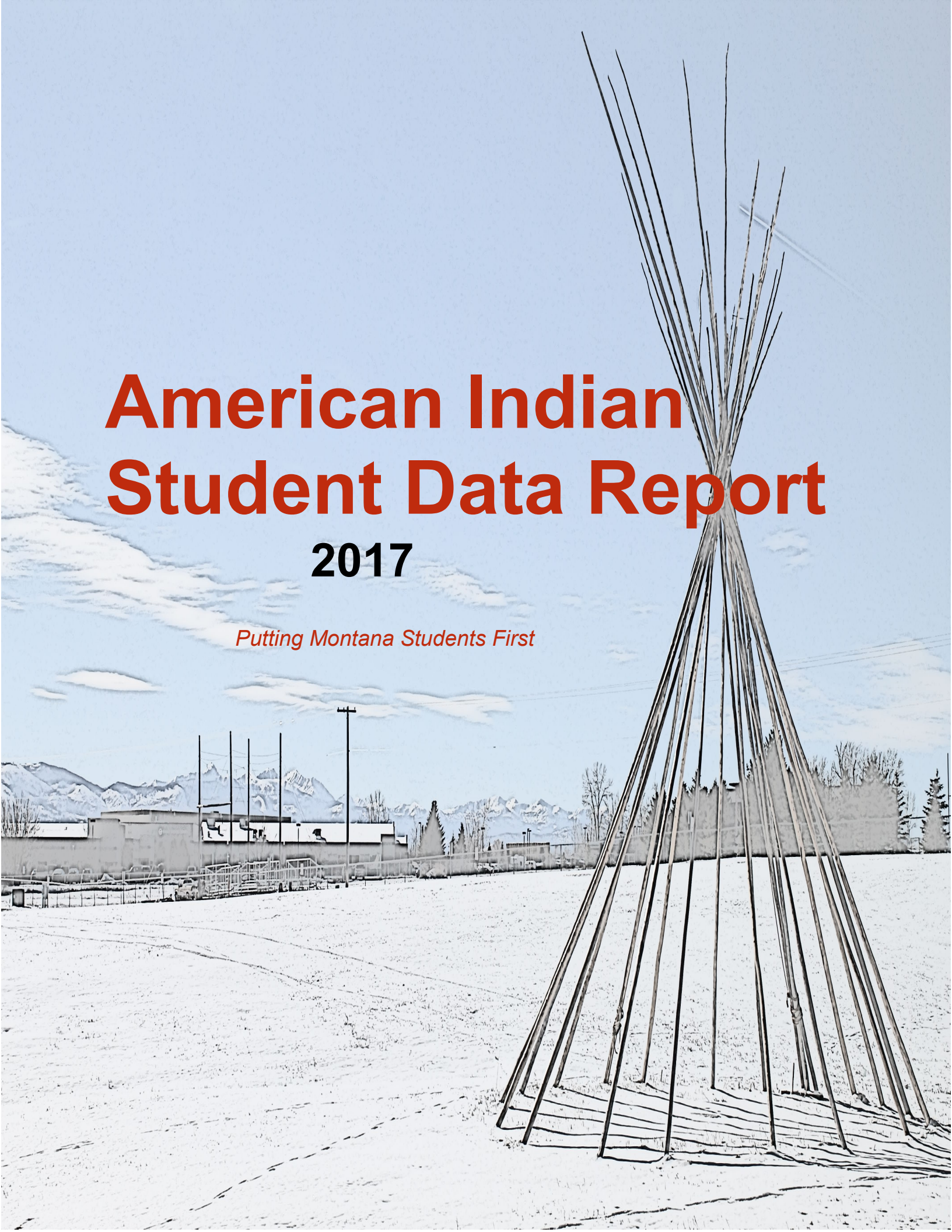
American Indian Student Data Report

2017

Putting Montana Students First



Montana

American Indian Data Report
Fall 2017

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American Indian Student Achievement

Students and the work of schools are filled with stories of struggle and resilience. Education is not simply the pushing of buttons or pulling levers to manufacture students that graduate college and career ready. It is about the people that employ strategies to support students. This data report is presented as only part of the story. Information contained within are not endpoints or conclusions, but should lead to questions, ideas, and discussions to find ways to improve educational outcomes for all students. It is important to apply thoughtful supports and interventions while students are in our schools, surrounded with caring teachers, staff, and communities, so that after they walk across the stages at graduation, they have the opportunity to enroll in colleges and have fulfilling careers to the betterment of the state of Montana. As Sitting Bull said in 1877, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."

Sarah Pierce, American Indian Student Achievement Specialist

2007 MCA 20-9-330

In 2007, the Montana State Legislature passed Montana Code Annotated 20-9-330, which currently appropriates $200.10 per American Indian child, totaling over $3 million dollars per year, to provide funding to school districts for the purpose of closing the educational achievement gap that exists between American Indian students and non-Indian students. According to MCA 20-9-330 (2) (a), funds were to be determined by "…using the number of American Indian students enrolled in the district based on the count of regularly enrolled students on the first Monday in October of the prior school year as reported to the Office of Public Instruction" and deposited into the district's general fund.

This report is provided to track the American Indian achievement gap on the Montana American Indian student population with the most up to date information and data at the time of publishing. More information can be found on the Indian Education Web site at Montana Office of Public Instruction Indian Education.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON THE RACE/ETHNICITY DATA IN THE AMERICAN INDIAN ACHIEVEMENT GAP REPORT:

In the 2009-2010 school year the OPI began collecting and reporting the race and ethnicity of students in Montana in a different way. This change matched alterations to the race/ethnicity questions in the 2010 U.S. Census. The change required all students to be identified using a two-part race/ethnicity question. The federal government established the two-part question to recognize Hispanic ethnicity and race as two separate and distinct concepts. Additionally, the change enabled the reporting of multiple races (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White). Students who identify with more than one race/ethnicity are reported in a distinct "Multi-Racial" population. For consistency and ease of comparison, the OPI follows this two-part race/ethnicity and multi-racial population methodology for all state and federally required reports EXCEPT for the American Indian Achievement Gap Report.

The underlying legislation authorizing the American Indian Achievement Gap Report "American Indian Achievement Gap Payment 20-9-330, MCA" is intended to support ALL American Indian students in Montana, including those that may identify with more than one race/ethnicity. Therefore students who otherwise are identified as "multi-racial" in other published data and reports are identified and accounted for as American Indian Students in this report. Please use caution when comparing or referencing data published in the American Indian Achievement Gap Report to other published data and reports.

Arlee educator Shawn Orr presents ways to combine technology and cultural lessons for student engagement and content connections.

I know I walk in and out of several words each day. ~ Joy Harjo

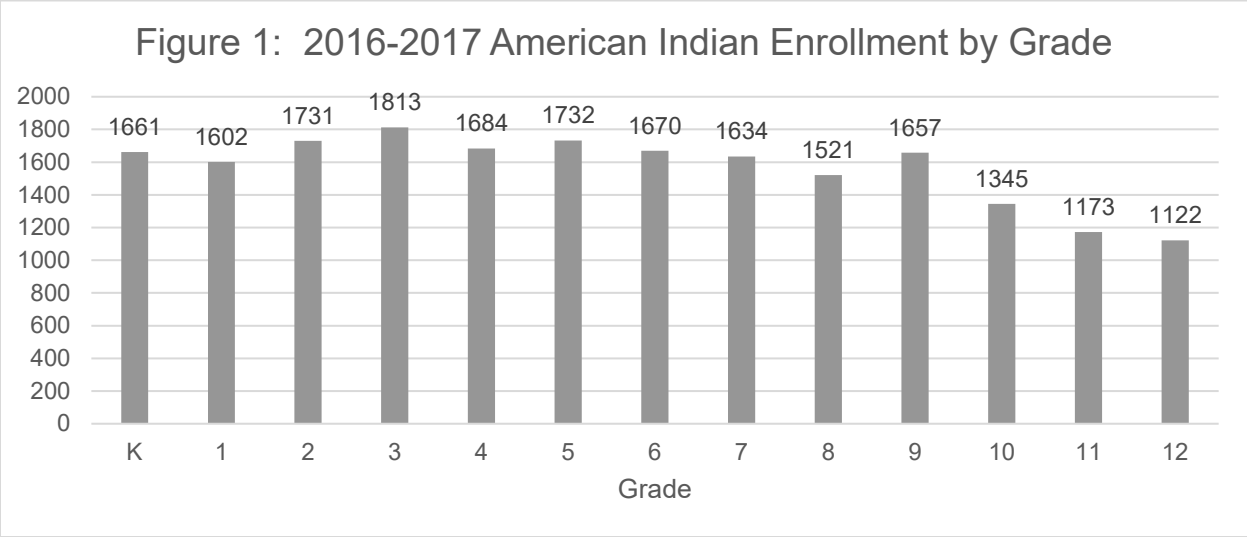
Student Population Data

There is often a misconception that American Indian students are only attending school on reservations or schools governed by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). It is a truth, both nationally and in Montana, that most American Indian students are in rural and urban schools supported through the public school system.

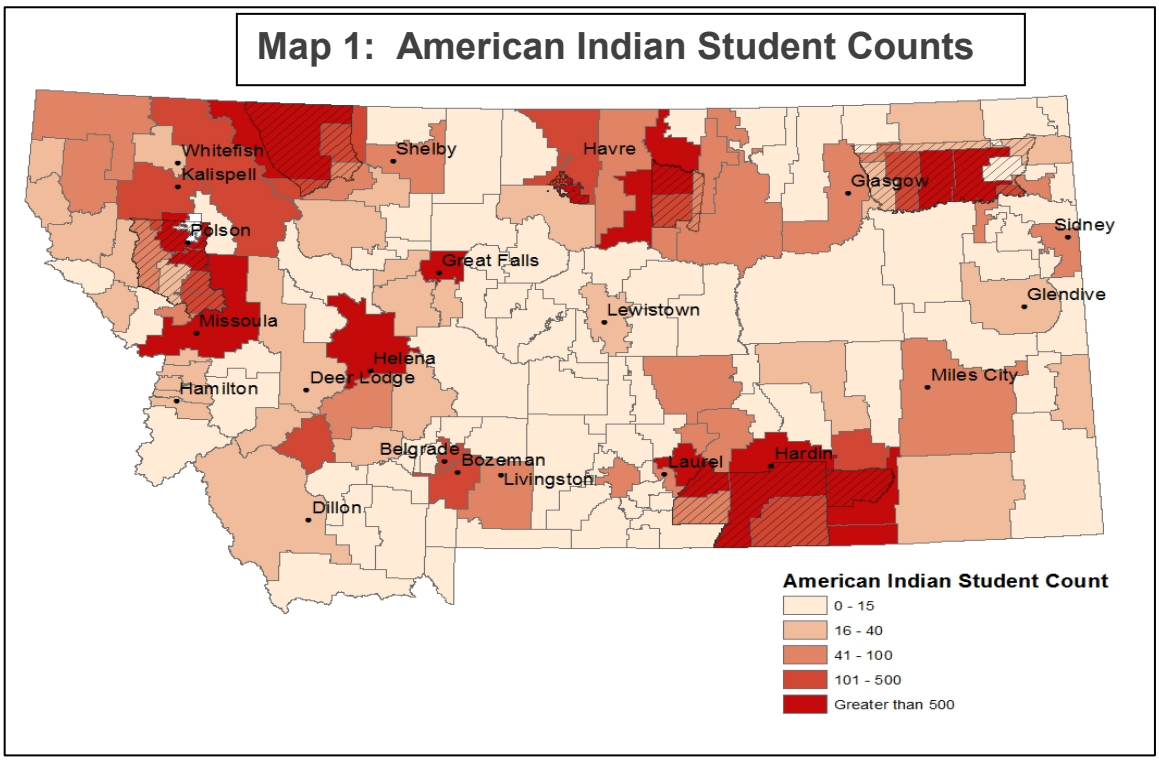
- 6.6% of Montana's total population is American Indian (2015 Census Estimate), made up mostly of the 12 tribal nations in Montana: Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, and Sioux.
- For the 2016-2017 school year there were 20,532, or 14% of the population, American Indian/Alaska Native students in Montana that self-report American Indian/Alaska Native as at least one of their races. The number of American Indian students in Montana is increasing every year.
    - 44.7% (9,175) of American Indian students attend a school physically located within a reservation with 55.3% (11,357) located outside a reservation boundary.
- Of 818 public schools in Montana:
    - 61 public schools report 75 – 100% American Indian students within their school population.
    - 18 public schools report 50 – 74% American Indian students within their school population.
    - 36 public schools report 25 – 49% American Indian students within their school population.

