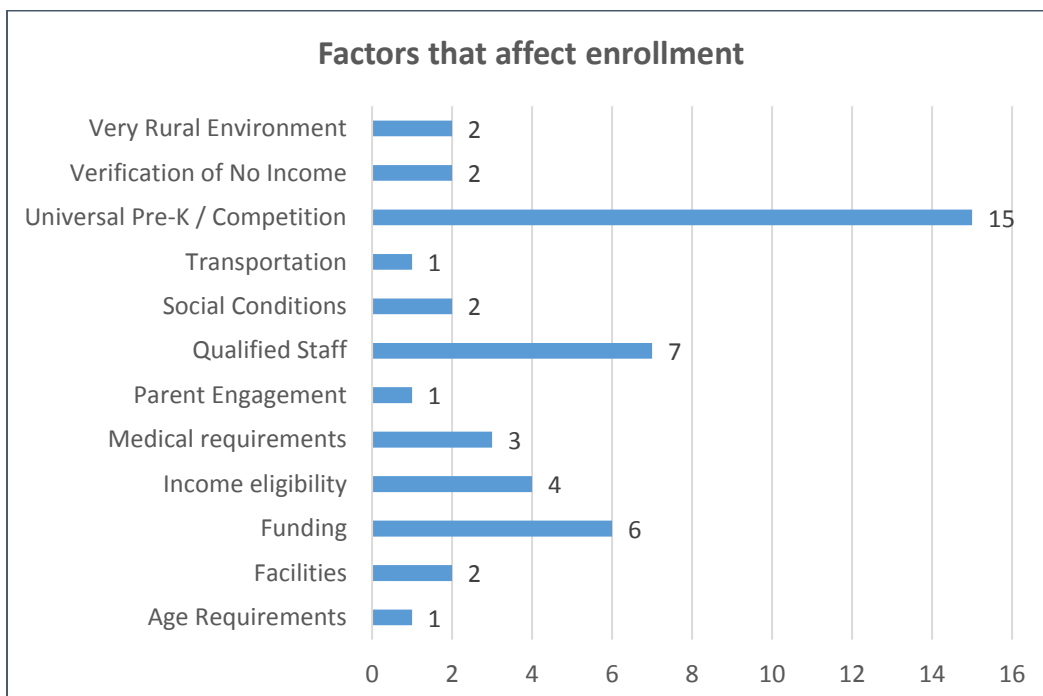


When asked what type of impact environmental factors had on Head Start programs, the majority of grantees (27 (53%)) stated that environmental factors had no impact on their program. Flooding and water issues had the greatest impact for those grantees who were affected by environmental problems, followed by industrial factors such as power plants or laboratories being located close to the program.



