HEALING THE WOUNDS

Can schools win back the trust of Native Americans?

There was so much discrimination against Indians when Palmdale teacher Marty Meeden was a child, he hid his Paiute and Washo roots and told people at school that he was Mexican. "It was easier to blend in."

Del Norte social studies teacher Don Steinruck, a member of the Shawnee tribe, recalls feeling "alienated and segregated from everyone else" when he was in school in the 1960s and '70s. He was never taught Indian history or heard the Native American viewpoint expressed in any of his classes. "I didn't like that feeling at all."

Eureka third-grade teacher Pam Malloy was almost removed from her college-preparatory English class when administrators realized that she, a member of the Yurok tribe, had been placed there by mistake. Thankfully, an enlightened teacher went to bat for her. Still, when she asked her counselor for college information, she was instead given an employment application for a local grocery store and told she wasn't college material.

"Things have definitely improved" since then, says Malloy, who went on to graduate from Humboldt State University's pilot program for Native Americans and now serves as president of the Humboldt Bay Teachers Association. "We're taking small steps."

For Meeden, things were already beginning to change by the time he got to high school. "It was easier to be yourself and be proud of who you were." He's now a member of the Palmdale Elementary Teachers Association and chair of the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus of CTA.

Steinruck, a member of the Del Norte Teachers Association (DNTA) and secretary-treasurer of the CTA caucus, makes sure that the Native American viewpoint is part of the curriculum at Smith River School. "I let students hear interpretive speeches by tribal elders and leaders. I talk about how reservations got established and affected people." In history classes, he shares the little-known fact that Ben Franklin got the idea for the U.S. Constitution from the Iroquois Confederacy, which unified tribes and gave them equal representation.

"The education field has become more aware of diversity, but Indians are still pretty edgy in a big way about the educational system," says DNTA member Loren Bommelyn, who operates a charter school for Native American students. "The system has not treated us well. And the wound is still there, which may be why Native American students are not achieving across the board."

Studies show that Native American students have lower academic achievement, attend school less often and have a higher dropout rate than other students. Some educators estimate the dropout rate is as high as 40 to 50 percent in California. Less than 1 percent of American Indians are college-educated.

Native Americans had reason to feel resentment. Historical records show that 300,000 Indians lived in California before the Spaniards arrived. They were forced into slave labor, and their conquerors spread disease that decimated their population. Thousands were killed deliberately for their land. When California's Gold Rush era began in the 1850s, the state's Indian population had dwindled to 20,000. And just a few generations ago, Native American children were taken from their families and enrolled in boarding schools where they were assimilated into white culture, whether they wanted to be or not. Some have likened the practice to "cultural genocide."

Native American educators say diversity training is necessary for teachers, and it should include discussion of tribal sovereignty and

Stories by Sherry Posnick-Goodwin
Photos by Scott Buschman

residual anger over the attempt to rob them of their land and their heritage.

"More knowledge is needed," says Malloy. "I just went through CLAD [Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development] training about how to teach multicultural children, and very little about Native Americans was even mentioned. Less than 20 minutes was spent on talking about the needs of native children, and this was in Humboldt County. To me, it's very important that they be included."

The 2000 census indicates that California has the largest American Indian population of any state. According to the California Department of Education, there are 51,350 Native American students in grades K-12. Some attend schools on reservations, which may be public schools or schools operated by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, but the rest are scattered around the state.

In many cases, say Native American teachers, their needs are not being met, nor are schools treating them with sensitivity. For

Demonstrating the use of a rainstick in Joy Christian's Native American literature class at Franklin High School in Stockton are Teresa Lopez and her son Jonah. Christian (in background) fears that the values espoused by schools are sometimes far removed from those held by Native Americans.

example, Columbus Day, which Native Americans see as a day of mourning, is celebrated as a holiday. Not only are history and social studies books woefully inadequate in their view, but teachers sometimes inadvertently select literature that is offensive and hurtful to Native American students. Many schools still have Indian mascots that mock the heritage and traditions of native students. And schools may not be actively involving parents in their children's education because they haven't attempted to overcome the parents' mistrust of the education system.

In many schools, Native Americans are often overlooked until Thanksgiving, at which time students portray Indians by wearing fringed vests crafted from paper bags. "Why depict people in bags associated with trash?" asks Meeden. Also, since the holiday commemorates the beginning of the Europeans' near annihilation of native people, it may not be viewed as a celebration by all students.

Casinos have had a big impact on Native American education. The public may be under the wrong impression that all Indians are "rich" from casinos and that Native American students no longer need help.

