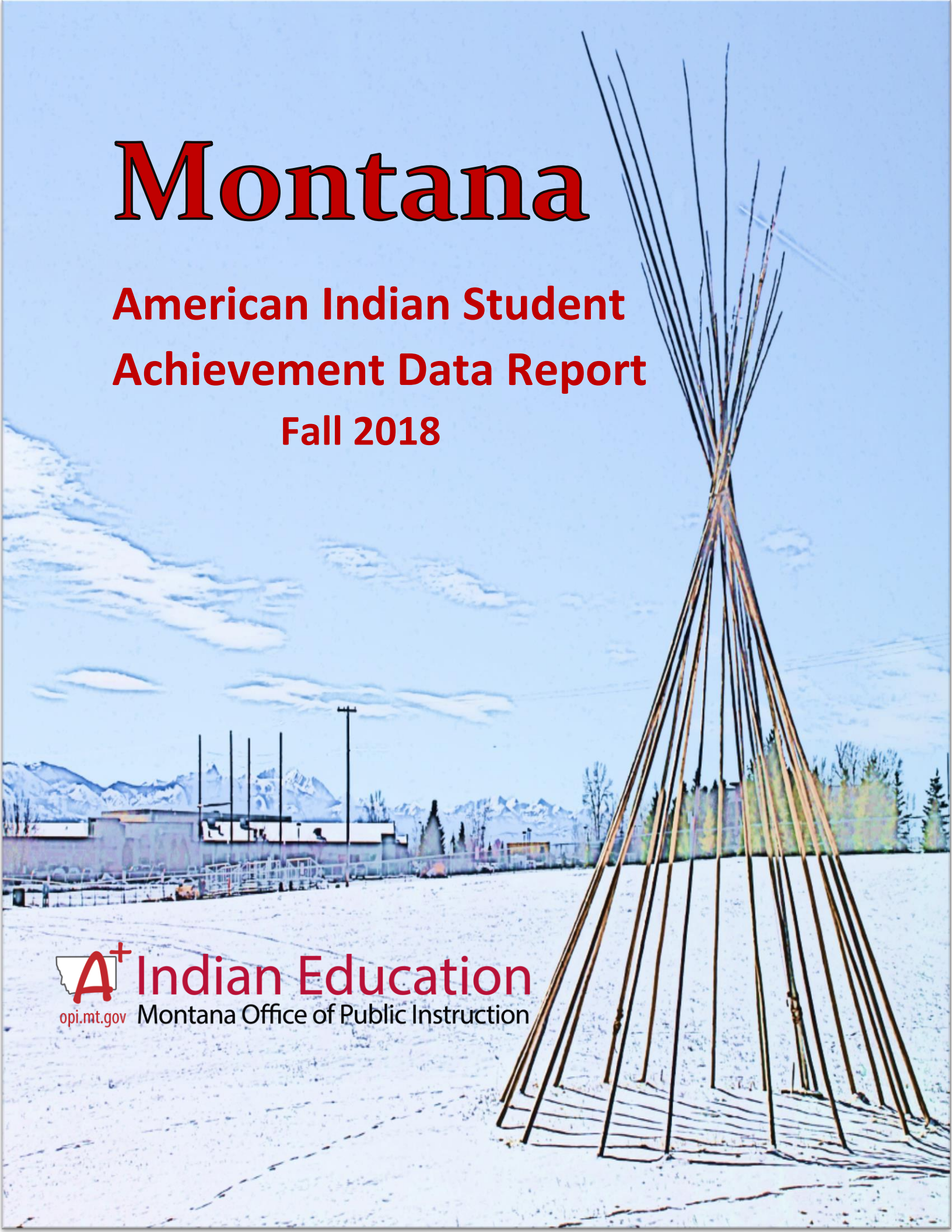
Montana

American Indian Student Achievement Data Report

Fall 2018



Indian Education

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American Indian Data Report
Fall 2018

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Montana
American Indian Student Data Report
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In Dakota culture, the word for children is "wakanyeja" which can be interpreted as something that is very sacred and powerful. It is my sincere belief that if American Indian people can continue to reconnect with traditional values and beliefs that not only will school systems improve but the overall health of the community will also be greatly improved. The work we do at OPI to help facilitate the revitalization of American Indian cultures and languages will have positive impacts for future generations of American Indian people. Many years from now there will be research papers and studies that show a direct correlation between the revitalization of American Indian cultures and the improvement of our educational systems that serve American Indian students. This is a historic time and the new ESSA law gives us an excellent opportunity to re-envision our educational systems in Indian country. The new 2018 Indian Student Achievement Report is an important piece of our ongoing school improvement efforts.

-Mike Jetty, Indian Education Specialist

Introduction

2007 MCA 20-9-330

In 2007, the Montana State Legislature passed Montana Code Annotated 20-9-330, appropriating $200 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 and provide data on the Montana American Indian student population.

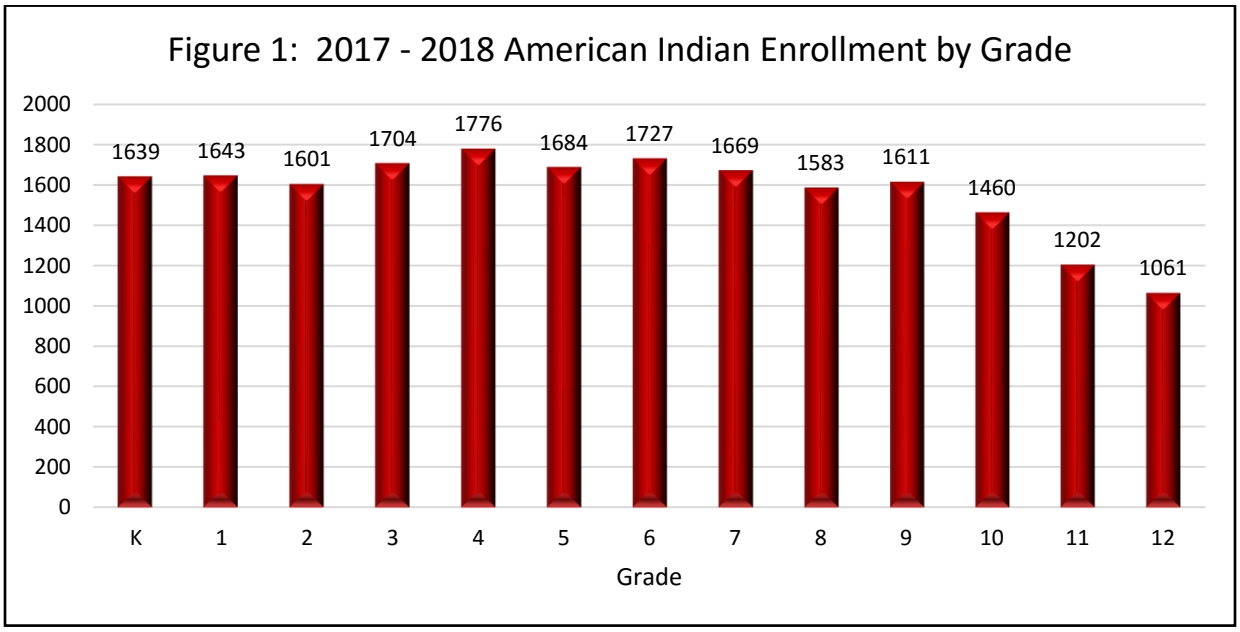
Student Population Data

- Nine and two-tenths percent of Montana's total population is American Indian (2017 Census Estimate), made up mostly of the twelve tribal nations of Montana: Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, Sioux.

- For the 2017-2018 school year there were 20,535 American Indian/Alaska Native students in Montana that report American Indian/Alaska Native as at least one of their races. The number of American Indian students in Montana has been increasing steadily every year. 14.0% of Montana's public K-12 students are American Indian.
  - 44.6% (9,162) of American Indian students attend a school physically located within a reservation with 55.4% (11,373) located outside a reservation boundary.

- Of 817 public schools in Montana:
  - 59 public schools report 75 – 100% American Indian students within their school population.
  - 22 public schools report 50 – 75% American Indian students within their school population.
  - 29 public schools report 25 – 50% American Indian students within their school population.