Other Factors that affect enrollment

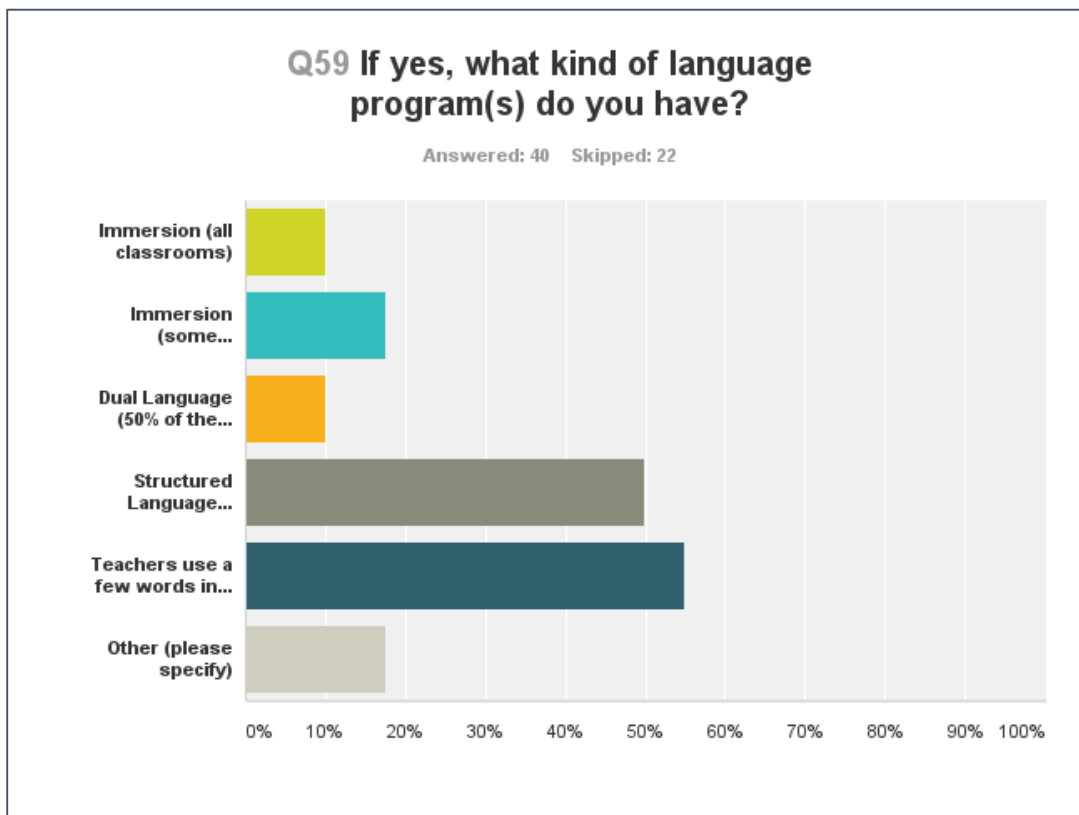
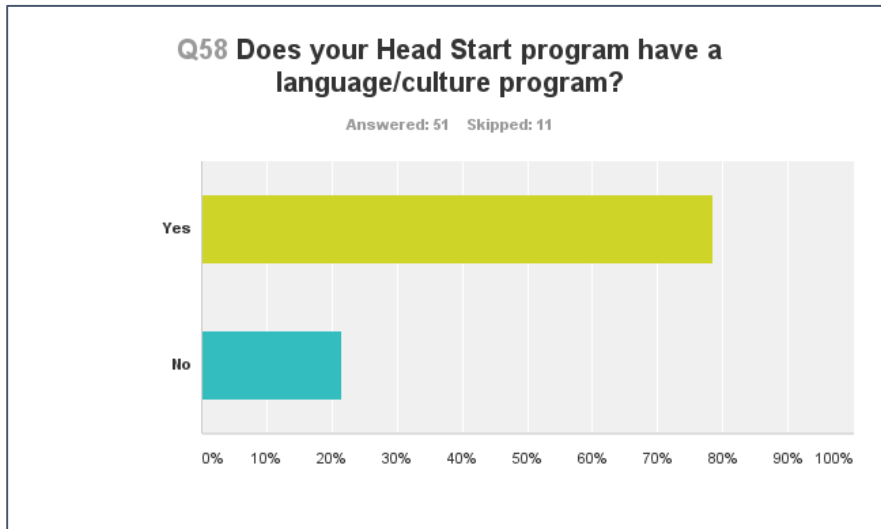
When asked about other issues that affected Head Start enrollment, 15 (29%) of the 51 respondents, stated that Universal Pre-K or competition with other Early Childhood programs had the greatest effect on their enrollment. The second and third highest factors were the ability to find and hire qualified staff (7 (13%)) and insufficient funding to support facilities, staff, and demand for services (6 (12%)). The other factors that affect enrollment are included in the below chart.