"All of a sudden, people think we're rich and advantaged," says Bommelyn. "There are more than 100 tribes and more than 600,000 Indians living in California, and maybe four or five tribes have wealth." He is especially incensed at the governor's commercials telling Indians to "pay their fair share" when so much has been taken away.

"We can hardly get donations for scholarships and other things anymore because people have the idea that Native Americans are rich," says Dale Fleming, program specialist for Stockton's Title VII program. A member of the Stockton Teachers Association, he estimates that out of 1,943 Native American students in the district, just a handful receive casino money.

Some say the job opportunities the casinos provide have given students more incentive to graduate from high school and attend college. However, on a few reservations, many students opted out of attending school since they already had an income. In response, tribal elders decided to extend the age of income eligibility and make it contingent upon high school graduation.

"I think casinos have been helpful to California in general and have made the public aware that we are here," says Meeden. "Casinos also offer a place where higher education can be used and instill a sense that people can come back to the community and work for their people. These days kids no longer have to say, 'When I grow up, I'm never coming back.'"

Cultural and language programs that made school relevant for many native students have been dwindling as a result of the federal No Child Left Behind Act and standardized testing. [*See story, page 12.*] However, taking up much of the slack have been state-funded American Indian Education Centers (AIEC), often located on reservations or rancherias. They assist schools with professional development, counseling, tutorial services, parent education programs, and mediation between schools and tribal leaders. The nearly 30 centers provide supplemental instruction programs as well as cultural presentations and native language classes. They are also getting parents to take a more active role in their children's education.

Using such a center as a resource was an extremely positive experience for Lynelle Romero, who teaches at Keith Bright Juvenile Court School in Independence (Inyo County). With most students coming from surrounding reservations, her class is nearly 75 percent Native American.

Romero, a member of the Owens Valley Teachers Association, approached AIEC when she decided her students needed to develop a sense of pride and learn more about their culture. "They also needed to learn Native American customs, such as respecting their elders."

Gerald Lewis, an elder from the Paiute reservation, agreed to schedule eight two-hour visits to the school site to provide language lessons and cultural presentations. Romero, whose great-grandmother was Mohawk, says she's learning the language right along with her students.

"The reaction of students has been very good," she reports.

"It helps students to have good role models. And it helps us, as teachers, because we can't teach everything."

Pam Malloy emphasizes nature whenever she can, in this case using pumpkins to help teach a lesson on weights and measures in her third-grade classroom at Cutten Elementary in Eureka. Weighing their pumpkins are Destinee Wavrin (left) and Dejay Vaughn.

NATIVE FOCUS DRAWS STUDENTS TO TAH-AH-DUN

"I like getting into the cultural stuff," says Darren Davis, 16, looking up from his beadwork. "At regular school they only talked about white-people stuff. All the history was about white government and George Washington. That was not my heritage. What about the Native American people? Here, Loren teaches us about our heritage."

In the three years he's been attending Tah-Ah-Dun Indian Magnet Charter School in Crescent City (Del Norte County), Davis has earned nearly straight A's.

While he and fellow students string colorful chokers, teacher Loren Bommelyn tells them that the patterns were inspired by traditional ceremonial regalia. Some of the materials they're using are nuts from gray pines, scarce enough that local tribal members used to trade for them. Once heated in ovens, the pine nuts take on the look of ebony.

Tah-Ah-Dun students do their schoolwork at home and gather weekly — if they choose — to engage in cultural activities like artwork and cooking. The independent study program is designed for Native American students in grades 7-12 who are at risk of dropping out of school.

The number of students averages 28 at any given time. Many are members of the Tolowa, Yurok and Karuk tribes. There's also a smattering of students of Pomo, Wailaki, Cherokee, Sioux and Hupa ancestry.

The school follows all state standards and guidelines, including testing.

Some students say they chose the alternative school because they had difficulty adjusting to the pace of regular academics. Others wanted to get in touch with their roots in a way that isn't possible at most mainstream schools.

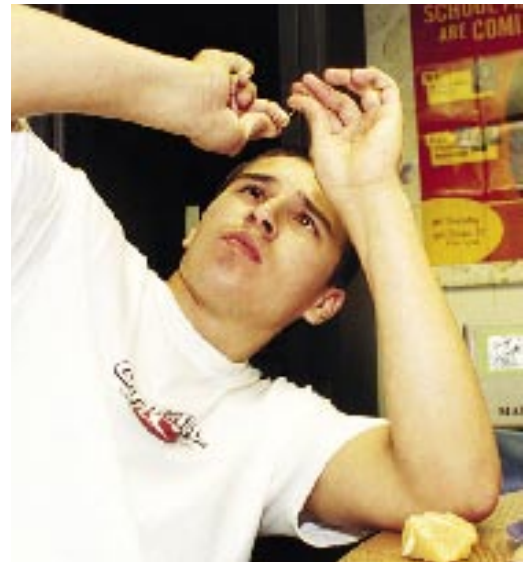
"This school is good for me since I don't like to be around a lot of people," says Andrew Brundin, a senior who has attended the school for four years. "I'd rather not be with a huge crowd and work better solo. But I like doing activities and field trips with my people. And Loren is someone I can relate to as a teacher and a counselor."