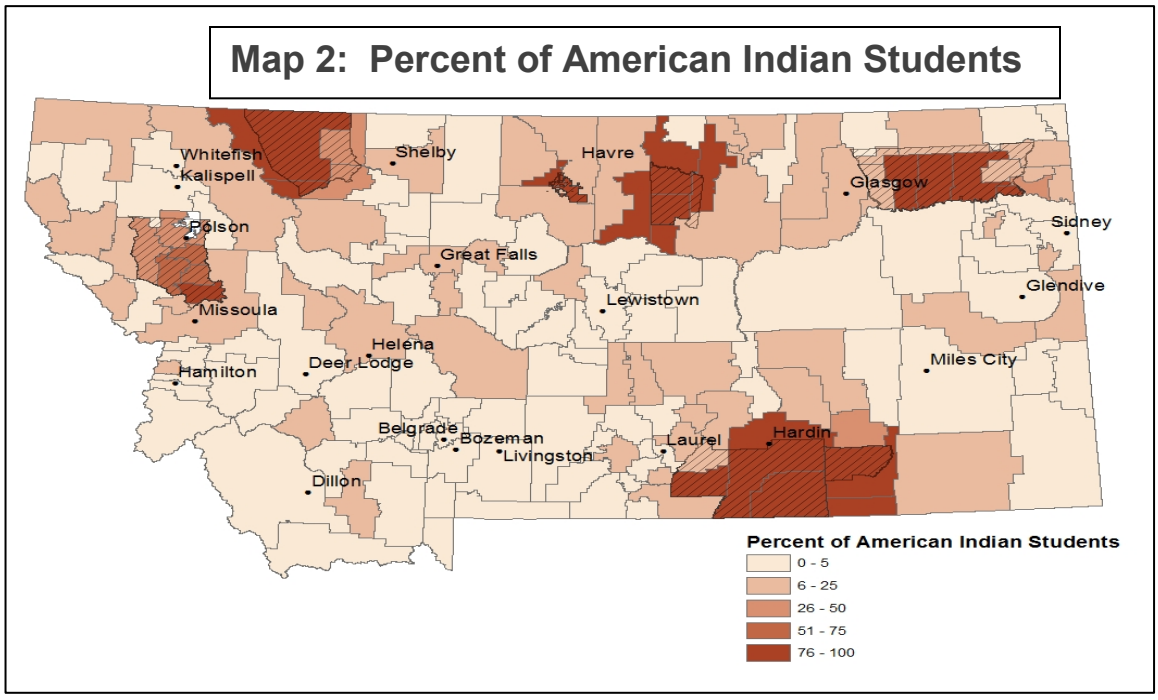
In this report, figures are gathered for all American Indian students across the state unless noted as "On Reservation" meaning districts have schools that are located within the bounds of designated reservations lands or "Urban" if the schools are located in Kalispell, Butte, Bozeman, Havre, Billings, Missoula, Helena, and Great Falls.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of American Indian student enrollment numbers for Montana public schools by grade.



The following maps show the distribution of American Indian students in public schools across Montana by high school districts. You will see in the maps that American Indian students are spread throughout Montana, clustered not only around reservations, but also urban centers and areas of rapid economic growth. The 12 Federally recognized tribes in Montana are located on seven reservations, Blackfeet, Crow, Flathead, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Northern Cheyenne, and Rocky Boy. Reservation lands can





cross multiple cities and counties within Montana, and are indicated on the map by areas shaded with diagonal lines. It's important to note the differences between the counts as compared to the percentage, as some urban schools may have more American Indian students enrolled than compared to our smaller communities on or near reservation boundaries. Map 1 shows the total number of American Indian students and Map 2 shows the percent of all students in that district that are American Indian.

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National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)

NAEP was established by Congress in 1969 to measure educational progress in America, and it is an indicator of what our nation's students know and can do in certain subject areas. NAEP asks the same questions and is administered in the same way in every state, making it a reliable and valid measure for state-to-state comparisons. Every two years, randomly selected schools across the nation are given the NAEP assessment. It is not given to every student in the selected schools, but uses a small sampling to get an understanding to compare states on an equal assessment. Since this assessment was designed differently and for the purpose of comparing states, not students, scores and results cannot be compared to other assessments administered in Montana, such as the Smarter Balanced, Science CRT, or ACT tests. The most recent NAEP test was given during the 2016-2017 school year to 4th grade and 8th grade students in mathematics and reading, but those results are not yet available. This report is based on the 2014-2015 school year results. The NAEP scores are on a scale of 0 – 500 with 500 being the highest score. Scores across grades or across subjects can't be compared to each other because they are not scaled the same; i.e.; a 4th grade scale score can't be compared to an 8th grade scale score. Any statistically significant changes discussed in the NAEP report are done at the $\alpha = .05$ level.

NAEP assessments, given every two years, are meant to compare states, not students or compare to other assessments. During the 2015 testing administration, a change to academic standards had schools readjusting

Mike Jetty presents about Indian Education for All and ways to include information by and about American Indians in all content areas; a proven strategy to improve academic achievement.

4th Grade

Figure 2 shows the 4th grade reading scores of American Indian students for the past five testing cycles. There are 13 states with a significant enough American Indian population in 4th grade reading that sample sizes and test results are large enough to report. Of those states, Montana ranked fifth in 4th grade reading performance. While there is a decrease in both the reading and math scores, there are a number of factors to consider, such as the timing of the new state standards and introduction to the SBAC assessment.

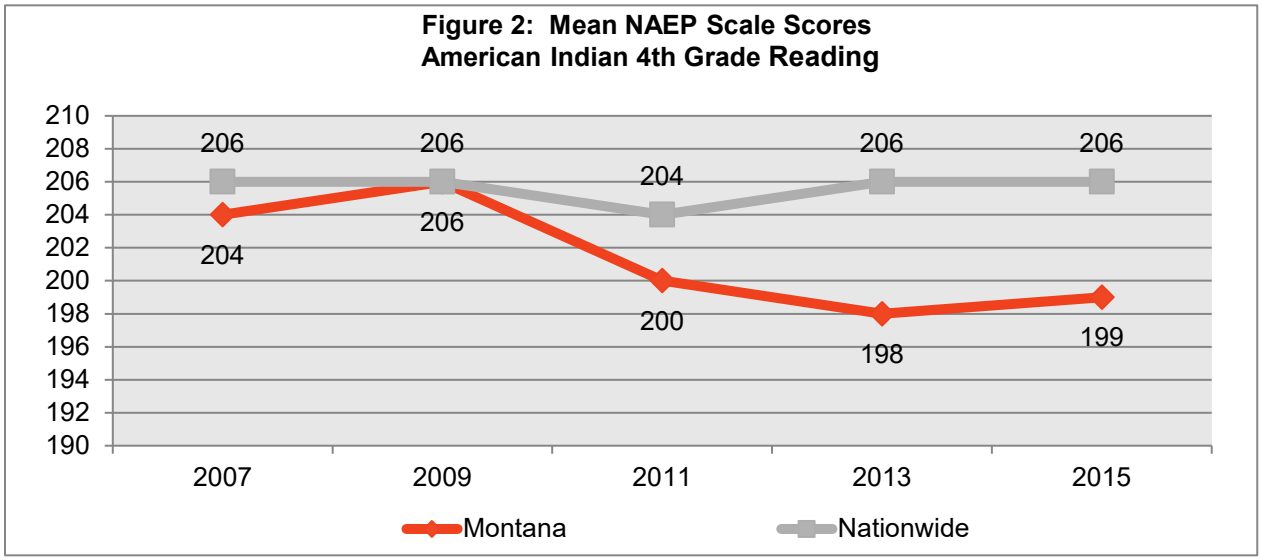
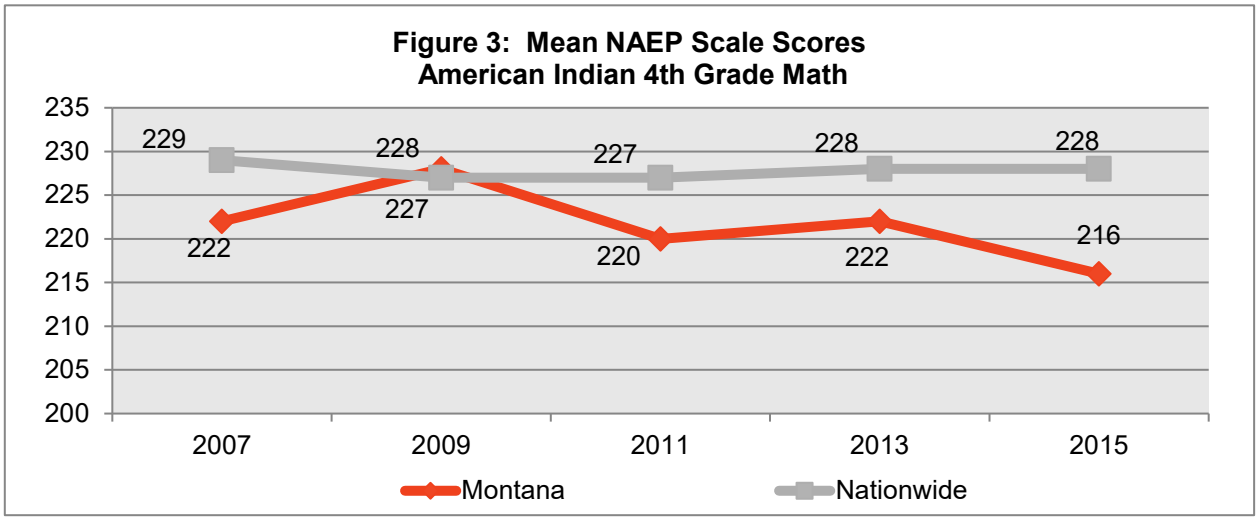
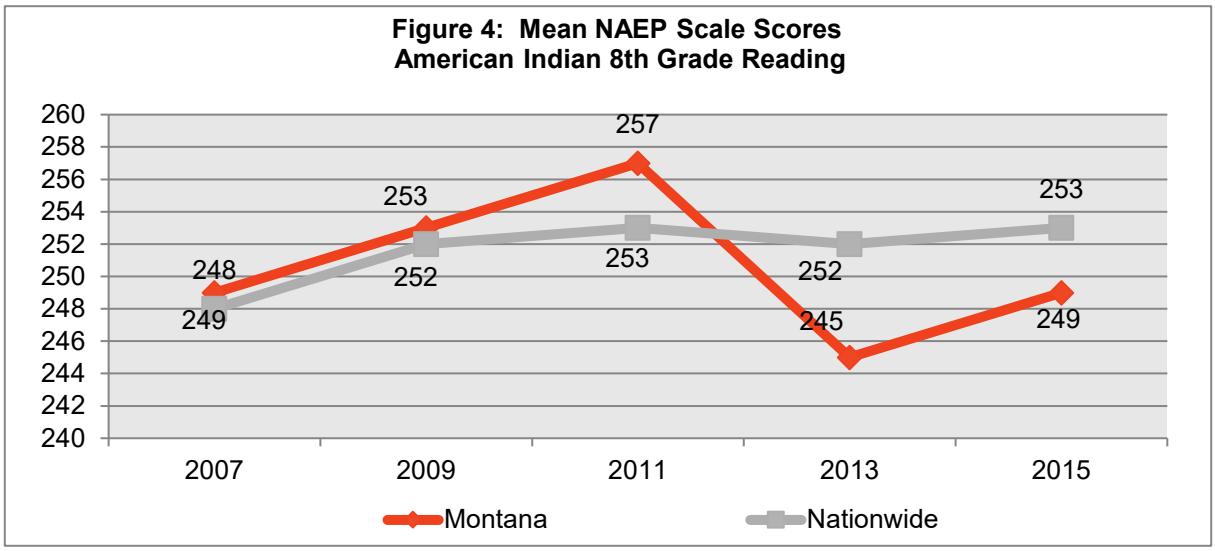


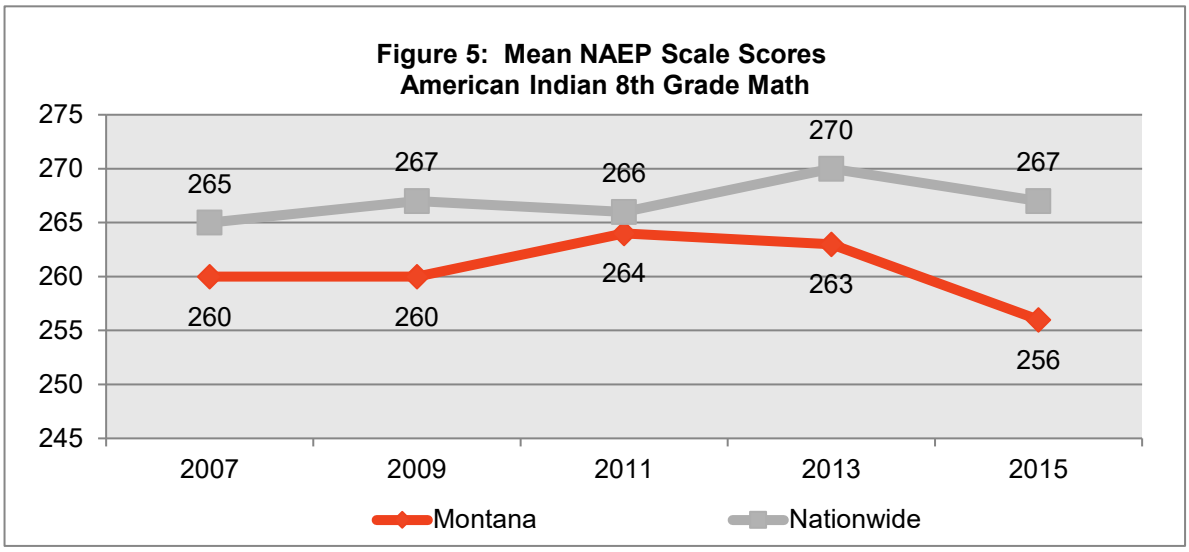
Figure 3 displays the 4th grade mathematics scores for American Indian students. Fourth grade math scores declined by six points between 2013 and 2015. This decline is statistically significant, and the difference between the national mean score and Montana mean score is also statistically significant for 2015. This is especially concerning since even as recent as 2009 Montana scored above the National mean score in 4th grade math. Of the 12 states that have a significant enough population to report American Indian test scores, Montana tied for last with two other states in performance.