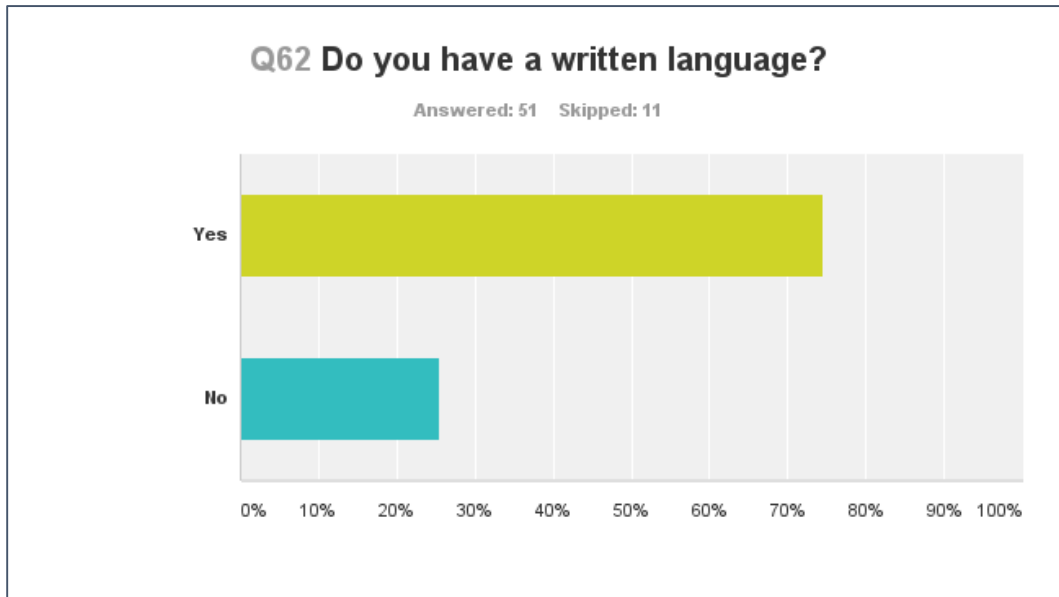
Tribal Language & Culture

Of 51 respondents, 40 (78%) stated they had tribal language and culture curriculum as part of their Head Start program. Of these 40 respondents, 20 (50%) included structured language lessons as part of their classes, 22 (55%) had their teachers speak at least a few words of the tribal language in the classroom, and some did both of these types of strategies. Very few, 11 (28%) had immersion classrooms and only 4 (10%) included tribal language at least 50% of the time during the classrooms. Several tribes had one immersion classroom, but also had words or structured language lessons in their other classrooms.

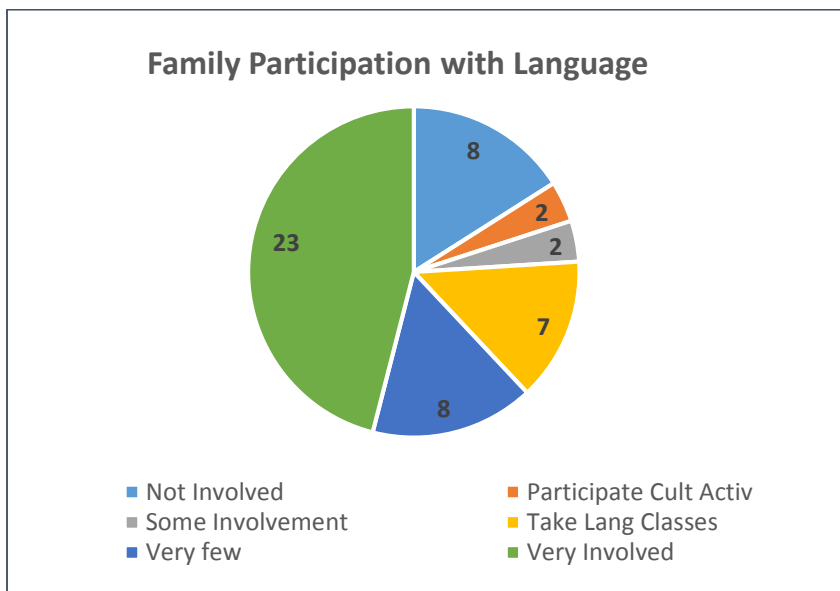
Those tribes that specified “Other” in this section occasionally included language activities within their classrooms and had visiting teachers or coordinators come in to work with children on the language.



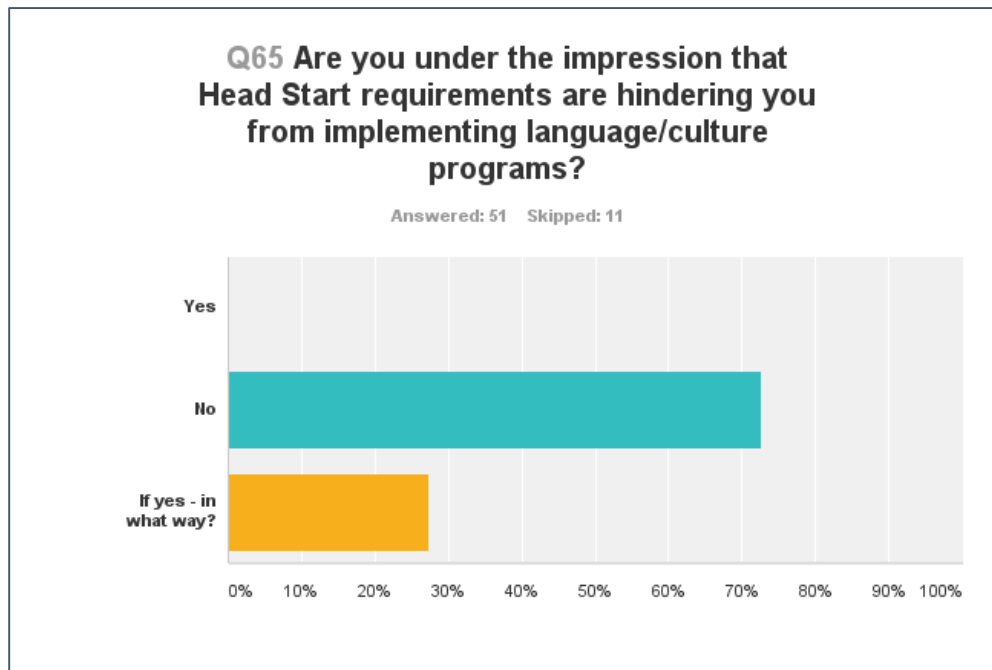
The tribal language for the majority of respondents (38 (75%)) is a written language, while the tribal language for the rest of the tribes was a spoken language only.