Bommelyn, who has Tolowa and Karuk ancestry, spent many years with tribal elders documenting the Tolowa language, which until that time was strictly an oral tradition. He's published several language books reflecting what he learned. Tolowa was his area of concentration when he earned his master's in linguistics from the University of Oregon. He has since played a role in getting the University of California system to accept Native American languages as meeting its world language entrance requirement.

A member of the Del Norte Teachers Association, he taught the Tolowa language at Del Norte High School for many years and served as department chair of the school's world language department.

At first he didn't know how to react when the superintendent offered him the opportunity to start a school for Native American students through the Del Norte County Office of Education. He was suspicious that the goal was to segregate native students in an effort to raise test scores at other sites. "I worried that perhaps they wanted to get rid of so-called 'bad Indian kids,'" he admits.

Once the magnet school concept was coupled with a location and a budget, he was convinced that the school district was genuinely concerned about helping native students succeed and wanted to do something about the dropout problem. He agreed to transfer to the magnet school and serve as one of the school's teachers. In its third year, it was placed under the Castle Rock Charter School, where he became the coordinator/teacher. His wife, Lena Bommelyn, works for the school district's Title VII Indian Education Program and serves as the school's instructional assistant.



The school's name — Tah-Ah-Dun — is Tolowa for the tribal community that stood where Crescent City is today.

"Tah-Ah-Dun emerged out of a need for

Magnet school students like Amando Lopez (top left) and Andrew Brundin (left and above) work independently and come together weekly for cultural activities like beadworking with teacher/coordinator Loren Bommelyn (standing).

the school district to serve a population that historically had been failing," says Bommelyn. "Typically the kids here were not succeeding in mainstream school, although some students enroll here out of preference."

When students first enroll they undergo academic assessment before being assigned a standards-aligned individualized education plan. Each week they meet with Bommelyn for an hour and receive their assignments. Students have access to a lab for computer, math and language arts lessons. Weekly group activities may include cultural activities, art lessons or instruction in healthy cooking from the United Indian Health Services. The school has earned "exemplary status" for its ability to keep track of individual student progress.

Curriculum is checked for cultural sensitivity, and history is taught from the Native American perspective. Students are encouraged to learn as much as possible about their native culture and traditions while receiving school credit for their efforts. The beadwork, for example, earns credits in art.

Some of the projects are quite innovative. In partnership with the California Rural Indian Health Board, the school has implemented a service learning project designed to increase tsunami preparedness in the county. Major damage from tsunamis occurred in the area in the remote Tolowa past and again during the 1960s. Students involved in the project share their knowledge with family and community members.

The state's library system and the Native Voices Project are sponsoring a Tolowa history curriculum project in which some students serve as photographers.

In addition to meeting the academic and cultural needs of students, the Bommelyns try to meet their emotional needs. Students tend to mistrust public school in general because many of their grandparents were taken away from their families and forced to live in government boarding schools in an effort to erase native culture and force assimilation into mainstream American culture. Some students have an "us versus them" mentality about public schools and the outside world, says Bommelyn, and can easily "shut down" when pushed beyond their comfort zone.

"Maybe it helps that we know their families and that we come from the community they live in, which is a very tight-knit community," adds Lena Bommelyn. "But it also helps that Loren and I both have a very special affection for these kids."

"We know their history and what they are feeling. We can share in their feelings and give them validation," says Bommelyn. "We want them to feel good about who they are and be able to express themselves."

In an effort to help students realize the possibilities that a college education opens, the Bommelyns take them on college visits and show them what others have accomplished.

"It's important for students to know they can move about freely in American society and that they can be open and successful," says Bommelyn. "We try to provide them opportunities for expansion and exploration.

"We want them to know they can move between two worlds and come back here safely."

Photo by Katherine Bauer-Helwig

DOES MEASURING UP mean leaving their world behind?

Native Americans have fought hard to have their heritage and viewpoints reflected in school curriculum. No Child Left Behind jeopardizes that progress, say teachers like Melodie George at Hoopa Valley High School in Humboldt County and Clyde Hodge at Daniel Webster Middle School in Stockton.

For years, Gerald Howard taught a Native American history class at Bishop High School. But not this year. Even though the Inyo County school serves 70 Native American students, the class no longer exists.