8th Grade

Scores for 8th grade reading increased while scores for 8th grade mathematics decreased in 2015. Figures 4 shows the mean scale scores for 8th grade reading for the past five testing cycles. The increase in reading scores is not statistically significant from the 2013 results. The 2015 results for Montana are also not statistically significant from the nationwide mean. Of the 12 states that tested enough American Indian students to report test scores, Montana was sixth for 8th grade reading. In Figure 5, the mean scale scores for 8th grade math are displayed for both Montana and nationwide. Eighth grade math scores did experience a large decrease (7 points) in the mean scale score. The decrease in mean scale score in 2013 of 263 to 256 in 2015 is not statistically significant. However, the difference between the nationwide mean and the Montana mean for 2015 is statistically significant. Of the 13 states that tested enough American Indian students to report test scores in 8th grade mathematics, Montana was 11th in performance





Every Student Succeeds Act and Achievement Data

In 2015 the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), P.L. 114-95, allowed states to create their consolidated state plan to address requirements and intentions of federal funding to support schools. As of the publication of this data report, the draft plan has been sent to the U.S. Department of Education, and is currently awaiting feedback on all elements. This report, when referencing the ESSA plan, is referring to the draft document submitted on September 14, 2017. As part of the plan, the state included elements for Academic Achievement and Academic Growth. Montana uses three assessments for these measures; the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC), the American College Testing assessment (ACT), and the Science Criterion Referenced Test (Science CRT).

Smarter Balanced

The SBAC assessment was created through a consortium of states to have a common assessment to measure students equally across multiple state lines. The SBAC is administered once a year to students in grades 3-8 for reading and math. There is a performance task as well as a computer-adaptive portion to measure what students know and can do as part of the Montana Content Standards. The first school year in which the SBAC results could be used as part of a reliable set of data for achievement determinations was 2015-2016.

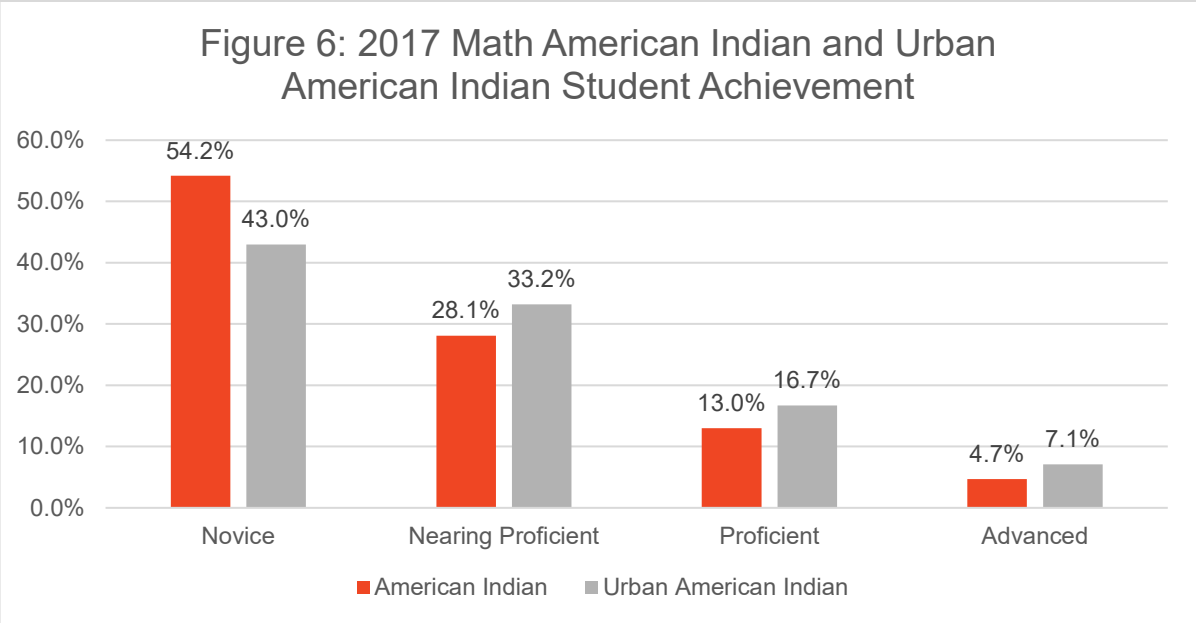
American Indians in urban areas are outscoring the state's American Indian population as a whole on the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

More American Indian students are scoring proficient and advanced in our larger urban districts, which include Kalispell, Butte, Bozeman, Havre, Billings, Missoula, Helena, and Great Falls.

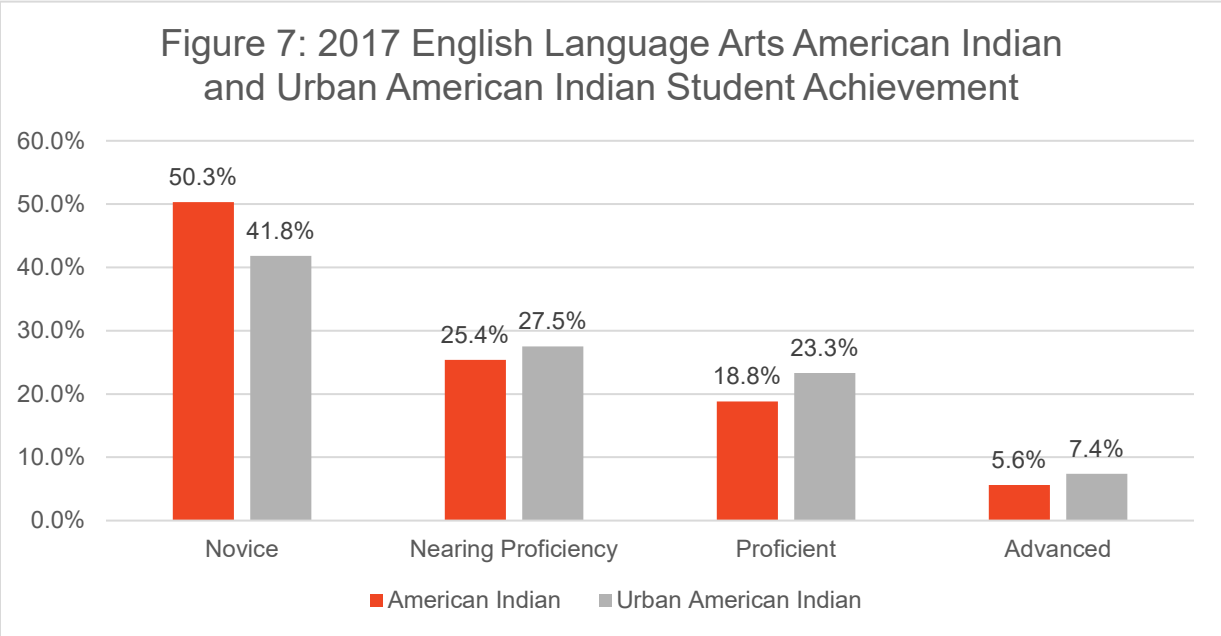
The SBAC was given to 66,318 Montana students during the 2016-2017 school year. The SBAC has four proficiency levels: Novice, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced. Scale scores for the Smarter Balanced Assessment range from 2000 to 3000, with each grade having a slightly different range. Because of this, the scale scores can't be compared between grades and only proficiency levels will be discussed for this report.

About half of the American Indian students are scoring at the Novice level in both reading and math but American Indian students in urban areas (Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell) are scoring greater than the group as a whole. That means the 55.3% of American Indians in urban areas are scoring higher than those located in our small and rural schools. Figure 6 compares the percent of students in proficiency levels of those in urban schools and American Indians across the state on the SBAC math. Twenty-three and eight/tenth percent of American Indian students are scoring proficient or greater in our larger urban areas, as compared to 17.7%

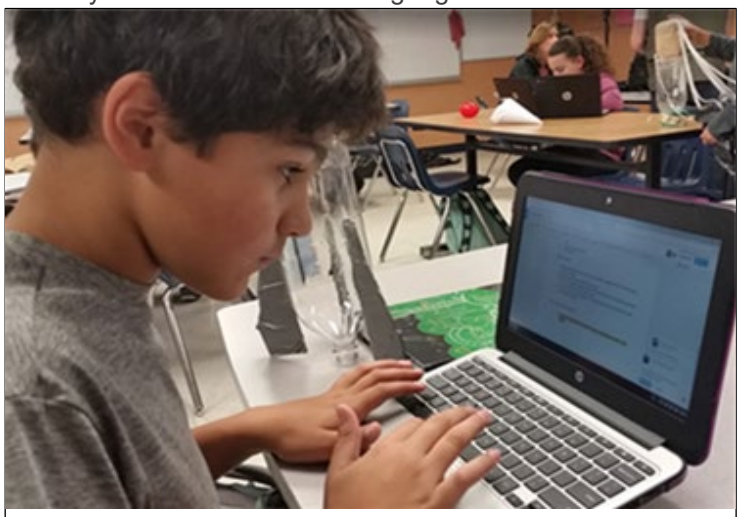
of the American Indian student population as a whole, which includes the higher scoring Urban American Indians.



The data shows similarities in English Language Arts for students in urban areas also. Figure 7 shows the distribution of achievement levels for all American Indian students and students in urban centers. Students in the urban areas are bringing up the overall average of American Indian students across the state. There are 30.7% of American Indian students in urban areas scoring proficient or advanced, while the overall state percentage of American Indians is 24.4%.

