

Espanola Public Schools
Department of Indian Education



Espanola Public Schools
Striving for Excellence

Tribal Education Status Report

For School Year 2020-2021

Issued September 2021

Interim Superintendent Vera Trujillo

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tribal Education Summary Report (TESR) is an informative report to the state and our local tribal communities on how our American Indian students are doing in our Public Schools, specifically ours is for Espanola Public Schools.

This report will include the 13 indicators presented in Introduction.

The first indicator covers student achievement. (Will go over data with Myra once received and provide a summary)

School Safety policies and procedures are in place district wide and is available on the school website. Each school site provided their own plans as well due to certain age groups not being able to get vaccinated. Plans can be available by request. Training and updating of plans are updated to adhere to the State's Public Health Order.

Graduation rates for Native students have always been below their peers, but this has been a great year for our seniors. We had a 100% graduation rate with our Native students for school year 2020-2021.

Attendance has been an issue, especially since we began remote learning for school year 2020-2021. Some Native students didn't have access to internet to connect to google classroom. We worked with tribes and NMPED for homework hotspots and individual mifis.

Parent and Community Involvement was a challenge due to COVID-19 . We held google meetings every month with tribal education directors and IEC. Tribal Consultation is planned for 8 northern Pueblos and EPS Administration in fall of 2021.

Educational Programs Targeting Native American Students is Tewa Language, which is offered at San Juan Elementary, Carlos Vigil Middle School, and Espanola Valley High School. Middle and High school Tewa teacher also teaches Native American art. Also, we have partnerships with Ohkay Owingeh that provide emotional and social-being trainings.

Financial Reports indicate that EPS provides funds for professional development, general supplies and materials for classrooms, student travel for field trips, college visits, conferences, etc. The are funds come from various funding sources.

Current status of Federal Education Indian Education Policies and Procedures may need some adjusting due to COVID-19. We will continue to meet with local tribal communities and IECs.

School Districts initiatives to decrease the number of student number of student dropouts and increase attendance will provide initiatives to decrease student dropouts. EPS Indian Education will work with the tribes to ensure students are attending school whether its remote or in person.

Public School Use of Variable School Calendars are accepted and promoted by EPS. Native students are encouraged attend cultural and traditional ceremonies within their respective tribal communities. Students will be excused from classes as long as a letter from the tribal community's Governor's office is provided.

School Districts Consultations continue with the district through the Indian Education Committee, and tribal, municipal, and Pueblo organizations. The goal for the district is to collaborate with all 8 northern Pueblos and continue to inform them of EPS activities.

Indigenous Research and Evaluation measures ways to bring together the indigenous teaches of language and culture with the required western culture we find in public schools. Assessments were in the process of going out to the community but due to COVID-19 it never went to surrounding communities. We will proceed with assessments process in SY 2021-2022.

Access to Native Languages is very difficult in these times. We have 2 instructors, one whom is full time elementary teaching and the other floats between the middle and the high school. We are working on getting EAs to help assist with classes and hopefully take over some of these demanding roles. There is a gap between elders and the younger generation of teachers. We could look at possibly seeking help from colleagues at the University level.

INTRODUCTION

Per the Indian Education Act (IEA) Article 23A Indian Education, NMSA Section 22–23A–7 Report and IEA Rulemaking (Title 6, Chapter 25 Part 2.11): A. The Indian Education division in collaboration with the education division of the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs and other entities that server tribal students shall submit an annual statewide tribal education status report no later than November 15 to all New Mexico tribes. 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. The report must include the twelve indicators listed herein. The report must be provided on or before September 30th following the close of the previous school year. Copies of the reports must be provided to the assistant secretary at the time the reports are provided to the respective tribes. In order to be in compliance with filing the dates, school districts need to complete a districtwide annual Tribal Education Status report.

Espanola Public Schools borders two tribes, Ohkay Owingeh and Santa Clara Pueblo, but serves many of the 473 federally recognized tribes throughout the United States. Espanola Public Schools sit along the beautiful Rio Grande Valley with 13 schools ranging from Pre- Kindergarten to Secondary level. Students have access to many courses, required and electives, but Espanola Public Schools offers Tewa Language, which is one of the 6 northern Pueblo's Native languages, at one elementary school and at the middle and high school level. Each Pueblo has their own certification process when it comes to language instruction but Espanola Public Schools follows the NMPED guidelines for teacher certification. Students of Espanola Public Schools have multi-cultural demographical aspects but continue the tradition of striving for excellence of the beautiful Espanola Valley.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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.
- (13) Access to Native Language programs

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Objective.

