

# RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENT OF FEDERAL, BILINGUAL AND NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAMS



## **Tribal Education Status Report**

For School Year 2015-2016

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Dr. V. Sue Cleveland

*Superintendent*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In compliance with the Indian Education Act (NMSA1976 Section 22), the purpose of the Tribal Education Status Report (TESR) is to inform stakeholders of the Public Education Department's (PED) and Rio Rancho Public School's (RRPS) current initiatives specific to Native American students and their academic progress.

Various divisions and bureaus of the PED have been actively engaged with pueblos, tribes, nations, and those school districts serving American Indian students in order to identify and support those effective programs that lead to increases in academic success for Native American students. Identification and program support are accomplished by maximizing the use of available resources, collaborating with stakeholder entities, creating communication pathways, incorporating language and culture into academic programs, expanding academic options, and involving parents and communities in building capacity. These crucial interactions positively influence American Indian students' academic and cultural achievement. The following programs, activities, and organizations have been the conduit for many of our students' gains:

### **Programs**

- Implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- PARCC testing to assess students' progress towards achieving the CCSS
- PED and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Memorandum of Understanding

When assessments are chosen carefully, they accurately reflect what students have learned and internalized over the school year. Assessment results of students in grades K–11 for the 2015–16 school year (SY) have been incorporated into this report. The New Mexico assessments used to evaluate students' progress for SY 2015–2016 include those in the following areas: The DIBELS were used to assess students' reading—decoding and comprehension in grades K–2; the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments were used in measuring student proficiency in math and language arts for students in grades 3–11, including reading 3–11; English language arts (ELA) 3–11, math 3–8, Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, Integrated Math I, Integrated Math II, and Integrated Math III. Additional assessments have been created to measure learning in science and Spanish reading and in reading for students with disabilities, math for students with disabilities, and science for students with disabilities. New Mexico students have been disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, economic status, and disabilities and analyzed as to their level of proficiency. This data and its impact on NM American Indian students have been compiled within this report.

While it is clear that the needs of American Indian students vary, major educational findings indicate that there is a need for continued, dynamic collaborative pathways, and such partnerships should be seen as a way of enriching the educational experience currently being offered to American Indian students by New Mexico school districts. This report recommends the continuous development and implementation of successful educational strategies and reliable and valid means of assessing their effectiveness.

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## *INTRODUCTION*

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The Indian Education Division (IED) has targeted initiatives that are designed to address the educational gap and cultural development of Native American students. These initiatives are based on collaboration and partnership with 23 school districts, 2 state charters, and the 22 tribes and pueblos in New Mexico. The PED is committed to the collaborative practices that support the established and unique working relationships of school districts with New Mexico's tribes and pueblos. This ongoing collaboration requires a consistent and stable relationship that cannot be captured by a policy; the relationship is, instead, practical and relevant. The many collaborative outreach activities provided to tribes and pueblos are a reflection of the PED's commitment to engage in meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders that improves the opportunities for American Indian students to succeed both academically and culturally.

Rio Rancho Public Schools (RRPS) aligns the scope of work to the priority areas as identified by the NMPED-IED.

This report examines both the current conditions and recent trends in the education of New Mexico's Native American students, with specific data for RRPS, using statistical measures that represent the current and past performance of these students. The analysis within provides a statewide and local representation of gains in key educational areas.

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*STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS*

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This section describes the laws and rules that apply to the Tribal Education Status Report in relevant part as follows:

**22-23A-7. Report.**

A. The Indian Education Division in collaboration with the education division of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs and other entities that serve tribal students shall submit an annual statewide tribal education status report no later than November 15 to all New Mexico tribes. The division shall submit the report whether or not entities outside state government collaborate as requested.

B. A school district with tribal lands located within its boundaries shall provide a district wide tribal education status report to all New Mexico tribes represented within the school district boundaries.

C. These status reports shall be written in a brief format and shall include information regarding public school performance, how it is measured, and how it is reported to the tribes and disseminated at the semiannual government-to-government meetings. The status report generally includes information regarding the following:

- (1) student achievement as measured by a statewide test approved by the department, with results disaggregated by ethnicity;
- (2) school safety;
- (3) graduation rates;
- (4) attendance;
- (5) parent and community involvement;
- (6) educational programs targeting tribal students;
- (7) financial reports;
- (8) current status of federal Indian education policies and procedures;
- (9) school district initiatives to decrease the number of student dropouts and increase attendance;
- (10) public school use of variable school calendars;
- (11) school district consultations with district Indian education committees, school-site parent advisory councils and tribal, municipal and Indian organizations; and
- (12) indigenous research and evaluation measures and results for effective curricula for tribal students.

**Objective.** IED’s objective is to ensure that student achievement in New Mexico public schools is measured by statewide tests that are approved by the PED, and results are disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, economic status, and disabilities. In turn, these results are used to develop strategies and programs that increase student achievement and reduce the achievement gap.

Rio Rancho Public Schools is dedicated to graduating each student with an educational foundation for success as a responsible, ethical contributor to society.

**Methods.** As a rule, proficiencies for groups with fewer than 10 students are masked; they are not reported because the number is too small to determine statistical significance, and student privacy might be compromised. In SY 2015–2016, new assessments were added that precluded reporting by level or by scaled score (arrived at by a transformation applied to the raw score). Ever since, proficiencies, rather than scaled scores, have been used to categorize student progress; testing data is reported as the number of students who meet the cut-off point for proficiency, as determined for the 2015–16 school year. These proficiencies include standard-based assessment (SBA) Spanish reading, SBA science, New Mexico Alternative Performance Assessment (NMAPA) reading, math, and science, PARCC ELA and math, and DIBELS reading. All assessment scores have been standardized to reflect proficiencies—from *non-proficient* to *at proficient* and *above proficient*.