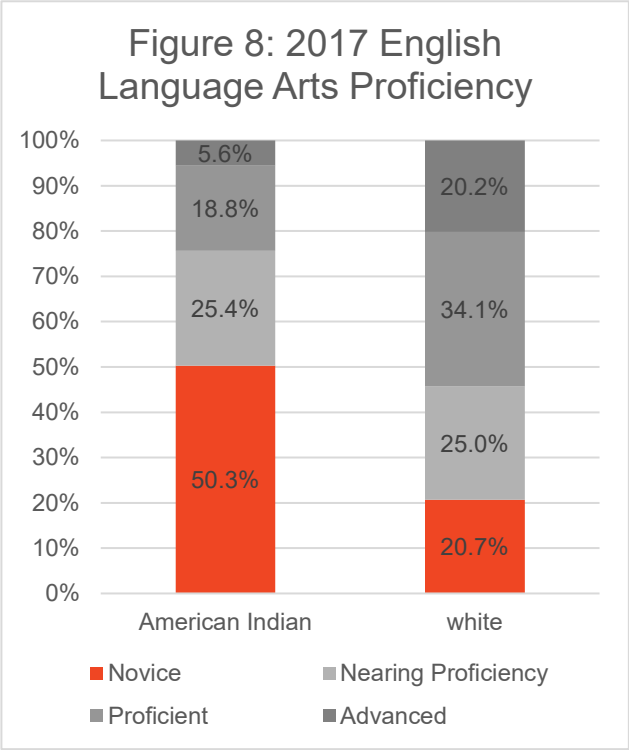


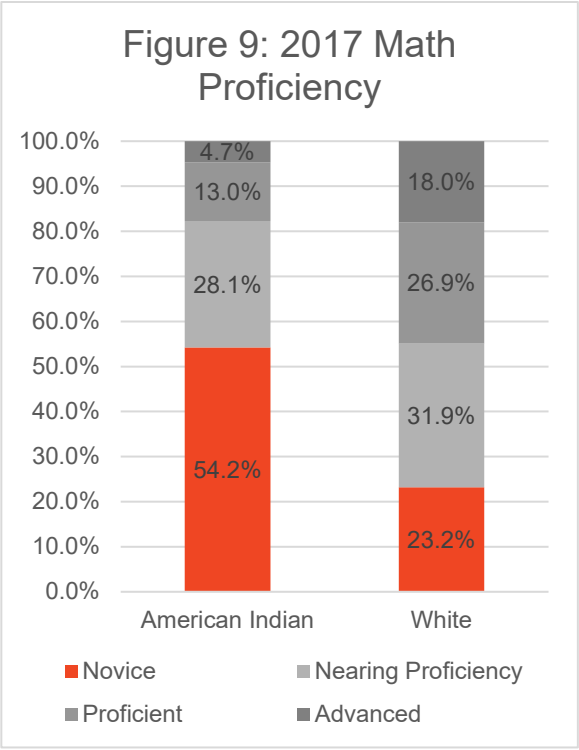
While the American Indian students in urban areas are outpacing the general American Indian population, White students are scoring at greater proficient rates overall. In figure 8, the graph displays the percentage of students scoring in the four proficiency areas for the SBAC Language Arts assessments out of all the students tested. While both groups have about the same percentage of students scoring at the Near Proficiency level, 54.3% of White students are scoring at or above Proficient, compared to 50.3% of Native American students scoring at the Novice level. While there is not yet enough information to establish trends over time between the two groups, it is noted that American Indians scoring at or above proficient in 2016 was 23.7% and in 2017, 24.4%, while in the same time frame White students scored 55.2% (2016), and 54.3% (2017).



Students in St. Ignatius use Google Docs on Chromebooks to collaboratively engineer soda bottle rocket designs.

The SBAC math portion of the assessment shown in figure 9, also highlights the gap between American Indian students and White students. Fifty- five and one-tenth percent of White students are scoring in the Novice and Nearing Proficient, while 54.2% of American Indians are scoring solely in the Novice range. Less than half (44.9%) of White students are scoring at or above proficient, while 17.7% of American Indian students are scoring in the same ranges. Although, like in English Language Arts, there is not yet





enough data to report on trends based on the SBAC assessments, in 2016, American Indians scoring at or above proficient was 17.5% and increased to 17.7% in 2017, while White students at or above proficient were at 46% in 2016 and fell to 44.9% in 2017.

Each reservation has a different number of schools, student population, student to teacher ratio, and other factors that could contribute to the differences in scores. Chart 1 shows the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency in the SBAC English Language Arts and Math for the 2016-2017 test administration. The number in parenthesis is the number of students that completed the test for a score. The differnces in the number of tests between English Language Arts and Math is due to the differences in the number of students actually completing the assessments during the individual school's testing window. Students may have moved to different schools or missed the testing administration or scheduled make up days. The lower the amount of students taking the assessment also provides caution in intepreting the percentage of proficiency, as smaller numbers of students create greater fluctuations in percentages. In addtion to the number of students taking the assessment, there are wide variables in which schools provide services and opportunities to students. Each reservation has a variation in the number of schools, number of educators and courses available, as well as local funding to support student achievement. Flathead has nine school systems serving students, while Fort Peck has 12 systems, and Northern Cheyenne has three. Some of the schools provide Pre-Kindergarten and other early childhood supports like Head Start and Early Head Start in the schools, so students can be academically and socially prepared for school, while other schools may provide early childhood supports to those identified with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) from Childfind events and Pediatrician referrals. Administration and educator turnover may also contribute to the lower proficieny rates in some areas.

This chart shows that Flathead and Fort Belknap have over a quarter of their students performing at proficient rates in reading and students on the Fort Belknap reservation are performing at proficient rates higher than other reservation areas.

Chart 1: Percent of American Indians scoring Proficient or Advanced on 2016-2017 Smarter Balanced Test

	Blackfeet	Crow	Flathead	Fort Belknap	Fort Peck	Northern Cheyenne	Rocky Boy
English Language Arts	12.2% (1021)	12.5% (807)	26.7% (1060)	26.3% (396)	12.2% (995)	3.1% (293)	21.9% (411)
Math	8.2% (1110)	6.6% (1014)	18.6% (1113)	35.0% (397)	6.2% (1019)	1.7% (290)	14.3% (419)

ESSA mandates that schools with a significant American Indian Student pouplation receiving Title I, Part A funding, must consult with tribes in a way that is timely and meaningful. The majority of tribes in Montana have a designated Tribal Education Department director, but others have individuals holding multiple roles and various responsibilities that may take time away from school-based activities, or

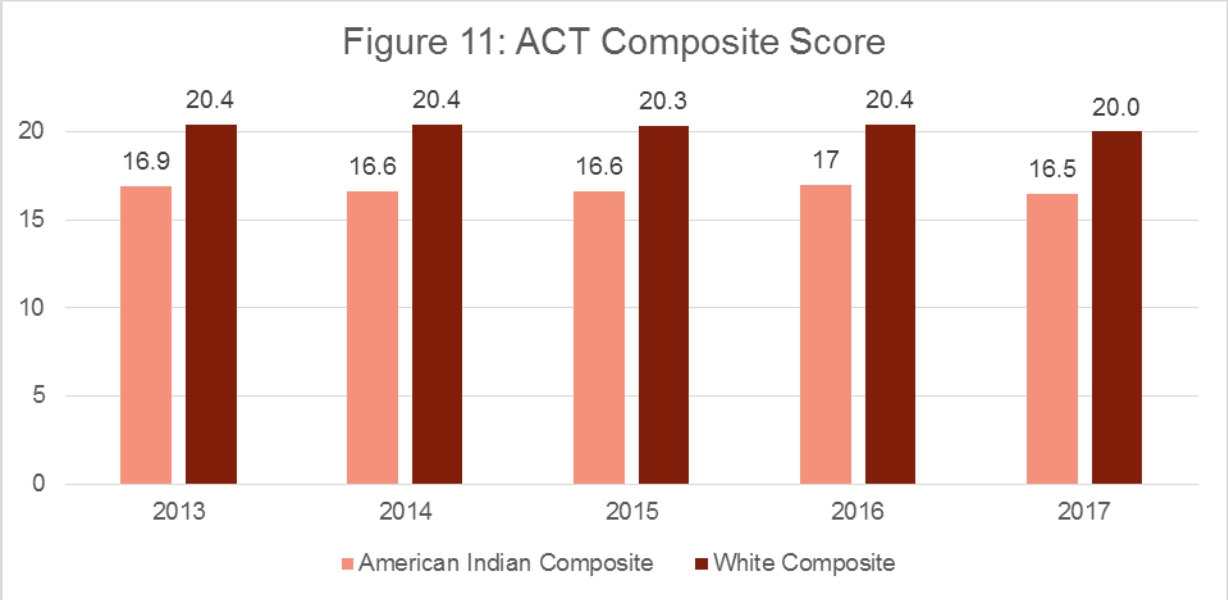
personnel resources that are spread over a large distance or multiple schools. Using this chart could help leaders in various capacities make decisions for support students and schools in a targeted manner.

ACT

Chart 2: 2017 100% State Participation Rate and Average Composite Scores	
State	**Average Composite Score**
Alabama	19.2
Arkansas	19.4
Colorado	20.8
Kentucky	20
Louisiana	19.4
Minnesota	21.5
Mississippi	18.6
Missouri	20.4
Montana	20.3
Nevada	17.8
North Carolina	19.1
Oklahoma	19.4
South Carolina	18.7
Tennessee	19.8
Utah	20.3
Wisconsin	20.5
Wyoming	20.2

The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in Mathematics, Reading, English, Writing, and Science. Montana students are given the opportunity to take the ACT test during their 11th grade year at no cost due to grant money provided by the Montana GEAR UP Program. Montana is one of only 13 states that has all students take the assessment, not just those who are college bound. Chart 2 provides information from the National ACT center in a report called The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2017. This chart shows states that test 100 percent of their graduates and the Average Composite Score of the students. North Dakota tested 98% of their graduates with an average composite score of 20.3. There are only four states which score higher on the average composite score as compared to Montana students. Many 12th grade students also take the test a second time for their college admissions requirements. More information on ACT data can be found at www.act.org/content/act/en/research.html. The test results discussed in this report are from the 11th grade students. In the 2016-2017 year, 9,322 tests were taken with an average composite score of 19.7. Of those tests, 965 were taken by American Indians, which was 10.4% of the state total with an average composite score of 16.5. The ACT defines college readiness as a composite score of 21 or greater. That readiness score was determined by ACT for students to have at least a 50% chance of getting a B or higher in the corresponding college courses. Keep in mind these test scores are for only 11th grade students, and the college readiness score is from their 12th grade ACT score. Figure 11 shows the mean scores for 11th grade test takers during the 2016-2017 school year. It can be seen in figure 11, that American Indians scores are lower in all domains with the biggest difference in English (Writing scores were not available at the time of this publication) . All domains have decreased just slightly for both White students and American Indian students from the 2015-2016 school year.

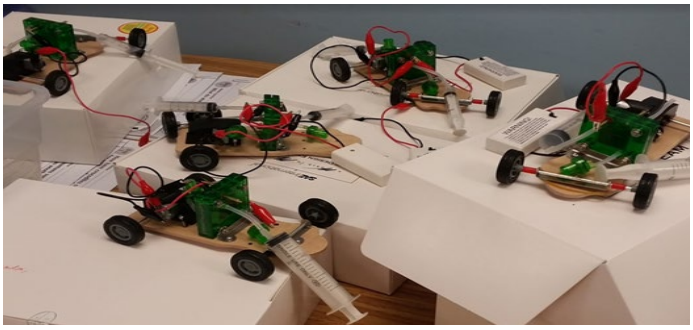
In Figure 11, you will see the trend lines of ACT composite scores for the previous five years. Both White and American Indian students are scoring below the 22 ACT college readiness score, but the gap is greater for American Indian students. Keep in mind that Montana is one of 13 states that administers the ACT as an opportunity for all students.



In a report from ACT, in 2017 22% of Montana graduates met all four ACT college Readiness Benchmarks, 2% of American Indians met the same goal. In 2017, 548 American Indian graduates took the ACT, which is up from 411 in 2016 and 363 in 2013.

Science CRT

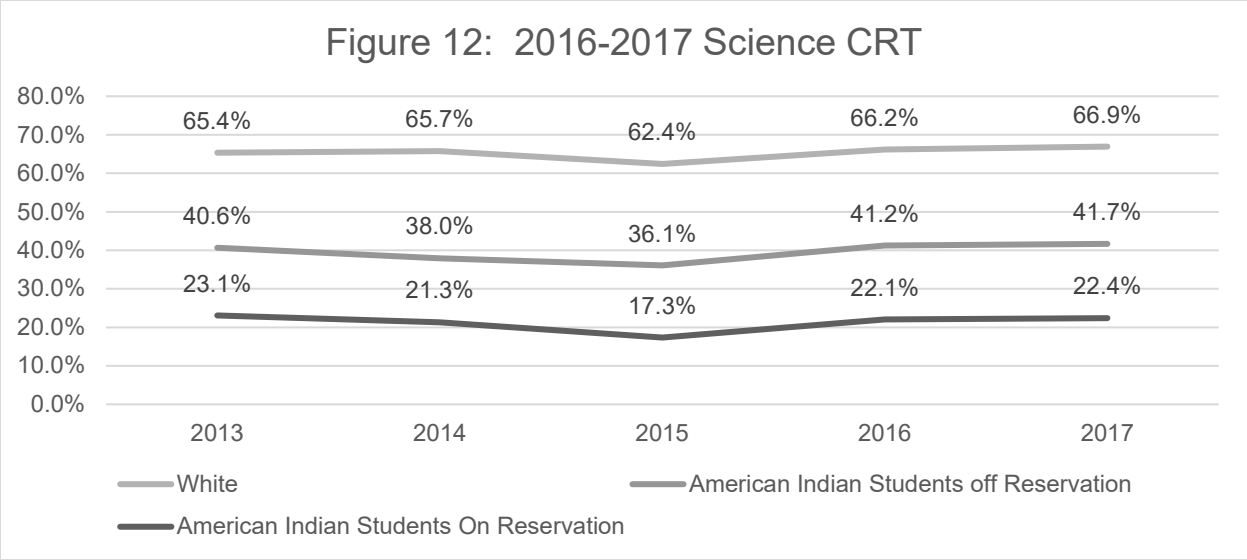
The Science CRT is administered once a school year for grades 4, 8, and 10. The Montana draft ESSA plan will use the Science CRT proficiency data towards accountability points for K-8 school systems as part of a STEM indicator. The Science CRT is a criterion referenced test, meaning it measures students on the expected grade level standards. Students are measured on their science content knowledge, not to other students. The Science CRT has four proficiency levels: Novice, Nearing Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced.