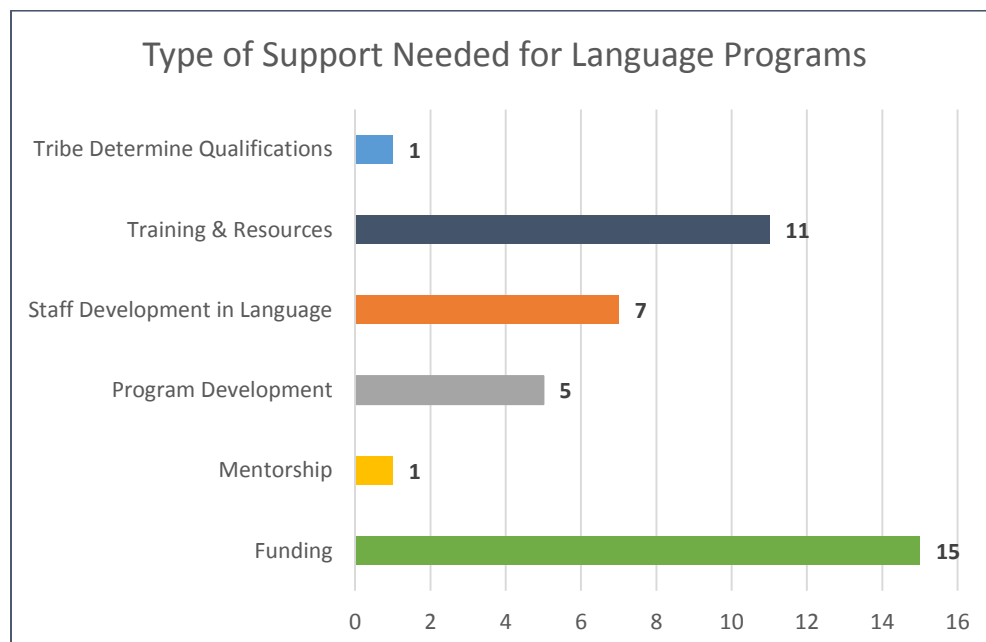
When asked about family participation with the Head Start language program, 23 respondents (45%) stated that their families were very involved. Another 22% said that their families at supported Head Start language efforts in some way such as language classes and/or participation in cultural activities. There were 16 respondents (32%) that stated very few parents participated or that there was no participation at all with the language and culture programs.



The majority of respondents (37 (73%)) felt that Head Start did not hinder their language and cultural efforts within the classroom; however, there were 9 respondents that did feel there were some barriers in place such as lack of financial support and time restrictions due to emphasis on other Office of Head Start priorities and curriculum requirements.

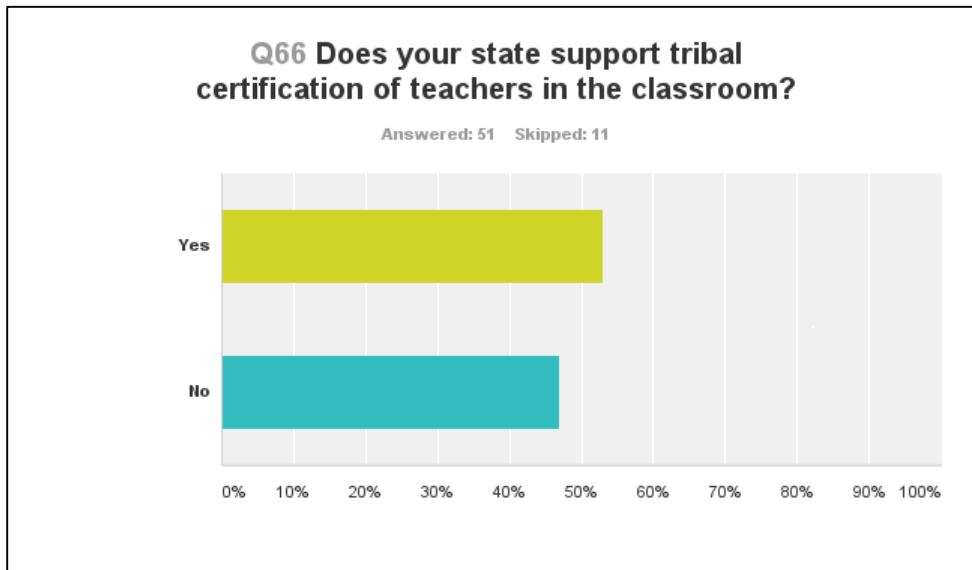


Grantees were asked about how the NAIANHSCO and Office of Head Start could support their language and culture programs within their classrooms. The majority of respondents (15 (29%)) said that additional funding for staff would be the greatest help to their program. The next highest request was for training and resources (11 (22%)) and assistance with language development with the staff (7 (12%)). The rest of the grantees would like assistance with developing a language program for their Head Start classrooms and mentorship from other tribes.

