Site Visit Report
January 2018

Hopi Education Feasibility Study

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hopi Tribe is a federally-recognized government comprised of a union of self-governing Hopi villages located on the Hopi reservation in northern Arizona. There are seven tribally-controlled schools on the Hopi Reservation. After receiving a Tribal Education Department (TED) grant from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), the tribe contracted with **Public Works LLC** to conduct a feasibility study to help the tribe improve education in Hopi schools.

The feasibility study included a review of promising practices in tribal education. To that end, between July 2017 and January 2018, the **Public Works** team conducted extensive research on other tribes' education activities, conducted visits to eight tribes and one school, and held telephone interviews with two tribes. The tribes and schools included:

- Standing Rock Sioux, North Dakota
- Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Nez Percé, Idaho
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Montana
- Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico
- Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico
- Eastern Band of Cherokee, North Carolina
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Santa Fe Indian School, New Mexico
- Gila River Indian Community, Arizona
- Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah

These tribes and schools were chosen due to their relevance to the Hopi's objectives for a comprehensive educational system. Based on our preliminary research, each tribe used a model or strategy that could inform the Hopi in their decision-making process. For example, using a Sovereignty in Education (SIE) grant, the Gila Education Department River is moving forward on plans to unify its three tribally-controlled schools. With its SIE and Tribal Education Department (TED) grants, the Standing Rock Sioux conducted an extensive community dialogue and revised their education code, and they now implement a consortium of school administers, who voluntarily share strategies and pool resources. The Choctaw and Cherokee use the "school district" model for their school district systems. The Navajo are setting up a system that more closely resembles a state education agency. Other tribes partner with the reservation's schools in more supportive ways, such as the Coeur d'Alene's use of an "education pipeline," a strategic multi-part framework developed by the Nez Perce, or through the creation of culturally relevant

materials by the Confederated Tribes of Salish and Kootenai. Finally, in consultation with the Hopi, we chose tribes because they were implementing innovative programs and other promising practices, such as tribal language programs or immersion schools, creative family and community engagement strategies, collaborative professional development opportunities for educators, alternative schools for at-risk students, and/or tribally-controlled colleges, all of which are described herein as potential options for the Hopi.

The findings and observations from each visit are summarized in a chapter of this report. Each chapter is divided into the five sections described below.

1. Historical and Community Background

In this section, we provide background information for each tribe, such as its location, the number of members, number of students served, and the number and type of schools serving its students. The tribes visited span a range of sizes and education models. For example, the Standing Rock Sioux, Eastern Band of Cherokee, and Mississippi Band of Choctaw are among the largest Indian tribes in the United States terms of membership and reservation size, and each has multiple tribally-controlled schools.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Coeur D'Alene operate a single tribally-controlled school, and the Santa Clara and Jemez Pueblos are involved in different capacities with one and three schools, respectively.

Not only the size, but the structure of the education system varies for each tribe. Some tribes only have tribally-controlled schools. Others have some combination of tribally-controlled schools, tribally-controlled charter schools, language immersion schools; BIE schools; and public and private schools. The Nez Percé hope to eventually operate its own schools, but currently work collaboratively with public schools that serve Native students on their reservation. The Standing Rock Sioux also have a tribally-controlled school located off-reservation and tribal college. Like the Hopi, all of the tribally-controlled schools (including charter schools and immersion schools), receive the majority of their funding from BIE grants.

Finally, the Santa Fe Indian School provides a different model altogether. It operates two boarding schools, for middle and high school students, from any tribe across the southwest. While this model is quite different from anything the Hopi would consider, it is considered an outstanding school that is often held up as a model for Indian education, and there are elements to its approaches to management, learning, and other educational programs that could be applied by the Hopi.

2. Management Structure

For tribes with tribally-controlled schools, each has a unique approach to the development of education policy and school management. In some tribes, each school is managed independently under an elected school board (Coeur D'Alene; Santa Clara Pueblo). Other tribes rely on different levels of centralization of decision-making and control. For example, the Eastern Band of Cherokee have an elected board that establishes a strategic plan and certain policies that apply to all the schools, which are otherwise managed independently. The Standing Rock Sioux have the tribe manage Human Resources for the schools, which are otherwise independent, while the Mississippi Band of Choctaw centralized a large part of decision-making with the tribal government.

Tribal departments of education and other tribal office may have a variety of responsibilities, depending on the tribe. Relative to tribally-controlled schools, they may develop the tribal education code; establish consistent requirements pertaining to attendance, teacher certification, and academic policies; facilitate collaboration; manage school libraries; provide after school programs. Outside of K-12, they may provide continuing adult education; early childhood development, higher education, and/or vocational rehabilitation programs; and college scholarships.

Many of the tribes with multiple schools attribute their success, in part, to a collaborative model or approach. The Standing Rock Sioux created a consortium that includes representatives from the tribe, schools, and community leaders to facilitate better communication, address common concerns, foster collaborative solutions, and utilize educational resources in a more efficient way; however, the consortium does not manage or supervise schools. On the other hand, the Eastern Band of Cherokee has a centralized school board that establishes consistent policies for its schools, and the Mississippi Band of the Choctaw centralizes even more control within the tribal education department. In all these cases, the consistency in standards, content, and methodology that results from collaboration is thought to be an important part of the schools' success.

3. Tribal Cultural and Native Language Education

A theme across all the schools visited was "teaching culturally", as opposed to teaching culture. Significant effort has been invested by the tribes to integrate their culture and language in the curriculum and lesson plans, classrooms and physical spaces, schedules, and oftentimes, the communities themselves.

Several of tribes created their own tools for teaching tribal culture and language, including curriculum (Standing Rock Sioux; Jemez Pueblo), standards (Nez Percé), and instructional materials, such as textbooks and videos (Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes). These efforts often began with the identification of core tribal values. Curriculum and standards typically aligned with the tribes' state and/or the Common Core Standards. Some education programs went further and developed lesson plans, pacing guides, and coaching to support teachers in implementation. Plans and materials often have often been developed in cooperation with local universities and/or hired consultants.

Schools also provide professional development for teachers in their Native culture, particularly where teaching staff is predominantly non-Native. The Cherokee Central School has a Culture Department with 18 staff members who are responsible for the integration of the Cherokee culture into all aspects of its elementary, middle, and high school. Cherokee cultural has been integrated not only into the schools' curriculum, but also the physical plant via the choices made in campus design, color choices, decoration, and landscaping.

Teaching tribal languages is a core part of teaching culturally for all of the tribes. Since the tribal languages are disappearing in many tribal communities, many of the tribes train teachers in the tribal language and recruit fluent speakers to work as aids in the classroom. Other strategies tribes use to teach and reinforce native languages include:

- Developing a language curriculum (Standing Rock Sioux)

- Creating language immersion schools (Standing Rock Sioux; Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes) or dual-language programs (the Jemez and Santa Clara Pueblos)

- Creating both text and audio language learning (Coeur D'Alene)

- Establishing a Language Department within the tribal government that is charged with expanding the use of tribal language throughout the community (Coeur D'Alene)

- Requiring senior projects tied to tribal culture (Jemez Pueblo; Santa Fe Indian School)

- Having a language coordinator who recruits and trains teachers, and works to expand Native language use in the community (Mississippi Choctaw)

- Utilizing certified language instructors (Santa Fe Indian School)

4. Professional Development and Capacity Building

Many tribes with students served by multiple schools arrange for combined professional development for all teachers in order to use resources most effectively and assure schools are using consistent strategies and methodologies in the classrooms. To keep teachers across schools on target with the curriculum, the Choctaw also utilize pacing guides across their schools. These guides also help to ensure that students who transfer between schools do not miss significant portions of the curriculum.

Most schools have multiple approaches to professional development. In addition to regular, structured professional development sessions, several provide an intensive summer learning program for teachers. Many of the schools also utilize strategies such as peer groups collaboration, professional learning communities, co-teaching, mentor-teacher models, and lead teachers to support teachers and facilitate their professional development.

Membership in professional organizations, such as the Native American Community Academy-Inspired Schools Network (Santa Clara Pueblo) and the Western Regional Education Service Alliance (Cherokee Central School), are another vehicle some schools use to provide teachers professional development support and opportunities to collaborate with other professionals. The Cherokee Central School also collaborates with public schools in its region for an annual conference on best practices.

Additionally, tribes recognize the value of Native teachers, yet often there are insufficient qualified-Native teachers to meet their needs. As a result, grow-your-own-teacher programs are one way that tribes are increasing the number of Native teachers. The Jemez people are working with the state on a path to alternative certification as a way to grow its own teachers and educational assistants. The Standing Rock Sioux and Santa Fe Indian Schools also utilize other types of grow-your-own programs, and the Coeur D'Alene are considering developing one.

5. Promising Practices and Future Objectives

Each site visit brought to light different promising practices – and future objectives – that vary depending on the needs, strengths, circumstances, and resources of the tribe or school.   Several examples that could be of particular relevance to the Hopi include:

- Integration of education with workforce development. The Coeur D'Alene's "education pipeline" is a unique model that ties its diverse grant programs together to support the whole learner, from birth through college, with a focus on workforce goals and opportunities. This model was developed by the tribe and considered a national best practice.

- Creative family and community engagement strategies. Many tribes have developed unique and successful strategies, such as an on-line tool (Coeur D'Alene); the use of Family Engagement Teams (Nez Percé), incorporating family engagement into the core education strategic framework (Nez Percé); a mobile parent resource center (Mississippi Band of Choctaw); and the use of open communication strategies to engage both students and parents (Santa Fe Tribal School).

- An emphasis on post-secondary education options. Tribes are very focused on their students' long-term success. Strategies tribes have used to facilitate such success include the creation of a tribal college (Standing Rock Sioux); a focus on STEM – science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (Coeur D'Alene); partnerships with community colleges and universities to provide dual-credit learning (Jemez Pueblo; Santa Fe Indian School); vocational education programs in schools (Cherokee Central Schools; Choctaw); and rigorous academic standards and graduation requirements (Santa Fe Indian School).

- Strategies to address public health and social challenges. Tribes recognize that their students' success is often hindered by drug and alcohol use and fractured families or unstable living arrangements. Some tribes have sought to address such problems as part of a more comprehensive effort to improve student outcomes. Strategies include projects that involve the criminal justice system (Coeur D'Alene); the utilization of culturally-relevant wraparound services to improve health and educational outcomes (Nez Percé); and the integration of health and wellness goals in the curriculum (Santa Fe Indian School).

CONCLUSION

This report can be helpful to the Hopi in two ways:

(1) Learning about options and incorporating them into the community dialogue and decision-making process; and

(2) Building relationships with the other Tribal education leaders, to better hone those ideas, strategies, and models.

The idea of "multiple options" has been emphasized to remind the Hopi educational leaders and community members alike that this project represents an ongoing process where our team will provide analysis, recommendations, and options so the Hopi people can make decisions about what will serve their community best.

In Appendix A, we have included "**Tribal Education Contact Information**" for each of the tribes that we visited or interviewed. It is our hope that, with this information, the Hopi Tribal Chairman, the Education Director, the Hopi Board of Education Chairman, and/or the Hopi Health and Education Committee Chairman can reach out to these other leaders, engage in an informed dialogue, ask follow-up questions, share strategies about moving forward, and learn from one another.