Cars designed by Plenty Coups 21st Century students and shared with Wyola Students

There is still a large gap between American Indian students and White students scoring at or above proficient. As Figure 12 shows, American Indian students who are in schools not located on reservations are scoring (41.7%) above American Indian students going to schools located on reservations (22.4%). Comparitavely, 62.7 % of White students going to the same schools on

reservations are scoring at or above proficient. Across the state 33.2% of American Indian students and 66.9% of White students are scoring at or above proficient.



Special Populations within American Indian Students

It is important to note that with Every Student Succeeds Acts, schools are required to act on data for sub-group populations including Socio-economic status, Race, English Language Learner, and Special Education. In addition to improvement in school-wide results, schools must also show improvement within the sub-groups.

Academic English Language Learner Progress

English Learner (EL) students in Montana are generally students who have impact from a language other than English in their environment, usually at home. During the 2016-2017 school year there were 2,918 EL students enrolled in Montana. Of those, 2,030 or 69.6% of were American Indian. The majority of Montana's EL students are identified as American Indian yet may speak only English at home. This is not an attempt to provide an English-only instructional environment, as one of the best practices for English Language Learners to develop academic language is to develop their bilingual skills. It is important for all students to develop the academic skills of language in reading, writing, speaking, and listening across all content areas, so they are successful in their future endeavors. All students are given a home language survey and additionally, some students are identified through classroom observations and the W-APT screening assessment.

All EL students must have access to grade-level curricula so they can meet promotion and graduation requirements. Students also have the opportunity to participate in all programs including Advanced Placement, Career and Technical Education courses, clubs, honor societies, and athletic programs.

Montana is one of 39 states that belong to the WIDA consortium. This consortium develops standards, practices, resources, guides and assessments including the W-APT language screener and the annual ACCESS 2.0 test given to students. There are resources in which to engage families and train educators in test administration. To learn more about the standards, instructional practices and assessments, please visit the WIDA Web site at www.wida.us.

Montana observes the following federal definition of Limited English Proficiency as noted in Chart 3. Additional resources for supports and guidance for English Learners may be found on the OPI Title III Web site at : http://opi.mt.gov/Families-Students/Family-Student-Support/English-Language-Learners

Chart 3: English Learner Definition

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">1. who is between the ages of 3 and 21</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">2. who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school;</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">AND</td><td>3. (i.) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; -OR-</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. (ii) (ii.) (I.) who is an American Indian or Alaska Native, or a native of the outlying areas; and (II.) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; -OR-</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. (iii.) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant;</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">AND 4. whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual –</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">(i.) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments –OR-</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">(ii.) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; –OR-</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">(iii.) the opportunity to participate fully in our society [Title IX, Sec. 901 (25)]</td></tr>
</table>

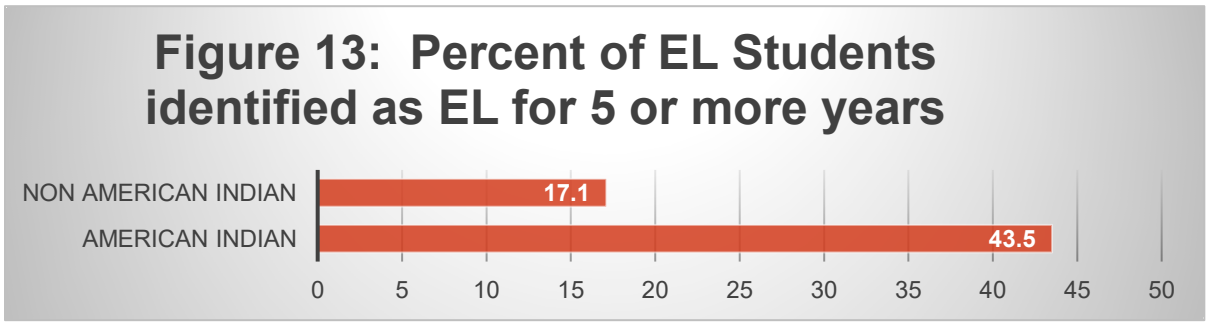
All EL students in Montana are required to take the ACCESS 2.0 test annually to measure Academic English Proficiency. There are four domains on the Access test: Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Literacy; and it measures the domains across five language proficiency standards: Social and

Instructional language, the Language of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students score on a scale of 1 (Entering) to 6 (Reaching). Students must test in all four domains. Students scoring 4.0 or greater in Literacy (50% Reading and 50% Writing) and a 5.0 or greater Overall score (35% Reading + 35% Writing +15% Listening +15% Speaking) may be eligible to exit out of the program. Schools use the ACCESS 2.0 assessment with grades, state assessments, and teacher input to determine if a student is exited and moved to Former EL. Former EL status is then tracked for at least two

years. At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, 40 students, or 1.3% of identified ELs, were eligible to be exited based on the required ACCESS 2.0 scores.

Billings educators learning and practicing the strategy of Picture Puzzles to support English Language Learners to apply in their own classrooms.

Nationally, students who are identified as EL score lower than their peers on standardized assessments, and this is true in Montana. Most students, with proper supports, exit out of EL status within three to five years. Thirty-five and a half percent of Montana EL students have been identified for five or more years, but many EL students are identified in the primary grades, and, therefore, in school for less than five years. American Indian students are being identified as needing academic English language supports, but are progressing at a rate much lower than any other language group in Montana. WIDA developed a resource to support the unique linguistic and cultural needs of supporting American Indian English Learners and can be viewed at: https://www.wida.us/resources/focus/WIDA_Focus_on_AIELL.pdf. Figure 13 shows that American Indians are identified as EL for more than five years at a greater rate than any other language group.



Special Education

For the 2016-2017 school year, there were 16,265 total special education students in public schools in Montana. This is a reflection of 12% of our students identified and served through Special Education programs and supports. This trend has increased every year since 2013. Of those students, 3,187 are American Indian students, or 15.5% identified as special education students. The top three disability reasons are the same for both populations: Learning Disability, Multiple Disabilities, and Speech and Language Impairment. Proportionally, over one-third (34.3%) of Native American students are identified in Special education due to a learning disability, while 28.9% of White students are labeled with that disability within Special Education.

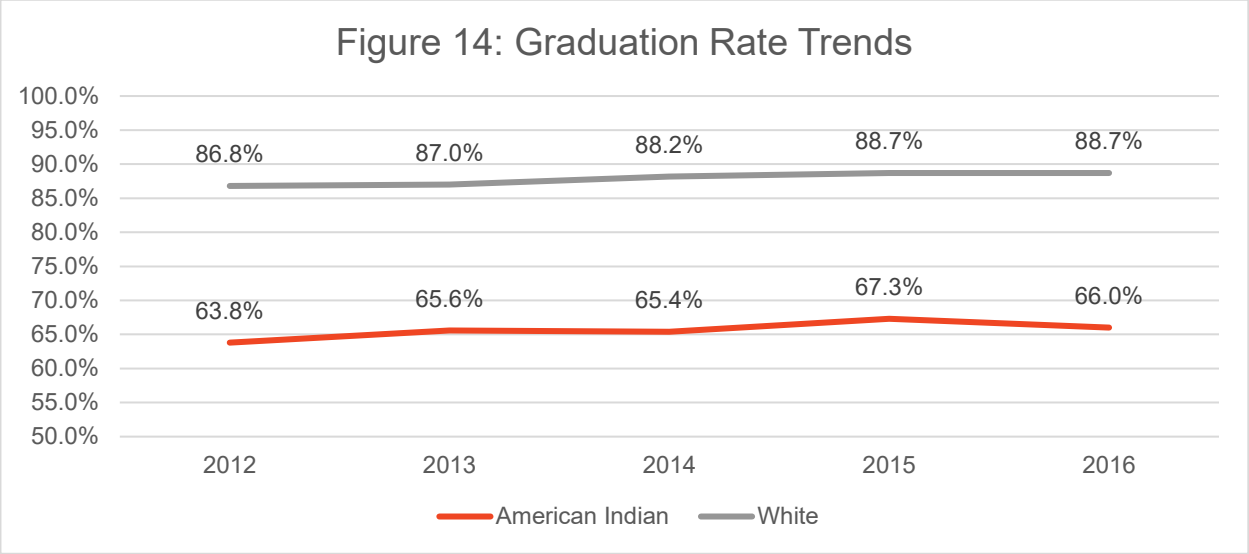
Wyola Pre-Kindergarteners developing vocabulary through literacy.

High School Graduation and Dropout Rates

Graduation

The graduation rates in this report are the percentage of students who graduate from high school in four years or less. Students who spent extra time to graduate, or students who re-entered school and graduated outside of their original cohort, are not counted toward the total graduation rates. The graduation rates for the 2016-2107 were not finalized by the drafting of this report. Figure 14 displays the four-year Graduation Rate Trends over time.

After five years of steady increases, 2016 saw the first decrease in graduation rates for all students and for American Indian students in their four-year cohort. In 2016, the Montana American Indian graduation rate dropped from a high of 67.3% to 66.0%, White students stayed the same at 88.7%, students who were non-native dropped from 88.5% to 88.4%, and the overall graduation rate went from a high of 86.0% to 85.6%.



Dropout

Students who have a negative experience with school, have life struggles that interfere with their continuing education in public schools, or other reasons, may choose to drop out. There are schools making concerted efforts to adjust schedules, policies, and supports so students who want to continue toward a high school diploma can do so. Schools that have changed policies or provided supports regarding attendance have reported positive changes to keeping students in school and learning. Other schools restructure instructional calendars and days to provide academic supports and credit recovery options for students that may note that "Academic Difficulty" as the reason for dropping out.