"It's too bad," says Howard, a member of the Bishop Union High School Teachers Association. "The class was designed for juniors to look at U.S. history from a Native American perspective. The students who took the class enjoyed it and thought it was relevant."

The course began with looking at archaeological evidence from the years prior to the colonial period and worked through the conquest period, the formation of the United States, westward expansion and the effect on different groups of people throughout the country.

Despite its popularity, the class was canceled. "There was concern about the standardized test that students have to take in the spring," says Howard, who belongs to the Paiute tribe. "The school is trying to improve test scores, and there is worry about students being exposed to information meeting U.S. history standards."

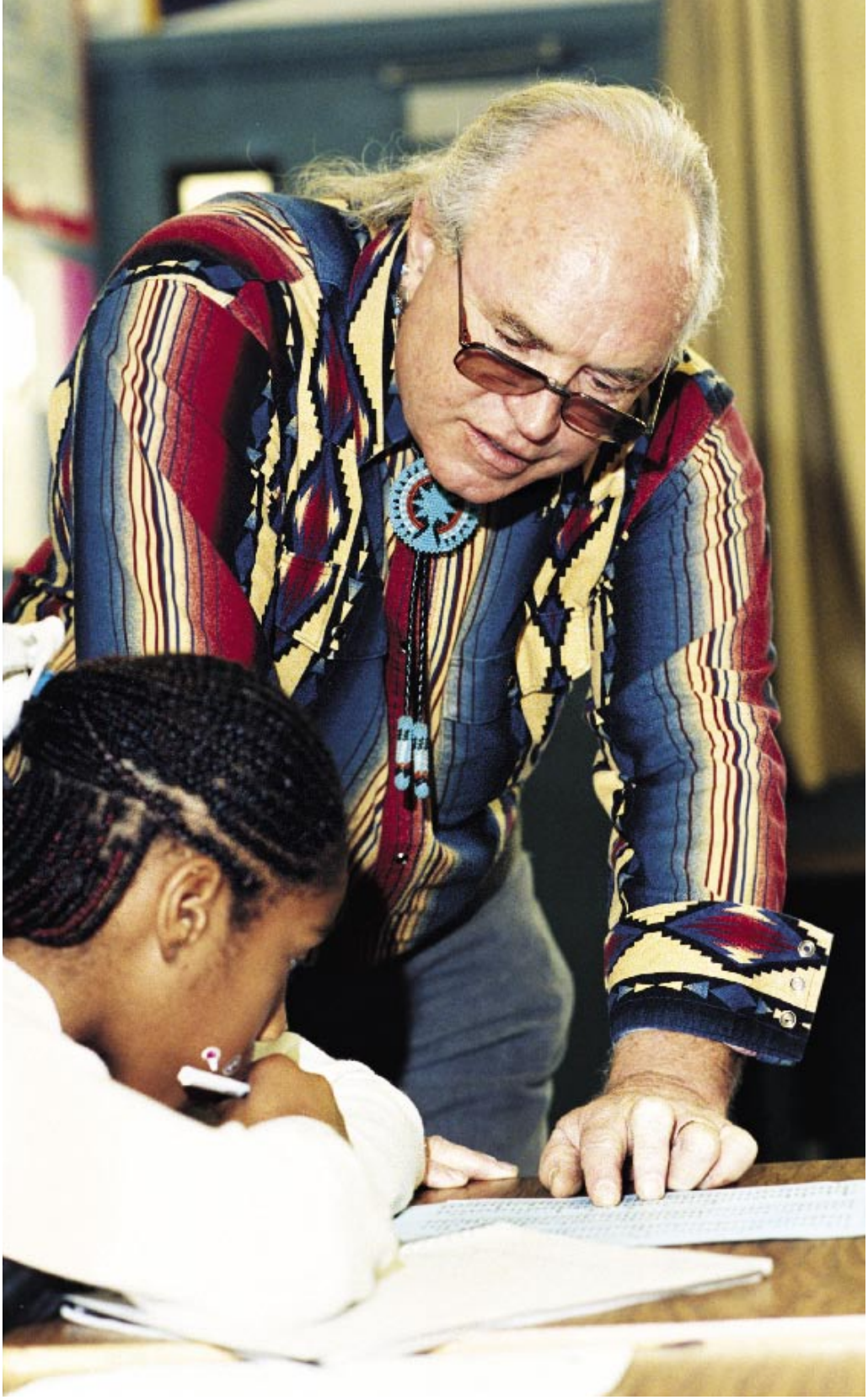
A likely victim of the No Child Left Behind Act and the standardized testing movement, the class's fate reflects a nationwide trend in Native American education that many find disturbing.