With the state receiving an accountability waiver from the US Department of Education, EPS chose to opt out of the testing for 2020-2021. The waiver exempts New Mexico from reporting many pieces of accountability data, including the achievement data, due to the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic.

Background.

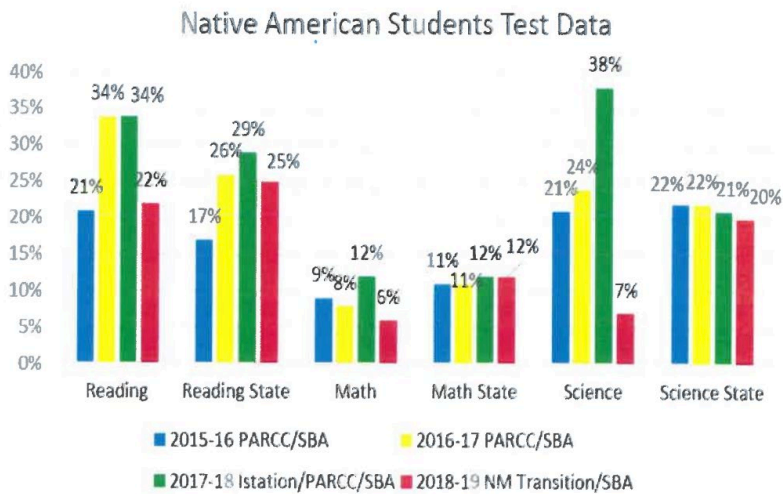
Given the low participation rates on statewide summative assessments, aggregated data from these assessments are not a reliable picture of academic achievement for New Mexico students. Given the low participation on the Measures of School Success and Achievement (MSSA) PED will not produce school or district reports. This includes assessments for science readiness (ASR) since no reports will be available to the district.

Methods.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, New Mexico PED would use standardized tested to measure how students do in math, science, reading and language arts.

Results.

The following graph provides data from school year 2015-2019 between EPS Native American students and other students within the state.



Conclusion.

Native American students of EPS and the state have many hurdles and challenges when it comes to testing. Testing changing all the time makes the data inconsistent and we have no scale of measure for our students. Native American students of EPS had hard times during COVID-19 and some of the data the tribes have comprised show how Native Students struggled. We will work closely with our Native students as they will be in person and give the teachers, parents, counselor, and most of all the students.

Action Plan.

- We will reach out to the Pueblos to see what kind of services we can collaborate on to ensure student success.
- With EPS going in person, we will work with 21st century program and explore creative options to ensure students get tutoring or other services.
- We will connect with different clubs in the schools to see if we can provide and peer tutoring system for all students. We will ask if high school students can help with tutoring middle and elementary students.
- We will work with NNMC and UNM-LA to see if they can provide any other services especially to high school students.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Objective.

The school safety objective is to ensure that students in New Mexico schools attend safe, secure, and peaceful schools.

Background.

New Mexico—as do other states in the rest of the nation—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 recurrence 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).”

During the 2020-2021 school year Española Public Schools implemented the following:

- Remote learning for all students Pre-K to 12. Each student was given a chromebook and logged in daily for instruction.
- Upon return to in-school learning schools will stagger arrival times to avoid mass crowds
- Provide adequate direction and procedural training to students and families

Covid Response:

- Due to COVID-19, safety protocols were addressed in the school districts tool kit. New Mexico Public Education (NMPED) along with state Department of Health (DOH) gave guidance which aligned with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.
- Due to vaccination guidelines schools sent individual safety plans to adhere to the toolkit.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction was provided remotely.
- Vaccinations were available for students 12-17.
- EPS schools reopened for in-person learning in April of 2021.

Methods.

1. School Climate Environment:

Since the district was entirely remote for the $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the school year, activity for school environment measurement is done remotely. We have minimum students on campus so environment is not as normal.

2. Student Infractions:

Due to COVID-19, majority of the school year was done remotely so there were hardly any student infractions online. Native American students only had 5 total infractions of the 60 reported by the school district.

Results.

See attached Report



Infraction Report
2020-2021.PDF

Conclusion.