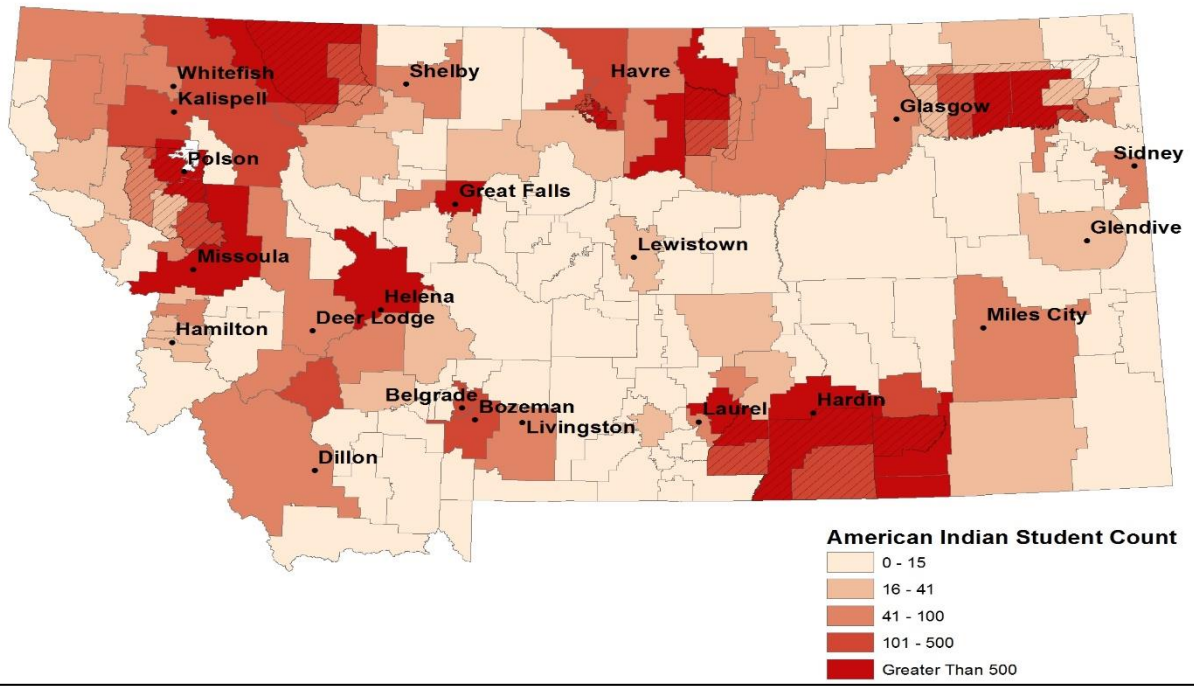
- Figure 1 shows the distribution of American Indian student enrollment numbers for Montana public schools by grade.



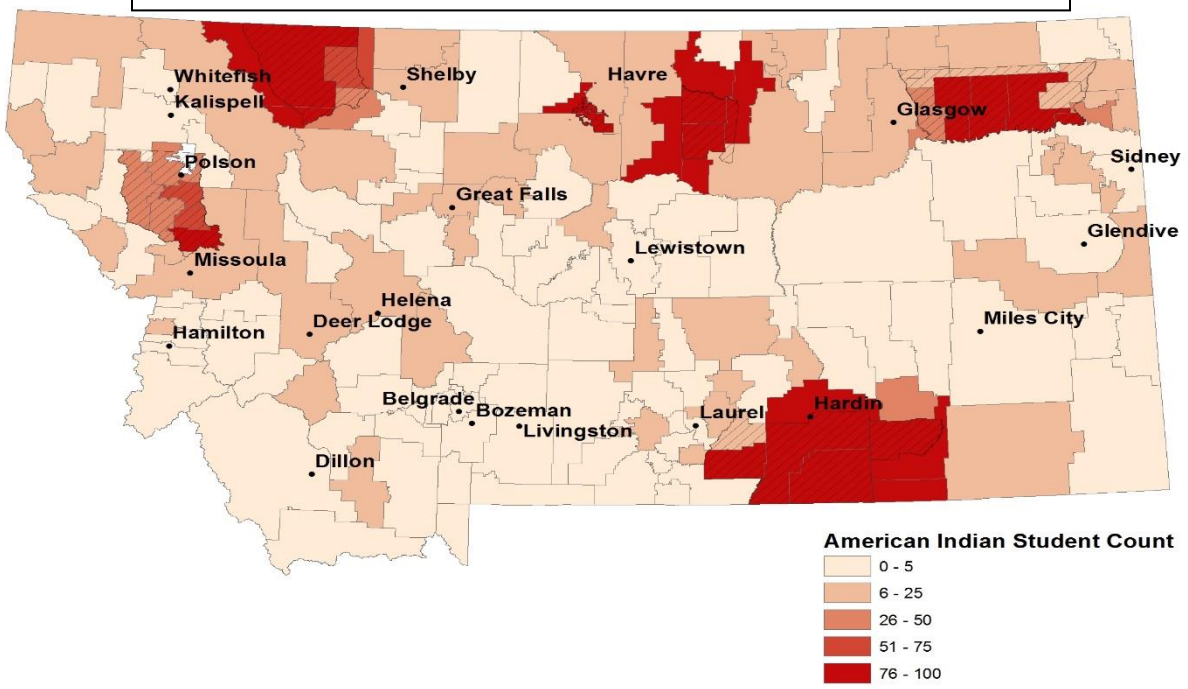
The following maps show the distribution of American Indian students in public schools across Montana by high school districts. Map 1 shows the actual student counts and Map 2 designates the percent of the K-12 student population that is American Indian. You will see in the maps that American Indian students are spread throughout Montana, clustered not only around reservations, but also in urban centers and

areas of rapid economic growth. Reservation lands can cross multiple cities and counties within Montana, and are indicated on the map by areas shaded with diagonal lines.

Map 1: American Indian Student Counts



Map 2: Percent of American Indian Students

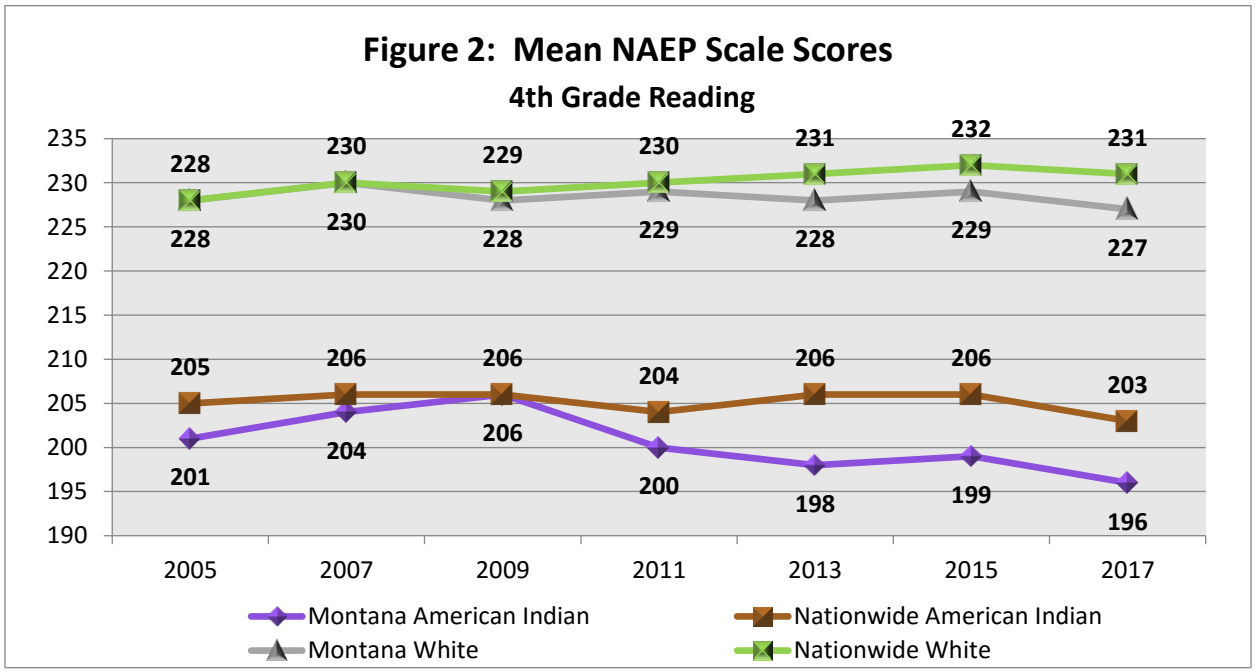


National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)