This report will be supplemented by two other reports to be provided by **Public Works LLC**:

- **Tribal Education Code Report**, which summarizes the education codes of 17 tribes, and shows the Hopi options for governance structures; and

- **Feasibility Study**, which will present information gathered from Hopi, promising educational practices, and a recommended framework for dialogue and decision-making.

Public Works will also develop short "Visioning Statements" for the Hopi to review and deliberate during the visioning meetings to be held March 5-7, 2018.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Contact	
Project Director	Pamela Kondé, **Public Works LLC**
E-mail	pkonde@public-works.org
Phone	703-272-3393

1. STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE, NORTH DAKOTA

Develop and implement activities to preserve, protect, and perpetuate the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe by and through education of its tribal members making education on the Standing Rock Reservation a relevant experience and to prepare students for life on and off the reservation.

- Standing Rock Tribal Department of Education

Tribal population: 8,200 on the Reservation

Student population: 2,021

Website: https://www.standingrock.org

Triballly-Controlled Schools:

- Rock Greek Grant School (Pre-K-8)
- Little Eagle Grant School (Pre-K–8)
- Standing Rock Community School (Pre-K-12)
- Theodore Jamerson Grant School (K-8, off the Reservation)
- Fort Yates Public School (Pre-K-12) (Operates under a Joint Powers Agreement between ND and SR Tribe)
- The Immersion Nest (Pre-K-3)
- Sitting Bull College

Public Schools (North Dakota and South Dakota):

- Selfridge Public School (K-12) (ND)
- McIntosh Public School (PreK-12) (SD)
- McLaughlin Public School (PreK-12) (SD)
- Smee Public School (K-12) (SD)

1.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Standing Rock Sioux Reservation is the sixth-largest Native American reservation in land area in the United States with a land area of 3,571.9 square miles and a tribal population of about 8,200, spread over South Dakota and North Dakota.

The Standing Rock Sioux represent one of the Great Sioux Nations. These tribes also include the Oglala Sioux, the Rosebud Sioux, the Yankton Sioux, the Cheyenne River Sioux, and the Lower Brule Sioux in South Dakota, as well as other Sioux tribes living in Minnesota and Nebraska.

There are 10 primary and secondary schools, and one college, on the reservation. Of the primary and secondary schools, three are tribally-controlled: Rock Creek Grant School, Sitting Bull School, and The Immersion Nest, a Lakota-language pre-K to grade 3 school. Standing Rock Community School on the reservation operates under a Joint Powers Agreement with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. There is also one tribally-controlled school off-reservation in Bismarck, North Dakota, the Theodore Jamerson Grant School. All of these schools are funded by the Bureau of Indian

Education. Each of the schools is governed by a local school board, and the Tribal Council exercises control and oversight through its Committee on Health and Education.

1.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Standing Rock Education Consortium

In 2005, the tribe, schools, and community leaders formed the Standing Rock Education Consortium (SREC) to facilitate better communication, address common concerns, foster collaborative solutions, and utilize educational resources in a more efficient way.[1] The members of the SREC include representatives from all of the educational institutions within the reservation: three tribal-grant schools, three North Dakota and three South Dakota public schools, the Language and Culture Institute, one parochial school, one Head Start program, and Sitting Bull College. Additional members of the SREC include the off-reservation tribal grant school and representatives from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, the South Dakota Department of Education, and the Missouri River Education Cooperative.

The SREC supports schools on the Standing Rock schools through by providing professional peer group collaboration, annual professional development, and Lakota/Dakota culture and language tools. Each year, the SREC also engages its members in strategic planning, through which three goals are selected that the schools focus on for the year. The annual planning involves school board members and school administrators. The strategic planning process is regarded as part of tribal nation-building.

The Education Manager of the Tribal Department of Education (TDE) facilitates the SREC. Although it does not have jurisdiction over the schools themselves, the TDE focuses on three major program areas: (1) Language and Culture, (2) Educational Programs, and (3) Scholarships (undergraduate and graduate).

The TDE was a first-round recipient of both Tribal Education Development (TED) grants and Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) grants. As a result, it has been working for several years on capacity building and improvement of students' educational experience.

SIE Grant: Determining Tribal Capacity for School Management

With its SIE grant, the Standing Rock Sioux tribe hired consultants to analyze school governance, academics, and finance and human resources of the BIE-funded schools and

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[1] Standing Rock Education Consortium, REL Central, 2015, https://www.relcentral.org/resource-download/?id=4853&post_id=5622 .

the tribal government to determine: (1) whether the tribe had the capacity to manage the tribal schools; and (2) whether any of the functions examined should be consolidated under the TDE. The tribe also used the grant to identify barriers to tribal control of education and legislative changes needed to address such barriers, as well as to create tribal education measures for student success.

In regards to business management, the consultant recommended that the tribe manage human resources for all the tribal schools and that tribal schools should continue to manage their own finances.

Additionally, the consultant found that the schools did not have academic policies and that working with the school boards and administrators to create consistent policies should be a priority. Therefore, another recommendation was for the school superintendents to meet and compare academic policies and procedures, and to determine which academic policies and procedures should be used by all of the schools. The consultant and TDE worked with the school leaders and school boards to provide capacity building; help each school to understand, articulate, and draft consistent governance documents (constitutions and by-laws); and begin the process of creating academic policies for the schools. The consultant also recommended that the TDE and its schools provide greater culture and language integration and provide cultural pedagogy.

TED Grant: Developing and Implementing the Education Code
Over a two-year period (2010-2012), the Standing Rock Sioux developed an Education Code. The process of creating the code involved broad community representation, including all education stakeholders from Head Start through college, and all of the tribal and public schools. According to the TDE, the process was difficult, open, and required significant negotiation, but as a consequence, all of the stakeholders took ownership of the code. Two important results were that the Lakota/Dakota language and culture became the basis for all instruction (it was no longer just an add-on) and the tribe created its own standards.

The Education Code also requires an annual State of Education report that the TDE created and issued for the first time in 2017. School leaders were involved in designing a survey to gather data so that they were prepared for the data request. As a result, they were eager to see the findings and compare their data with that of others. The TDE director reporter that Tribal Council members seemed to express more interest and ownership of it than prior reports that had come from state or federal entities.

Using the TED grant, the TDE also focused on capacity building and implementing key parts of the Education Code, including:

- Creating consistent (though not identical) academic policies for the schools;

- Requiring all children to attend kindergarten;

- Setting teacher qualification rules;

- Developing their own set of standards;

- Creation of a student data system that will be used for all schools on the reservation (tribal, North Dakota, and South Dakota);

- Implementation of an attendance policy;

- The creation and use of a pre-school readiness assessment;

- The development of a Lakota language certification for teachers; and

- The provision of an orientation on history, language and culture for all teachers new to Standing Rock.

The Standing Rock Sioux now have an Educational Code designed to preserve, protect, and perpetuate tribal culture, promote educational understanding and coordination, and make education a relevant experience that prepares students for life on and off the reservation.

1.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The TDE supports a continuum of educational opportunities for Standing Rock Sioux students and schools, from pre-school to college. The programs include tribal school accreditation, the Immersion Nest (a Lakota-language school), and Sitting Bull college programs and scholarships.

Tribal School Accreditation

For several years, the TDE has been working in collaboration with the Tribal Education directors from all the recognized tribes in South Dakota to coordinate and improve tribal education. Together the directors created a tribal accreditation process designed to be

used by any of their tribal schools. The process aligns with the internally-recognized AdvancED school accreditation system, enabling schools to simultaneously seek both accreditations. The Theodore Jamerson School in Bismarck, North Dakota is the first school to indicate that it is interested in obtaining tribal accreditation. At the time of our visit, approval for use by Standing Rock Sioux schools was pending approval by the Tribal Council.

Oceti-Sakowin Essential Understandings
A significant amount of time has been spent developing standards tied to tribal culture. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act ties the schools to South and North Dakota's standards. Since the primary interest of the tribe is standards for language and culture, the first standards the Council adopted were the South Dakota Oceti-Sakowin Essential Understandings (OSEU), a set of elder-defined and agreed upon understandings designed to promote Indian identity and cultural understandings among Native and non-Native students and teachers.[2]

In South Dakota, the OSEU are state standards supported by curriculum and lesson plans. In North Dakota, the OSEU are optional state standards. The Standing Rock Tribal Council directed the TDE to adopt the South Dakota OSEU for tribal schools because it more closely ties to their culture than the North Dakota OSEU does. However, some schools' missions, visions, and practices speak more directly to the OSEU standards than others.

The South Dakota public schools located on the Standing Rock Reservation are familiar with the OSEU, although only one is reported to be significantly invested in their use. The North Dakota public schools are just beginning to hear about them. The tribe provided a grant to the TDE in 2017 to provide capacity building professional development to administrators and school boards on language and culture, and professional development for teachers on how to implement the OSEU in the classroom.

The tribal schools support the teaching of language and culture in different ways. Examples of the strategies used to support both the teaching and understanding of Native culture and history include:

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[2] South Dakota Office of Indian Education, *Oceti-Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards*, https://indianeducation.sd.gov/documents/OcetiSakowinEUS.pdf

- The Standing Rock Community Middle School is incorporating the lesson plans made available through the WoLakota Project, South Dakota's OSEU support program.

- The Standing Rock Community High School is providing extensive staff development in language and culture in response to teacher requests.

- The Standing Rock Community Elementary School is replacing some non-Native stories in reading curricula with Native stories. It is also building an enhancement curriculum that adds and aligns the teaching of Native American culture and books to all of the Northwest Evaluation Association and Common Core Standards, work being supported by experts from the Missouri River Education Cooperative.

One of the TDE's primary goals is to strengthen the teaching of language and culture. This effort is also where it directs a significant portion of its resources. The tribe, the TDE, and the SREC believe that their language and culture should be at the heart of education and this principle now part of the Education Code.

Language learning was supported by the TED grant through the purchase of language curriculum that is used in eight of the nine schools on the reservation. TDE staff also provides professional development to language teachers; runs community language activities with the goal of building a base of second language learners; and supports Sitting Bull College to ensure that those participating in its classes and professional learning opportunities can obtain credit for their work.

The TDE also created the Language and Culture Institute which offers a four-week intense language training program for teachers and community members each summer. Last year, approximately 200 people attended the summer institute from throughout the reservation, as well as from other reservations, states, and countries. All of the coursework provides college or continuing education credit.

The Immersion Nest
Six years ago, at the suggestion of the SREC, Sitting Bull College created a Lakota-immersion preschool. Called the Immersion Nest, the school was designed to begin by offering only pre-school, and growing by a grade level each year until it spans pre-K through high school. In 2017-2018, the school included pre-K, kindergarten, first, second, and third grade. The students are taught by teachers and Elders who are fluent in the

Lakota language. The school, which is creating its own curriculum, is organized around traditional kinship relationships and includes the use of some Montessori practices.

The Immersion Nest is supported by grants from the Administration for Native Americans, American Indian College Fund, and the National Science Foundation (NSF). Parents are charged tuition, but most families qualify for childcare assistance from the tribe which can cover all or some of the tuition, depending on family need. In addition, Sitting Bull College provides transportation for the children. The lack of fluent Lakota speakers is a barrier to the school's growth. An NSF grant is providing language instruction to nine people to prepare them to teach at the school; Immersion Nest teachers are not required to be certified.

