

## ABSTRACT

Navajo Nation (NN) is a land in transition, blending the past and the present, reaching out to a future in which children have the skills to compete in the global economy, while embracing Navajo language and culture. However, coupled with its beauty are pervasive and persistent poverty, and extensive unemployment. American Indian students drop out of school at a rate twice that of other U.S. students; highest of any U.S. ethnic group. Based on social/demographic factors the majority of young Navajos are considered at-risk for future academic failure.

*Pump up the Volume in Preschool (PVIP)*, responsive to the Secretary's four Invitational Priorities, proposes to serve 300 3-4 year old primarily Navajo children at 4 sites in northwest NM. It is a partnership among Gallup McKinley County Schools, Navajo Department of Diné Education, Arizona State University, and the Southwest Institute for Families and Children; designed to rapidly increase the amount and quality of early literacy education. PVIP goals are *to increase the amount of letters recognized, sounds manipulated, and words used in print rich environments that reflect the traditions, experiences and culture of the children*. This is accomplished by implementing a thoughtful 9-strategy approach: 1) SBRR early literacy high interest, multi-modal curriculum enriched by play 2) coupled with culturally-based activities reflecting Navajo customs and traditions, 3) an intensive full-day, 44 week instructional year, 4) extensive language acquisition for all children and 5) a specific rigorous plan and timeline for ELL; 6) valid and reliable continuous progress monitoring of all children, 7) proactive Response to Intervention for children struggling to master the core curriculum, 8) high intensity professional development and coaching by master teachers and 9) active engagement of family and community. A thorough formative and summative evaluation will determine fidelity of implementation, efficacy, cost effectiveness and prompt salient changes to the approach.