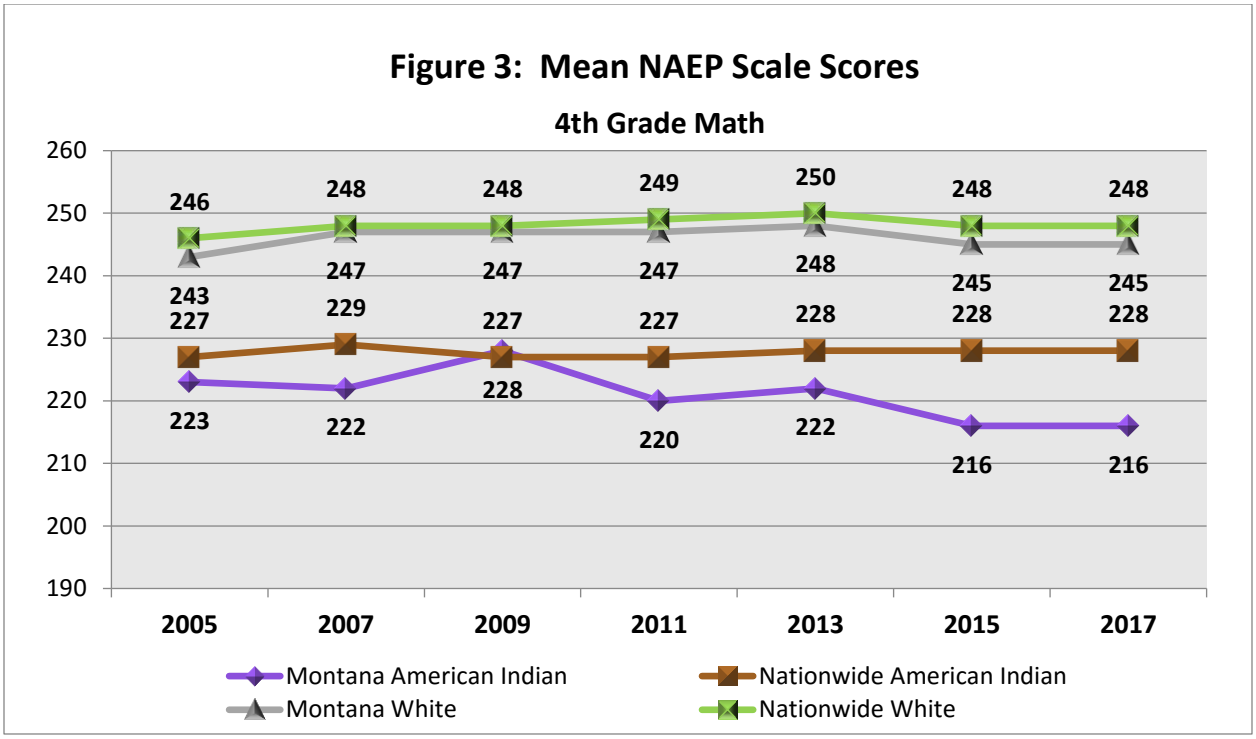
NAEP was established by Congress in 1969 to measure educational progress in America, and it is an indicator of what our nation's students know and can do in certain subject areas. NAEP asks the same questions and is administered in the same way in every state, making it a reliable and valid measure for 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 sampling to get an understanding to compare states on an equal assessment. Since this assessment was designed for the purpose of comparing states, not individual students, scores and results can't 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. The 2016-2017 results are the first year reported results are from students required to take the assessment on a tablet. 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 α = .05 level.

4th Grade

Figure 2 shows the long term 4th grade reading scores of American Indian students. For Montana American Indian students scores decreased in 2017 by three points, which is not a statistically significant difference from 2015. This is the lowest score this subgroup has seen since 2005. While this is alarming, you can see the nationwide American Indian score for 2017 also went down three points while the white student subgroup saw decreases at both the national and state levels. There were eight states that had enough American Indian students to report state level scores, and Montana was fourth among those.



In Figure 3 the 4th grade math scores are displayed since 2005. Both American Indian and White subgroup scores for 2017 at both the national and state level saw no change from 2015. However, of the eight states with a large enough American Indian population to report results in the subgroup, Montana had the second lowest score and the score of 216 ties for the lowest score Montana has attained since 2005.



8th Grade

On the next page Figure 4 shows the 8th Grade Reading scores. For American Indian students in Montana the mean scale score for 2017 decreased by three points when compared to 2015. While this is not a statistically significant difference, it is something to keep an eye one as the nationwide mean stayed the same. The last three years the American Indian mean score has been below the nationwide average after it was above the nationwide average for the three years prior. Of the eight states with a large enough American Indian population to report results, Montana scored better than two other states. In Figure 5 the data for 8th grade mathematics is shown. In 2017 American Indian students in Montana showed some improvement by increasing their mean score by two points, while the White student subgroup in Montana had a decrease by one point. Of those eight states with a large American Indian population, Montana was ranked fifth.

One thing that is consistent among both 4th and 8th grades and among both subjects is the large achievement gap between the White student subgroup and the American Indian subgroup. That gap did close slightly in the 8th grade math scores but there is still a significant gap between the student groups. The achievement gaps in the other three areas all either got worse or remained the same from 2015 to 2017.

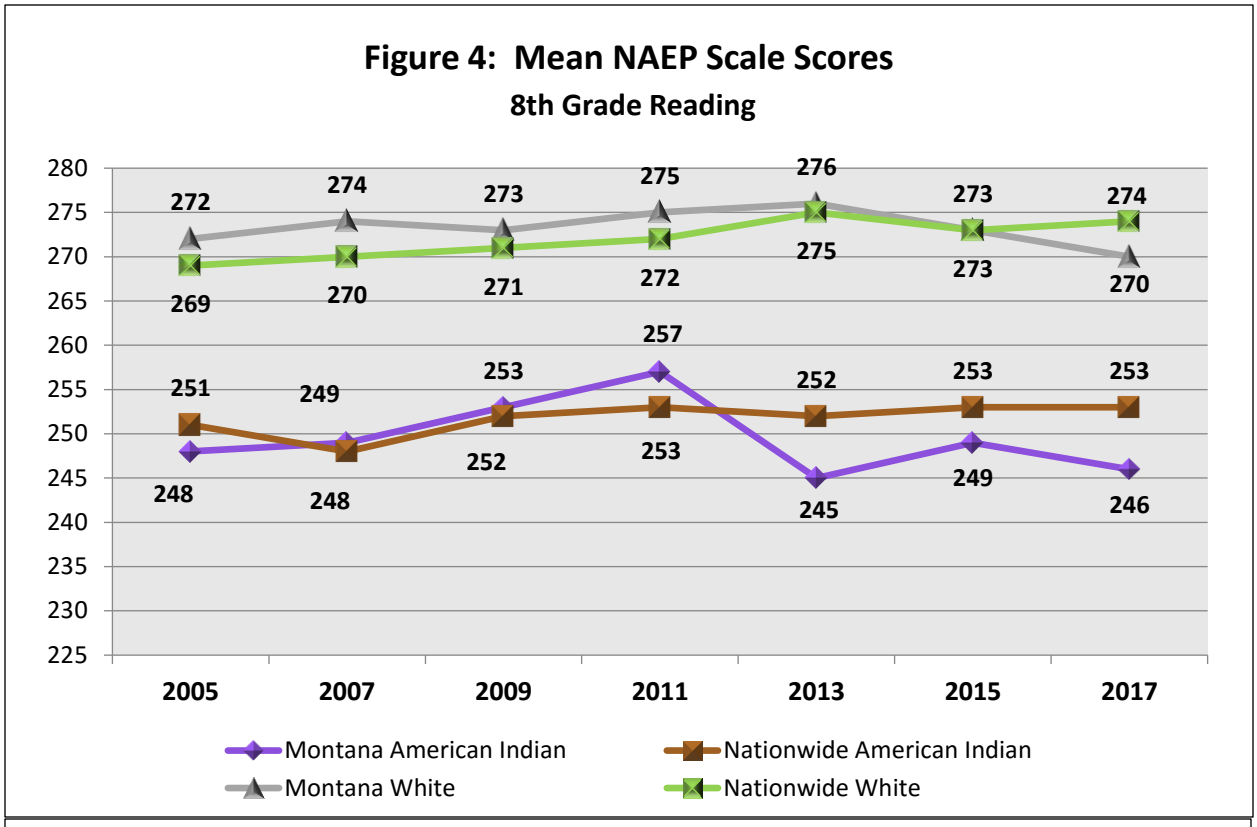


Figure 4: Mean NAEP Scale Scores
8th Grade Reading
280
275
270
265
260
255
250
245
240
235
230
225
2005
2007
2009
2011
2013
2015
2017
272
274
273
275
276
273
274
269
270
271
272
275
273
270
251
249
253
257
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Montana American Indian
Nationwide American Indian
Montana White
Nationwide White