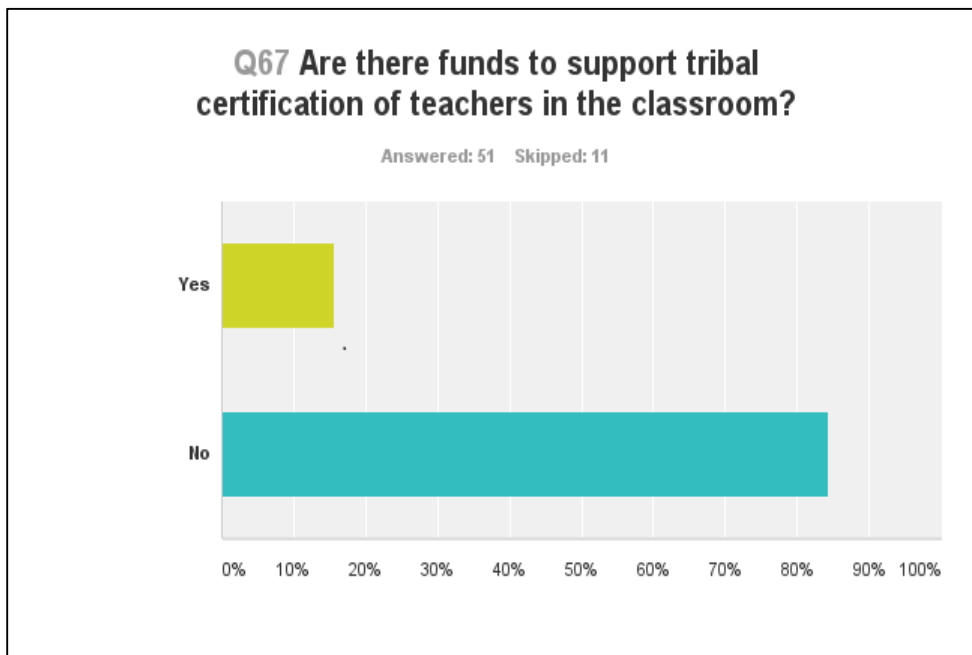


Certification

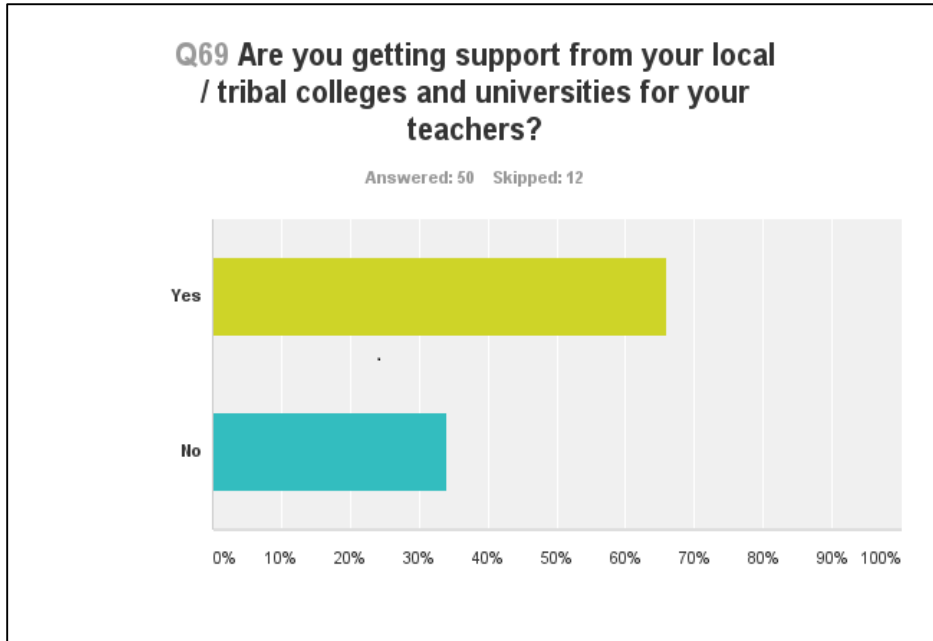
Out of 51 respondents, 27 (53%) said that their state supports tribal efforts for teacher certification (**tribal certification?**). Twenty-four (47%) said that their state does not support them with their efforts to certify their Head Start teachers.