**Source:** [http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ped/Assessment\\_index.html](http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ped/Assessment_index.html)

**Results.** The following tables show the statewide percentage of students who are at or above proficiency by ethnicity as measured by the New Mexico assessments. The overall gains seen in student achievement are based on PARCC 2015 test results.

**Assessment Proficiency Data – Proficient and Above**

	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Math</i>	<i>Science</i>
Statewide All Students	33.3%	17.6%	39.8%
RRPS All Students	46.0%	27.6%	60.4%
Statewide Native American Students	22.4%	9.0%	20.6%
RRPS Native American Students	32%	17.9%	40.2%

**Conclusion.** Native American students consistently scored below their counterparts in the core subjects of reading, math, and science in both the state and district wide rates. However, the district-wide rate as well as the Native American student proficiency rate exceeds that of the state in Reading, Math and Science.

**Action Plan.** Several PED and District initiatives are aimed at improving student performance. The Reads to Lead program, which provides supports to teachers in effectively teaching students to read by 3rd grade, counts participation among all districts in the state with a significant American Indian student enrollment. Additionally, K-3 Plus, a program that extends learning time for students, targets high-poverty schools. These two programs and others focus on improving student achievement, including that of Native American students. The Priority Schools Bureau (PSB) has several initiatives aimed at improving student performance in mathematics and ELA. The PSB provides districts and schools systematic, differentiated support to address low student performance. The amount of support needed is determined by federal status, the school's grade—as assessed by the A–F School Grading Accountability System—and by the subsequent status that is assigned; priority and focus.

The support provided to schools, staff, students, parents and the community take the following forms:

- School support visits specific to individual needs based on a needs assessment
- Technical assistance
- Annual Benefit Powwow
- Native American Summer Academy
- ACT Prep Classes and ACT Exam Fee Reimbursement
- AP Exam Reimbursement
- Pending MOA with the Institute of American Indian Arts, to offer a dual credit Native Language opportunity (Board Presentation on 10/10/2016)
- Supply Reimbursement Program
- Active Native American Parent Advisory Council (district and site level)
  - Subcommittees
    - Book Recommendation
    - Scholarship
    - Powwow
    - Fundraising
- Native American Liaison at every school site PreK-12.
- Six “Community Hub” events:
  - Native American Arts and Crafts
  - Storytelling
  - Traditional Cooking
  - Leadership Academy
  - Strength and Resiliency
  - College and Career Readiness
- Before and After school programs and opportunities

**Objective.** Ensure that students in New Mexico schools attend safe, secure, and peaceful schools.

The Rio Rancho Public Schools Safety Plan utilizes federal, state, and local guidelines, to ensure a safe learning environment for Rio Rancho Public Schools staff and students. The overall goals for safe schools in New Mexico include:

- All students will have access to public education services in a safe, secure, healthy, caring and respectful learning environment.
- All school personnel will be able to carry out their duties in a safe, secure, healthy, caring and respectful work environment.
- Students, staff, parents and the community should understand that safe schools are everyone's responsibility and benefit the whole community.

**Background.** New Mexico—as do other states —looks at strategies to keep students, staff, and faculty safe in schools. The School Safety plan offers new research and new approaches with the intent to – assist schools and their community partners in the revision of the school-level safety plans; – prevent an occurrence and/or recurrences of undesirable events; – properly train school staff, faculty, and students to assess, facilitate, and implement response actions to emergency events; and – provide the basis for coordinating protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency. New Mexico school districts have developed supports to ensure the safety of students within the schools. These provisions include the following: policies and procedures for school safety, safety committees, safety implementation plans, prevention plans, anonymous tip lines, emergency response plans, recovery plans, safe schools reports, and a school safety report submitted to the PED Coordinated School Health and Wellness Bureau (CSHWB). <http://ped.state.nm.us/sfsb/safeschools/>

**Methods.** A security assessment was conducted for all school sites and District Office by the Security Department. It is the philosophy of the Security Department to at best slow down intruders or threats. An important key to securing schools is by limiting access to school facilities. The assessment process reviewed all aspects of each facility in an attempt to create an integrated plan on how to provide a safe learning environment for staff and students alike.

The Security Audit conducted looked at a variety of issues as they pertained to our schools. First and foremost was the safety of students and staff. The team examined policies and methods to prevent unwanted persons and intruders from entering facilities without permission, but not deterring parental involvement. The team looked at ways of limiting vulnerability of criminal acts on campuses both during business hours and after hours. The team looked at policies and procedures for handling emergency situations. The team looked at physical aspects of each facility from landscaping to lighting, fencing to door locks and how to improve these things to create a safer environment for everyone. The team also looked at the schools being used as emergency shelters and what needs to be done to prepare for that possible situation.



**Results.** The Rio Rancho Public School District met approval standards for all indicators as outlined in the Safe Schools Plan Rubric:

- Introduction
  - School Safety Committee
  - Maps
  - Assurances
- Prevention
  - Health Services
  - Infections and Communicable Disease
  - Behavioral and Mental Health
  - Bullying
  - Suicide Awareness and Prevention
- Protection
  - Access Control
  - Traffic, Playground and Facility Safety
  - Bicycle Safety
  - Internet Safety
  - School Resource Officers
- Mitigation
  - Understanding Risks, Threats and Hazards
  - Drill and Exercise Planning
  - Review, Revise, Secure and Share the Plan
- Response - Incidence Command System, Protective Actions/Functional Annexes, Closing of School/Early Dismissal, Act of Violence, Active Shooter, Animal on Campus, Bomb Threat, Civil Disturbance, Cyber Security Breach, Explosion, Fallen Aircraft, Fire, HAZMAT, Loss of Power or Water, Medical Emergency, Missing Child, Natural Hazards/Severe Weather, Special Events, Suicide Threat or Attempt, Transportation Emergency, Notification and Messaging, Media Relations
- Recovery – Re-location, Notification, Accountability, Reunification, Continuity of Operations Planning, Psychological and Emotional Recovery

**Conclusion.** The Rio Rancho Public Schools Safety Plan, also known as the core document, is the same for each school site. This ensures consistency and uniformity before, during and after a critical incident, threat or disaster. It also facilitates emergency personnel response to ensure critical incident management methods are the same at each school. It is important to note that there are variances as each school site is unique due to the specific location of the school, its diverse community and different facilities.