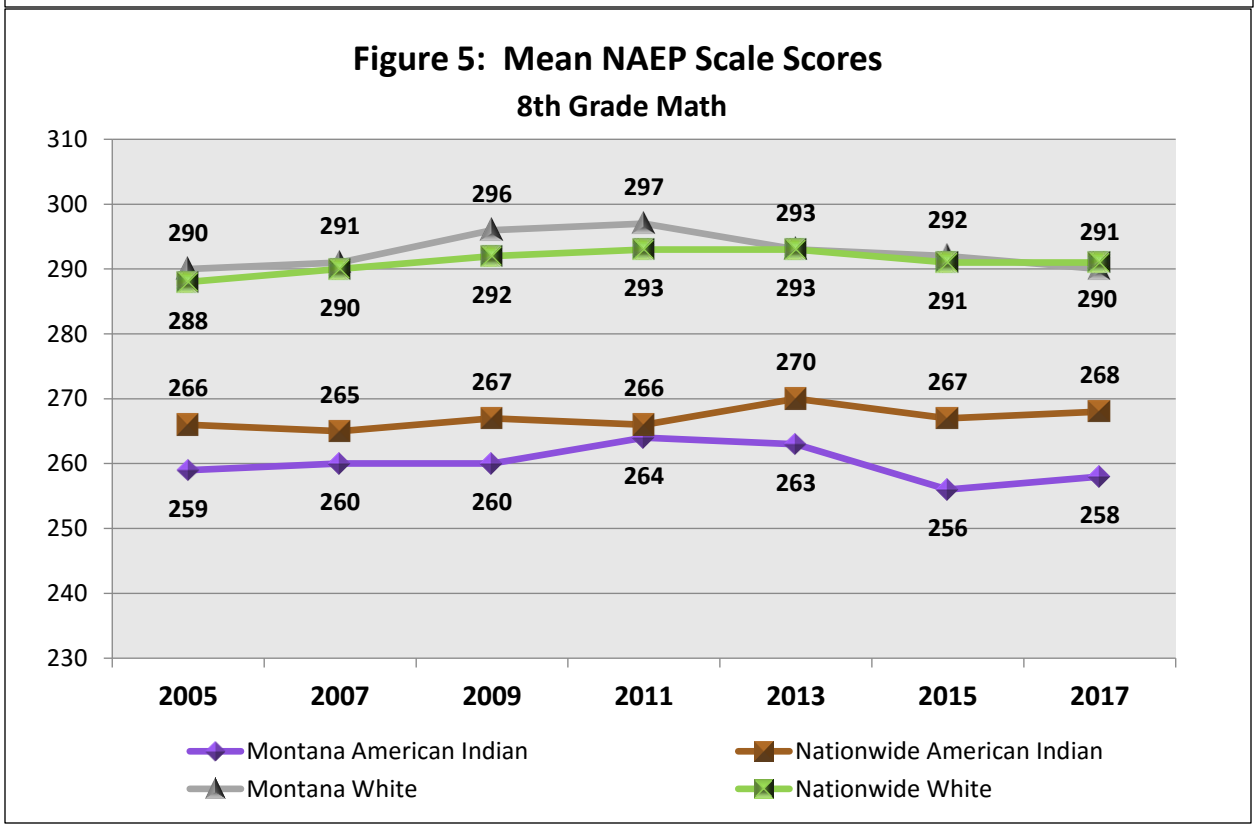


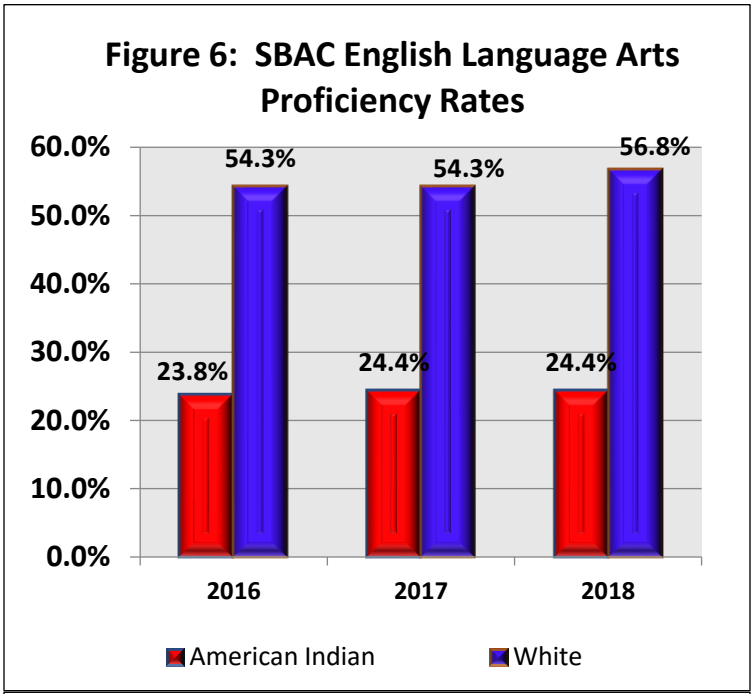
Figure 5: Mean NAEP Scale Scores
8th Grade Math
310
300
290
280
270
260
250
240
230
2005
2007
2009
2011
2013
2015
2017
290
291
296
297
293
292
291
288
290
292
293
293
291
290
266
265
267
266
270
267
268
259
260
260
264
263
256
258
Montana American Indian
Nationwide American Indian
Montana White
Nationwide White

Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC)

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.

The Smarter Balanced assessment was given to 3rd–8th grade students during 2017-2018. Tenth grade students were not tested using the Smarter Balanced test as that portion of the test has been replaced by the ACT testing of 11th grade students. The Smarter Balanced assessment has four proficiency levels: Novice, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced. Scale scores for the Smarter Balanced Assessment range between 2000 and 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 in this report.

Figures 6 and 7 show the percent of students who scored proficient and above in English Language Arts and Mathematics for the past three years. It can be seen in the graphs that in the last three years there has not been much change in the scores for American Indian students, although White students did show a small increase in the students scoring proficient for 2017-2018 in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. What is very evident while looking at Figures 6 and 7 is the achievement gap between the subgroups. For ELA in 2017-2018 there is a difference of 32.4 percentage points while the difference in Mathematics is 28.8 percentage points.