1.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Peer group collaboration is fostered by regular peer group meetings throughout the year. School administrators meet monthly and school board members and community members (including teachers, students and others) meet quarterly. The implementation of annual strategic planning goals occurs through the school and education leaders' peer group meetings.

The TDE has a Technical Assistance Provider whose job it is to provide professional development as requested to schools throughout the reservation. However, some tribal schools are reluctant to use this resource because they do not want to utilize the TDE. These schools use Title II funds to provide professional development.

Most capacity building is provided through the SREC. Each summer, the SREC offers a professional development day that is widely attended by teachers and administrators from all schools on the reservation. The tribal schools do not express the same reluctance to participate in SREC activities, as the SREC is viewed as being their organization. This year, the common professional development day provided resources for teachers, paraprofessionals, and school staff, with presenters drawn from the reservation, North and South Dakota, and other states.

In addition, Teach for America (TFA) has teachers in two schools on the South Dakota side of the reservation, one public school and one tribal school. TFA works to prepare teachers and provides support to the TFA teachers throughout the year.

1.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Tribal College

Sitting Bull College is a tribally-controlled college on the Standing Rock Reservation. It has undergraduate and graduate education programs, and scholarships are available for enrolled members of the Standing Rock Tribe through the TDE. In addition, Sitting Bull College has both undergraduate and graduate teaching/education programs. A US Department of Education Indian Professional Development Grant supports a small "grow you own" teacher education program designed to increase the number of certified Native teachers and reduce the high turnover rate traditionally seen on the reservation. The grant enables the college to select 10 junior and senior high school students on the reservation to complete the teacher certification program in three years, and then help them obtain teaching positions.

Family and Community Engagement

The TDE frequently engages with the community due to the tribal consultation and engagement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The TDE held community "consulting sessions" that were widely attended and successful. In addition to inviting Standing Rock community members, representatives from Bismarck and Mandan (which are also required to consult with the Tribe), and from other tribes, attended. TDE plans to increase family and community engagement activities this year by working with peer groups to develop strategies to make families feel welcome, strengthen cultural understanding, and help school staff to be good relatives.

Attendance Protocol

The SREC, school leaders, and Tribal Courts created an attendance protocol that the majority of the schools now follow. The protocol specifies how to track attendance, who to report absences to and when, and how the Courts can and should support the schools in responding to truancy. Since the protocol was adopted, attendance has improved.

Attendance Boundaries

There are no tribal attendance boundaries; families living on the Standing Rock Reservation can choose to send their children to any school on the reservation. Each school is required to provide transportation to all of its students. Many families choose schools that are a great distance from their home, resulting in some students spending more than two hours on the bus. Two thousand of 2,021 students are regularly bussed to and from school each day. They are considering whether to continue this transportation policy for the future.

2. COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO

> *Tribal members have dynamic cultural and linguistic practices. These dynamic practices are constantly being adapted to meet the needs of contemporary demands. The cultural and linguistic practices of the Coeur d' Alene people are intellectual, linguistic, cultural and spiritual assets necessary to maintain individual and community well-being.*
>
> - Coeur d'Alene STEP grant
>
> -

Tribal population: 2,190

Student population: Approximately 370

Website: http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/

Tribally-Controlled Schools

- Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribal School (K-8)

Public Schools

- Lakeside Elementary, Middle, High Schools (Plummer-Worley School District)

2.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation is located in the northern neck of Idaho, between Spokane, Washington, and Missoula, Montana. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe has its own tribal school, with a new facility that opened in 1997. There are also public elementary, middle, and high schools on the reservation that serve Native students. The Tribal Council oversees the Tribal Education Department (TED) which collaborates with the tribally-controlled and public schools on the reservation. The TED also provides programs for adults, including a college degree program in cooperation with Idaho's Lewis and Clark State College.

In October 2015, the Coeur d'Alene tribe received a four-year State-Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) Program grant. The STEP Program is intended to promote increased collaboration between tribal, state, and local education agencies serve students from the tribe; and to build the Tribal Education Department's capacity to conduct certain administrative functions. The tribe's overarching goal of the STEP grant is to strengthen the cultural identity of students and to improve the academic success and graduation rates on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, as measured with local and state methods.

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2.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Tribal / Public Partnership

As part of the STEP grant, the Coeur d'Alene work in partnership with the Plummer-Worley School District. Plummer-Worley public schools include about 378 students in Lakeside Elementary School, Lakeside Middle School, and Lakeside High School. Approximately 70 percent of the Plummer-Worley students are members of the Coeur D'Alene tribe.

In addition, the tribally-controlled school, the Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribal School (K-8), opened in 1997 and serves approximately 100 students. The Coeur D'Alene Indian Tribal School is funded from the BIE, but is managed by a school board elected by the tribe. The TED does not manage the Coeur D'Alene Indian Tribal School, but works in partnership with its school board and the school's administrator, as it does with the school board and administrators of the Plummer-Worley public school district. That partnership is supported by the "Education Pipeline," as described below.

Education Pipeline

The TED has received many grants over the years. It has developed an "education pipeline" model whereby it seeks to tie its diverse grant programs together to support the whole learner, from birth through college, regardless of which schools the student attends. For example:

- Early childhood programs include Early Head Start, Head Start, and the Imagine the Future Preschool classroom.

- Students in grades K-12 are supported by the State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) program.

- Students are prepared for college and career with an Office of Indian Education Indian Demonstration Program, the Native American Career and Technical Education Program, and the Johnson O'Malley Program.

- The tribe supports all tribal students earning postsecondary degrees.

Figure 2.1, below, is a graphic representation of the Coeur D'Alene TED's Education Pipeline. Programs and grants are tracked by grade level.

Figure 2.1: Coeur D'Alene Education Pipeline
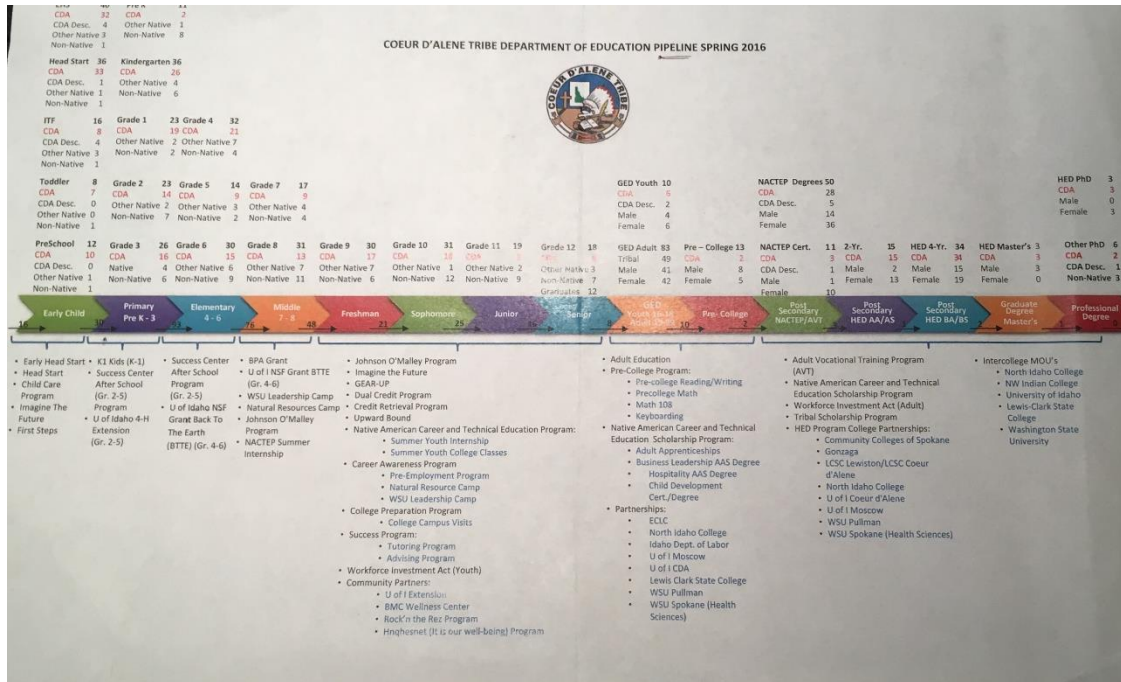
The TED uses a data-driven approach to ensure accountability with grant requirements and to track the progress and success of its students. Each family must sign a waiver for their child to attend a grant-funded program. The TED is then able to access the students' data from the public schools or the tribal school and compile quarterly reports. The TED uses this data to support its students, report to the Tribal Council, and facilitate collaboration between the education agencies as required by the STEP grant. The TED provides an annual report that includes per student spending and student participation in programs.

The pipeline model helps TED identify where additional support may be needed. For example, there is currently a gap in the pipeline for students from kindergarten through 4th grade, so TED is working to identify what those students need and resources they can access to provide support.

2.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The objectives of the STEP grant include development of culturally-relevant curriculum standards, assessments, materials and teaching strategies. Specifically, the tribe sought to:

- Collaborate with the State Education Agency (SEA) to increase the role of the tribe in curriculum standards, assessment, and culturally responsive teaching strategies and materials;

- Develop Coeur D'Alene Tribal Social Studies Units for grade 4 Idaho History;

- Align, articulate, and integrate culture, history and language in K-12 Idaho Social Studies standards; and

- Develop three high school Social Studies dual-credit enrollment or high school credit courses, such as Tribal Sovereignty and Policy, Tribal Government, and Tribal Geography.

To develop more culturally-relevant curriculum, a Cultural Leadership Team was assembled that included tribal staff, Plummer-Worley School District and tribal school representatives and teachers, University of Idaho partners, and Coeur d' Alene language speakers. Among other products, this team created a 4th grade Idaho Social Studies curriculum that is rooted in Coeur d' Alene culture, language, and history. This curriculum was shared statewide to provide a curricular framework for other tribes interesting in working with their local school districts to develop culturally-relevant curriculum. More detail on the culturally-relevant curriculum framework designed by the Cultural Leadership Team is available in Appendix B.

Tribal Language Department

According to TED staff, there is only one original speaker of Coeur D'Alene left, and 10-15 fluent tribal members. Language is a key component in tribal education efforts and its importance is reflected in the culturally-relevant curriculum framework. The Tribe's Language Department offers classes in the Coeur d'Alene language (Schitsu'umsh) and teaches tribal members, staff, and anyone else interested in maintaining ancient traditions and culture.

Hnqwa'qwe'eln (Language Program) staff deliver text and audio lessons to tribal employees via the tribe's email system. They create lessons that provide comprehensive instruction in the language, but delivers them at flexible levels of skill and commitment to allow learners to self-pace their progress. The hope is that by the nature of their regular job interactions, and access to the resources on the "internal" website, the employee group will make it common to use the language in daily job tasks and activities. The Language Program also:

- Plans, creates, and revises existing language materials to suite the workplace setting;

- Conducts brief, fun workplace workshops upon request from individual departments to help with pronunciation and to provide Coeur d'Alene language interaction within the individual departments;

- Monitors and moderates discussion groups on the "internal" site; and

- Facilitates activities to sustain routine workplace usage of the language by conducting individual and inter-departmental contests, language fairs, etc. throughout the year.