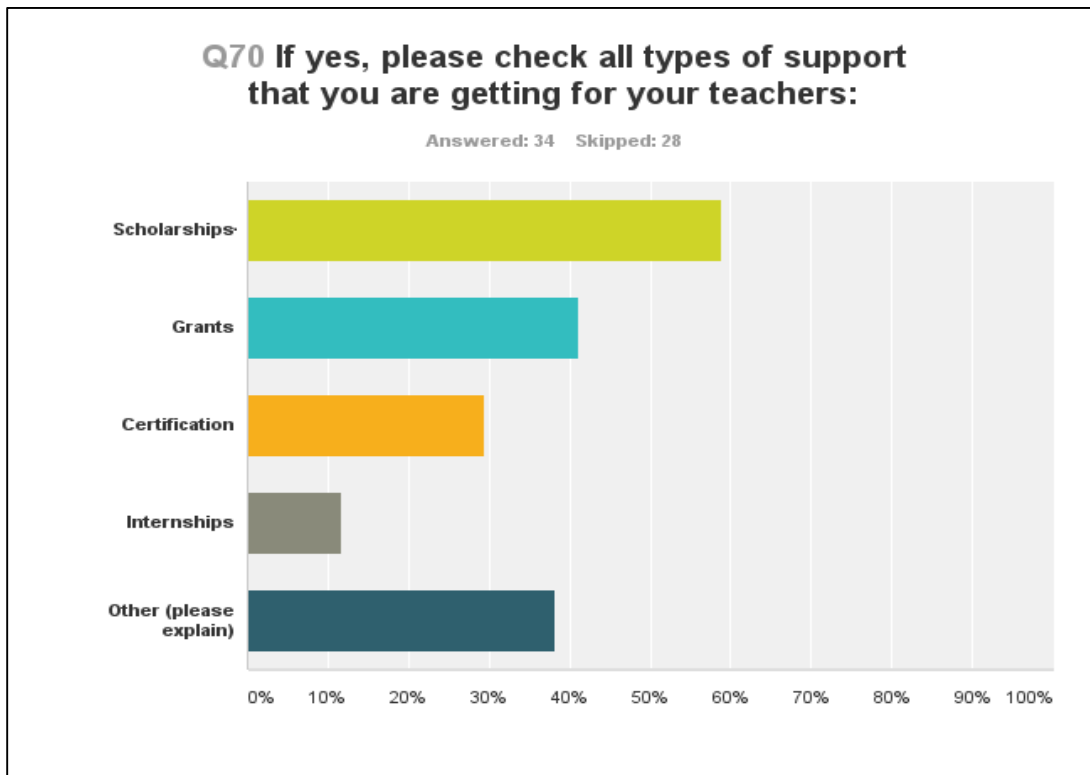
Out of 51 respondents, only 8 (16%) said that funds were available to assist with teacher certification, whereas the majority, 43 (84%) said that there are no funds to support teacher certification efforts.



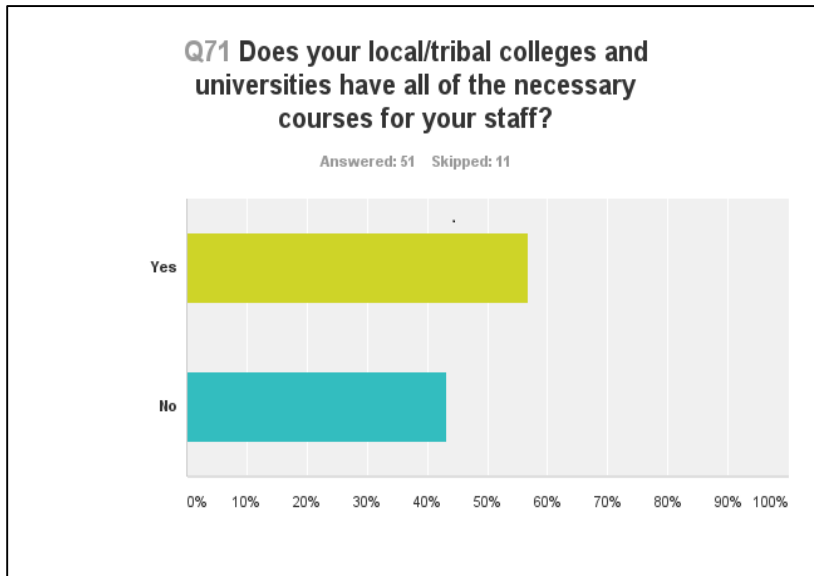
Out of 50 respondents, 33 (66%) said that they are getting support from their local/tribal colleges and universities for their teachers; and 17 (34%) respondents said that they are not getting support from their local/tribal colleges and universities.