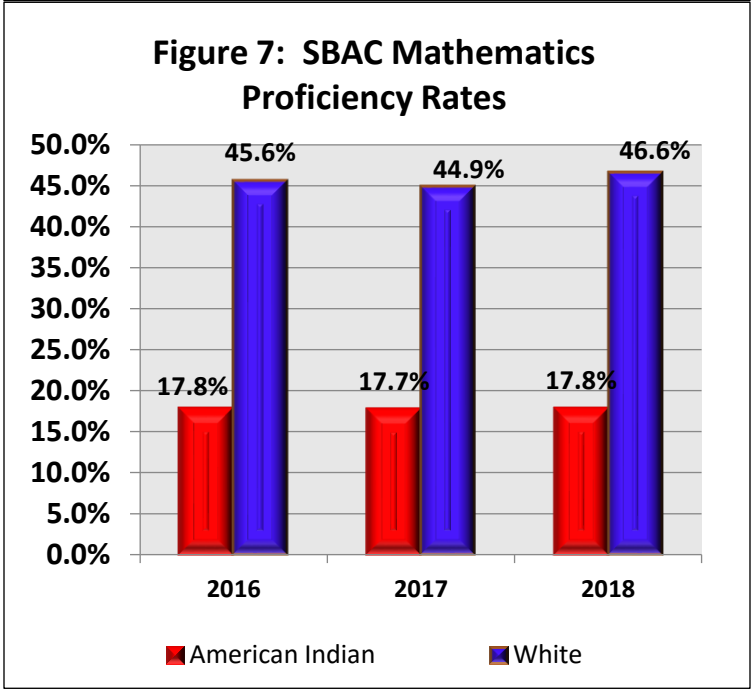
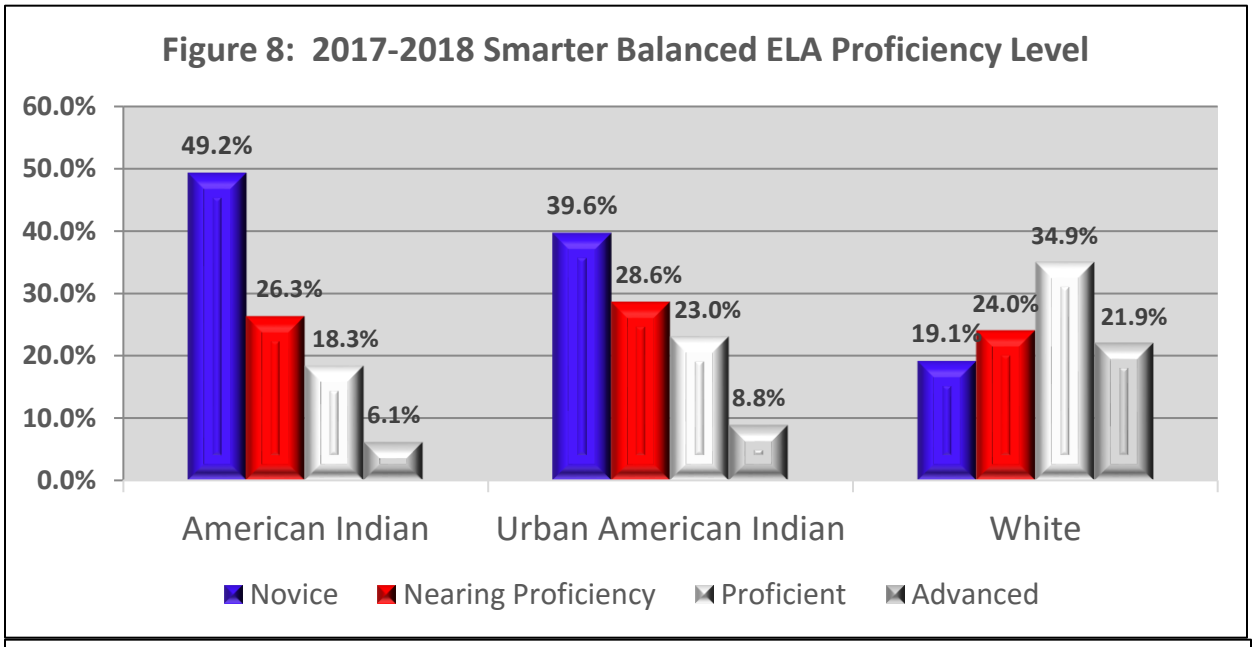
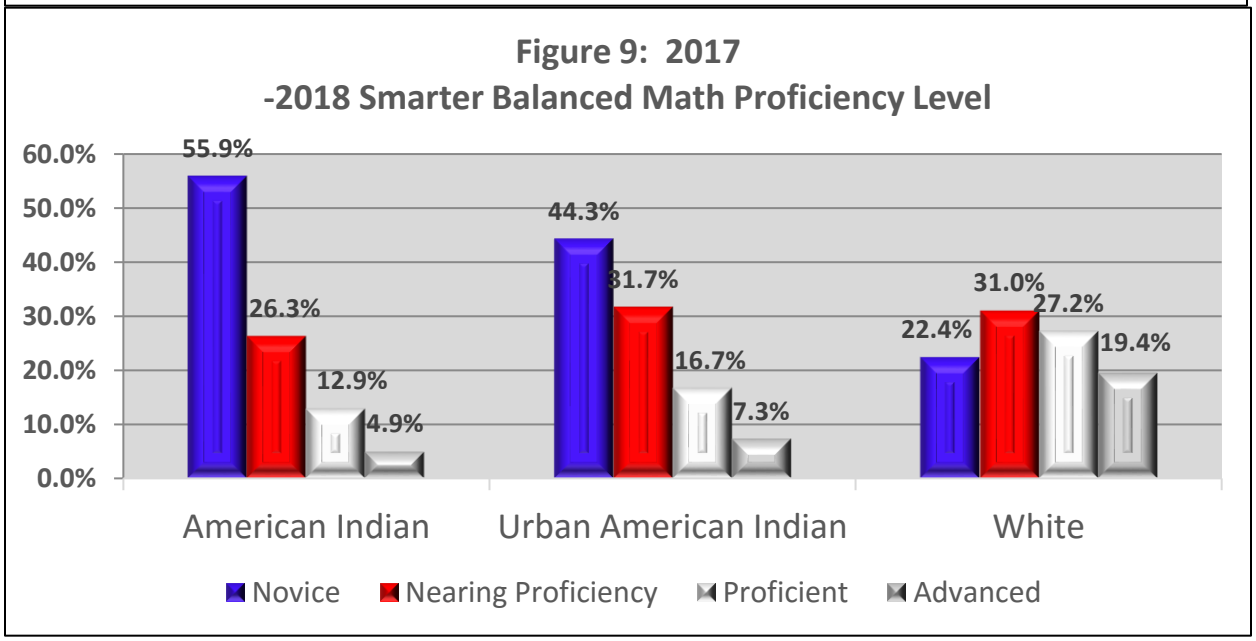


Figure 8 below shows the proficiency level breakdown of the ELA portion of the 2017-2018 SBAC assessment. The breakdown compares three groups, All American Indian students, Urban American Indian students, and White students. Figure 9 shows the same breakdown, except for the subject area of math. The Urban American Indian students are American Indian students who attend a public school in one of the following communities: Kalispell, Butte, Bozeman, Havre, Billings, Missoula, Helena, and Great Falls. It can be seen in both Math and ELA that the American Indian students in these urban areas in Montana are scoring better than their rural counterparts. While the data reflects this, you can also see there is still a significant achievement gap between the Urban American Indians and White students in the state. While the data shown here is only from 2017-2018 this trend exists for previous years also.





ACT Assessment

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 free of charge. The ACT Math and ELA subscores are used in the ESSA Accountability system for schools in Montana. Many 12th grade students also take the test a second time for their college admissions requirements. The test results discussed in this report are from the statewide testing of 11th grade students. During the 2017-2018 school year there were 7,933 White students and 1,035 American Indian students who took the test as 11th graders.

Student working on a project at the Flathead Youth Initiative 2018 in Pablo

The ACT College Readiness scores are the scores ACT has determined a student needs in that domain 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 11th grade students, and the college readiness score is used from their 12th grade ACT score. ACT has not set a College Readiness score for the ELA portion of the test. Figure 10 shows the mean scores for 11th grade test takers during the 2017-2018 school year. It can be seen in Figure 10 that American Indian scores are lower in all domains with the biggest difference coming in ELA. Most domains have decreased slightly from the 2016-2017 results for both subgroups. American Indian ACT scores have steadily decreased in every domain since the 2015-2016 assessment when they had an average composite score of 17.0, Math average of 17.2, and an ELA average of 15.8.

Figure 10: 2017-2018 Mean ACT Test Scores by Domain and Race

	Composite	English	Math	Reading	Science	ELA
American Indian	16.1	14.3	16.4	16.7	16.3	14.5
White	20.1	18.9	20.1	20.8	20.2	18.9
College Readiness	22	18	22	21	23	-

CRT Science Assessment

The Science CRT is administered once a school year for grades 4, 8, and 10. There has been more interest recently in this assessment since the Montana ESSA plan uses 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.

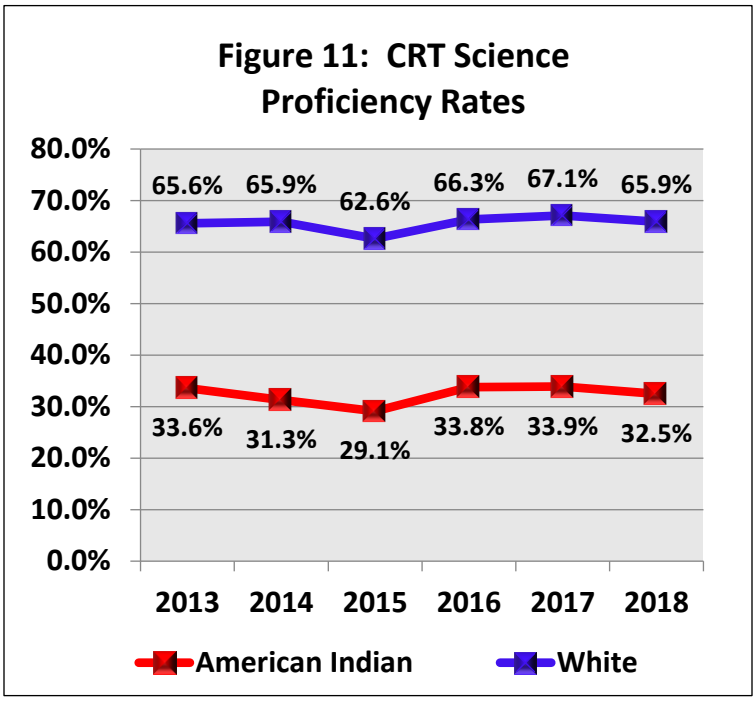
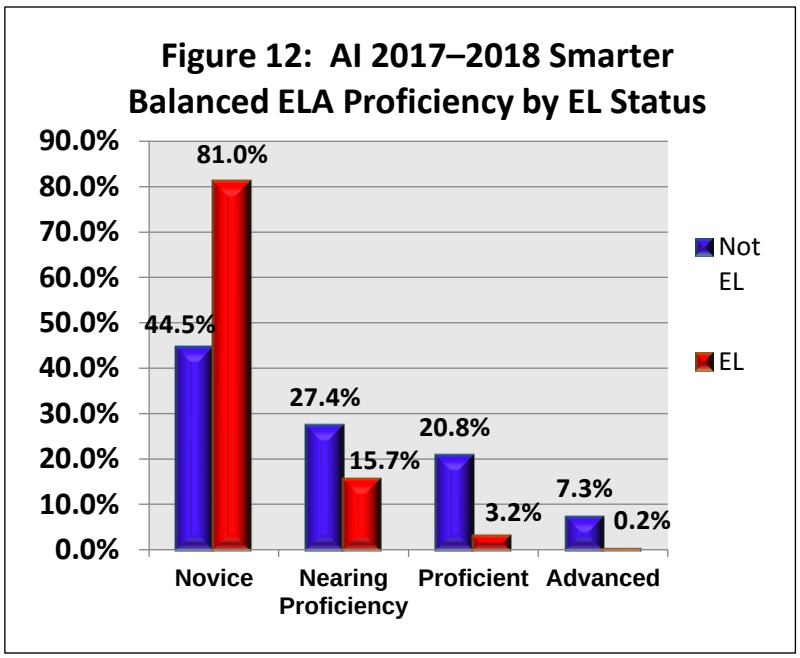