"What spells success for Native American students?" asks an article titled "Catching Up Without Letting Go" in the *Christian Science Monitor*. "Certainly one answer would be improvement in their reading and math scores, which lag significantly behind those of their white peers. But many educators also seek to give native students a solid grounding in their unique cultural traditions and history. And some worry that this is a goal that will lose out as an unintended consequence of the 2001 federal education law known as No Child Left Behind."

A recent report issued by the National Indian Education Association and the Center for Indian Education, Arizona State University, takes the position that NCLB is actually leaving Native American students behind and contributing to a "crisis" in Indian education. According to the report, titled "No Child Left Behind in Indian Country," NCLB does not fit or respond to the needs of native communities, especially those in rural areas. Among the findings:

- The few successes that have been achieved have been at the expense of native language and culture classes, as well as music, art, vocational classes and other programs.
- Native American students may be "internalizing" the system's failures as their own personal failures when they are blamed for low test scores.
- The law does not take into account different learning styles.
- The impact of NCLB has "clearly shifted the uses of Title VII [funds for Native American education] to focus on remedial programs typically supported by Title I" funding.

NCLB's "highly qualified teacher" requirement has certainly had an impact on Hoopa Valley High School. Located on the Hoopa Reservation in Humboldt County, it's the only public high school in the state that currently teaches Native American language



classes — Yurok and Hupa.

Klamath Trinity Teachers Association member Melodie George, who teaches the Hupa class, says it's difficult for teachers at her site to receive certification in native languages.

"There is nowhere where you can get a certificate or credential like a Spanish teacher gets to teach Spanish, because that doesn't exist for native languages," she says. And that's despite the fact that such classes meet the UC requirement in the world language category. "But that doesn't mean you aren't qualified to teach."

Tribal elders, however, cannot get certified for being masters of their languages

Mascots reveal insensitivity

Imagine you are at a high school football game. The mascot, a Catholic priest, runs out onto the field to great applause. When he sprinkles holy water on the field, spectators in the bleachers chant and make the sign of the cross.

Sound offensive? Of course it does. But to many Native Americans, having an Indian mascot for a school is equally insensitive.

According to a website that keeps track of such affronts [*www.aics.org/mascot/california.html*], there are 184 schools in California with Native American mascots. Just a handful of them actually have a significant population of Native American students. According to the site, the breakdown is Apache, 2; Redskins, 6; Chiefs, 11; Braves, 26; Indians, 55; and Warriors, 85.

Recently Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed, for the third time, a bill by Assembly Member Jackie Goldberg (D-Los Angeles) to ban the use of Redskins as a school mascot. His reason was that it should be a matter of local control. If local control were a factor in civil rights issues, points out Curtis Notsinneh, legislative aide to Assembly Member Goldberg, "we would still have Jim Crow laws in the South."

"I'm totally appalled by these mascots," says Joseph Giovannetti, an associate professor of Native American Studies at Humboldt State University. "It shows a complete ignorance of the struggles that Indian people have endured, such as genocide." Giovannetti is working on a book tentatively titled Warriors of the Diamond, about Native Americans who have played major league baseball, some of them on teams with mascots like the Atlanta Braves or Cleveland Indians.

At least one school district, Los Angeles Unified, has banned the use of American Indian mascots at its schools.

In Humboldt County, the Del Norte High School Warriors have replaced their Plains Indian headdress with a flaming W. "We went through a whole year of tugging and pulling because people wanted the mascot removed," says Don Steinruck, a Del Norte Teachers Association member. "It really tore the community apart.

"There were staunch Warriors people who believed in the icon, and some Native American people who went to school here who were really proud of it. The rest of us said it was time for a change because it was inappropriate and racist. At times you would see kids out on the field doing a war dance. It was very degrading."

under NCLB, even though in some cases they may be among the few who are fluent in a language bordering on extinction. When that's the case, they can offer instruction if a certified "teacher of record" takes responsibility for the class, which does happen at the high school on occasion.

George says that language classes — ranging from beginning to advanced — at her school have maintained the fluency level of languages as elders have passed on. Her students realize that they are being entrusted with keeping the languages alive.

"They know the responsibility is huge when they take this class. This is not a casual class," she says. "For a lot of them it's like therapy when they walk through the door. We have lots of discussions about deep issues and cultural miscommunications.

"We have the same problems as inner-city schools, like generational poverty and the prevalence of drugs and alcohol. Those problems are not necessarily solved in the classroom, but the classroom turns out to be the place where discussion begins. There is the advice of thousands of years of elders encased in the language. And the more students learn about the language, the more they learn about their own identity."