**Action Plan.** From an overall perspective, Rio Rancho Public Schools and all NM schools have been successful in keeping most of their students and employees safe from harm. The perception of risk at these schools is often greater than the actual risk incurred. However, there are many schools that do face serious problems of on-campus violence and criminal activity. It is important to develop an understanding of these problems so that the best possible strategies can be devised to prevent crime and increase school safety.

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*RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – GRADUATION RATES*

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**Objective.** The graduation objective is to ensure that all American Indian students are given the opportunity to graduate from high school with a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence. The high school experience and diploma together provide students with solid preparation for college and career readiness.

Rio Rancho Public Schools is dedicated to graduating each student with an educational foundation for success as a responsible, ethical contributor to society.

**Background.** Transitioning to the National Governors Association (NGA) cohort computation method, New Mexico implemented its first 4-year cohort graduation rate in 2009. This adjusted cohort graduation rate improves our understanding of the characteristics of the population of students who do not earn regular high school diplomas or who take longer than four years to graduate. Numerous statistics and reports from the US Department of Labor indicate the importance of a high school diploma and reflect the high economic costs of *not* completing high school. Since 2003, New Mexico has reported on a 5-year cohort graduation rate for American Indian students in order to better capture the number of students acquiring the New Mexico Diploma of Excellence.

**Methods.** The cohort consists of all students who were first-time freshmen four years earlier and who graduated by August 1 of their 4th year. Additionally, cohorts are tracked for one additional year past their expected year of graduation, yielding a 5-year graduation rate. Targets for graduation—called School Growth Targets or SGTs—were reset and approved by the USDOE in the spring of 2012. These targets are 4-year cohort graduation rates, which are anticipated to reach 85 percent by 2020. For detailed rates by traditional subgroups, aggregated by school and district, view the PED website (*A-Z Directory → Graduation → Data & Statistics*). The results of the extended years graduation rates (5-year and 6-year) for the same cohort of students are also posted on this site. [http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Graduation\\_data.html](http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Graduation_data.html)

## Results.

### 4 Year Graduation Rates

	2015	2014	2013
NM All Students	68.6%	69.3%	70.3%
RRPS All Students	82.7%	84.4%	84%

NM American Indian Students	62.9%	61.7%	64.3%
RRPS American Indian Students	78.8%	80.6%	74.2%

### 5 Year Graduation Rates

	2015	2014	2013
NM All Students	75%	70.5%	71.4%
RRPS All Students	86%	86.7%	85.7%

NM American Indian Students	71%	62.9%	65.4%
RRPS American Indian Students	82%	82.4%	78.9%

**Conclusion.** Rio Rancho Public Schools 4 and 5 year graduation rates for All Students and Native American students exceeds that of the state. To address the gap in rate within the district, RRPS will utilize state supported systems and initiatives to support students and narrow (or close) the gap.

New Mexico's 5-year cohort graduation rate for the cohort of 2013 was certified in February 2015, in synchrony with the release of rates for the 4-year cohort of 2014. The 5-year cohort is now reported in the annual School District Report Card. The rates are accompanied by outcomes for students who did not graduate, including those who left to get a GED, dropped out, or continue to be enrolled. This information about non-graduates assists schools in targeting dropout prevention and in devising and providing other programs for struggling students.

Currently, far too many students drop out or graduate from high school without the knowledge and skills required for success in the 21st century workplace and/or post-secondary education, closing doors and limiting future options. In response, the PED has developed and phased in implementation of the Early Warning System (EWS) to provide schools with the tools to reliably identify students who have lower odds of graduating, based upon specific key indicators. Support can then be provided through effective interventions early enough in their educational experience that there is sufficient time to intervene. The EWS highlights risks utilizing an electronic dashboard. The dashboard includes the following seven key student indicators:

- **Attendance**— less than 90 percent attendance is flagged as **at risk**
- **Behavior**—one or more unsatisfactory behaviors that are written up is flagged as **at risk**
- **Course Performance**—any report card grade of *D* or *F* in mathematics or English is flagged as **at risk**
- Student Demographics
- State Assessment Scores
- **Economic Disadvantaged status**, if applicable
- **Special Education Services Summary**, if applicable

Minority groups continue to profit most from the extra year (5-year cohort), with African American, American Indian, and economically disadvantaged students making the greatest gains. The American Indian graduation rate is consistent with these other two student demographics, increasing their 5-year graduation rates nine percent over the past three years.

**Action Plan.** The statewide EWS electronic dashboard became available in January 2016. The dashboard is a tool that administrators, counselors, and SAT members can use to obtain an overall picture of their students. The College and Career Readiness Bureau (CCRB) provides opt-in professional development (PD) opportunities to schools for the EWS. This PD trains student assistance team (SAT) members to evaluate student data and respond with tiered interventions. Early reports from the two cohorts that are participating suggest that the SATs and Response to Intervention (RTI) format—when coupled with the dashboard information—prove to be powerful tools for schools to use in their support of at-risk students.