Figure 11 shows the proficiency rates for American Indian students and White students on the CRT Science. Over the last six years the proficiency rate has gone up and down a bit for each subgroup, but has remained relatively constant. The larger concern here is the achievement gap between the two subgroups has also remained constant and for 2017-2018 is 33.4 percentage points. There is also a fairly large difference between American Indian students attending a school within a reservation boundary compared to those outside the reservation. The American Indian students within a reservation boundary have a 22.2% proficiency rate for 2017-2018, while their counterparts outside the reservation have a 40.3% proficiency rate. This difference has also remained fairly constant over the long term trend.

English Learner (EL) Students and English Language Proficiency (ELP) Test

English Learner (EL) students in Montana are generally students who have impact from a language other than English in their environment, usually at home. All EL students in Montana are required to take the ELP test, according to the ESSA. The students can then test out of EL status and become Former EL. Former EL status is then tracked for two full school years. The ELP test is used to test the EL students for English proficiency but other factors such as grades, state assessments, and teacher input are the determining factors for whether a student is moved to Former EL.

During the 2017-2018 school year there were 3,113 EL students enrolled in Montana. Sixty-six and one-tenth percent of all EL students were American Indian. The percent of EL students who have been EL for five or more years is 36.6% of all EL students. Decreasing this number of students who have been EL for five or more years has been a focus of OPI and these students are now a focus in the ESSA. In 2017-2018 85% of the students who have been EL students for five or more years were American Indian. So, on average, American Indian students are remaining in Current EL status longer than other students. It is well known in the education community, both nationally and in Montana, the lowest scoring demographic of students are the EL students. The longer the student is an EL student the more effect it has later on in the student's schooling. Figure 12 shows the difference between EL students and other students on the Smarter Balanced ELA test during the 2017-2018 school year. Almost twice as many EL students score at the Novice level when compared to students who are not ELs. EL students also have the lowest graduation rate of any student group, for 2016-2017 it was 63.4%



Montana is one of 39 states that belongs to the WIDA consortium that creates the ELP test Montana utilizes. 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. Please visit the WIDA Web site at www.wida.us to learn more about the assessment.

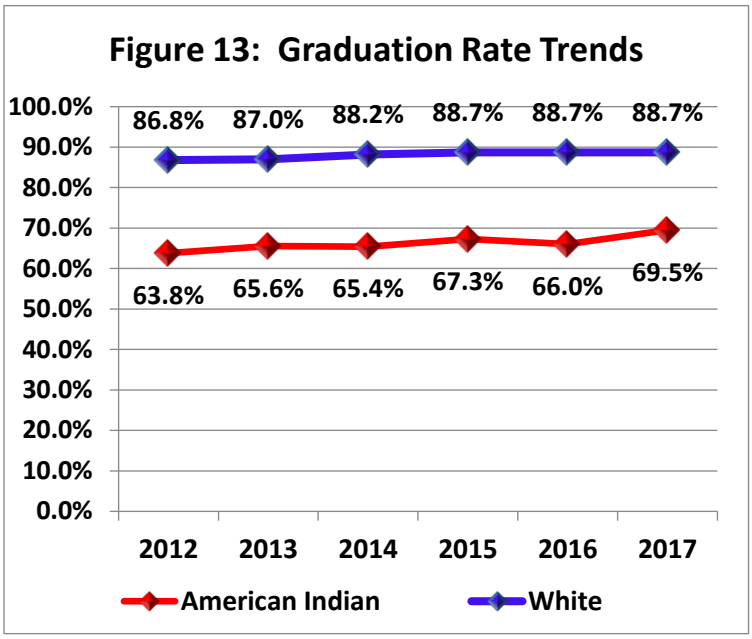
For the 2017-2018 school year there were 3,111 total students who took the ELP test. The ELP test has five different domains for testing EL students: Writing, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Literacy. A total score is then found using the result from the five domains. To be considered proficient in Montana, a student must score at least 4.0 on literacy and 5.0 on total proficiency. Of the students who took the test in 2018, 70 of them, or 2.3%, were tested as proficient.

Students planning for Youth Leadership Conference

Graduation Rates

The graduation rates in this report are the percentage of students who graduate from high school in four years or less, otherwise known as the four-year cohort graduation rate. Students who spent extra time to graduate, or students who re-entered school and graduated after their original cohort are not counted as graduates in their cohort. This rate tracks students throughout their time in high school to determine the graduation rate. Graduation rates for 2017-2018 are not available as of the printing of this report.

For the first time since the newest method of calculating the four-year cohort graduation rates was established in 2012, the American Indian graduation rate decreased for 2015-2016. However, there was a significant increase in the gradation rate for 2016-2017 to 69.5%. The White student graduation rate has remained steady the last three years. Because of this, the gap between the subgroups has closed, but the American Indian graduation rate is still 19.2 percentage points lower than that for White students.

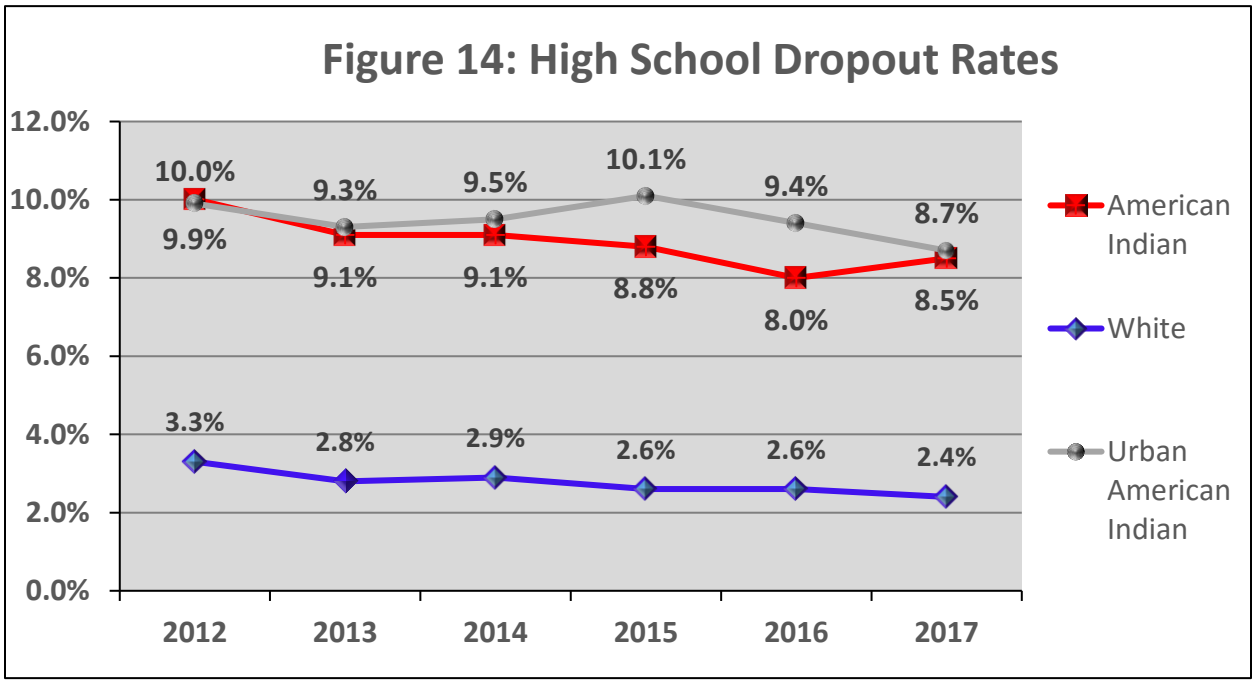


Dropout Rates

Unlike the graduation rate, the dropout rates presented in this report are an event rate, which is the percentage of total students who dropped out during that year. The overall high school dropout rate continued to drop in 2016-2017 to 3.3% as Montana had a total of 1,457 dropouts statewide. Unfortunately, the American Indian high school dropout rate increased to 8.5% after seeing a historical low in 2015-2016 at 8.0%.