Recently the high school was taken out of NCLB's Program Improvement status and is no longer facing sanctions. The elementary school, however, faces sanctions even after meeting its targets on the state's Academic Performance Index and showing academic improvement. Teachers there worry that the campus could be taken over by state officials insensitive to the needs of Native American students.

Dave Etnire

Del Norte High School in Crescent City had a Tolowa language class at one time, but that teacher has since left to operate a charter school for Native Americans. [*See story, page 10.*] The school wants to replace the teacher, but has had difficulty meeting NCLB standards.

Stockton, which has the largest Title VII Indian education program in the state, once offered 12 native languages for its students, who have more than 90 different tribal backgrounds. Funding for those classes, however, has dried up. Still, Native American teachers feel fortunate to have the state's only high school Native American literature class and a certified teacher who provides Indian education programs in the district's classrooms.

Teachers say that the provision of NCLB that requires support professionals or paraprofessionals to be "highly qualified" and take college courses for certification will also affect Title VII-funded Native American aides in the classroom, and could cause many of them to leave the profession.

"The Indian community embraced No Child Left Behind in the beginning, despite a distrust of public education," says Marty Meeden, a member of the Palmdale Elementary Teachers Association and chair of the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus of CTA. "But tribes have seen that NCLB is not really helping Native Americans as a whole. And that's partly because of certification. Some tribes had language classes going on in the school and those instructors had to be 'highly qualified.' In most cases the instructors were elders of the tribe and could not get certification. So Native Americans were punished by NCLB instead of helped."

For several years, Meeden collected information on indigenous people in his locale to supplement the district's third-grade curriculum. The social studies textbook lacked details about local Indian people in the Southern California area, so the mentor teacher developed a study guide on how native people in the High Desert interacted with animals, plants and the environment before the arrival of the Spaniards.

Today, his curriculum is seldom used in Palmdale schools. "There is such an emphasis on reading and math," says Meeden. "We've lost a lot when it comes to social studies."

Dave Etnire, a teacher at Mountain Empire Junior High School near the Mexican border in San Diego County, is trying to improve academic achievement and also provide cultural curriculum for Native American seventh-graders in his "peer mediation" class. In addition to teaching study skills and computer use, he devotes class time to helping students increase their knowledge about their heritage, which he believes will boost their self-esteem.

"We talk about cultural identity a lot," says Etnire. "A lot of kids have been influenced by MTV and rap, which has an impact on their native culture. One girl in my class wins awards for native dancing and others don't do it at all and would rather listen to rap music. These kids are caught between two worlds, and we try to talk about it. We don't say one way is right and another is wrong, but we talk about it and make comparisons. The kids seem to like it."

Etnire, a member of the Mountain Empire Teachers Association, has asked for help with curriculum from the area's Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians. He encourages tribal

CTA American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus Chair Marty Meeden works with students in the computer lab at Buena Vista School in Palmdale.

members to visit his class and discuss such topics as native language, ceremonies and tribal sovereignty. A recent discussion focused on the "Seven Needs of Life" for Native Americans — water, food, shelter, air, society, territory and spirituality. Etnire used it as a springboard to discuss tribal heritage and customs. His class also has an "intervention component" with guest speakers — some of them from Native American health agencies — discussing issues like drugs, alcohol and domestic violence.

Teachers argue that cultural and language programs often make school more relevant for Native American students and can help reduce truancy and dropout rates, which some estimate to be as high as 40 to 50 percent. Even though schools can fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by having too high a dropout rate under NCLB, cultural programs are being put on a back burner. While there has been no official study, Northwest Regional Laboratory found that school attendance increased from 68 to 97 percent — and family connections were strengthened — when native culture and language classes were introduced at Fort Hall Elementary School on the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Reservation in Idaho.

In 1986, Stockton's Native American dropout rate was 98 percent. Now the district boasts just the oppositive — a graduation rate of 98 percent. The addition of Native America programs is credited with bringing about the reversal, says Dale Fleming, pro-

Tips for teaching Native Americans

The Ableza Institute in San Jose, which is dedicated to promoting, preserving and protecting traditional and contemporary arts by Native Americans as well as taking back Indian images from Hollywood stereotypes, makes the following recommendations for teachers:

■ Understand that the term "Native American" includes all people indigenous to the Western Hemisphere. Don't assume there are no Native American students in your class. Many do not use Indian surnames. Help your students understand that Native Americans have a wide variety of physical features, attributes and values, as do people of all cultures and races.

■ Present Native American peoples as having unique, separate and distinct cultures, languages, beliefs, traditions and customs.

■ Teach Native American history as a regular part of American history and avoid using loaded terms like "massacre" and "conquest," which may distort the facts or present a one-sided view.