Teaching Language in the Coeur D'Alene Tribal School

The Coeur d'Alene Tribal School has a Coeur d' Alene Language teacher which enables a concentrated focus on native language learning. The school also celebrates Culture Day twice a month, when students sign up for special interest classes on campus, taught by staff and community members. However, being a rural school, one of the challenges is a limited ability to attract volunteers and parents to visit and help in classrooms as many residents have limited transportation options.

The Coeur d' Alene Tribe is focused on its children's education and the Tribal Council is very supportive of the mission of the Tribal School. The school is currently reaching out to other tribal departments to seek out experts to come into the classrooms to talk to the students about the sciences, history, and culture of the reservation. The administration and staff are excited about the future of the tribal school and the continued success of the students.

2.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Coeur d'Alene Tribal School has a strong staff who are qualified in their specialties and professional areas. The school satisfied the federally mandated Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements and over the last three years, has worked to sustain that academic progress. The school has had little teacher turnover at the school for the past three years. They have an academic coach who keeps teachers up-to-date on the latest teaching strategies and methods and who conducts individual goal setting. The school utilizes proactive counseling for individuals and small groups with a Behavioral Interventionist who works with the teachers. The teaching staff and support staff are very dedicated and the students have a positive attitude about school.

Idaho tribes collaborate directly with the Idaho State Board of Education through the Idaho Indian Education Committee. The Idaho Indian Education Committee has two goals:[3]

1. American Indian Academic Excellence: Ensure Idaho's American Indian students are afforded educational opportunities on an equitable basis, and provide resources that promote and support an increase in their educational attainment.

2. Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ensure Idaho K-20 educational institutions provide all educators with an understanding of the distinct knowledge and heritage of Idaho's American Indians.

At the reservation's public schools, one of the STEP grant's objectives is to provide pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to promote Indigenous knowledge and culturally responsive pedagogy. Teaching methods and strategies are recommended for teachers to build students' self-esteem and to strengthen understanding, tolerance, respect and trust between Indigenous students, the community and the school system, include:

- Utilizing the Coeur d'Alene Essential Understanding as a resource to inform teaching and learning;

- Drawing upon student's prior knowledge, both academically and socially/culturally;

- Considering education as a bigger community effort, using community and family as curriculum/lesson co-constructors and knowledge keepers; and

- Encouraging teachers to actively engage and participate in the local community to build relationships and an understanding of the community,

2.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Family and Community Engagement

The TED uses Family Link systems to invite parents into schools and to help make parents feel more like partners in their child's education. The school itself is decorated with Coeur

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[3] Idaho State Department of Education, Indian Education Department, http://www.sde.idaho.gov/indian-ed/index.html.

D'Alene history and streams video of photographs of tribal ancestors and family members to help to provide a warm and welcoming environment to foster family engagement. The school chooses not to utilize home visits as they are considered too intrusive.

Supporting High School Students: Imagine the Future Program

The Imagine the Future program (IFP) helps secondary students complete high school and transition to college fully prepared academically. The program provides culturally rich programs during school and after-school to increase competency and proficiency in challenging subject matters, including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and college preparatory classes. The program also provides social and emotional support activities to develop resiliency skills and increase school success. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe Department of Education collaborates with the Plummer/Worley School District and a consortium of five colleges and universities with which the Tribe has formal Memoranda of Agreements.

Tackling Underlying Issues

The TED realized that a significant barrier to education was poor attendance, often caused by underlying substance abuse issues. They found that 45 percent of tribal children ages of 12 to 17 were in the justice system or on probation, and that 90 percent of educational failures were substance-abuse related. Using a U.S. Department of Justice grant, the Tribe formed a Tribal Collaboration Committee and worked with the Northwest Area Foundation to develop a Comprehensive Tribal Justice Strategic Plan that is rooted in four of the five Essential Understanding pillars.

Technology: Native Technology Career Program

The Native Technology Career Program (NTCP) includes Native and non-Native students. Students can earn certificates in fields such as health, human resources, natural resources, and hospitality. The certificates are "stackable," meaning that they can count toward a two-or four-year college program at Northern Idaho College. The TED is working with the University of Idaho to enable course credits to be transferred there as well. Currently, there are 82 students working part-time toward a two-year degree and 13 graduates with two-year degrees.

The TED also has strong relationships with nearby higher education institutions, including the University of Idaho and nearby Washington State University. It works with the schools, negotiating for students and creating nation building programs within the universities.

The Education Pipeline and Workforce Development

The Education Pipeline model discussed above is integrated into the TED's workforce development initiatives with the goal of cultivating a dynamic workforce capable of achieving the tribe's long-term priorities. The model has been successful in improving the tribe's economy, and the tribe itself is considered a regional "economic powerhouse." The TED and its Education Pipeline model is held up as a model for integrating education and workforce development by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI): the Coeur D'Alene's TED provided a presentation on the Education Pipeline model at the 2016 NCAI Mid-Year Conference;[4] the NCAI Partnership for Tribal Governance featured TED's Workforce Development Program and the Education Pipeline model in its Innovation Spotlight series;[5] and the NCAI created and posted an hour-long interview with the Director of Education for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe describing the development of the Education Pipeline.[6]

Native Teachers

Currently there are no Coeur D'Alene teachers in the Plummer-Worley public schools, and although there are several Coeur D'Alene members who are para-professionals at the Coeur D'Alene Indian School, it has few Native teachers. The TED found that few Coeur D'Alene students aspire to be teachers. To increase the number of Native teachers, it is considering a grow-your-own teacher program and is investigating the U.S. Department of Education grant program, I-KEEP.

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[4] http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/CoeurdAleneTribe.pdf
[5] http://www.ncai.org/PTG_Innovation_Spotlight_-_Coeur_dAlene_Workforce_Development_FINAL.pdf
[6] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzUmmV4k2pQ&list=PLBjQrzrj0IyshzCqxlBiNXY4L2PgtKZlY&index=21

3. NEZ PERCÉ, IDAHO

> *Together, we provide education and career pathways to enhance self-sufficiency for individuals while staying grounded in Nez Percé values.*
>
> **- Mission Statement of the Nez Percé Tribal Education Department**

Tribal population: 3,500 members, with 1,800-2,000 living on the reservation

Student population: Approximately 470

Website: http://nezperce.org/

Public Schools:

- Lapwai School District

- Kamiah School District

3.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Nez Percé Indian Reservation is located in north central Idaho. It consists of 750,000 acres. However, because the U.S. government opened the reservation for general settlement in 1895, the tribe or tribal members own only 13 percent of the land. The reservation is majority white, but Lapwai, the seat of tribal government, has a population that is approximately 80 percent Nez Percé. The tribe has an enrolled membership of approximately 3,500.

There are two public school districts serving the reservation. The Lapwai Public Schools' student body is approximately 80 percent Nez Percé; roughly 11 percent of its students come from other tribes. The Kamiah Public Schools' student body is approximately 15 percent Native, including students from Nez Percé and other tribes. Each district serves approximately 500 students. A small percentage of the Nez Percé students attend schools off-reservation.

3.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Tribal Education Department (TED) is supervised by the Nez Percé Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC). The TED works to implement the NPTEC Strategic Plan and oversees six tribal education programs that serve tribal members of all ages: Early Childhood Development, STEP Project, Students for Success Program, Higher Education, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The TED is also working to create an education, training, and business development center. Because the Tribe does

not manage any schools, the TED works in partnership with the two public school districts with schools on the reservation to serve its students.

3.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The TED recognizes that there is a difference between "teaching culture" and "teaching culturally." It received a Sovereignty in Tribal Education (STEP) grant that it used to develop strategies to meet the unique educational and cultural needs of their students as a way to improve their academic achievement. The process of defining what is culturally-relevant education for today's tribal K-12 students is the key factor that guided the collaboration and capacity building between the Tribal Education Department, Idaho Department of Education, and Partner School Districts, Lapwai and Kamiah. Part of the STEP project was the development of a Cultural Education Strategic Framework that includes three components: Native Culture and Language, Teaching Culturally, and Family Engagement.

Figure 3.1: Nez Percé Cultural Education Strategic Framework
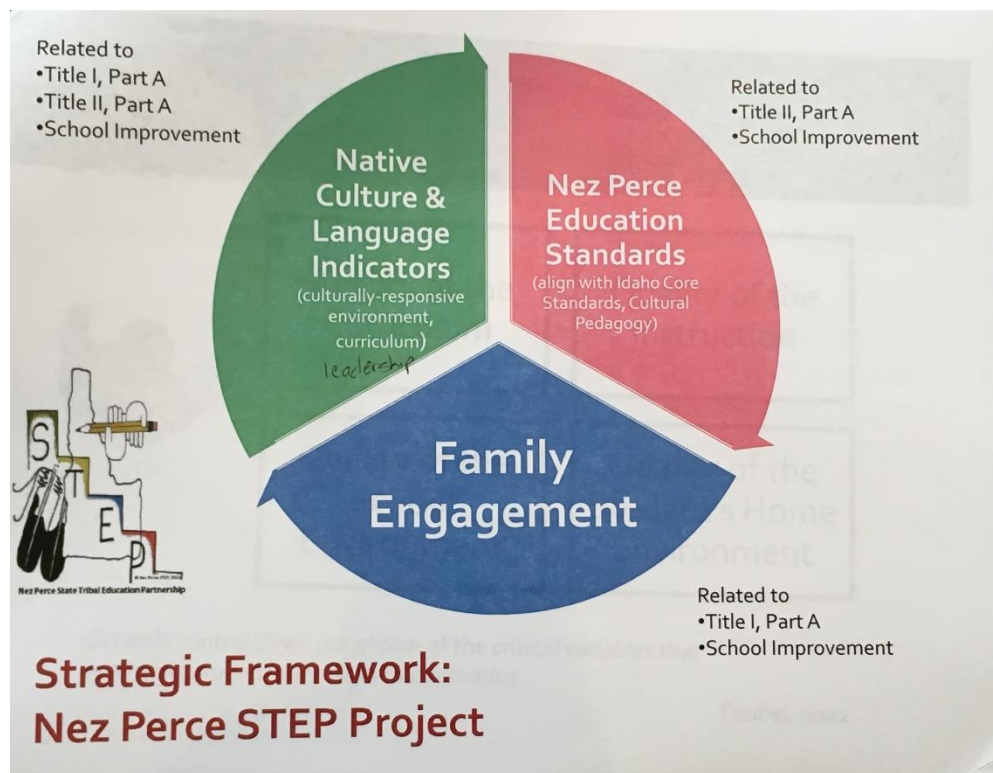
In the National Indian Education Association's analysis of the White House 2014 Native Youth Report, the Nez Percé STEP project was recognized as an example of best practices for strengthening tribal control of education. Specific elements of the project that were recognized include:

- Technical assistance to their partner local education agencies on use of the Native Star Culture and Language Indicators which address culturally-responsive school leadership, environment and community engagement, and infusion of culture and language into the school's curriculum and instruction;