RRPS will implement state support systems and initiatives to improve the graduation rate for our Native American students.

**Objective.** The attendance objective is to assure that all students attend school every day and on schedule. This will be accomplished by supporting school district initiatives addressing the decrease in dropout rate and increase in attendance.

**Background.** The Compulsory School Attendance Rule (6.10.8.9 NMAC) takes into consideration the sovereignty of every American Indian pueblo or tribe. The rule requires an established set of policies to be identified with each governing entity in support of the cultural well-being of the student, with the goal of keeping children in school until the age of eighteen. The local school board/governing body of the public or charter school adopts the attendance policy. The attendance rate is reported by each district that serves a large American Indian student population or one that borders on or around tribal lands.

New Mexico pursues programs and strategies to meet the needs of at-risk students and to address obstacles associated with keeping students in school. New Mexico districts and schools actively pursue programs focused on addressing the academic needs of at-risk students and building capacity of truancy intervention programs. In addition, some school districts have established agreements with outside agencies to jointly provide for the educational and social needs of students who are at risk of dropping out. Students who drop out negatively affect the four-year (freshman) cohort graduation rate for the state, which results in a lower graduation rate.

**Methods.** The school districts and charter schools report absences with excused and unexcused identifiers through the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS). They certify that the information is being reported consistently at intervals at the 40th-, 80th-, and 120th-day, and end-of-year in a manner as specified by the PED. STARS tables were sorted by the attendance rates of American Indian students within the districts for the SY 2015–2016, capturing the 80th day attendance. A student is considered habitually truant if he or she has a total of 10 or more full-day, unexcused absences in a school year within that district.

The Compulsory School Attendance Law requires districts to maintain an attendance policy that provides for the early identification of students with unexcused absences and truancy, while providing intervention strategies that focus on keeping truants in an educational setting. NM districts identify these students using demographic data obtained from the Student Snapshot and Membership (school cumulative enrollment between the first and last days of the school year) records stored in STARS. Student membership is collected and reported at the school, district, and state level—including the number of pupils in each of several categories from grades K (kindergarten) through 12. Dropout data and rates are calculated only for grades 7–12. Dropout statistics provide the number of students dropping out in a given school year and are collected at the school district level. These statistics are then reported to the PED. Additional information can be found for dropout rates on the PED website.

**Source:** STARS 80D Student Attendance Assessment Report by Subgroup.

## Results.

### Attendance Rates from 2013-2016

	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Statewide All Students	95.1%	95.2%	94.8%
RRPS All Students	94.7%	95%	93.2%
Statewide Native American Students	92.8%	92.3%	92.5%
RRPS Native American Students	93.88%	94.1%	93.0%

**Conclusion.** The attendance rate for RRPS Native American students is comparable with the district's rate for all students, and is consistently slightly higher than the statewide attendance rate for Native American students.

**Action Plan.** The IED will continue to partner and collaborate with school districts to provide support in the identification of the causes underlying students dropping out of school and in the implementation of successful strategies to address and ameliorate dropout rates. As indicated in the graduation section, the EWS is an effective tool for schools to use in identifying struggling students who exhibit signs of not persisting to graduation.

Non-attendance is a leading indicator of student disengagement. The PED, local education agencies (LEAs), and BIE can support recipient schools by teaching them interventions and encouraging their participation in the EWS training program. Both national, evidence-based practices and NM EWS participant experiences suggest that RTI intercessions are tremendously effective at supporting students who struggle with attendance. RTI Tier 1 interventions within the EWS often target school-wide attendance issues.

Early warning systems combine data systems with student response systems to identify students early and provide proactive responses to student needs. EWS use readily available data to alert teachers and administrators about students who are on the pathway to dropping out of school. A key benefit of early warning systems is that they help educators know what to look for amid the mountains of student data. Early warning systems can be implemented at the middle and high school levels—even as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Researchers from the Everyone Graduates Center found that more than 50 percent of students who dropped out could be identified as early as the 6<sup>th</sup> grade by using three key indicators (the ABCs):

- Attendance (chronic absenteeism)
- Behavior (being suspended or sustained mild misbehavior)
- Course performance (failure in math or English)

Furthermore, the PED has established the Truancy and Dropout Prevention Coach program. The program trains and places coaches, so these support personnel are available to engage with students, which better ensures that students attend and participate in school.

**Objective.** The parent and community objective is to ensure that parents; tribal departments of education; community-based organizations; urban American Indian community members; the DOE; universities; and tribal, state, and local policymakers work together to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students by encouraging and fostering parental and community involvement within public and charter schools.

**Background.** The importance of parent involvement in education has been documented as benefitting students, parents, teachers, and schools—whether the program is at the preschool or elementary, middle or high school levels. Studies have shown that when parents participate in their children’s education, the result is an increase in student academic achievement and an improvement in the student’s overall attitude and school behavior. There is also improved attendance, fewer discipline problems, and less bullying. Higher aspirations have been correlated to parent involvement as have improved attitudes, enhanced interest in science among adolescents, increased language achievement, and sustained achievement gains.

**Methods.**

- Student Credentialing (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- District provided information about state testing expectations as well as school and student results
- Parent education via workshops, courses or training for Native American parents
- Providing strategies that support learning at home
- Community meetings
- Community engagement events
- Providing information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork with student(s)

**Results.** Rio Rancho Public Schools hosts organized activities directed toward involving families and the community in their children’s education.

**Conclusion.** Research indicates that students with highly engaged families will attend school regularly, enjoy a more positive attitude, be involved in fewer discipline problems and incidences of bullying, and exhibit greater interest in higher education.