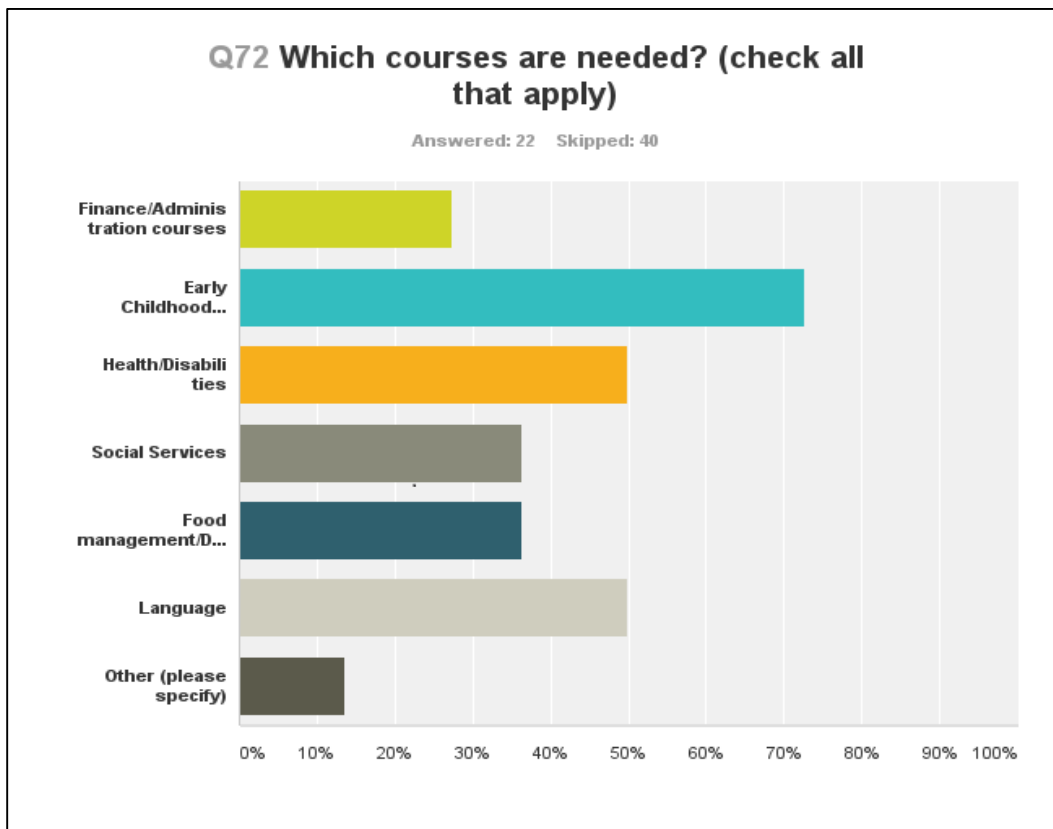
Out of those that said they were receiving support (34 respondents), 20 (59%) said that they receive support in the form of scholarships, 14 (41%) grants, 10 (29%) certifications, and 4 (12%) internships. 13 (38%) respondents receive other forms of support such as: providing free courses, paying tuition costs for staff with family, scheduling class times according to staff members' availability, offering student loans, and providing language and culture courses.