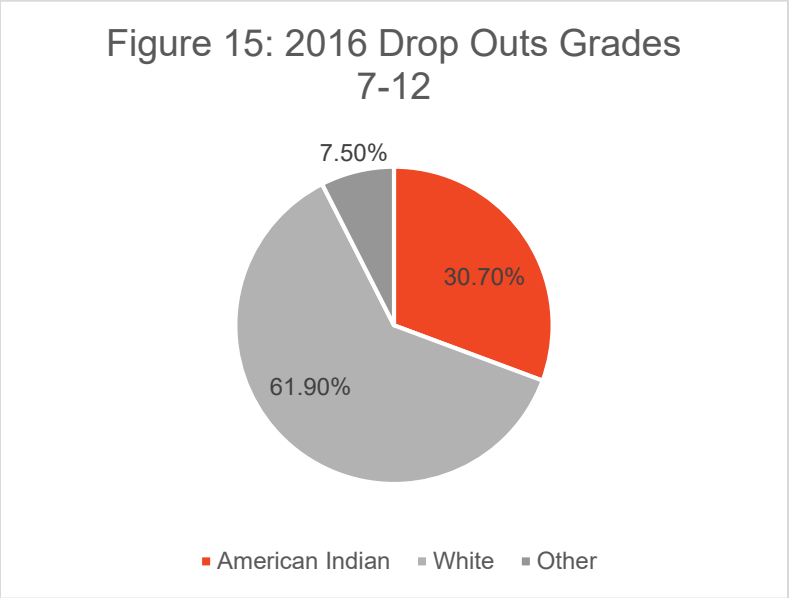
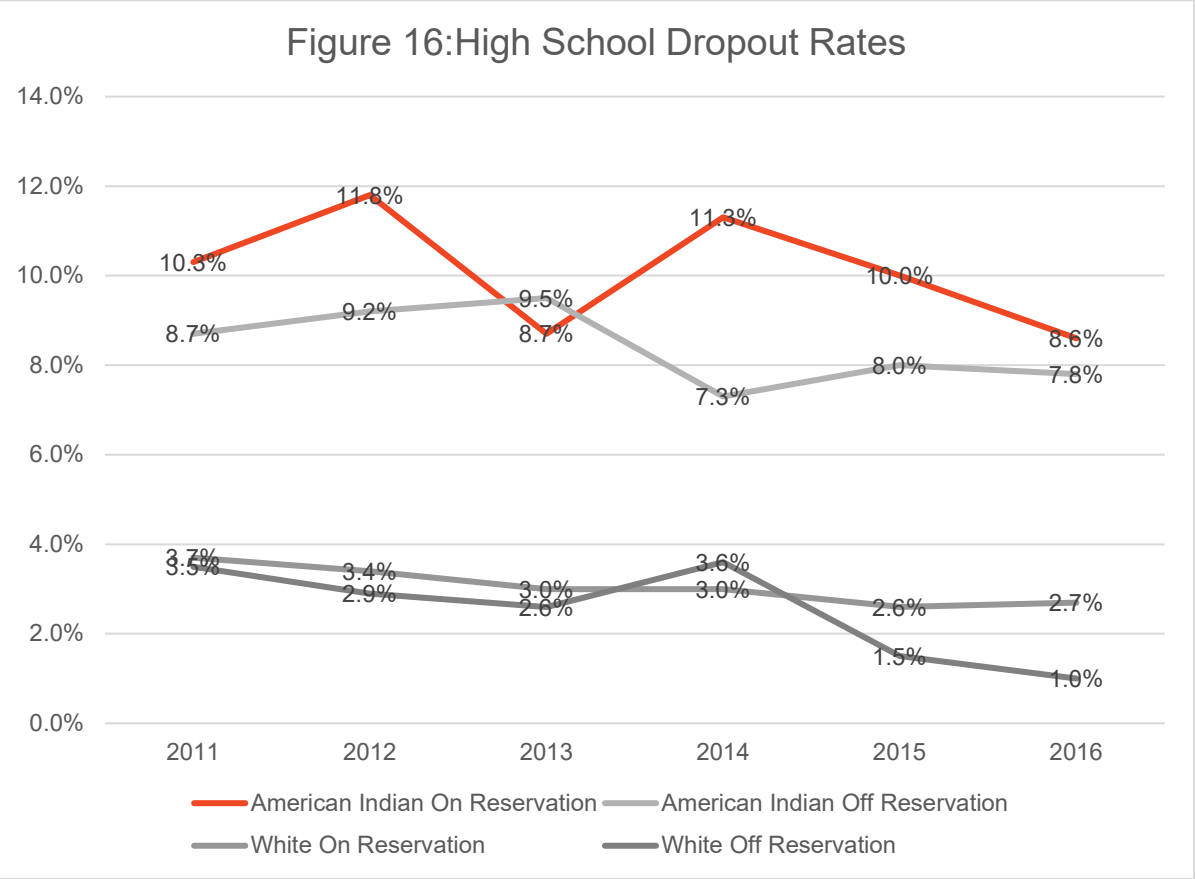


Figure 15 gives a comparison of the 1,471 students who dropped out of school in the 2016-2017 school year. While American Indian students are at 30.7% of the dropout rate, that is still a large percentage



since only 14.0% of our students are American Indian. It is also noted that American Indian students are dropping out in much larger percentages at the 7th and 8th grade levels compared to White students in Montana.

The chart in Figure 16 shows the change in dropout rates over time. There is a continuous trend of students less likely to drop out, and over time American Indian students on Reservations are quickly moving forward to close the gap.

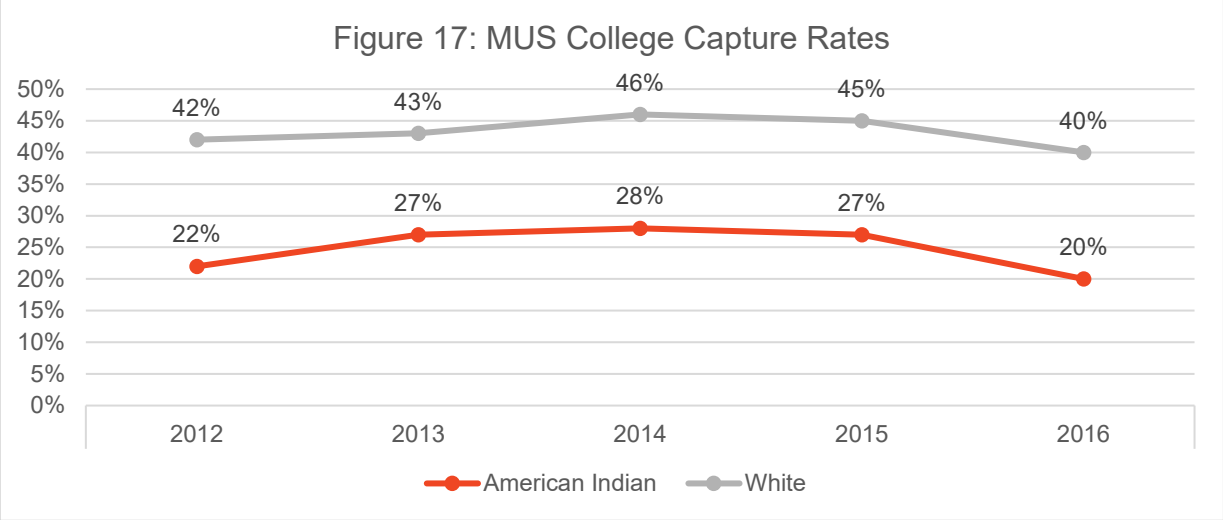
College and Career

Montana University System College Capture and Remediation

While not every student is immediately college bound after high school graduation, many take the opportunity to continue their education and develop skills in various fields. The Montana University System (MUS) has identified the fact that American Indian students' remediation and capture rates need improvement. Many of the universities have put in place supports to guide students toward greater success rates.

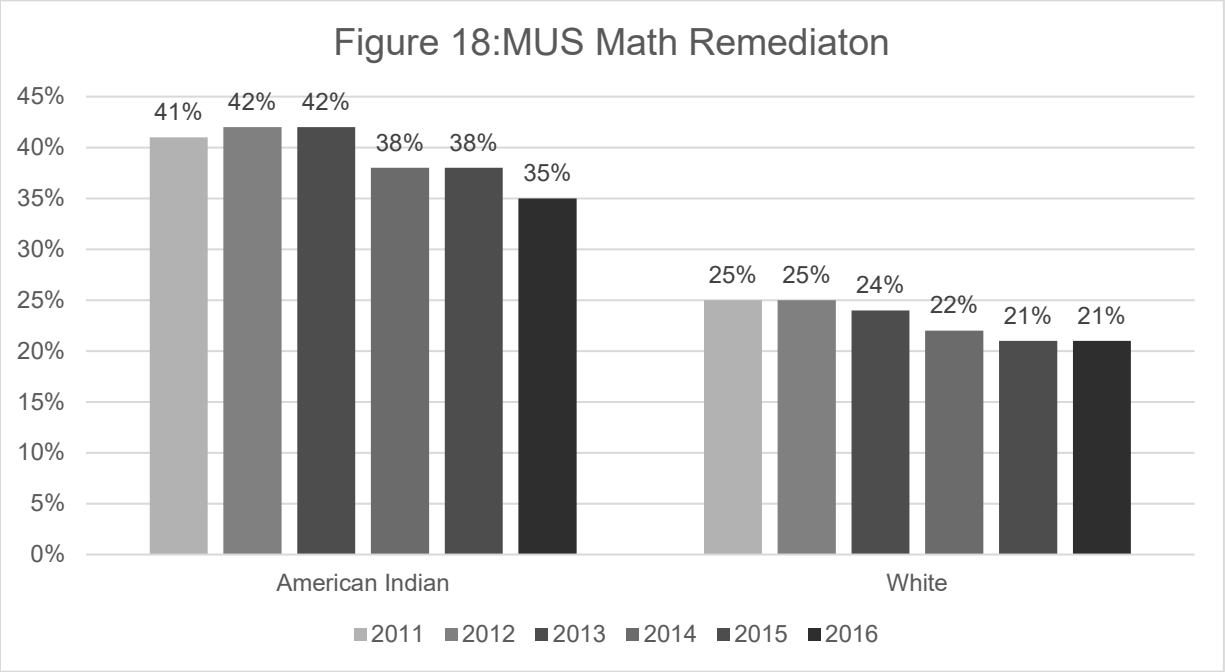
Students at Harlem enter the building with reminders of multiple college options for them.

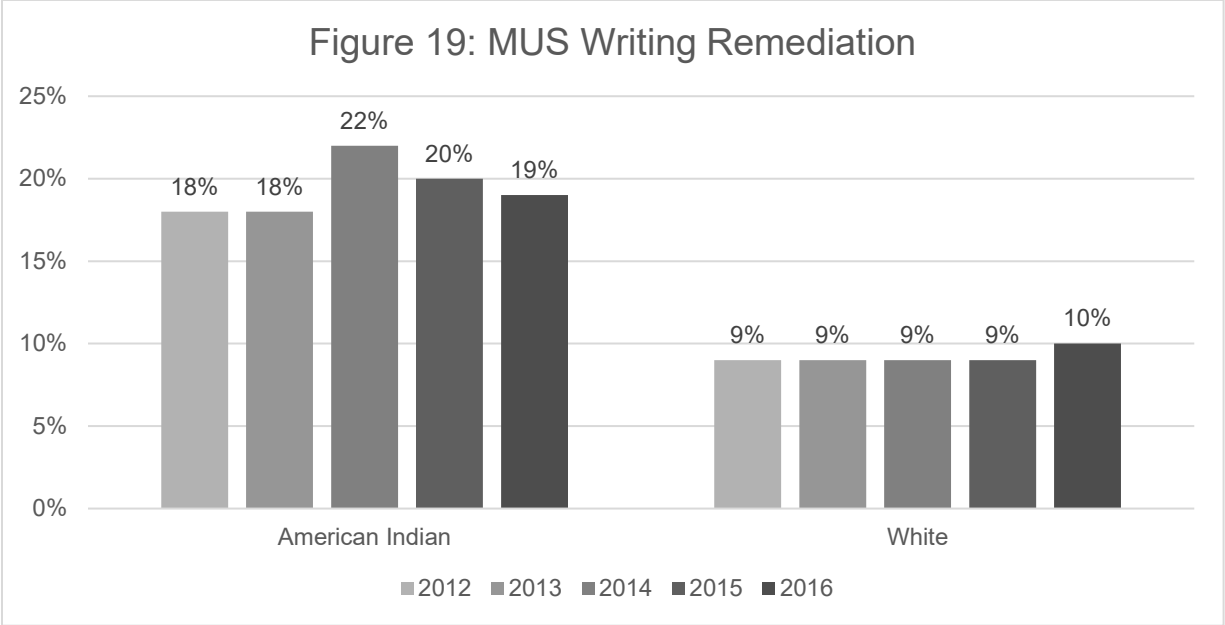
Montana is unique in that each reservation is home to a Tribal College, offering certifications, two-year and/or four-year degrees. The data presented in this report is from the MUS system only, as Montana tribal college data is not available to the state. This is the rate of students who enroll in college within the United States within 16 months of graduating (which still allows time for 2016 graduates to enroll at the time of this report). Figure 17 shows the capture rates for American Indian students. There is a gap between the American Indian students



enrolling in college compared to White students, but the trend which mirror each other for the past four years. In 2014, MUS data shows that highest capture rate of both groups.

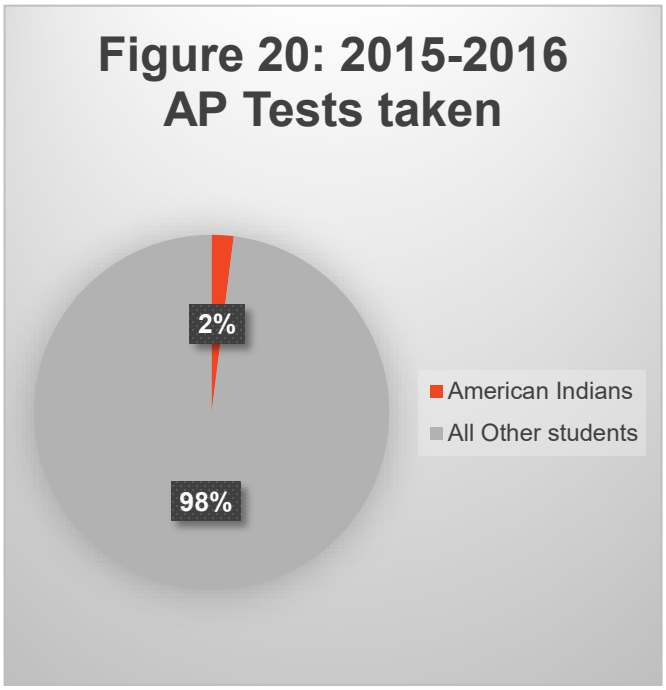
Those students who are choosing to attend college who may not have mastered some skills are given remediation courses. In figure 18 the data shows that since 2013 there has been a decline in the need for American Indian students to have a math remediation course from its peak at 42% to the 2016 rate of 35%. White students have decreased the need by three percent in the same time frame. Writing remediation, as shown in figure 19, has also been decreasing from a peak in 2014 to a current rate of 19% for American Indian students needing remediation at the college level.