- Teacher training program on the integration of cultural pedagogy, tribal education standards, and common core standards; and

- A family engagement piece that recognizes the role of the family as the first educator and organizes the parents and school staff to work together to assess parent involvement programs, policies, and practices.
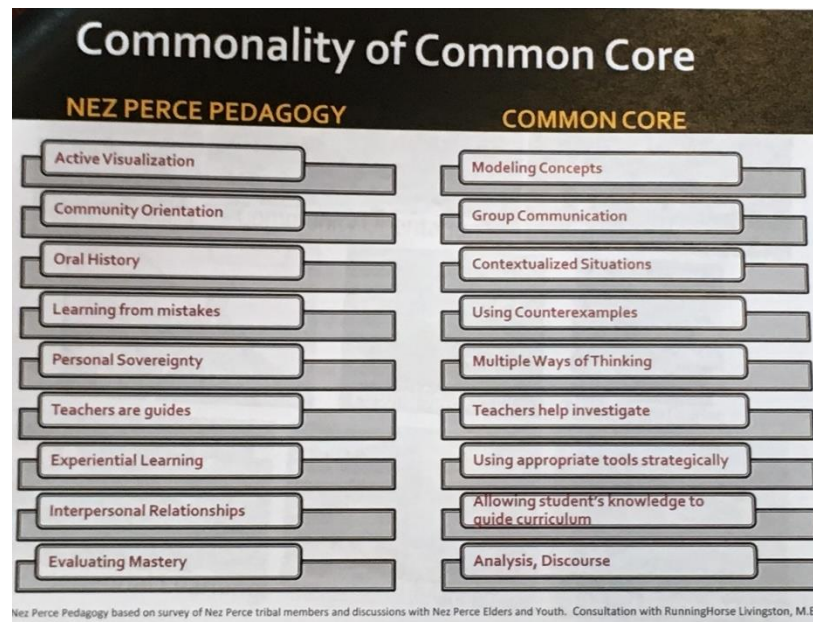
Native Star Culture and Language Indicators

The TED worked with a consultant to develop Native Star Culture and Language Indicators. Teachers and staff from the public elementary, middle, and high schools were involved in the process. The indicators are designed to: provide culturally-responsive school leadership; engage the community with culture and language; and infuse tribal culture and language into the school's curriculum and instruction. A complete list of the indicators is provided in Appendix C.

Common Core Alignment

The TED wanted Nez Percé-specific education standards. To that end, the TED collected information from tribal members, including tribal elders and youth and worked with a consultant to identify a tribal education pedagogy, and then align that pedagogy with the Idaho Common Core Standards.

Figure 3.2: Alignment of Nez Percé Pedagogy with Common Core Standards

Commonality of Common Core

NEZ PERCE PEDAGOGY	COMMON CORE
Active Visualization	Modeling Concepts
Community Orientation	Group Communication
Oral History	Contextualized Situations
Learning from mistakes	Using Counterexamples
Personal Sovereignty	Multiple Ways of Thinking
Teachers are guides	Teachers help investigate
Experiential Learning	Using appropriate tools strategically
Interpersonal Relationships	Allowing student's knowledge to guide curriculum
Evaluating Mastery	Analysis, Discourse

Nez Perce Pedagogy based on survey of Nez Perce tribal members and discussions with Nez Perce Elders and Youth. Consultation with RunningHorse Livingston, M.Ed.

By linking the Nez Percé pedagogy to the Idaho Common Core Standards, the TED was able to "meet the teachers where they live" and achieve buy-in from teachers on the benefits of culturally-relevant teaching. Other ways of they have achieved buy-in include building interpersonal relationships, staying consistent with goals, utilizing the words and terms used by teachers, and providing leadership and technical assistance to superintendents and principals. They have found that strong leadership and commitment by principals to culturally-relevant education is essential. Additionally, public displays of tribal culture - such as posters, photographs students in their traditional regalia, and tribal colors in the classrooms - are used to reinforce the importance of culturally-relevant education.   Teachers are encouraged to integrate the accomplishments of Native Americans into lessons plans and evaluations. In the long-run, the TED wants the "deprivitization" of classrooms so other teachers and tribal members can share ideas and collaborate more.

Across the eight different communities on the reservation, tribal members speak different dialects of the language. However, there are less than 20 fluent speakers of Nez Percé and preserving the language is considered a critical mission of the TED. The Lapwai High School offers a daily Nez Percé language class, while some of the other schools offer after

school language programs once or twice per week. Additionally, the TED is also working with the elders in the community to develop a language curriculum and an application ("app") for smart phones and tablets. To engage the community, they have also conducted a Language Bowl with nearby tribes.

3.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TEACHER TRAINING

To facilitate effective implementation of the Native Star Culture and Language Indicators, this initiative included the development of a teacher rubric and self-assessment and program monitoring tool, and teacher professional development, coaching, and technical assistance. The schools also have professional learning community cohorts that focus on native, cultural, and family engagement components, using a mentor-teacher model, and providing technical assistance and capacity building. During the summer, there is "peer-to-peer" professional development.

One goal of the TED STEP grant program was reducing the achievement gap by 50 percent in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math between Nez Perce students in targeted schools on the reservation by the end of the 2018-19 school year. To meet that goal, grant objectives included:

- Strengthen collaboration between the SEA and TEA in the administration of three (3) state formula grant programs, implemented by the partner LEA's, that target improving basic programs, supporting effective instruction, and school improvement.

- Build the capacity of the TEA and SEA to support partner LEAs to meet the unique educational and cultural needs of AI/AN students to improve their academic achievement.

- Develop, monitor, and evaluate effective, culturally-responsive standards and practices implemented by partner LEAs to improve academic achievement of their AI/AN students, as related to three (3) selected state formula grant programs.

To this end, the tribe is working in partnership with the Idaho State Department of Education and its local school districts to improve Native student performance and reduce the achievement gap. The TED intends to use student data to create action plans to improve academic achievement and graduation rates.

Staff also intends to achieve school improvement through focused school visits and monitoring, and talking with staff and parents about the STEP program. They want there to be a strong connection between culturally-responsive teaching and English-Language Arts assessments. In addition, they will be determining how to integrate STEP goals into the Education Strategic Plan.

3.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Family Engagement

The family engagement component of the STEP Strategic Framework recognizes the role of the family as the first educator. Parents and school staff work together to assess parent involvement programs, policies, and practices. This partnership between parents and teachers helps to motivate students to recognize the value of education, stay in school, graduate, and go to college. Specifically, TED uses a model developed by the Academic Development Institute for School Network, which included:

- Utilizing a Family Engagement Tool to assess school's family engagement programs, policies, and practices;

- Conducting a School Community Index survey to assess each school's parent involvement efforts and identify what was happening at home to support education;

- Developing an action plan for the 2014-15 school year;

- Creating Family Engagement Teams consisting of half parents and half school staff at each school;

- Providing technical assistance and coaching to the schools' Family Engagement Teams; and

- Tracking progress by monitoring data and plans.

Family engagement is also reinforced by the schools' increased emphasis on culturally-relevant education. Bringing Native history, leaders, ancestors, and language into the classes helps to build positive engagement with the schools and hopefully replaces negative perceptions parents might have.

An example of an initiative to engage families was a campaign to encourage parents to read the School-Parent Compact. After parents read the compacts, they were asked to post a "WildCat Paw" on the school bulletin board, take a picture, and post it. A picture of the compact was also posted in every classroom. Additional specific efforts to engage families and create a positive relationship between families and schools include:

- Family nights where free meals and prizes are provided;

- An on-line "Family Link" that provides a mechanism for parents to check their child's attendance and review their grades;

- Regular updates on social media sites such as Facebook;

- Positive communications to home, such as calls from teachers and counselors with good news; and

- Reminders to parents that they are the experts on how their children learn and that they, too, are educators.

Focus on Health & Educational Outcomes
The Students for Success works to improve the health and educational outcomes to K-12 students. The program provides culturally-relevant wraparound services to prevent juvenile delinquency; teaches drug prevention curriculums to teens and parents; and works with coalitions to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and HIV and promote cultural identity and wellness.

Online Professional Development
In the future, the TED would like to conduct online professional development in conjunction with the local college, perhaps providing a certificate on culturally-relevant education that is aligned with the Idaho professional development badges and endorsements.

4. CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES, MONTANA

> *Grounded in tradition, charging into the future.*
>
> -   Salish Kootenai College motto

Tribal population: 7,920

Student population: 1,200

Website: www.cskt.org

Tribally-Controlled Schools

- Two Rivers Alternative School

- Nk'wusm Immersion School

Communities/Public School Districts:

- Ronan

- St. Ignatious

- Polson

- Arlee

- Hot Springs

- Dixon

- Charlo

4.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes include the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai who live on the Flathead Reservation in northwest Montana. Total tribal population is approximately 7,200, of which 5,600 to 5,800 live on the reservation. The federal government opened large tracts of the reservation to non-Indian homesteading and occupancy in 1920. As a result, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes members are a minority population on the reservation. However, the tribe and tribe members have purchased much of the land on the reservation and now control approximately 65 percent of the reservation.

The schools on the reservation are controlled by seven different public school systems. Each system has a publicly-elected school board that is primarily comprised by non-Natives, and very few public school administrators or teachers are Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes members. Through a contract with the Bureau of Indian Education, the tribe manages one alternative school, Two Rivers Eagle School. Additionally, a non-profit organization runs the Nk'wusm Salish Immersion School on the reservation.

4.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Tribal Education Department (TED) manages all of the departments for the Tribal Council. The Tribal Council intends to

conduct education initiatives, such as providing a clearinghouse for all education materials regarding the tribes, developing a K-12 curriculum, and supporting a teacher pipeline. To support these initiatives, the TED serves as the liaison to the public school education programs and manages a variety of programs.

4.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Montana State Indian Education Policy

The State of Montana revised its Constitution in 1972. The new Constitution explicitly recognizes the importance of Native culture and commits to culturally-relevant education in its State Constitution:

> The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.

> - Article X, Section 1(2), Montana State Constitution

In 1999, the state legislature passed the Indian Education for All Act passed, requiring that all Montana teachers that working on or near an Indian reservation have at least three credits of Native Studies. To help implement this law, the Montana Office of Public Instruction developed a framework for all Montana teachers to be used to inform students about both the unique cultural heritage and shared history of the state, and the history and modern of lives of Montana tribes.[7] The state also developed a teacher resource on the culture, history, and diversity between tribes.[8]

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Tribal Education Efforts

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' TED has developed many of its own tribal education materials, including a history book, videos on water rights, a history of land allotment, and resources for teaching incorporating tribal and regional histories.

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[7] Montana Office of Public Instruction, *The Framework: A Practical Guide For Montana Teachers and Administrators Implementing Indian Education for All*, http://montanateach.org/resources/the-framework-a-practical-guide-for-montana-teachers-and-administrators-implementing-indian-education-for-all/

[8] Montana Office of Public Instruction, *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*, http://montanateach.org/resources/essential-understandings-regarding-montana-indians/

Additionally, the Salish-Pend O'rielle Culture Committee developed Salish language oral histories and educational materials.