With all school sites completing their reentry safety plans for their respective schools, it will be added to the district wide reentry plan. EPS and Indian Education will work with staff, parents, tribal leaders, tribal education directors, EPS Directors, and students on making sure safety protocols are followed.

Action Plan.

Espanola Public Schools will develop and get approved a Re-entry Plan for the full in person learning for school year 2021-2022. EPS will provide the following Logistics and procedures:

- EPS will inform staff and students of vaccination clinics and highly encourage them to get vaccinated.
- Will continue to practice social distancing with unvaccinated adults to maintain 6 feet from other staff and students and unvaccinated students to maintain 3 feet distance unless eating, drinking, playing instruments, singing, and shouting.
- Those adults that haven't been vaccinated or cannot provide proof will be screened often.
- EPS will utilize Google Suite inclusive of Google classroom and Google meet to support student learning.
- EPS will continue to work with NMPED and NMDOH to make any needed changes.
- With vaccinations becoming more available the work with each school to ensure students and staff have access to it.
- Each director from central office will work its staff to understand any changes to made to the toolkit.
- Keep the Governor's and local communities aware of all and any changes to the schools districts reopening plan.
- Assist Directors that will do reopening plan for the district and assist in any areas needed, traffic, PPE transportation to schools, etc.

GRADUATION RATES

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. EPS adopted the state of New Mexico Bilingual Seal which allows seniors that are proficient in their Native language to receive the seal on their diplomas.

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.

Data from our student information systems (Synergy) and (STARS) is used to review credits, credit recovery, courses, class schedules, attendance, and discipline.

Results.

Getting our students to graduate high school is always a priority and we start from the beginning. We make sure once they are in our system, we identify and give them the tools to succeed.

We had 17 Native American students start their senior year and very proud to announce all 17 graduated, a percentage of 100%.

We had 1 student enrolled in the Navajo Nation, 10 whom are enrolled in Ohkay Owingeh, 5 from the Pueblo of Santa Clara, and 1 student identified as other.

Conclusion.

The COVID-19 pandemic laid down many challenges for our school districts throughout the state and our local districts. We had to work really hard with our tribal community's education departments and families to make sure they're on the right path. We want every student to succeed and we had our challenges but we were able to be successful with a 100% graduation rate. With the school district going back to in-person learning we will closely monitor our students.

Action Plan.

We were very fortunate to have all of our seniors graduate but we still need to take proper steps for our future.

- We will continue to work with our local tribal communities to ensure our students are getting the support they need.

- We will offer options to our student such as AVID, Gear Up, UNM-LA, and other opportunities given to us from our local colleges and non-profit organizations.
- We will offer SAT prep, college and career readiness, and tutoring for juniors and seniors.
- Indian Education will meet with staff and counselors to ensure students are on the path to pass on to next grade and, with seniors, to graduate.

ATTENDANCE

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.

EPS uses the Synergy system to identify the 25% lowest students when it comes to addressing absences. We also intervene when students are failing classes through the same system. When addressing attendance students whom miss 6-9 consistent days are considered at risk, 10-15 are considered high risk and require an intervention, and anything over 15 days is considered very high risk require intensive interventions. We check attendance daily. 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 students' ideal educational settings.

Results.

District Attendance Improvement Targets by Subpopulation.

Enter the attendance improvement target for the district. For each subpopulation and grade level please enter an attendance improvement target.

Subpopulation Name	Current Year Total Enrollment Number	2018-2019 Chronic Absence Rate	2019-2020 Chronic Absence Rate	2020-2021 Current Chronic Absence Rate
District - All Students	3,496	%32.85	%35.68	%48.2
Female	1,777	%31.60	%35.03	%46.2
Male	1,719	%34.15	%36.34	%50.3
Caucasian	3,159	%32.35	%35.46	%48.5
Black or African American	23	%21.74	%50.00	%70.0
Asian	40	%7.41	%9.68	%8.5
American Indian/Alaskan Native	273	%43.70	%40.61	%53.5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	%0.00	%20.00	%100.0
Economically-Disadvantaged	3,493	%32.86	%35.68	%48.2
Students with Disabilities	455	%33.33	%34.27	%51.6
English Language Learners	683	%74.47	%32.09	%51.2
Hispanic	3,083	%32.77	%35.85	%48.5
Non-Hispanic	413	%33.41	%34.51	%46.2

Conclusion.