Figure 14 shows the breakdown of dropout rates by race and school grade for 2016-2017. It can also easily be seen in Figure 14 that there is a stark gap between American Indian and White student dropout rates. While the gap does appear to be getting smaller, progress has been slow.

Also of note is American Indian students tend to drop out at an earlier grade than White students. In Figure 15 below you can see the 7th and 8th grade dropout rate for American Indians is much higher than it is for White students. In fact, American Indians are more than ten times likely to drop out before high school when compared to White students. What is also not shown in Figure 14 is the fact American Indians drop out much earlier in high school also. For example, the 9th grade dropout rate for American Indians is 6.2% while the same dropout rate for White students is only 0.7%. However, American Indians have shown improvement in this area in the past few years as there used to be more 9th grade American



Indian dropouts than 12th grade dropouts. That has reversed and there are now more 12th grade dropouts, which means the students dropping out are staying in school longer than they had previously. In summary, dropout rates are improving, both among American Indian students and other subgroups, but there is some progress needed to close the gap.

Another difference among the American Indian subgroup and other students is the reasons they drop out. Fifty and seven-tenths percent of American Indian students dropped out because of attendance difficulty as compared to 33.8% of other students. This is a huge difference and shows that many American Indian students are dropping out because for whatever reason, they can't get to school. Another area of difference among dropouts is that only 13.0% of American Indian students list pursuing or completing the HiSET as the reason for dropping out while 32.4% of other students list this reason for dropping out.

Figure 15: 2016–2017 Dropout Rates by Grade

	Grades 7 – 8	Grades 9 – 12	Total
American Indian	1.2%	8.5%	5.8%
White	0.1%	2.4%	1.6%
Overall	0.3%	3.3%	2.3%

Special Education Data

For the 2017-2018 school year there were 18,304 total special education students in public schools in Montana. This was an increase in the number of students for the fifth year in a row. Of those students, 3,365 are American Indian students. Of all America Indian students in Montana, 16.4% were identified as special education students. This compares to only 11.9% of all White students that are identified as special education students. The three most common disabilities among both the American Indian and White student subgroups are learning disability, multiple disabilities, and speech/language impairment.

Attendance Rates

There is no statewide policy for how attendance should be counted at schools. Each school is left to count attendance in a way they see best. This leads to differences between schools on how they count things such as missing school for school related activities, tardies, medical absences, missing partial days, and other reasons. That being said, when looking at the statewide data OPI does have, we can get some ideas of what is occuring across the state. As of the writing of this report, the 2017-2018 attendance data is not yet available.

Youth Leadership Conference Planning at Havre

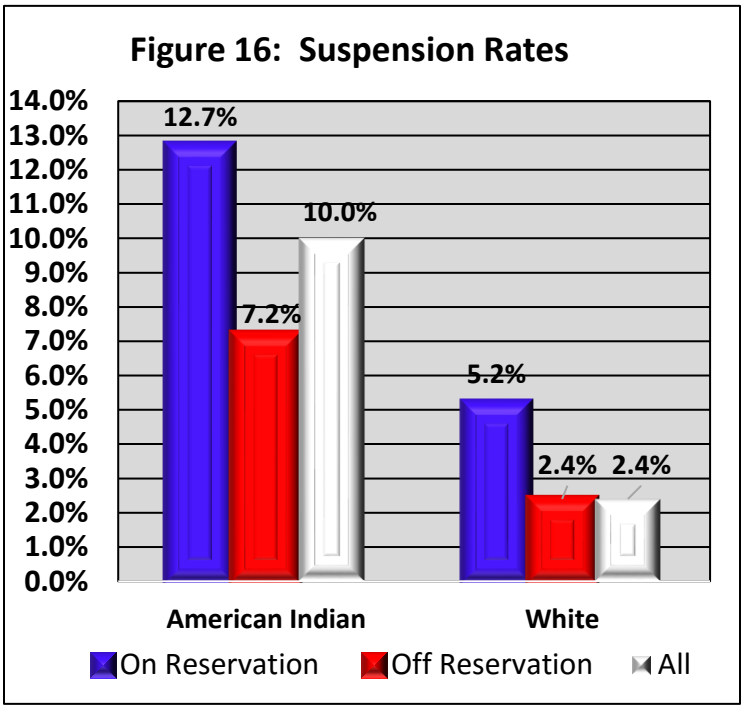
For 2016-2017 the statewide attendance rate for American Indian students was 88.1% compared to 93.5% for White students. This is a significant difference between these two subgroups. While the attendance rates have remained relatively stable the last four years, there was a slight decline for all students and subgroups for the 2016-2017 school year. Chronically absent students are currently defined as students missing 10% or more of school. The data then reflects that the average American Indian student in Montana is chronically absent from school. There are many reports and studies showing the negative effects on students from being chronically absent. America Indian students attending school physically located on the reservation had a 85.1% attendance rate, compared to their peers off the reservation at 90.5%. However, the Urban American Indian attendance rate was 89.5%.

Suspension and Expulsion Data

As of the writing of this report, the 2017-2018 suspension and expulsion data had not been finalized. The 2016-2017 data will be discussed in this report. All suspension data shown here reflects out of school suspension data, as OPI does not collect in-school suspensions. Statewide, 10% of all American Indian students were given at least one out of school suspension during the 2016-2017 school year. That compares to only 2.4% of White students who were given an out of school suspension. The discripency of minorities being suspended at a much higher rate is not unique to Montana as it has been shown to occur all across the nation with most minorities. A more concerning aspect may be that while the White student suspension rate continues to decrease, the American Indian suspension rate shows an increase

for the first time since OPI start collecting this data in 2010 – 2011 (the 2015-2016 American Indian suspension rate was 9.6%).

Figure 16 shows several different trends that are occuring in Montana. First, regardless of race, students located in schools within reservation boundaries were about twice as likely to be suspended compared to those located outside the reservation boundaries. Also, regardless of their location, American Indian students are much more likely to be suspended than White students with the overall suspension rate of American Indians four times that of White students.



Students expelled from school for any time frame also show similar trends to that of the out of school suspensions. Expulsion counts for the state are relatively small, which causes a lot of fluctuation from year to year and makes comparisons difficult. There were 27 American Indian students expelled for some time period during the 2016-2017 school year while the number of White students expelled was 17. This means that even though the White student population in Montana is much larger than the American Indian population, there were more American Indian students expelled.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

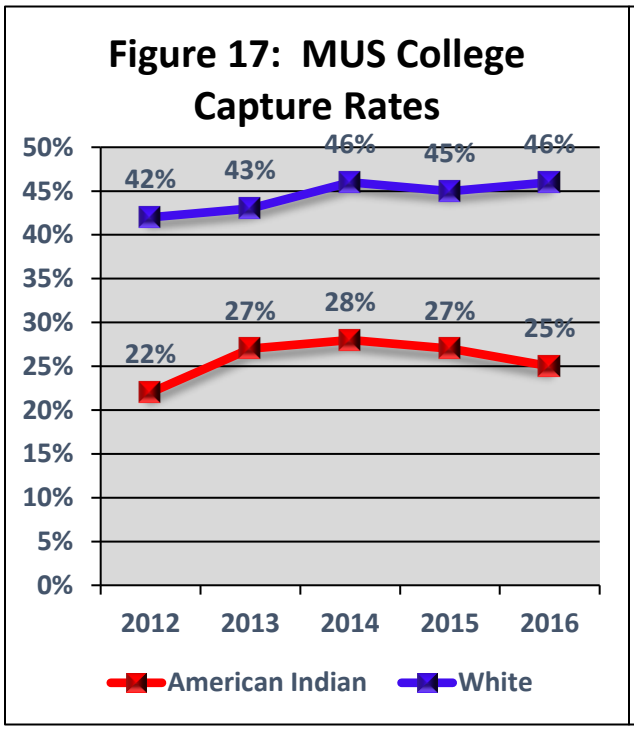
There were 5,256 total AP exams given to Montana public school students during the 2016-2017 school year. Data for the 2017-2018 school year was not available at the time of the printing of this report. The number of AP exams given increased from the previous year and, in general, the number of AP exams taken in Montana has been increasing for the past 30 years. Some students took more than one AP exam and 3,288 students took at least one AP exam. Two hundred thirty-seven of the exams were given to American Indian students, with English Literature and Composition being the most common subject tested at 68 exams.