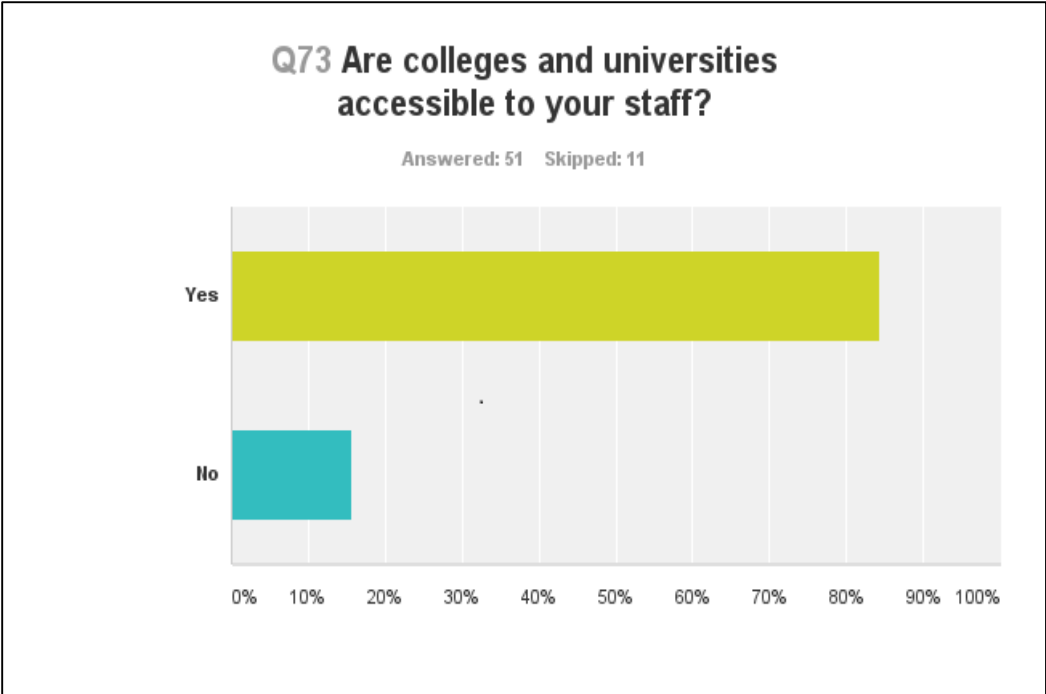
Of 51 respondents, 29 (57%) said that their local/tribal colleges and universities have all of the necessary courses for their staff, and 22 (43%) said that their local/tribal colleges and universities do not have all of the necessary courses for staff.



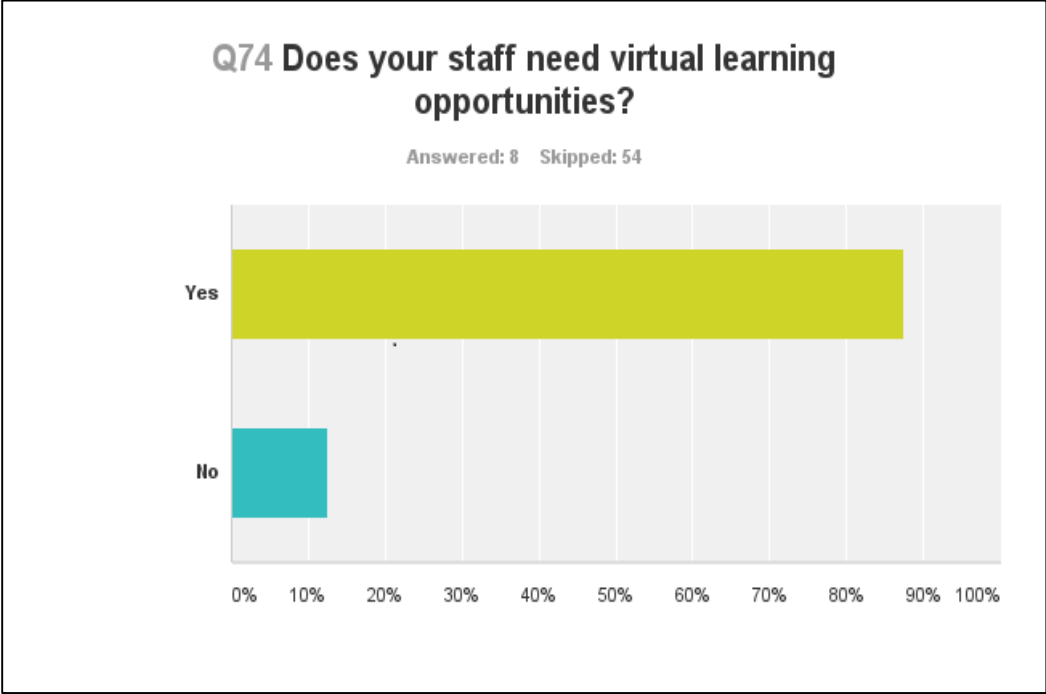
Out of 22 respondents, 6 (27%) said that finance/administration courses are needed, 16 (73%) early childhood, 11 (50%) health/disabilities, 8 (36%) food management, 11 (50%) language, and 3 (14%) said other courses are necessary. The other courses include: CDA classes, language immersion, and math and reading.



Out of 51 respondents 43 (84%) said that colleges and universities are accessible to their staff, whereas only 8 (16%) said that the colleges and universities are inaccessible to their staff.



Out of 8 respondents, 7 (88%) said that virtual learning opportunities are needed for their staff, whereas only 1 (12%) respondent said their staff did not need virtual learning opportunities.



Top three areas of Needed Support

Of 51 respondents, the three areas of most needed support were in Training and Resources on a wide variety of topics, Specific support/training in the area of programming and financial systems, and lastly language and culture program development. The rest are listed in descending order.