**Action Plan.** Feedback collected during open meetings and surveys guide the programmatic supports and offerings provided to our students and families.

**Objective.** The tribal students’ educational programs objective is to recognize and support the unique cultural and educational needs of American Indian students enrolled in public schools and charter schools.

**Background.** The Indian Education Act prioritizes support to meet the unique educational and culturally relevant academic needs of American Indian and Native Alaskan students through the efforts of LEAs, Indian tribes and organizations, postsecondary institutions, and other entities. American Indian students are challenged to meet the same state academic standards as all other students are expected to meet. Integrated educational services, in combination with other programs, are offered to best ensure that American Indian students and their families can meet and take advantage of those academic opportunities.

**Methods.** The Rio Rancho Public School District meets compliance with all Federal and State educational requirements. Programs and systematic supports are aligned to federal and state level initiatives to align and maximize time, efforts and resources. Student, parent and community input along with input and data from our schools at the site and district level provide critical information for a needs assessment, to refine and restructure opportunities for our students.

**Results.** Educational programs targeting tribal students offered in RRPS: AP courses, SAT/ACT/AP prep, sessions and materials, Dual Credit Programs, Cultural competency support for educators, K-3 Plus, Elementary Summer School, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade AYD, Credit Recovery, Native American Summer Academy, Title I school wide programs, Title III supplemental support for identified English Learners, Bilingual Multicultural Education Program opportunities K-12, Community Engagement Events.

**Conclusion.** Activities and educational programs for Native American students are consistently offered in RRPS. Evidence through student achievement data, attendance, survey feedback, are collected and analyzed to reflect upon program offerings and the correlation between student performance—specifically in the priority areas as identified by the NMPED-IED.

**Action Plan.** The plan is to develop an equity tool of key indicators statewide. This formula will allow districts to reflect on equitable distribution of resources and equitable participation of students in programs and coursework that leads to college and career readiness and success in life.

The PSB has several initiatives aimed at improving student performance in mathematics and English language arts (ELA). Based on the A–F School Grading Accountability System, which is comprised of a school grade and on an assigned status of *priority* or *focus*—depending on that grade—districts and schools receive differentiated support to address low student performance.

The support provided to districts and schools can take the form of the following: regional support from the PSB, school support, implementation of Principals Pursuing Excellence and Teachers Pursuing Excellence programs, and PD on utilizing data-driven instruction for better student outcomes.



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*RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – FINANCIAL REPORTS*

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**Objective.** The financial objective is, through the use of public school funds, to ensure that New Mexico schools provide adequate operational resources to provide and improve services to NM tribal students. These services will meet the educational needs and provide opportunities to tribal students attending NM public schools.

**Background.** The New Mexico public school funding formula is based on a model developed by the National Education Finance Project (NEFP) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As a tool for better decision making, the model had great potential because of the variety of data that could be accommodated and the ease with which new data could be added and new decision options made available. Prior to the creation of the current formula, school funding methods had created a high degree of dis-equalization among districts because of differences in local wealth. The gap between rich and poor districts was broad, and the revenue that would be required to reach full equalization with the richest districts was staggering.

The goal of the new formula, therefore, was clear: to equalize educational opportunity at the highest possible revenue level, while minimizing the financial loss to the richest districts. As a result of the committee’s work, the 1974 New Mexico Legislature enacted the Public School Finance Act, which has been widely acclaimed as one of the most innovative of the school finance plans currently being used across the country. The formula is designed to distribute operational funds to school districts objectively and in a non-categorical manner, while providing for local school district autonomy. Formula dollars received by local districts are not earmarked for specific programs. Within statutory and regulatory guidelines, school districts have the latitude to spend their dollars according to local priorities. In place for more than four decades, the public school funding formula has been under constant analysis. For the most part, the results of these analyses have supported statutory data-based refinements to the structure of the formula, while maintaining the philosophical concept of educational equity for all students.

(<http://ped.state.nm.us/div/fin/school.budget/index.html>)

**Methods.** Rio Rancho Public Schools applies annually for the School District Initiative Grant through NMPED’s Indian Education Division, as well as the Federal Title VII Grant for Indian Education.

**Results.** Rio Rancho Public Schools uses operational resources to ensure that resources are applied to American Indian students’ educational opportunities. In addition, the school district applies for additional supplemental grant opportunities.

<i># of AI funding sources used</i>	<i>Total Enrollment (80D)</i>	<i>AI Enrollment* (80D)</i>	<i>AI* (%)</i>	<i>Indian Ed Formula Grant Title VII</i>	<i>NM IEA</i>	<i>Total AI Program Funding</i>
2	16,880	597*	4%*	\$136,598	\$25,000	\$161,598

\*This count only reflects the number of students with a primary Ethnicity of Indian as reported by parent/guardian during registration. RRPS enrolls nearly triple that number of students who have Indian indicated as a secondary or tertiary ethnicity.

**Conclusion.** The IED will continue to monitor expenditures and align department, district, and school support for the best results for New Mexico American Indian students’ education.

**Action Plan.** RRPS will continue to utilize funds to ensure that fiscal expenditures are aligned with the needs of the New Mexico Native American student population.

Rio Rancho Public Schools do not claim students for funding, and therefore are not required to report on IPP data.