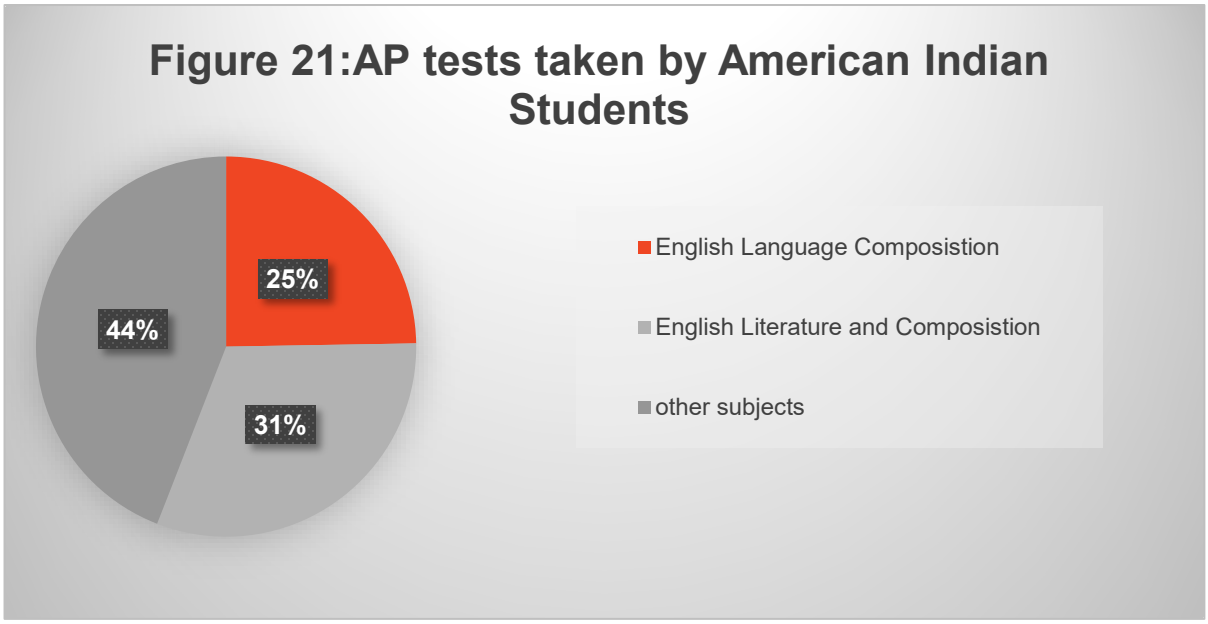


Advanced Placement tests

Advanced Placement (AP) tests are offered to students who participate in courses geared to meet the educational standards of college curriculum. Many colleges and universities will accept credit for AP course tests that score a 3 or higher. Acquiring college credit or having the ability to skip introductory classes in college is only one benefit. Students who take the challenge of AP courses and assessments build college level skills. The data in this report is for the 2015-2016 school year. In figure 20, the chart shows that out of 4,659 tests taken, only 93 (or two percent) were taken by American Indian students. There are a variety of factors leading to these low numbers including a lack of access to AP courses in our smaller or rural schools, students choosing not to take available AP courses, or students taking courses but not the culminating course assessment, which is optional and includes a fee.

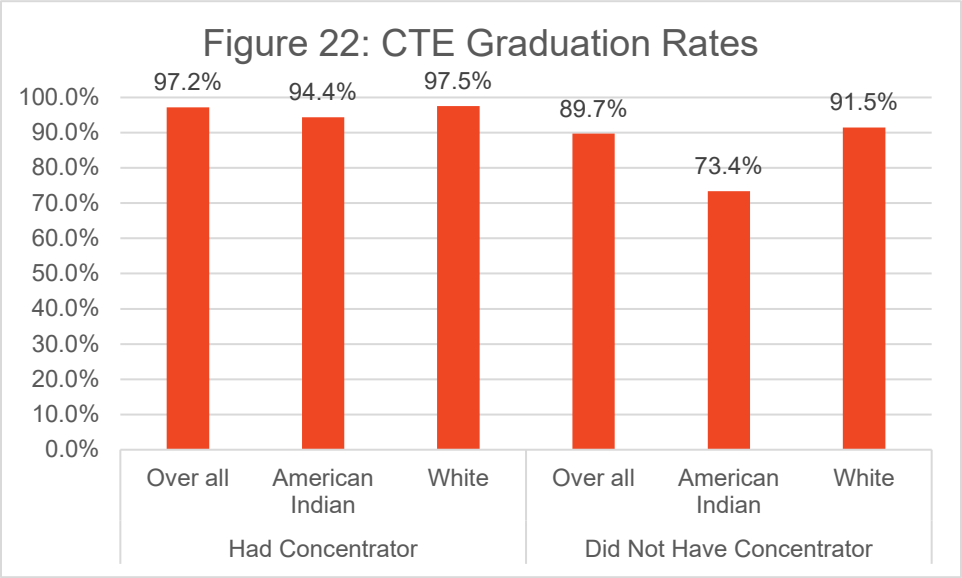


The students who are taking AP tests are chosing a variety of course subjects. Out of the 93 tests taken by American Indian students, 23 were English Language Composition, 29 were English Literature and Composition, and 41 were in other subjects including Calculus, U.S. Government, U.S. History, and Biology. Figure 21 shows the breakdown tests taken by American Indian students. While 93 test were taken in a variety of subjects, there were 12 that were scored at a 3 or above.

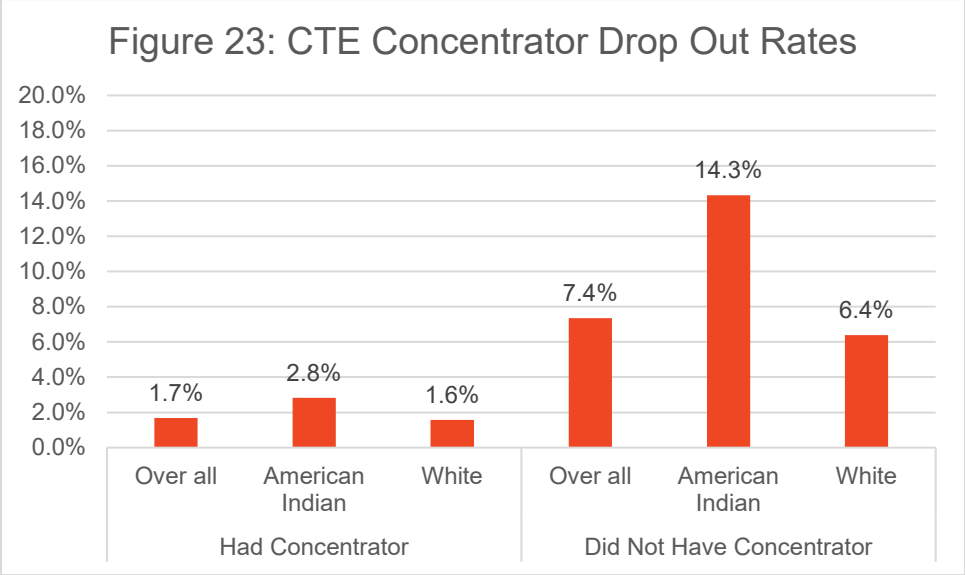


Career and Technical Education

As we move forward with industry advancements, students often look for pathways to provide for stable and successful careers. Many Montana students take advantage of the over 500 approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs with over 800 certified teachers in Agriculture, Business, Marketing, Family and Consumer Sciences, Industrial Technology, and Health Sciences. Students are expected to earn CTE credits to meet graduation criteria, but students may elect to participate in a specific pathway with a series of courses in a particular area of interest (considered a CTE concentrator). Students who choose CTE concentrators tend to stay in school and graduate, often closer to a degree or industry specific certification, than their peers who took general courses. The 2016-2017 data was not ready by the time of this report but in 2015-2016 American Indian students who chose a CTE concentrator met a graduation rate of 94.4% while those without a concentrator but took CTE courses, graduated at 73.4% compared to overall graduation rate of 67.4% in 2015. Figure 22 shows the CTE Concentrator graduation rate for students who have taken CTE classes and have chosen concentrators, compared to students who have taken CTE classes, yet have not chosen a concentrator.



The rate of American Indian students dropping out without a CTE Concentrator was 14.3% compared to 6.4% for White students. More students participate in the areas of concentration in Technology Education/Industrial Arts, Trade and Industrial, Business, and Family and Consumer Science, compared to Health Sciences or Agriculture.



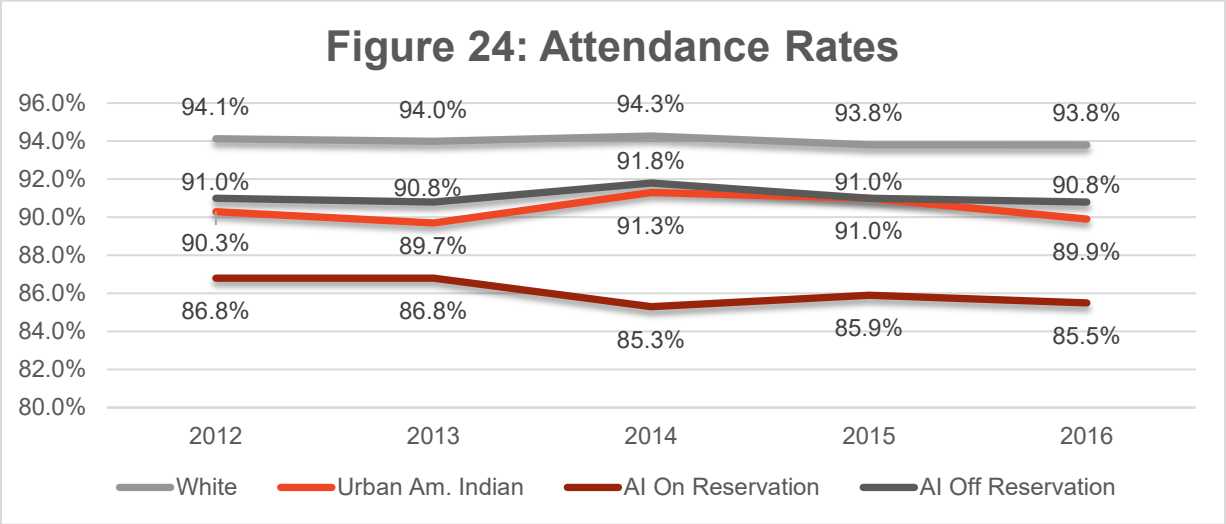
Social and Behavioral Data

Attendance Rates

For a student to be successful in school, the student must be in school. Studies show missing more than ten percent of school directly affects student's grade level reading and harms student academic growth exponentially. In Montana's draft ESSA plan, "Satisfactory Attendance" is defined as missing five percent or less of the school year and is an indicator for school accountability. In Montana, there is no statewide attendance or defined policy, each district has its own policy for what constitutes an absence and how it is reported to the state. Students in one district may be counted as "present" while at an athletic event, while other districts note it as an "absence." Tardies and partial days may also affect attendance concerns in one region of our state versus another. School districts having conversations about promoting positive changes in policy and strategies to improve attendance have also seen an increase in student achievement. Transportation issues, health concerns, homelessness, and transiency all have a deep effect on students' ability to

Each school may count attendance in a way it sees best, which leads to differences between schools on how to account for missing student days. Absences and tardies may be entered into the system with different meanings to the schools.

Ronan students in Advanced Culinary Arts are preparing traditional foods: moose meatballs, wild rice and plum sauce.



attend school consistently. Attendance Works offers schools and educators tools to support decreasing truancy and chronic absences. Attendance rates are calculated by the number of days a student is present compared to the number of days that student is enrolled. A day can be measured as less than one whole, based on the attendance system reported by the school district.