On any AP exam taken for any subject, a passing test is scored as a 3 or higher. For 2016-2017 there were 3,227 exams passed, which results in a passing rate of 62.3%. For American Indians there were 78 passing scores resulting in a passing rate of 32.9%.

College Data

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) allows for the ability to track students who enter these post-secondary schools. Montana is unique in that each reservation is home to a tribal college. However the MUS data presented here does not include Tribal College enrollment and remediation data since it is not available from those schools.

One way of determining what students are doing after graduating from high school is the college capture rate. This is the rate of students who enroll in college within 16 months of graduating. Capture rates for Montana students entering the MUS are shown in Figure 17. Figure 17 shows the capture rates for American Indian students are much lower than for White students. The data for 2017 is not shown in Figure 17 because at the time of this report those students still had time to enroll in a school. Remediation rates are another way of tracking students once they enter college. A remediation rate is the rate of students who enter college within 16 months of graduating high school and enroll in either a remedial writing or math class (remedial courses are usually courses with course numbers less than 100). The rates presented in this report are only for campuses of the Montana University System.



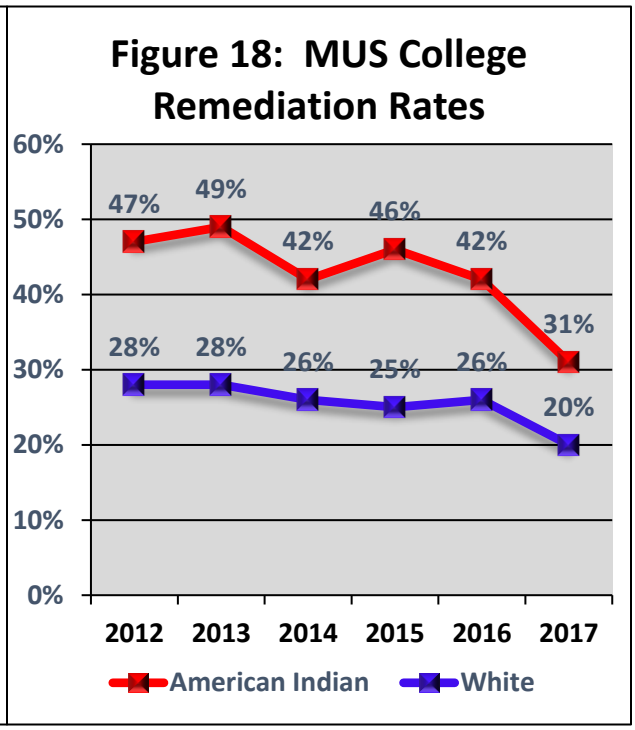


Figure 18 shows the remediation rates for Montana students attending a school in the Montana University System. Remediation rates are much higher for American Indian students. Math remediation rates are much higher than writing remediation rates for both races. Math remediation rates for American Indian students are 26% while it is 18% for White students. The American Indian remediation rate for writing is 8% compared to 4% for White students. However, in Figure 18, you can see the Remediation rates for American Indians have decreased in the past two years, more so than it has for White students. When

comparing the remediation rates of math and writing, it indicates many students who take a remedial course in one subject also take on in the other.

Student Surveys Data

There are two student surveys administered in the state of Montana, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the My Voice Student Survey. Neither survey polls every student and both surveys use sampling procedures to estimate for the entire population. The YRBS survey has been conducted once every two years since 1993, with the last one being during the 2016-2017 school year. This survey is conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and is conducted nationwide. Some YRBS results are discussed here but you may find the entire YRBS report at http://www.opi.mt.gov/yrbs. There are many more differences in the survey results than what is detailed in this report. The My Voice survey has been conducted annually since the 2010-2011 school year. The 2017-2018 My Voice report was not available at the printing of this report, so the 2016-2017 results will be discussed here.

Figure 19 shows some selected questions from the YRBS survey results and shows the differences between American Indian students on or near reservations and those in urban schools. Some of the differences also demonstrate a difference between American Indian students and all students.

Figure 19: 2016–2017 Selected YRBS Results

AI – R: American Indian students on or near reservations **AI – U: American Indian students in urban schools**

	All	AI – R	AI - U
Carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days.	8.5%	7.5%	14.0%
Felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months.	31.0%	42.9%	39.4%
Attempted suicide during the past 12 months	9.5%	22.5%	22.8%
Were trying to lose weight	41.1%	56.7%	48.1%
Currently smoked cigarettes, past 30 days.	12.1	26.4%	18.4%
Ever drank alcohol	68.0%	58.6%	66.5%
Currently used marijuana, past 30 days	19.8%	35.0%	26.8%

For the question “Felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months,” there was a significant increase in the past year for American Indian students on or near reservations. Also related to this, there was an increase for 2016-2017 for all three groups when asked if they “Attempted suicide during the past 12 months”.

Figure 20 shows some trend data for some selected questions on the YRBS. Trend data is available in the full YRBS report for all questions. Figure 20 also shows there has been a strong decrease is certain behaviors. Most of the drug and alcohol related questions have seen significant decreases since 1999 and continue to decrease almost annually.

Figure 20: YRBS Trend Data AI – R: American Indian students on or near reservations AI – U: American Indian students in urban schools	Subgroup	1999	2017
Rode in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days.	All	43.1%	19.8%
	AI – R	53.3%	23.6%
	AI - U	49.3%	23.4%
Used any form of cocaine in their life.	All	9.8%	4.4%
	AI – R	21.4%	6.5%
	AI - U	21.2%	8.4%
Used methamphetamines during their life.	All	13.5%	2.2%
	AI – R	26.8%	5.3%
	AI - U	24.1%	4.8%

The My Voice survey asks different types of questions than the YRBS survey. Examples are questions relating to the students belonging in school, sense of accomplishment, curiosity, and leadership. There are several ways the MyVoice 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), all White students.

Figure 21 shows the percentage of students who agree to the statement provided in the survey. There are many more questions on the survey; this is a just a few that were selected because of there differences between the subgroups presented. One of the largest differences found in the study is to the question, “I think bullying is a problem at my school”. Fifty-three percent of American Indian students in a school where they are the majority said bullying is a problem while only 38% in schools where American Indians are the minority. This is interesting because the YRBS reveals that American Indian students feel more threatened when they are in schools where they are the minority.

Figure 21: Select 2016-2017 My Voice Survey Results	White	AI majority	AI minority
I think bullying is a problem at my school.	37%	53%	38%
I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.	80%	76%	79%
Teachers make school an exciting place to learn.	41%	49%	41%
Teachers let my parents know what I do well.	49%	58%	49%
I feel comfortable asking questions in class.	60%	55%	59%
I am a good decision maker.	64%	57%	63%
I feel accepted for who I am at school.	66%	69%	65%
School inspires me to learn.	58%	66%	58%
I enjoy being at school.	50%	57%	50%

The MyVoice survey also has a survey that is filled out by the parents. The types of questions on this survey are related and in some cases even the same. There are some interesting differences between students and parents in this survey. For example, when asked if their child is a good decision maker,

parents of American Indian students said they agreed 75% of the time while parents of White students agreed 81% of the time. These percentages are markedly different than the percentages shown by the students themselves in Figure 21. there are also other questions that show differences in the parent survey. Such as when asked “Teachers care if my child is absent from school” the parents of American Indian students agreed 84% of the time while parents of White students agreed 79% of the time.

Summary

The American Indian student Achievement gap is shown in several areas throughout this report. There is improvement in some areas in narrowing the gap but there is still room for improvement. Improvement in these areas will not happen overnight, but it is important for the future of Montana for the American Indian student achievement gap to continue to narrow. This report is meant to be used to discuss ways to reduce the gap between American Indian students and other students and build strategies to support the student who may struggle with typical school supports.

This document is also located electronically on the Indian Education page within the OPI Web site at http://opi.mt.gov/Educators/Teaching-Learning/Indian-Education/Data-Guidance.

Students showing their posters from the Flathead Youth Initiative at Salish Kootenai College

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