■ Avoid depicting as Native American heroes only those who helped Europeans or Euro-Americans.

■ Avoid referring to or using materials which depict Native Americans as savages, primitives, the Nobel Savage, the Red Man, simple or extinct.

■ Use materials that show respect for and understanding of the sophistication and complexities of Native American societies. Communicate the fact that the spiritual beliefs of Native American peoples are integral to the structure of their societies and are not "superstitions" or "heathen" practices.

■ Use materials that show the value Native Americans place on their elders, children and women. Terms such as "papoose" and "squaw" may be seen as derogatory.

■ Avoid rhymes or songs that use Native Americans as counting devices (for example, "One little, two little, three little Indians"). When teaching the ABCs, avoid "I is for Indian" and "E is for Eskimo."

■ Avoid craft activities that trivialize Native American dress, dance and beliefs — for example, kachinas (Indian dolls) made from toilet paper rolls, or costumes and headdresses made from paper bags and construction paper. Instead, research authentic methods and materials. Be sensitive to the fact that many native songs, dances, legends and ceremonies are considered sacred.

For more information, visit the institute's website [*www.ableza.org/dodont.html*].

gram specialist for the district's Title VII program. "When we first started, we would discuss graduation. Now we discuss whether they should attend UC Berkeley, Arizona State or Stanford. It's a whole different ballgame these days."

The program, which includes four paraprofessionals, sponsors a science camp every June. There is also a very active parent group. To keep it going and to help parents feel positive about school, staff conducts home visits. Weekly cultural activities for students and their families range from beadwork and weaving to painting and tutoring. Language classes are in the planning stage. The group also holds powwows outside of school.

In class, Fleming presents Native American perspectives on history, nutrition and science using native plants and animals.

There is also counseling to meet students' emotional needs. "I talk about their options and how they shouldn't let anything hold them back. I talk about different ways to get financial aid. I do a lot of work telling them they are valued people and that they should not put themselves down."

"One of the keys to reducing the dropout rate with Native American students is to make them feel like they belong in school and are a valuable part of the school community," says Kathy Wells, a member of the Mount Diablo Education Association who serves as vice chair of the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus of CTA. "A lot of our students feel very isolated, and feel that what they are learning doesn't relate to who they are. Making a connection is really important."

Wells, a science teacher in Pleasant Hill, is especially concerned about the potential loss of Native American languages. They're close to extinction in some cases because, at the turn of the century, students were forcibly removed from their homes and taken away to boarding schools for assimilation purposes. There they were punished for speaking in their own language. As a result, entire generations of Indians are not fluent in their own language. Students were also forced to reject traditional dress and religion.

"My grandfather went to boarding school where he was taught only English. I never heard him speak more than three words in his

Learning native languages can help students connect with their culture and feel less isolated, says Kathy Wells, who teaches at Sequoia Middle School in Pleasant Hill.

native language, which was Dakota," says Wells. "Our culture is wrapped up in the language and the words that we use. It's a link to our ancestors and a way for us as American Indian people to communicate with each other in a traditional way. And those languages are a resource we could lose very quickly."

Like other minorities, a large number of Native American children are in special education, says Joseph Giovannetti, an associate professor of Native American studies at Humboldt State University and a member of the Tolowa tribe. Under NCLB, many are subject to the same proficiency standards as mainstream students, which puts them under pressure to raise test scores to avoid having their school labeled "underperforming."

"NCLB is also underfunded," says Giovannetti, a California Faculty Association

Native American resources

Websites

www.oyate.org — Native American members of CTA highly recommend anything that can be found at the Oyate website, which evaluates texts, resource materials and fiction by and about native people. It also distributes books and materials emphasizing writing and illustration by native people.

www.heydaybooks.com/public/catalog.html — Heyday Books in Berkeley has many books under the category of "California Indians" in its online catalog. The Heyday Foundation, which includes the Clapperstick Institute, publishes *News from Native California*, a quarterly magazine devoted to California Indian communities. Owner Malcolm Margolin wrote *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area* and edited *The Way We Lived: California Indian Stories, Songs, and Reminiscences*, both of which are recommended by CTA members.

www.nea.org/readacrosss/resources/nabooklist.html — NEA recently released a recommended reading list by grade level in observance of Native American Heritage Month in November.

Curriculum materials

The Winds of Change: A Matter of Choices — This video/film is considered useful for discussion of contemporary issues facing the American Indian community. It's available from Wishing Well Distributing, P.O. Box 1008, Silver Lake, WI 53170; (800) 888-9355.