We faced many challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic especially when it came to attendance. Because of tribal communities being closed in person interventions were not possible and in some tribal communities it was difficult to access internet for google meets. We reached out to tribal education directors and social services division when needed for high risk students whom weren't logging into google classroom sessions. Towards the end of the school year most students were able to get access to internet either through their tribal education programs or through Indian Education with the school district. When the state was able to open schools to in person, Indian Education worked with the schools and tribes to see which students needed in person learning. Now that schools are going back to in person learning, EPS Indian Education will continue to work with tribal communities and school sites to ensure students are regularly attending. We will resume monthly meetings with tribal communities and their education divisions to inform them of students whom are not attending class. The department will continue to utilize the compulsory attendance law to help improve attendance rates and continue working with local agencies such as CYFD and tribal social services to assist us at times.

Action Plan.

With all EPS going in person, our number one priority is safety but we also want them to feel motivated to come to school. We will with these action plan items

- Create a positive school environment and culture throughout the school day
- Monitor grades and attendance to ensure they are on track
- Communicate with parents and tribal education directors if students are falling behind.
- Continue to meet monthly with IEC to update them on any attendance issues that have come up.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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.

EPS adheres to the Indian Policy and Procedures which has written to meet with tribal liaisons on a monthly basis. Each tribe has their tribal education director or designee meet virtually to update them on any items that need to be addressed

Results.

Title VII meetings that were held monthly for students, parents, tribal officials and EPS staff showed to be a challenge due to COVID-19. We posted events and information in the newspaper, through school flyers, and school emails for engagement.

Conclusion.

It was very difficult during the pandemic to meet with tribal liaisons and students. Most parents were working from home and some isolated without internet or access to resources. We reached out to local Emergency Operations Center (EOCS) teams to assist the district any way possible.

Action Plan.

- EPS will set up times to meet with tribal communities.
- We will also hold tribal consultation either in person or virtually depending on each tribes COVID-19 restrictions.
- We will continue to work with tribal communities to ensure students needs are adhered to and if additional support is needed.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TARGETING TRIBAL STUDENTS

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.

EPS offers Tewa Language classes at San Juan Elementary School and as an alternative language class at middle and high school level. Tewa is spoken by 6 northern New Mexico tribes and primarily the two main Pueblos that neighbor the district, Ohkay Owingeh and Santa Clara Pueblo. Curriculum is different at each level. Elementary level its basics such as word recognition, season, and sentence structure. At Middle and High School, it becomes more structured into conversational and more hands-on projects.

Results.

Students from Tewa speaking tribes are able to take the class. Each tribe has their own dialect of Tewa but Ohkay Owingeh is the primary instruction method. Each tribe has their own certification methods of Language instructors but teachers are fully licensed through the state (502). Seniors that are graduating are eligible for the State's bilingual seal but have to get tested and certified by the tribe they are enrolled in.

Conclusion.

The Tewa Language is a vital piece to our students and our school district. We face many challenges when it comes to it though especially finding instructors. Many of the instructors from our local tribal communities are retired and young language teachers are a rare find. We will continue to work with local colleges to see how we can encourage alternative licensure for language instructors.

Action Plan.

- Now that in-person is back, what happens next has to be recruitment and community outreach. We might have to look at either getting part time teachers to rotate at schools because of lack there of certified instructors in our communities.
- There many resources for language instruction from the UNM department of native studies and language engagement, so next steps, would be a needs assessment.
- Director will reach out to American Indian Science and Engineering Society to see of there are resources to either start a chapter or provide support for Native students.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

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.

Metho
See attached budgets
Expense Report FY21.

Conclusion.

In consultation with Tribal Leadership, Tribal Education Departments, and local communities. Espanola Public Schools will continue to monitor expenditures and align funds for Native students. We will work close with accounting staff to ensure compliance is met.

Action Plan.

- Will seek funds to set up more outdoor classrooms for schools. With COVID-19 still around we want to limit students indoors and exposure.
- We will seek the NMPED grant for school year 2021-2022 for supplies, training, and supplement of specialist salary.
- Will monitor upcoming legislative session to see how budgets will affect Indian Education.

CURRENT STATUS OF FEDERAL INDIAN EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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.