**Listing of Tribes and School Districts Located on or Near Tribal Lands**

Region I		Region III	
Tribe	School Districts	Tribe	School District
Navajo (Dine') Nation 53 NM Chapters	Bloomfield* <sup>2</sup> Cuba* Farmington* Central Consolidated * Jemez Mountain*	Navajo (Dine') Nation 53 NM Chapters Pueblos Various Tribal Affiliated Tribes	Albuquerque*
Jicarilla Apache Nation	Dulce*	Ohkay Owingeh	Española * & Pojoaque*
Region II		Pueblo of Cochiti	Bernalillo*
Tribe	School District	Pueblo of Jemez	Jemez Valley & Walatowa*
Navajo (Dine') Nation 53 NM Chapters	Gallup McKinley* Grants-Cibola* Magdalena*	Pueblo of Nambé	Pojoaque*
Pueblo of Acoma	Grants-Cibola*	Pueblo of Pojoaque	Pojoaque*
Pueblo of Isleta	Los Lunas*	Pueblo of Picuris	Peñasco*
Pueblo of Laguna	Grants-Cibola*	Pueblo of San Ildefonso	Pojoaque*
Pueblo of Zuni	Zuni*	Pueblo of Sandia	Bernalillo*
IPP Not Required	Aztec Rio Rancho Santa Fe	Pueblo of Santa Ana	Bernalillo*
<b>Current Status of Federal Indian Policies and Procedures (IPPS) Compliance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Compliant—20 districts</li> <li>o Did not report—0 district</li> <li>o Not required to report—3 districts</li> </ul>		Pueblo of Santa Clara	Española* & Pojoaque*
		Pueblo of Santo Domingo	Bernalillo*
		Pueblo of San Felipe	Bernalillo*
		Pueblo of Tesuque	Pojoaque*
		Pueblo of Taos	Taos*
		Pueblo of Zia	Bernalillo* & Jemez Valley*
		Mescalero Apache Tribe	Ruidoso & Tularosa

**Objective.** The objective of Indian policies and procedures (IPP) is to ensure that New Mexico schools provide adequate tribal consultations with regard to the basic support payment requirements under the federal Impact Aid regulations.

**Background.** Districts that claim federally identified American Indian students residing on Indian lands for Title VIII Impact Aid funding shall develop and implement policies and procedures in consultation with tribal officials and parents. The New Mexico Indian Education Act requires that school districts obtain a signature of approval by the New Mexico tribal governments or their designees residing within school district boundaries, verifying that New Mexico tribes agree to Indian education policies and procedures pursuant to federal Title VIII Impact Aid funding requirements.

**Methods.**

**Results.**

**Conclusion.**

**Action Plan.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**Objective.** The objective of this initiative is to ensure that New Mexico schools provide their district office with the initiatives they are employing to increase attendance support for and decrease the number of student dropouts of American Indian students.

**Background.** New Mexico pursues programs and strategies to meet the needs of at-risk students and to address obstacles associated with keeping students in school. New Mexico schools continue to be challenged in obtaining resources required to keep students in school despite including an “at-risk” factor in the state’s funding formula to assist in addressing the issue. The assurance of collaboration and engagement from educational systems and pueblos/tribes for input regarding academics and cultural awareness has positive effects on developing and implementing a variety of administrative and instructional practices to reduce school dropouts and increase students’ success in school. Additionally, dropouts negatively affect the four-year (freshman) cohort graduation rate for the state, which results in a lower graduation rate.

**Methods.** The 23 school districts and 2 charter schools submitted their 2016 district survey reporting school district initiatives to increase attendance, decrease the number of student dropouts, and increase academic support for American Indian students.

**Source:** 2016 district-wide survey

Dropout statistics report the number of students dropping out in a given school year and are collected at the school district level. Student membership is also collected and reported at the school, district, and state level, including the number of pupils in each of several categories from grades K through 12.

Dropout data and rates are calculated only for grades 7–12. A student is considered a dropout if he or she was enrolled at any time during the previous school year, is not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, and does not meet certain exclusionary conditions. This means that students dropping out during the regular school term in year one, who are not re-enrolled in school on October 1 of year two, are reported as year one dropouts. This is recorded in the dropout report in year two. **Source:** STARS Dropout Rates, 2014–2015

**Results.** In order to retain students in school, New Mexico districts and schools actively pursue programs focused on addressing the academic needs of at-risk students and building truancy intervention programs. In addition, some school districts have established agreements with outside agencies to jointly provide for the educational and social needs of students who are at risk of dropping out. Even with these efforts, schools continue to be challenged to meet the needs of at-risk students. Adequate resourcing continues to be an additional burden.

**Drop Out Rates from SY 2014-2015**

	2014-2015 (a) Membership (unduplicated)	2014-2015 (b) DROP Gr. 7-12	2014-2015 Overall % Rate
Statewide Native American	16,022	982	6.1%
RRPS Native American	7,898	101	1.3%

**Conclusion.** New Mexico students drop out for a variety of reasons and the data does not always capture the underlying causes. The top three reasons reported include student: 1) did not re-enroll; 2) had an invalid transfer; and 3) intends to take GED.

What is not reflected in the reported reasons are the social, health, and economic stresses that can affect dropout rates. Poverty is an underlying stress factor. For example, without adequate health care and nutrition, students may be absent more often from school due to poor health. Sometimes, family economics may require an older sibling to care for younger siblings who are at home, thereby affecting the student’s regular school attendance. Students may leave school to help support their families. Some other factors that can influence dropout rates are: experimentation with drugs, teen pregnancy, chronic diseases, and being the victim of bullying.

**Action Plan.** The objective is to encourage schools to continue to support efforts of American Indian students stay in school or become re-engaged. This can occur with the implementation of academic and cultural awareness and through collaboration with tribal governments.