The Salish language family includes 23 languages and 53 dialects, including the Salish and Pend d'Orielle dialects. The Kootenai language is not related to any other known language. Historically, theses languages were oral languages only. In the early 1970s, the tribe created a written language or language orthography. Recently the Salish-Pend d'Orielle & Kootenai Culture Committee paid for the development of a Salish language application "app" for smart phones and tablets to make lessons even more accessible for students and the community.

Nk'wusm Salish School
Fifteen years ago, the Nk'wusm Salish School opened. It has nine teachers and 43 students, from preschool through 8th grade, in a Salish language immersion program. Funding for the school is provided by a non-profit organization with some support from the tribe. The Nk̓ʷusm organization is committed to revitalizing the Salish language through the school and community learning programs. Nk̓ʷusm is working to:[9]

- Increase the number of quality materials available to teach the Salish language for primary students by creating a complete curriculum with materials and activities for the primary grades;

- Increase the number of speakers through community participation in school activities and programs and the school's participation in community activities; increase the fluency of Salish speakers through participation in the school and the school's outreach programs; and

- Recreate the process whereby the Salish language is passed from parent to child.

4.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' teachers, the TED conducted Fish Camp, which including building fish traps, learning about drumming, sharing what they could bring into the classroom, and meeting with elders. The camp was modeled on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network's Cultural Camps. The focus was on teaching

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[9] Nk'wusm Salish School, https://www.salishworld.com/

culturally, not on teaching culture. The Culture Camp helped teachers realize ways that they could integrate Native culture into their content areas every day.

Three school districts on the reservation also participate in the STEP grant program. Together these schools they developed a Tribal Education Committee that consists of the representatives of the Salish Kootenai Education Department, all of the public schools, and parents and other stakeholders. The TED provides professional development through this committee.

4.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Alternative School

The Two Eagle River Alternative School (TERS), grades 7-12, was established in 1979 as an alternative school within the Dixon School District. It was an experiential school that was project-based, had low student-teacher ratio, and was student-centered. The school is now a tribally-controlled, Bureau of Indian Affairs contract school. It serves just over 100 students who have left the public schools because of attendance problems, discipline issues, mental health needs, drug addiction, and other issues. The core curriculum is augmented with cultural and historic content, and all students take Salish or Kootenai language classes and Flathead Reservation History. Instead of traditional grading, the school uses contracts with teachers and a point system.

Tribal College

The Salish Kootenai College (SKC) was established in 1977. Located in Pablo, it has emerged as one of the flagship tribal colleges in the nation. From its inception, the SKC has had a central commitment to, "perpetuate the cultures of Confederated Salish and Kootenai peoples." Serving approximately 1,000 students, SKC offers five vocational programs, 18 associate degrees, and 14 baccalaureate degrees. Financial aid and scholarships are available, and cultural classes are offered free to tribal members. Beyond providing post-secondary opportunities, SKC offers cultural and educational services to the community. For example, throughout the school year, there are cultural and educational programs that are open to the public; the media center and library are available to all community members free of charge; and it operates KSKC-TV, the only Class-A PBS television station based on an Indian reservation. SKC is also home to SKC Press, which has published works in oral literature, history, and native language dictionaries.

Increased Self-Determination in Education

Moving forward, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes wants to claim sovereignty over the education of their children by determining how, what, and in what environment they learn. They are focused on developing a model for training. The TED would like to develop a "cognitive teaching" model where one teacher observes another teacher giving a lesson and then deconstructs what happened and provides feedback. This approach is different from an evaluation in that the reflection is intended to help build awareness about instruction and support the teachers.

public works
making good ideas work for the better

5. JEMEZ PUEBLO, NEW MEXICO

To continue strengthening, respecting and encouraging our traditional language and culture while building on the unique talents of each individual, to develop well-educated, knowledgeable, healthy and competent leaders for a stronger and healthier community.

- Jemez Pueblo, Department of Education

Tribal population: 1,800

Student population: Approximately 750

Website:

www.jemezpueblo.org/Education.aspx

Tribally-Controlled Charter Schools:

- San Diego Riverside Charter School (K-8), in the Jemez Valley school district

- Walatowa High Charter School, independent local education agency

BIE Schools

- Jemez Day School

5.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico, encompasses approximately two square miles in north-central New Mexico and is home to approximately 1,800 tribe members. The word "pueblo" comes from the Spanish for "village."

Three schools serve approximately 750 tribal students. These schools include:

- Jemez Day School, a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) K-6 school that serves approximately 133 students;

- San Diego Riverside Charter School, a K-8 school that serves approximately 90 students and that is part of the Jemez Valley school district;

- Walatowa High Charter School, a state-administered experiential learning charter school with approximately 70 students that also serves students from neighboring Zia Pueblo.

In 1999, Jemez Pueblo undertook "Vision 2010," a community visioning process that asked the community "'What would you like the Pueblo to look like in 2010?'"[10] People were specifically asked how the tribe could connect its traditions with the educational

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[10] McKosato (2014).

demands of the future. Through these discussions, the tribe arrived at a common understanding of its goals: First, the people wanted tribal self-determination in educational matters. Second, the tribe wanted to preserve its language and culture for the future, with a particular emphasis on making the Towa language integral to the educational experience of all pueblo children. Third, the community understood that children needed to be prepared for higher education and workforce opportunities, including outside the tribe.

This process resulted in families taking pride in being part of something that is community driven; students understanding the tribe's aspirations for them and being motivated; and tribal Department of Education goals being reinforced by the tribal leaders and at home. In 2018, Vision 2020 seminars will continue to move this process forward.

There are two strong values that define the educational reform movement underway at Jemez Pueblo. The first is a deep-rooted commitment to collaboration—both within and outside the tribe. The second is an independent spirit that has given the tribe confidence in the leadership of its own affairs. School leaders believe that a key part of their success is that they did not disconnect the schools from the community. The schools and community want their children to know who they are, where they come from, and how they are making a contribution and can succeed academically.

5.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Jemez Pueblo took control of its elementary and high schools from BIE and established tribally-operated, independent charter schools approximately 14 years ago. They were among the first Tribal-formed charter schools in New Mexico. The San Diego Riverside Charter School (K-8) is part of the Jemez Valley School District, but the Walatowa High Charter School has its own local educational agency. The two schools' charters are supported by and approved by two tribal governments, the Jemez and the Zia, and there is regular communication and collaboration between the tribal governors and their departments of education. The Acoma tribe has also become a strategic partner.

The charter school option has given the tribe a path to "self-determination." And, importantly, charter school development is happening not in isolation but as part of an intentional, long-term, community-supported plan to improve the tribe's educational outcomes.

Following the Vision 2010 process, the Jemez Department of Education was redesigned to reflect a comprehensive approach to education that spans infancy through adult

learners. This holistic approach is accomplished cooperatively. The Department of Education manages the Jemez early-childhood program, the Jemez Community Library, and the Education Services Center; has a role overseeing school operations; and is responsible for maintaining the collaborative working relationships between the tribe and educators. "System-wide" teacher planning days take place once per month; there is an annual tribal retreat to look at school plans and set goals; and there are administrator meetings every month.

5.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The Jemez people do not want schools to teach culture, they want them to use their culture to teach students. The tribe believes that educational excellence and cultural pride cannot be separated. Through the Department of Education's work these beliefs are integrated into Jemez educational practice. The Jemez education is grounded in Towa, which is necessary for rituals and prayers. Towa is taught by immersion program at the Head Start program, and the charter school curriculum is rooted in Towa language and the Jemez culture; it is also aligned to the common core.[11] This approach grounds Jemez children in tradition but also frees them to pursue college and careers apart from reservation life.

In 2007, the leadership team convened by the Education Department conducted an initial visioning of the Jemez education standards with the intention of developing a way to bring the common core to life in a meaningful way. The Jemez team worked with the University of New Mexico, College of Education to devise the initial common core-aligned curriculum, and principals and teachers have continued the process. Following best-practice, Jemez utilizes evidence-based methods of lesson planning and formative assessment that promote hands-on activities.

The unique curriculum for the charter schools incorporates traditional language and culture and that guides young people in the tribe's standards. Native-centered examples from the curriculum include:

- Dual language instruction;
- Towa certified teachers;
- Place-based and experiential learning;
- A senior thesis that must be completed on a topic that impacts the community; and

[11] "Common Core from a Tribal Perspective," Kevin Shendo, *Commentary Education Week*, December 3, 2013.

- Career pathways opportunities with regional post-secondary partners.

The tribe is forging partnerships with the University of New Mexico, Central New Mexico Community College, Arizona State University and others to enrich classroom instruction and prepare students for postsecondary education. It has increased the size, strength and political influence of its educational system by partnering with neighboring Zia Pueblo and sharing best-practice lessons with other schools and districts in the region, including at Acoma Pueblo. The National Indian Education Association has recognized these efforts with an award for cultural contribution.

Jemez Pueblo has the highest level of tribal language fluency in the U.S. Nearly 75 percent of tribal members speak Towa; older generations are at 85 to 90 percent fluent, but the percentage drops with younger generations. The Towa language is passed down orally. Tribal elders and leaders feel maintaining the language is the best way to maintain the Jemez traditions and history. They believe that without fluent use of the language, the tribe would lose the context of their stories of their history and culture.[12]

The Jemez Pueblo Head Start is one of the only programs in the country that conducts instruction in the native language (Towa), preserving the tribe's oral language tradition. The majority of pueblo children attend the Head Start. The high school curriculum is also rooted in the Towa language.

5.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Jemez Pueblo are searching for and hiring teachers who can help them meet their goal of improving student achievement. As part of this effort, there is a memorandum of understanding with the state of New Mexico to support certification for tribally-approved specialists in Jemez language and culture. The Jemez are using this path to alternative certification to grow its own teachers and educational assistants and then spread them throughout their schools so that all students benefit from having Jemez-certified instructors.

The Jemez schools work to foster strong collaboration between native and non-native teachers, including co-teaching arrangements. Teacher collaboration is a product of a healthy and energetic teaching environment. At Jemez there is an Education Collaborative that has been meeting monthly for a decade. Professional development

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[12] "Jemez Pueblo Charter Schools Soaring to New Heights," Harlan McKosato, *Indian Country Today*: indiancountrymedianetwork.com, May 27, 2014.

days occur in the fall for all teachers from early childhood through high school. Early release days are coordinated across all schools to allow for site-based professional learning communities (PLSs) and cross-site collaboration. The tribe has been using a consistent cadre of outside trainers for professional development so that teacher learning spirals upward over time.

The Jemez Pueblo schools appear to be succeeding academically. In 2012-2013, Walatowa High ninth-graders' reading proficiency rate rose by nearly 45 percent and tenth-grade reading scores went up 64 percent. Math grades also went up almost 43 percent.[13] More recently, Walatowa High School received a school grade of "A" from the New Mexico Public Education Department in 2015 and 2016, and its graduation rate was 95% in 2016.[14]

The Jemez tribe has been invigorated by the responsibility to be accountable for its own results. Test scores are rising and the tribe attributes these results to the experiential learning curriculum based on community and culture. There are now discussions underway with the New Mexico Public Education Department to pilot alternative assessments in the Jemez charter schools to more accurately measure the experiential learning that characterizes Jemez classrooms.