Espanola Public Schools Indian Policies and Procedures consist of the following:

- EPS will give tribal officials and parents of Native American students an opportunity to comment on whether Native children participate on an equal basis with non-Native culture in education programs and activities within the Local Education Agency (LEA)
- Assess the extent to which Native children participate on an equal basis with non-Native students served by the LEA.
- Modify, if necessary, its educational program as needed to ensure Native students have equal access to programs.
- Disseminate pertinent information relevant to applications, evaluations, program plans and information related to educational programs of the LEA in sufficient time to allow tribes and parents of Native children an opportunity to review and make comments.
- Gather information concerning Native views, including those regarding the frequency, location, and time of meetings.
- Consult and involve tribal officials and parents of Native families in the planning and development of LEA's educational programs.
- Modify IPPs as needed based upon results or data

Results.

Meetings are held monthly in accordance with the IPP

Conclusion.

EPS currently has Indian Policy and Procedures signed by the two neighboring tribal community's Governors. The goal for this year is to get it signed by the Eight Northern Pueblo Council Governors. We will look at making modifications due to COVID-19 and be sure to add in safety measures and pertaining to working with tribal communities and keeping them updated. A copy of the current IPP will be attached to this report.

Action Plan.

- EPS will continue consultations with Tribal Governments.
- We will ask for recommendations through a review session with the Indian Education Committee. Changes to the IPP will go to EPS school board for approval.
- Indian Education will continue to attend NMPED Government to Government meetings and will ask guidance for any items in regards to Native students.

*SCHOOL DISTRICT INITIATIVES TO DECREASE THE NUMBER
OF STUDENT DROPUTS AND INCREASE ATTENDANCE*

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.

Dropout rates are calculated for grades 7-12. A student will be considered a dropout if they were enrolled anytime during the previous year, is not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, and does not meet certain exclusionary conditions.

Results.

The creation of a strategic plan would be the next steps and some early intervention. EPS administration will work with tribal communities to address these issues.

Conclusion.

The common reasons for dropout include non-attendance, invalid transfers, or failure to enroll after summer break. Also, because of COVID-19 pandemic some couldn’t adapt to the online schooling and dropped out of school. The struggle we will face in the upcoming school years are to see how far the kids are behind and if passing some to the next grad might have not been the next steps. Native Americans face many issues as well within their own communities and homes. Because of the pandemic some tribal communities have seen a rise in domestic violence and substance/drug abuse within the homes. Some used school as their scapegoat but because of online learning some students couldn’t get out of their current situation.

Action Plan.

- We will collaborate with tribal communities in implementing academic and cultural awareness and strive to work closely with EPS student support services.
- We will provide professional development for cultural awareness and sensitivity for all district staff. Attendance Success Plan will be developed and implemented.
- EPS Indian Education will keep in close contact with Pueblo leadership and education directors about student concerns and celebrations.

PUBLIC SCHOOL USE OF VARIABLE SCHOOL CALENDARS

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.

A calendar committee was developed to work on the calendars. The committee is comprised of teachers, parents, administration, Indian Ed. Staff, and certified staff. The committee reviews and make changes as needed and review every component of the school year. Items such as holidays, administrative days, professional development, and cultural days from the various Pueblo communities.

Results.

The school district works with Tribal Governments to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students by allowing them to participate in traditional and cultural activities.

Conclusion.

The district gets a letter from the tribal community's Governor's office to excuse them from school days to participate in traditional and cultural activities.

Action Plan.

- The school district really respects local tribal governments wishes for students to participate.
- Constant communication is key especially with education directors to ensure kids don't fall behind with their school work.
- Indian Education will emphasize the history and knowledge of Native culture in the classroom and by hosting different events for students and staff.

*SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSULTATIONS WITH DISTRICT INDIAN
EDUCATION COMMITTEES, SCHOOL-SITE PARENT ADVISORY
COUNCILS AND TRIBAL, MUNICIPAL AND INDIAN
ORGANIZATIONS*

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.

As outlined in our Indian Policies and Procedures we conduct monthly meetings in regards with IEC and tribal Education directors. It was difficult during the pandemic to meet because of tribal leaders and education directors focused on cares act funding and their own tribal communities struggles.

Results.

Meetings went well and most tribes were very responsive to google meetings and returning back forms. Some tribes went to docu-sign so most documents were returned in a timely manner.

Conclusion.

EPS has and is working hard to develop rapport with tribal communities. Some Tribal communities lost staff due to the pandemic and some staff had to stay home with families as the pandemic forced online schooling.

Action Plan.