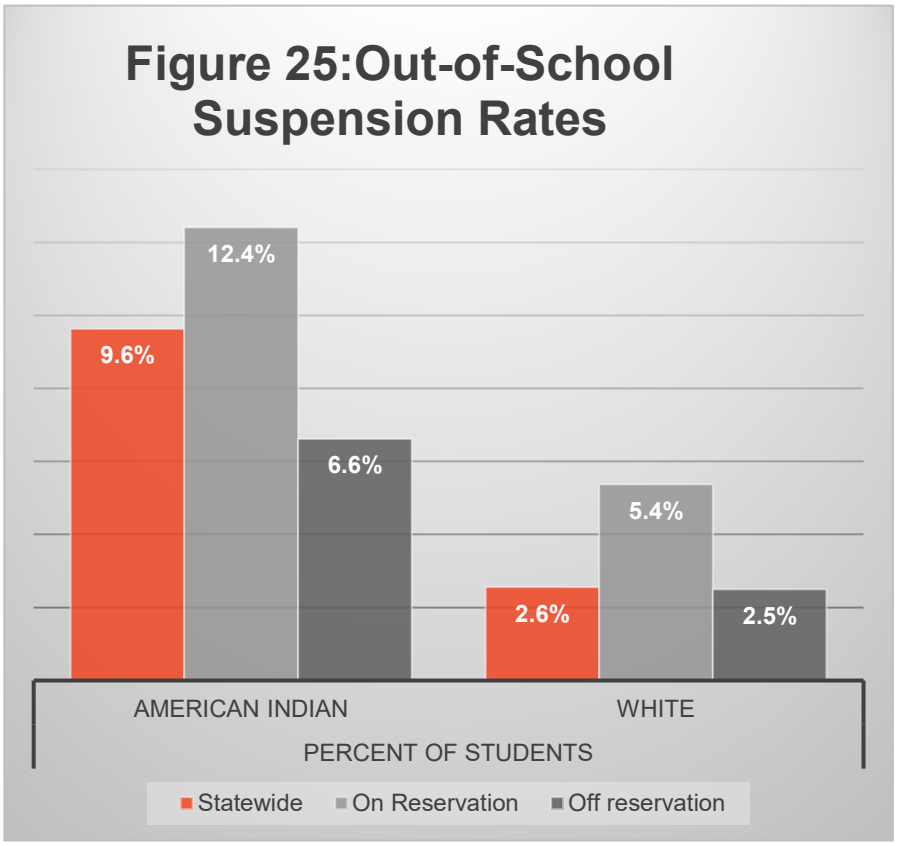


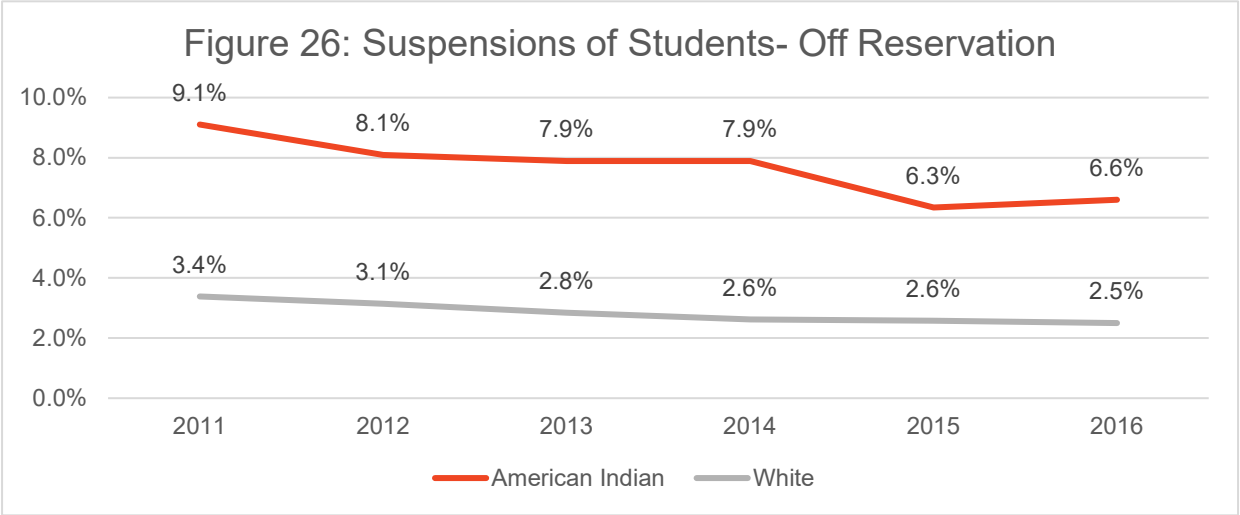
Figure 24 compares American Indian students located in Urban areas, On Reservations, and Off Reservations as compared to the larger White population. This chart reflects that American Indian students in 2016 going to school Off Reservation (90.8%) or in Urban areas (89.9%) have a higher attendance rate than students On Reservations (85.5%). Comparing overall American Indian attendance rates combined (88.5%) to White students (93.8%) shows that each group will have to make improvements to meet the ESSA expectation.

Suspension and Expulsion Data

The 2016-2017 suspension and expulsion data had not been finalized by the writing of this report, so data will reflect the 2015-2016 school year information. Each school district has its own policy and procedures to record in school suspensions and detentions. The Office of Public Instruction only collects out-of-school suspension and expulsion data, and this report will not differentiate the number of students receiving multiple out-of-school discipline referrals, but rather just an accounting of the number of suspensions being recorded into the statewide data collection system.

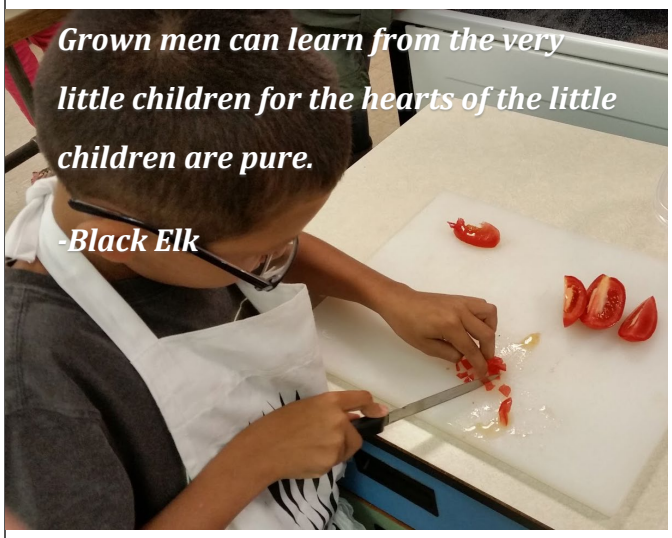
Figure 25 shows that across the state 9.6% of American Indian students had at least one out-of-school suspension during the school year compared with the 2.6% of White students. Also, there is a higher rate of suspensions in schools located on reservations, no matter the race of the student. However, no matter the location, American Indian students are still suspended at rates much greater than White students. This correlates with other national indicators that students of color tend to be suspended and expelled at higher rates than their white peers.

As teachers and schools work to decrease behavior incidences with strategies from the Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI), the Office of Public Instruction has also been working to develop strategies to decrease negative behaviors through traditional cultural practices with the Indigenous MBI. Schools are also practicing more trauma-informed strategies to prevent incidents occurring before having to make the decision to suspend students out of school. There is a trend that the percentage of students being suspended is continuously decreasing as noted in Figure 26. Although the state does not collect the reasons for why students are suspended out of school, there may be options for schools to discover their own trends and ability to continue to decrease the amount of American Indian students being affected by this rule and losing academic learning time.



Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered annually by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as part of a sampling survey to estimate general information about the behaviors of students. Students self-report on a confidential survey that monitors six types of health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and adults. More information about the survey can be found at: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm This is the first year in which the Montana Office of Public Instruction has published a trend analysis specifically for Native American students. It can be found on the Indian Student Achievement Data and Guidance Web page.



This chef dices tomatoes with precision to help his team prepare a traditional dish to other culinary art students across the state.

Chart 3 shows some of the survey results from 2017. Bolded numbers indicate an increase from the previous data collection. Data are shown as “the percentage of high school students who….”
There are a number of areas in which Native American Students are conducting less risky behavior than the general student population or are decreasing the gap. There are only a few areas in which an increase in behaviors are noted and are greater than the general student population.

Chart 3: Select 2016-2017 YRBS Survey Results		
	Montana YRBS	Native American Students
Never or rarely wear a seat belt when driving a car	8.7	11.3
Rode with a driver who had been drinking- past 30 days	19.8	25.5
Drove a car when they had been drinking- past 30 days	7.6	7.1
Texted or e-mailed while driving- past 30 days	54.2	**47.2**
Talked on cell phone while driving- past 30 days	56.6	**39.2**
Carried a weapon	25.2	**19.5**
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school-past 30 days	**12.1**	**8**
Were ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse (when they did not want to)	**9.3**	10.6
Experienced physical dating violence- past 12 months	7.2	**11.3**
Seriously considered attempting suicide- past 12 months	**20.8**	**28.2**
Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide- past 12 months	**18.6**	16.6
Had a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse- past 12 months	**32.6**	18.6
Ever drank alcohol- lifetime	69.9	68
Currently drank alcohol- past 30 days	33.1	26.7
Currently used marijuana- past 30 days	**19.8**	32
Ever used methamphetamines- lifetime	2.2	**4.6**

In 2017, eight percent noted “Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school/ past 30 days” compared to 12.1% of American Indian students and an increase from 9.3% from 2015. Also, an increase to 7.7% of American Indian students were “threatened or injured with a weapon on school property/ past 12 months.” The general population also saw an increase to seven percent.

Overall trend data from the YRBS survey has American Indian Students engaging in less risky behaviors than the general population. American Indian Students are less likely to drive when they had been drinking, text or talk on cell phones while driving, carry weapons, be bullied electronically on or off school property, use electronic vapor products, or drink alcohol. They were more likely to eat vegetables, participate in sports and other physical activities.

The focus of mental health and suicide prevention for youth has been an emphasis for all students in Montana. Based on this data, there are increases in the number of students feeling sad and hopeless for an extended period and seriously considering suicide. There is a decrease in Native American students actually making plans, from 20.6 % in 2015 to 18.6% in 2017, but an increase in those attempting suicide (15.6% in 2015 and 28.3% in 2017) Among students who attempted suicide there is a significant decrease in which there was an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse. In 2015, that was true for 46.8%, while in 2017, it was 18.6%, less than the general population at 32.6%.

My Voice Survey

The My Voice Survey, also known as the Quaglia survey, asks different types of questions than the YRBS survey. The 2016-2017 information was not available at the time of this publication, but will be available on the OPI Web site. This report contains information about the 2015-2016 survey of students. Examples are questions relating to the students belonging in school, sense of accomplishment, curiosity, and leadership. There are several ways the My Voice survey data may be disaggregated. Three groups of students will be focused on for this report: American Indians in schools where the majority of students are American Indian (AI majority), American Indians in schools where the majority of students are not American Indian (AI minority), and White students. Chart 4 shows some questions that were selected from the My Voice survey. Some questions were selected for differences between White students and American Indian students. Others were selected because of the difference in answers provided by American Indian students. The full My Voice report has breakdowns by race, gender, and grade.

Chart 4: Select 2015-2016 My Voice Survey Results			
	White	**AI majority**	**AI minority**
I think bullying is a problem at my school	38%	48%	43%
I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me	78%	64%	73%
Teachers have fun at school	49%	41%	45%
Teachers let my parents know what I do well.	50%	57%	49%
I feel comfortable asking questions in class	63%	55%	53%
I am a good decision maker.	68%	59%	58%
I feel accepted for who I am at school.	68%	72%	62%
School inspires me to learn	61%	67%	59%
I enjoy being at school.	53%	59%	50%

Summary

While there is growth in many achievement areas, there is still a wide gap between American Indian students in rural areas and urban areas, and with their non-native peers. While looking at the achievement gaps it is important to consider factors of opportunity gaps, causes for students failing to thrive, and the supports that schools, communities, and partners can provide to remove barriers so all students have the opportunity to graduate with multiple options of college and career choices.

This report is meant to be used to discuss ways to reduce the opportunity gap and build strategies to support the students who may struggle with typical school supports. Though some growths are not statically significant or they are too early to create trends, they are promising for the future of American Indian students. American Indian students need and deserve the opportunity to have access to college level and preparation courses. All students and especially American Indian students also need access and the ability to take Career and Technical education courses and choose concentrators as a way to engage students in educational settings and ways to prepare them for life after crossing the graduation stage.

Hays Lodge Pole Vision statement wrapped around classroom from a warrior song:
To Instill Strength and Knowledge to Walk Anywhere on Earth and Fear Nothing