Districts and charter schools implemented several initiatives to support increased attendance for American Indian students that include—but are not limited to—experiential projects, reading and math interventions, incentive programs, after school programs, tiered interventions, tutoring, alternative settings, attendance/truancy policies, parent liaisons, home visits, incentives, school counselors, Native American liaison/advisor, positive behavior intervention and support, suicide prevention, attendance policies and procedures, parent educator programs, student assistance teams, counseling, career exploration for K–12, extracurricular activities/clubs, credit recovery, Edgenuity, Saturday school, after-school programs, parent engagement, student health centers, Early Warning System with High Plains, culturally relevant curriculum and cultural experiences, out-of-school opportunities including international travel experiences, and college engagement programs to provide support for academic success.

**Objective.** The variable school calendar objective is to ensure that New Mexico schools collaborate with Tribal governments to identify the important cultural events in their American Indian students’ lives. By using variable school calendars, schools directly address their AI students’ cultural and family responsibilities and enhance these students’ ability to more regularly attend their public school.

**Background.** New Mexico has a rich American Indian history and culture that cultivates the 22 Tribal governments and urban Native communities. The assurance of collaboration and engagement from educational systems and pueblos/tribes for input regarding academics and cultural awareness has positive effects on the educational success of American Indian students. American Indian education in New Mexico represents rich cultural traditions and diverse educational practices through different protocols and paradigms of practice. The 35,000-plus students who represent the NM tribes and pueblos and other tribes from throughout the United States, who attend over 185 public schools and charter schools in the State of New Mexico, were the focus of state and tribal legislators who established the Indian Education Act (IEA) in 2003.

**Methods.** Rio Rancho Public Schools makes every effort to support Native American students with their self-identity, language, and culture by providing students opportunities to partake in these activities. Communication between the pueblo leadership, with RRPS allows for students to attend cultural activities without negatively impacting student achievement.

**Results.** The chart below lists the variable school days that are offered to American Indian students within the 23 districts and 2 charters. This list serves as a guide to days of Native importance during the school year 2015–2016. Per the 2016 District Survey, 48 percent of the districts and charter schools follow a variable calendar and have a school calendar committee involved in the decision making.

VARIABLE CALENDAR DAYS AS PROVIDED IN THE SY 2015–2016 SURVEY	
All Souls Day (November 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Pueblo of Nambé Feast Day
Alamo Indian Days	Pueblo of Pojoaque Feast Day
Cultural Day, Pueblo of Acoma	Pueblo of San Ildefonso Feast Day
Gathering of Nations	Pueblo of Santa Ana Feast Day
Jicarilla Apache Tribal Feast, Go Jii Ya	Pueblo of Santa Clara Feast Day
Mescal Harvest and Roast	Pueblo of Santo Domingo Feast Day
Native American Senior Day	Pueblo of Tesuque Feast Day
Navajo Sovereignty Day	Pueblo Taos Feast-San Geronimo Feast Day
Ohkay Owingeh Corn Dance	Pueblo of Zia Feast Day
Ohkay Owingeh Feast Day	Pueblo of Zuni-Shalako
Pueblo of Acoma Feast Day	Shiprock Northern Navajo Fair (Professional Development Day)
Pueblo of Cochiti Feast Day	Tribal Governor’s Irrigation Day
Pueblo of Isleta Feast Day	Winter and spring break extended to accommodate dances
Pueblo of Jemez Feast Day	Zuni Appreciation Day
Pueblo of Laguna Feast Day	

**Conclusion.** The majority of the 23 districts and one charter school report the use of variable school calendars that support an American Indian student’s cultural well-being and self-awareness.

**Action Plan.** The objective is to encourage schools to continue to support Native American students to develop and honor their cultural traditions while better ensuring school attendance. This is accomplished by the development of variable calendar days and in collaboration with Tribal governments, who ensure calendar days are accurate.

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*RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSULTATIONS WITH  
DISTRICT INDIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEES, SCHOOL-SITE PARENT ADVISORY  
COUNCILS AND TRIBAL, MUNICIPAL AND INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS*

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**Objective.** The district consultations ensure that New Mexico schools provide a means of developing mutual understanding of educational programs and collaborate with Tribal entities to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students.

**Background.** Districts that claim federally identified American Indian students residing on Indian lands for Title VIII Impact Aid funding shall develop and implement policies and procedures in consultation with tribal officials and parents. Additionally, the New Mexico Indian Education Act asserts that parent(s); families; tribal departments of education; community-based organizations; the Public Education Department; universities; and tribal, state, and local policymakers work together to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students.

**Methods.** The 23 school districts submitted responses on district-wide surveys that provided input into the number of times districts met and discussed American Indian students' educational opportunities with the district's Indian Education Committee, parent advisory committees, Tribes, Indian organizations, and other tribal community organizations.

**Results.**

- 5 meetings annually, plus additional meetings as requested by the Native American Parent Advisory Committee (NAPAC) Board.
- Individual consultations with parents, community and tribal entities on an as needed basis and upon request.
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**Conclusion.** LEAs developed working relationships with their Indian Education Committee (IEC), parent advisory committees, Tribes, Indian organizations, and other tribal community organizations through the consultation and decision-making processes.

**Action Plan.** The objective is to develop a minimum of one primary goal for consultations with each Tribe or Pueblo and, in collaboration, stakeholders determine the best method to implement and achieve that goal for the benefit of New Mexico American Indian students.