- It has been a challenge with this pandemic and tribes priorities have changed but our tribes were really responsive and made the effort to make sure kids were logging on to google classroom and completing work. I feel we can still strengthen the relationship with the tribes through by modifying the IPPs and meeting monthly meetings.
- We will establish Equity Council and involve the local tribal communities for input on school matters
- EPS Indian Education Director will work with IEC to ensure all and any information is disseminated.

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH AND EVALUATION MEASURES AND RESULTS FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULA FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS

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 the past, EPS utilized surveys for research purposes but due to COVID-19 pandemic, the survey on reached the students and never went out to the communities. The previous survey measured 5 components; belongingness, educational background, demographics, student support services, and open-ended questions about the courses offered.

Results.

As previously stated due to COVID-19 the survey couldn't make it out to the communities as most Pueblos were closed.

Conclusion.

If local tribal communities don't open up, we will work with Tribal Education Directors to see if the survey can be done online or have a google meet with community members if they have questions.

Action Plan.

- With students going back to in person learning, priority will be to try and do another needs assessment. Due to COVID-19, most of our students struggled in the classrooms and we know our students are behind a grade. Extra support for the students is going to be needed for 2021-2022.
- We will look at the data from previous years and see how we can provide services and see how we can support students.
- Will seek out additional resources to further expand options for Native American students.

Access to Native Language Programs

Objective.

In accordance with the Indian Education Act, it is imperative that Native languages and Bilingual programs are part of schools' development plan. Native languages are the foundation of culture and tradition for all Indigenous people.

Background.

The ability to access native language programs was added to the Rule of the Indian Education Act in 2019, and will become a part of the statewide IED TESR: 22-23A-5 (E2) provide assistance to school districts and New Mexico tribes in planning, development, implementation and evaluation of curricula in native language, culture and history designed for all students, including American Indian and Alaska Native students, as approved by Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos in New Mexico.

Methods.

Espanola Public Schools has 2 certified 520 teachers. 1 teaches at San Juan elementary with 20 students staggered throughout the day by grade and level of proficiency. The other teaches at Carlos Vigil Middle school with 14 enrolled students in the mornings, and at the high school for 2 periods with 27 enrolled students. High school classes are separated by Tewa 1 which is introductory and Tewa 2 which is intermediate to advanced levels.

Results.

In previous years, students have obtained the bilingual seal, but in 2020 we didn't have recipients. One student was eligible but tribes have their own certification processes of proficiency in Native languages. Instructors have different styles on how students test in Native Languages especially Tewa because to most Tewa tribes they don't have it written. Most tests are done orally and documented and approved by the instructor

Conclusion.

Proficiency always comes up when it comes to Native languages but that any Native language. The goal for Tewa and language is to be conversational over proficient. There are levels of proficiency when it comes to speaking and understanding a Native language and that depends on most tribes ways of measure. Elders are considered the most proficient in most Native languages but there are gaps that need to be bridged.

Action Plan.

- Indian Education has reached out to many resources to help with bridging the gaps of learning Native Languages.
- We have sought advice from local tribal communities but also local colleges and universities to see how these issues have been resolved with other tribes.
- We will continue to work with tribes on bringing in educational assistants to assist and possibly take over teaching classes for the school district.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion EPD Indian Education will continue collaborate with Pueblo's by continuing to:

- Review and evaluate current Tewa Language instruction and seek additional instructors
- Construct a list of Native consultants as presenters; teach students about tribal seals, do different activities from when they grew up
- Promote family learning and get them more involved
- Develop core team to help kids stay motivated in MS and HS
- Coordinate with GEAR Up program for college and career readiness
- Develop safe areas to travel for cultural awareness
- Develop and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion programs school wide.
- Provide trainings to staff and students on Historical and Intergenerational Trauma
- Provide training on other Indigenous culture

Recommendation for programs and initiatives for Native American Students

- Look at Tewa curriculum to see what can be added
- Explore the 6 Tewa speaking tribes to see if there's possible instructors
- Seek possible consultants that can-do further assessments, especially after COVID-19
- Have workshops for parents that want to learn Tewa
- Partner with local entities to assist with Behavior Health issues
- Start a chapter of American Indian Science and Engineers Society (AISES)

Recommendations for Staff Professional Development

- Multiculturalism and diversity training
- National Indian Education Association annual conference
- Curriculum training for Tewa teachers through University of New Mexico
- Financial Literacy Training
- Special Education Training
- Social Emotional Learning
- Framework training for Multi-Layered Systems of Support