The American Indian: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, A Handbook For Educators was prepared by the American Indian Education Handbook Committee and published by the California Department of Education (revised 1991), $5 plus tax, Bureau of Publications, California Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95812-0271.

Indians of Northwest California: History/Social Science and Literature Based Curriculum Units (grades K-5) was written by classroom teachers, Indian Education Program staff and tribal resource people, and edited by Sarah Supahan for the Klamath-Trinity Joint Unified School District. Units correspond to educational frameworks. It's available in binder form through Oyate for $40 ($50 for institutions).

Books for teachers

Dr. Darryl Babe Wilson, who teaches Native American Studies at De Anza College in Cupertino and at CSU-Hayward, has written two highly recommended books: *The Morning the Sun Went Down* and *Surviving in Two Worlds: Contemporary Native American Voices*, co-written with Lois Crozier-Hogle.

Fourth-grade teachers looking for an alternative to having students build a mission are urged to look into *The Destruction of California Indians* by Robert F. Hizer.

Other books for teachers that come highly recommended include:

Power and Place: Indian Education in America by Vine DeLoria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat.

Indigenous Educational Models for Contemporary Practice, In our Mother's Voices, edited by Maenette Kape'ahiokalani Padeken Ah Nee-Benham and Joanne Elisabeth Cooper.

Teaching American Indian Students, edited by Jon Reyhner.

Books for students

The following books are recommended for students because of their accuracy and cultural sensitivity:

Molly's Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen.

Whispers Along the Mission Trail by Gail Faber and Michele Lasagna.

A Time of Resistance, California Indians During the Mission Period, 1769-1848 by Sarah Supahan.

California Indian Country by Dolan H. Eargle.

Natives of the Golden State, The California Indians by Rupert Costo and Jeanette Henry Costo.

Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World by Jack Weatherford.

Northwest Indigenous Gold Rush History: The Indian Survivors of California's Holocaust, edited by Chag Lowry.

Our Home Forever, video and book by Bryon Nelson.

The Snake that Lived in the Santa Cruz Mountains and Other Ohlone Stories by Linda Yamane.

Indian Summer: Traditional Life Among the Choinumne Indians of California's San Joaquin Valley by Thomas Jefferson Mayfield.

Clockwise from top left: Stockton's Title VII program specialist Dale Fleming discusses a Native American artifact during a visit to Joy Christian's literature class at Franklin High School. Making presentations for their classmates are students Zoila Bahena, Jonah Lopez and Joycelyn Thompson.

member. Two-thirds of all districts will receive less Title I funding this year than they received last year, he points out.

"No Child Left Behind is unrealistic because it does not address structural problems in society, such as gross disparities of income. It's a game of blaming the victims — students are told they have to try harder, and teachers and administrators are being threatened. Once schools are put on a list, there is a reactionary response, with people asking, 'Who's responsible?'"

Despite all the emphasis on test scores, there's no way to tell if Native American students are improving statewide. Schools and districts only count Native Americans as a subgroup if they make up 10 percent or more of the population. "Unfortunately, Native Americans are not usually significant subgroups. So, it follows that native students may not be getting the help they need," says Judy Martinez, the consultant on native Americans for the California Department of Education.

Even in Stockton, which has the largest Title VII funding in the state, they're not considered a "significant subgroup," says Clyde Hodge, a Native American who teaches language arts at Daniel Webster Middle School. "Our Native Americans are outperforming some other groups, but when it comes to the API test, no matter what their greatest achievements are, it's not considered statistically significant."

Martinez says the state will eventually track whether native students are improving academically in districts where they do constitute a subgroup. Until then, she says, the only way to gauge that would be to analyze test scores district by district.

NCLB measures success in the terms of American cultural values, such as "winning," and discounts Native American cultural values, says Joy Christian, who teaches Native American literature in Stockton and belongs to the Saux/Fox and Chickahominy tribes.

"By whose standards do you choose what is best for a person?" she asks. "Is a person who takes years learning to weave a blanket, make a drum or do beadwork, and makes a good living out of this gift, a failure? Is the person who has a natural ability to write poems, make music, paint a picture or sculpt a statue a failure? Is the person who is happy where they live with the things they need a failure? Why must others try to make people fit into their world and work perspective? Why must we expect everyone to go to college, live in a big house and have many worldly items if this truly doesn't make them happy?"

Native Americans fought hard during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and '70s to have their heritage and viewpoints represented in school curriculum. They worry that NCLB jeopardizes these gains.

"There is an overall sense … that profound changes are underfoot in native education and that the native education community has only just begun to sense the impacts and dangers incumbent in both the intended and unintended consequences of

the NCLB statute upon the future of Native American education," notes the "No Child Left Behind in Indian Country" report. "It gives reason for pause and reflection."