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*RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – INDIGENOUS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION  
MEASURES AND RESULTS FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULA FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS*

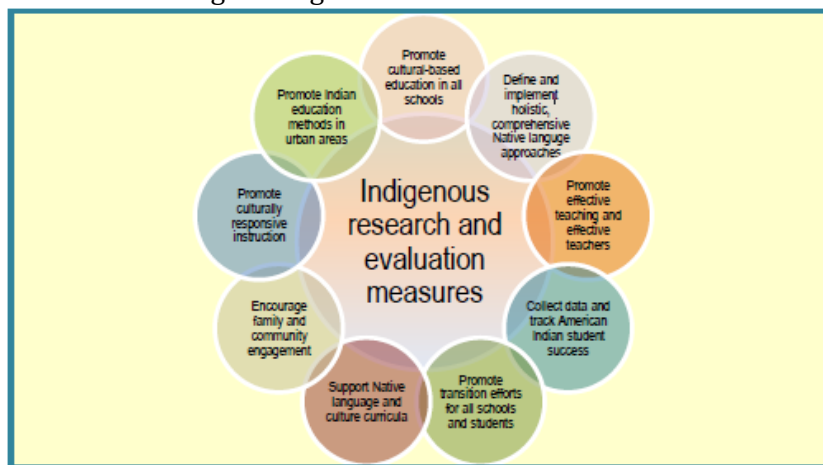
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**Objective.** The research objective ensures that New Mexico schools receive adequate assistance for planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of curricula in native languages, culture, and history designed for tribal and non-tribal students as approved by New Mexico tribes.

**Background.** Indian Education has been working to strengthen the field of Native education research, data, and best practices. The development of resources for Native education researchers, evaluators, educators, professors, and others who are working within Indian Education has been to improve education for our American Indian students enrolled in all schools. The Indigenous research methodologies differ from the Western educational approaches. In Western academic models, the research project and data are separated from the researcher, who is merely an onlooker. Though the data collected by Indigenous research methodologies can be analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively, just like data collected by Western research methods, the acknowledged relationship between researcher and data naturally challenges Western research paradigms. Indigenous research methodologies are powerful and worthwhile despite this challenge because they provide vital opportunities to contribute to the body of knowledge about the natural world and Indigenous peoples.

**Methods.** In order to develop effective curricula for tribal students and increase their educational opportunities, the 23 school districts submit district-wide surveys on behalf of the district's implementation of indigenous research. **Source:** 2015 District-Wide Survey

**Results.** The graph below illustrates the activities in which districts have collaborated and in which they have implemented the Indigenous research evaluation measures and curricula within their respective schools and neighboring tribes.



**Rio Rancho Public Schools**

- **Research:** Some research has been shared with all sites. All sites have a Native American Liaison who participates in professional development.
- **Curricula:** Resources are available to support Native American culture.



**Conclusion.**

Districts have implemented Indigenous Research and Evaluation in the development and assessment of tribal language programs.

Rio Rancho Public Schools has begun work through a book study for a core team. From this book study, the expectation of the team members is to create lesson plans to be shared district wide for best practices in Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction. In 2008, a major effort to offer a Tribal language program was initiated with an identified instructor, materials and classroom space. However, due to lack of interest and registered students, the program did not come to fruition. There have been continuous efforts. The school district is in support of offering tribal language programs.

**Action Plan.** The objective is to create an action plan, with each district supporting Indigenous research. These plans ensure that comprehensive, best practice models are being utilized for language development and that opportunities for the use of Indigenous research, evaluation measures, and curricula in other areas—such as culture and history—are being explored.

Rio Rancho Public Schools is exploring dual credit opportunities with higher education institutions to offer Tribal language programs. This will be the first step in seeing if there is a revitalized interest and commitment from our students and families. If so, the next step would be to build upon the program to grow and extend the Tribal Language Program opportunities for our Native American students.



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## CONCLUSION

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This report employs qualitative and quantitative performance measures to briefly examine the current educational opportunities available to New Mexico's Native American students. In conjunction with the Indian Education Advisory Council, the vision of the IED is to provide support for equitable and culturally relevant learning environments for American Indian students in all New Mexico schools. The IED will continue to collaborate with the 23 school districts, 5 state charters, 22 NM Pueblos/Tribes, and local stakeholders to pursue strategies that address the achievement gap and develop cultural awareness for the benefit of all American Indian students enrolled in NM public schools.

The National Association of Indian Education (NIEA) encourages utilizing statistics and education data to make informed decision leading to improved education systems serving Native students. The following are demographics and national statistics about our American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations and students as reported by NIEA.

**Notes:** NHOPI refers to Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. *Alone* means not in combination with any other race. *In combination* means in combination with at least one other race.

### Student Demographics

**Note:** AI/AN means American Indian and Alaska Native

The American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) population from birth through age 24 makes up 42 percent of the total AI/AN population, whereas the under-25 population for the United States is only 34 percent of the total population (2010 Census) (1)

- AI/AN students make up 1.2 percent of public school students nationally (2)
- There are approximately 644,000 AI/AN students in the U.S. K-12 system (3)
- About 90 percent of all AI/AN students attend regular public schools and about 8 percent attend schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (4)
- States where AI/AN students compose the largest proportions of the total student populations: Alaska (27%), Oklahoma (19%), Montana (11%), New Mexico (11%), and South Dakota (11%) (5)
- In the 2007-2008 school year, there were 741 public schools located in AI/AN areas, with 82,406 AI/AN students (6)
- In the 2005-2006 school year, there were 181 BIE schools with a total AI/AN student population of 50,155 (7)
- 52 percent of AI/AN students attended schools in the 2003-04 school year where half or fewer of the students were White (8)
- In 2009, 68 percent of AI/AN fourth graders were eligible for free-or reduced-price lunch (9)
- 61 percent of AI/AN eighth graders attend schools where more than half of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (10)
- In the 2007-08 school year, 28 percent of AI/AN students attended a high-poverty public elementary school, compared to only 5 percent of White students (11)
- In public schools with high AI/AN enrollment, only 16 percent of teachers are AI/AN (12)
- Though 23 percent Alaska public school students are Alaska Native, just 5 percent of the teachers are (13)

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