5.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Language Immersion

The tribe wants to expand its language immersion initiative beyond the Head Start program. It has received funding from the Kellogg Foundation to invest in the pipeline of Towa-certified educational assistants. The tribe partners with experts at the University of New Mexico and Hilo University in Hawaii to increase the quality of its programming. It is expanding the immersion program into kindergarten and first grade.

Teamwork with Zia Pueblo

When asked to name what has been most important in the transformation of their schools, Jemez leaders consistently mention collaboration. Inter-tribal cooperation is not the norm in New Mexico, but to the governors and education directors of the Zia and Jemez tribes,

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[13] Harlan McKosato, *Jemez Pueblo Charter Schools Soaring to New Heights*, Indian Country Today, May 27, 2014, indiancountrymedianetwork.com.

[14] "American Indian and Alaska Native high school graduation rates are the lowest of any racial or ethnic population in the U.S.—roughly 50 percent nationally according to a report called "Diplomas Count 2013" published by *Education Week*." From McKosato (2014).

their teamwork is indispensable. Zia administrators continue to meet routinely with the Jemez Department of Education staff and Jemez tribal government, and participate in all of the Jemez Department of Education strategic planning activities.

Examples of the reform process that have begun at Zia Pueblo in part because of the relationship with Jemez:

- Teachers are being certified in the Ceres (Zia tribal) language, and these Ceres instructors are entering not only the into the Zia BIE school but into the Jemez Valley (public school district) and Jemez charter schools;

- Zia is developing a long-term plan to get tribal control of the BIE school (K6); and

- The Zia Head Start program offers dual (Ceres/English) instruction.

The tribes realize that their relationship makes them stronger, individually and together, in many areas, including political matters, funding, among students, and in making policy.

Focus on Career Opportunities

Jemez Pueblo increases the value of high school instruction by focusing on career opportunities. Through partnerships with Central New Mexico Community College, the University of New Mexico, and the Institute for American Indian Arts, Jemez is able to provide dual-credit learning in fields such as health sciences, welding and digital storytelling. In an entrepreneurial fashion, Jemez Pueblo stretches its limited resources to support students' post-secondary aspirations with a computer and information lab at the Department of Education.

Creation of Tribal Education System

Over more than a decade, Jemez Pueblo has taken careful steps that are leading to fulfillment of its long-term goal to have its own K-12 system. The Jemez Department of Education has knowingly cultivated strategic relationships with partners who will help them succeed, including

- The Pueblo of Zia;
- The New Mexico Public Education Department;
- National charter school and Indian education associations;

- The University of New Mexico and Central New Mexico Community College;
- Arizona State University; and
- Professional development experts.

The tribe intends to use Title VI grant funds (administered collaboratively between Jemez and Zia) to secure its system. Jemez is the only location in the state of New Mexico where Title VI monies, which help "ensure that Indian students gain knowledge and understanding of Native communities, languages, tribal histories, traditions, and cultures,"[15] are managed by the tribe and not by the district. As it enters into the Vision 2020 process that will prepare for these long-term goals, the Department of Education is seeking to fully staff its positions, such as filling its gap in data analytics, and continue to develop Jemez-certified teachers.

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[15] U.S. Department of Education, "Title VI—Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Education, Part A, Indian Education."

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6. SANTA CLARA PUEBLO, NEW MEXICO

It is the Mission of the Kha'p'o Community School to nurture our children through education that embodies Kha'p'o Owingeh culture, language and values that is academically challenging and enjoyable. Working together as a community we enable them to be proficient Tewa and English speakers, support their physical and emotional well-being, encourage their critical thinking and imagination, and inspire their love of learning.

- Kha'p'o Community School Mission Statement

Tribal population: 980

Student population: Approximately 100

Website: http://www.khapoeducation.org/

Tribally-Controlled School:

Kha'p'o Community School (pre K – 6)

6.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Santa Clara Pueblo is located within the Santa Clara Indian Reservation on the Rio Grande River in southeast New Mexico. Approximately 10,700 people live on the 77 square mile reservation, but tribal enrollment is only about 2,000 and less than 1,000 live in Santa Clara Pueblo.

The Kha'p'o Community School serves approximately 100 students in grades preK-6. Known formerly as Santa Clara Day School, Kha'p'o was a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school that transitioned to tribal control in July 2016.[16] It was selected for inclusion in this report because of its commitment to academic excellence in dual language instruction. The majority of students who attend the school are from Santa Clara Pueblo, although there are some students who are from other regional tribes.

Santa Clara Pueblo was in the first cohort of tribes to receive funding from the Bureau of Indian Education Tribal Education Department (TED) grant program. This funding provided the tribe with the resources to establish tribal control and to improve educational

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[16] The Bureau of Indian Education oversees 183 schools in 23 states. The vast majority of these schools—130—are tribally controlled under P.L. 93-638 Indian Self Determination Contracts or P.L. 100-297 Tribally Controlled Grant Schools Act.

planning and effectiveness. The impetus for this change was the impending loss of the traditional Tewa language. In 2007, only eight percent of Santa Clara Indians were fluent speakers of Tewa.

The transition of the Santa Clara elementary school to tribal control took two years—from 2014 to 2016. The majority of this time was spent speaking with the community. As early as 2010, Santa Clara tribe began soliciting the voice of its members and its neighbors in high-level discussions about the future of Indian education in the United States. At that time, the U.S. Department of Education participated in a consultation with regional tribal leaders hosted at Santa Clara Day School by the All Indian Pueblo Council that was attended by more than 100 participants, including nineteen pueblo governors and leaders from the Navajo, Hopi, and Ho-Chunk Nations.[17]

In October 2014, the pueblo began its own reform process. The Department of Youth and Learning (DYL) was charged to explore education options within the Pueblo. It was supported by an Advising Committee to provide insights and recommendations.[18] The DYL and Advising Committee conducted numerous public meetings and approximately eighty-five conversations with individuals to learn what they wanted to see in education. In April 2015, the Advising Committee presented the tribal council with three educational options, and recommended that the school transition from BIE management to tribally-controlled status.[19]

6.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Kha'p'o Community School is an independent organization that reports to a school board appointed by the tribal council. The school board, not the tribe, is the grantee named with the BIE as the fiscal agent. The principal reports to the school board, and the principal hires school staff.

The DYL oversees areas such as the library, after school programs, college scholarships and other extramural educational programs. Head Start reports separately to the tribal council. The tribal council remains an important voice in the community that frequently weighs in on school matters. The Santa Clara community decided that this structure provides an appropriate balance between tribal freedom to manage educational decision

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[17] "Santa Clara Pueblo NM Consultation," U.S. Department of Education, https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/indianed/santaclarapueblo.
[18] Kha'p'o Community School website, http://www.khapoeducation.org/.
[19] Kha'p'o Community School website, http://www.khapoeducation.org/.

making and tribal support from the BIE. The tribe decided not to create a charter school for several reasons, in part because federal funding for buildings and building maintenance was a powerful incentive for collaboration with the BIE.

6.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The Kha'p'o school focuses on academic success, language, physical and emotional wellness, and cultural values because these are the tribal values that have been identified by the community. [20] These values, especially the intentional striving towards wellbeing, are manifested at the instructional level by teaching Tewa and making lessons culturally relevant.

Since the 1990s, Santa Clara Pueblo has worked to ensure that its language and culture spread the values that the tribe wants its children exhibit. With the formation of Kha'p'o Community School, they chose dual-language instruction and project-based learning models to help meet their goals. According to one of the school's master teachers, "project-based learning makes the kids feel 'whole.' "[21] The school is still in the process of moving to dual-language instruction.

The school is not developing a new curriculum, but is utilizing primarily curriculum programs to deliver lessons and texts. The school partners with the Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation to offer "Inquiry-Based Science," and receives technical support from foundation scientists and advisors. The school is implementing Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and aligning its curriculum to meet key goals for STEAM (science, technology, engineering and math) enrichment, physical and emotional wellness, culture and wellness, tiered growth achievement, and family involvement."[22]

The Tewa language embodies the spirit of the Santa Clara people. However, as recently as a decade ago, the tribe was on the verge of permanently losing its language. At Santa Clara, Kha'p'o dual-language instructional in the elementary school provides the mechanics to redress this problem and also binds the community together. The community works together to enable students to be proficient in Tewa and English, support

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[20] http://www.nacainspiredschoolsnetwork.org/our-fellows/
[21] Site interviews, September 26, 2017.
[22] Kha'p'o Community School website, http://www.khapoeducation.org/.

their physical and emotional well-being, encourage their critical thinking and imagination, and inspire their love of learning.[23]

The teachers, principal and community are beginning preparations to become a dual-language school:

- The principal is meeting with his leadership team, with teachers and with the community to consider which model Kha'p'o will use to implement dual language;

- The school has forged partnerships and advising relationships with New Mexico dual language and indigenous language organizations; and

- There currently are two certified Tewa teachers and two certified Tewa educational assistants at the school, and administrators are considering methods for increasing that pipeline.

6.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

As a member of the Native American Community Academy-Inspired Schools Network, teachers receive support in the development and introduction of project-based lessons and participate in leadership retreats with other educators in the network.

As an independent school, Kha'p'o is able to pay teachers higher salaries than the typical New Mexico rate which has helped the school attract good teachers. The slightly longer Kha'p'o teaching day allows for collaboration and release time. Staff receive one hundred and five minutes per day of preparation time, and students are released early on Fridays to free-up additional prep time. The school does not host formal professional learning communities, but according to the principal, the staff are "all well-aligned."

The Santa Clara Day School had been performing fairly well; independent analysis found that the school was rising academically at the time that the tribe initiated the process to assume control.[24] The Santa Clara people are furthering educational achievement by joining together the traditional forces of culture, community, and well-being.

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[23] http://www.nacainspiredschoolsnetwork.org/schools-in-network.
[24] "Santa Clara Day School has had a fairly stable number of students tested and, despite having below-average achievement in reading in 2013-14, students in this school have shown

6.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Native American Community Academy-Inspired Schools Network (NISN)

Educational transformation at Santa Clara Pueblo did not stop with the formation of Kha'p'o Community School under tribal control. Kha'p'o is a partner in NISN, a network of Indian-serving schools that is learning from the experience of the Native American Community Academy (NACA). NACA is a highly-regarded charter school for middle- and high-school students in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The NACA community "seek[s] to reimagine what Indigenous education and the school experience can be for Native students by creating schools of academic excellence and cultural relevance."[25] As a member of NISN, Kha'p'o is striving to be part of this same movement. Additionally, the NISN Indigenous Educators Corps places AmeriCorps volunteers in Kha'p'o classrooms who help provide individualized and culturally appropriate student support.

Family and Child Education (FACE)

FACE is a BIE-funded program for 0-5-year old children that has myriad benefits at Santa Clara Pueblo. It supports parenting classes and ensures that there are home visits for parents of infants and toddlers. The program also provides additional language support to ensure that the tribe is meeting its goal to have children speaking Tewa at least one hour per day every day. There are monthly meetings with parents, and there is an adult education component that offers programming every day.

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improvement since 2010-11." From B*ureau of Indian Education Report on Student Achievement and Growth: 2010--11 to 2013--14*, Northwest Evaluation Association, Portland, Oregon 2015.
[25] "$5.3 Million Awarded to Help American Indian Youth Become College-, Career-Ready," press release, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., September 24, 2015.

7. EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE, NORTH CAROLINA

The Cherokee Central School System is committed to empowering students, preserving our nation, and ensuring our future.

- Cherokee Central Schools Mission

Tribal population: 16,000+

Student population: 1,147

Website: www.ccs-nc.org

Triballly-Controlled Schools:
- Cherokee Elementary School
- Cherokee Middle School
- Cherokee High School

Public Schools:
- Jackson County Public Schools
- Swayne County Public Schools

7.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) is one of three federally-recognized Cherokee tribes. Its members are primarily descended from the Cherokee who did not participate in the Trail of Tears to Indian Territory. These individuals remained in traditional Cherokee lands which were ceded to the federal government. Eventually part of this land was purchased back by the tribe and is now known as Qualla Boundary.

The Cherokee Central School (CCS) became a tribally operated school in 1990, under a PL 100-297 grant from BIE Department of Education. In 2009, it moved to a brand new, state-of-the art 14-acre campus where it now functions as three separate schools: Cherokee High School, Cherokee Middle School, and Cherokee Elementary School. Each school has its own library, gymnasium (the high school gym seats 3,000), and cafeteria seating, but the three schools share the same kitchen. The schools achieved the Silver LEED certification for being green schools. Most importantly, community members helped to design the school keeping the Cherokee customs and beliefs in mind.

7.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

EBCI has a school district model, where the school board provides oversight over the schools' superintendent. In 1990, the EBCI Tribal Council passed a resolution authorizing the six member elected CCS School Board to operate the schools as a policy-making entity. It also gave authority to the Board to hire the superintendent of schools. The board has a non-voting representative from EBCI Tribal Council. Each member serves a two-year (staggered) term. The School Board chose to be independent from the tribe.

The current Superintendent was selected by the School Board and had only served three months at the time of our visit. Central office includes 75 staff members charged with assisting all of the schools. Each of the three schools has a principal who is supervised by the Superintendent. The middle and high school each also have an assistant principal. Due to enrollment, the elementary school has two assistant principals. Each school also has a school leadership team.

There is a set of school policies for all CCS the schools; each school develops its own student and staff handbook based on these policies.[26] CCS also has a data-driven strategic plan for 2016-17 with three key goals:

1. Cherokee Central Schools will produce globally competitive students with 21st century skills.

2. Cherokee Central Schools will be guided, supported, and maintained by 21st century systems.

3. Cherokee Central Schools will collaborate with parents and community partners to strengthen and enhance learning opportunities for students.

The plan provides a funding source for each goal and is summarized by school. According to interviews, a wide range of stakeholders, including community members, participated in creating the plan. Additionally, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits all three schools.

7.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The CCS is very proud that they integrate the Cherokee culture in everything they do, from school design to curriculum. The Cultural Department, with its 18 staff members, is responsible for the integration of the Cherokee culture into all aspects of the school. One example of cultural integration is the school's Cultural Arts Center. It seats 1,000 and is used for community and family programs (such as events honoring grandparents and elders), and tribal meetings. The school also has a K-12 Character Education Program called, "The Cherokee Sacred Path Program," that focuses on a different Cherokee value

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[26] http://www.ccs-nc.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=369027&type=d&pREC_ID=828006

each year. Teachers are required to take cultural continuing education hours. Additional examples of cultural integration include:

- History standards are integrated into the curriculum;

- The Arts Department encourages traditional student singers and dancers and traditional staff singers;

- Culture Heritage Week and the "Night of Cherokee" both showcase cultural aspects of the school;

- Each class has required to have at least one symbol of Cherokee highly visible in their room; and

- Traditional sports such as stickball, chunkey, blowgun, and archery ranges are provided.

Cultural elements are also integrated into the built environment of the schools. The school site is itself culturally significant in that it has been proven by archaeological study to have had continuous Cherokee habitation for over 500 years. Lumber was salvaged from the site and reused within the buildings as trim, furniture, decorative wall wainscot, and 7-sided ceiling trellises. The school has an indoor-outdoor building called the "Gathering Place" to help promote the village concept, and between each school there is a one-acre courtyard to encourage socialization skills. Even color palettes, decorative features, and landscaping plants are drawn from Cherokee cultural traditions and history.

Every day, each student is required to take one hour of Cherokee language. Cherokee language standards are integrated into the curriculum. CCS also has a pre-K-8 immersion program.

7.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Over 242 staff members work in the three schools. The student-teacher ratio is approximately 21:1; in addition, all pre-K through 3rd grade teachers have a teacher assistant. All teachers are licensed by North Carolina and the staff are evaluated using the NC evaluation instrument as well as frequent administrator walk-throughs. All of the faculty are rated "highly qualified" (HQ). To encourage students to pursue college, the teachers each have posters from their alma mater on display on their classroom doors.

Each school has a designated staff member to oversee professional development. CCS is a member of the Western Regional Education Service Alliance, a low-cost, high-quality forum for professional development. It also works with a variety of partners to conduct professional development each year and looks to the state Superintendents' Council for guidance on various training and policy matters.

For three years, the district has partnered with seven other North Carolina districts to provide a one-day professional development conference at their campus. It is hosted on a teacher workday. There is no fixed budget for it, but all districts contribute their best practices. Presentations are selected from superintendents, principals, and teachers. It is so well-attended and well-respected that the North Carolina Department of Education sends representatives to learn best practices.

7.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Special Education
Approximately 29% of the student population are special education students. All special education is inclusive; there are no self-contained classes. It has an inclusive education teacher at every grade level, and a lot of co-teaching. Every grade-level teacher with special education students has an assistant.

At-risk Students
Each school has an inside suspension program with one full-time staff member. There have been few outside suspensions over the last several years. Each school also has one full-time social worker, one full -time counselor, and a full-time certified therapist to help troubled students. CCS has an Alternative Education Program at the high school for students who have legal or discipline issues, although they report that very small

Vocational Education
CCS offers a Career and Technology program, including auto shop, sports medicine, agriculture (with a large greenhouse), and a wide variety of other occupational courses. CCS has a particularly active partnership with local emergency medical technician (EMT) services and students can graduate with an EMT license.

Food Services
Formerly overseen by the Boys' Club, the CCS Director of Food Services now oversees the program. All students receive free breakfast and lunch. No outside fast food is permitted. Students can pack healthy lunches. As Cherokee are prone to diabetes, no food or candy type of student rewards is allowed.

E-STEAM Initiative

The district has been working over the past year to plan and implement a Blended Learning and ESTEAM initiative (Empowerment through Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics). The goal of the initiative is to provide graduates with the career and college readiness skills needed for success. At the time of our visit, implementation was scheduled to begin during the 2017-18 school year.

Improved Student Achievement

Cherokee test scores have waivered since they began using the North Carolina State Standards and testing. They see positive trends in the right direction, but not to the point of calling themselves "high performing." In 2013, the schools started following Common Core, and they are challenged by the higher new standards. The schools recognized that their instructional approach has been somewhat fragmented. In response to faltering test scores and instructional fragmentation, CCS created the Qualla Education Collaborative, which consists of representatives from higher education, early childhood, K-12 students and parents, and human services. The purpose of the collaborative is to share best practices. The Collaborate created a "vision of a graduate" and determined that CCS needs to have more personalized instruction and blended learning, which is now its focus. The administration is making these changes in three cohorts and also working to ensure frequent meetings with superintendent, central office directors, and principals.

8. MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

> *Alla momat ikkana chih.*
>
> *All children will learn.*
>
> - ***Choctaw motto***

8.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Choctaw are the third-largest federally recognized tribe, with bands in several states. This Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) includes approximately 10,000 members. MBCI lands cover over 35,000 acres spread across ten counties.

The Choctaw Tribal School System (CTSS) has approximately 2,340 students in eight schools: six elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The schools are operated as a division of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Mississippi Department of Education. There is one boarding school located at the high school for students who live in outlying communities. Students are provided transportation to the dorm on Sunday night and bused back home on Friday afternoon.

Tribal population: 10,000

Student population: 2,300

Website:

www.choctawtribalschools.com

Tribally-Controlled Schools:

Bogue Chitto Elementary

Conehatta Elementary

Pearl River Elementary

Red Water Elementary

Standing Pine Elementary

Tucker Elementary

Choctaw Central Middle

Choctaw Central High

8.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

CTSS is set up as a traditional school district. The Tribe has 3 divisions: Education, Government Services, and Member Services. A Tribal Chief is at the top of the educational organization structure and also serves as the Director of the Board of Education. Reporting to the Tribal Chief is the Tribal Council Committee on Education. The Education Committee from the Tribal Council works closely with the schools in the development of policy, calendars, and budgets, which are then presented to full council for final approval. The Tribal Council has 17 members - at least 2 from each of the

communities. The Division of Education Director reports to the chief and her role is mainly administration. This director oversees early childhood, adult education, vocational education, Head Start and ultimately K-12. Reporting to her is a Director of Schools who is responsible for the day to day operation of the schools. They operate as a school district with a central office of 40 staff serving the schools. The CTSS once had several school boards. However, in 1989, it dissolved all of the school boards and consolidated into a single board.

The majority of CTSS funding comes from BIE, but the tribe itself contributes approximately 3 to 4% of the total budget. The budget developed and managed at the Department of Schools, but purchasing, finance and procurement is performed through the Tribal Office. However, BIE does not recognize the CTSS as a school district, but rather as eight independent schools that are each allocated their funding separately. Staff interviewed believe they are adequately funded.

All Human Resources (HR) is done centrally which has caused some school level staff challenges. The majority of their teachers are board certified and the tribe pays for this. Positions cannot be announced publicly until the tribal chief reviews and give the go light. It's a tight screening process to ensure schools get the best staff. The tribe recommended that all tribes centralize HR, although the additional bureaucratic step and time to wait for approval can sometimes lead to a loss of qualified candidates.

The staff interviewed believe their strength lies in the overall management structure. They work as one unit with the same goals in providing all students the opportunity for a strong education. For example, the planner for tribal government has been in place for 30 years knows and understands public safety, emergency management, education, and how to write and win grants including education. The planner recently wrote and the tribe was awarded two grants from HHS/Administration for Native Americans and the US Department of Education for language preservation-K-3 language exposure/acquisition.

Because of this cross-tribal teamwork, the schools are strengthened. The other two branches of the tribe (Government Services and Member Services) work toward common goals with Education. The Government Services Division includes overall tribal planning, economic development, and finance. The Member Services Division provides law and order, public safety, health center, and social services. There is also the Attorney General's office which provides the finance and compliance function.

There is also a multi-generational effort to support the schools. The tribe works as a team to improve housing (for teachers and others), and they have a new tornado shelter and a new hospital, all with the focus on keeping students and community safe and healthy.

Several tasks are delegated to the Director of the Division of Education and the Director of the Department of Schools, such as approving spending up to a certain dollar amount; authorizing travel, training, and curriculum; and the day-to-day operations. However, the Tribal Chief does all of the hiring and firing, including contractors. Principals can make a recommendation, but the Chief makes the final decision. In summary, all the units have individual work tasks that all support education so that the principals and educators can solely focus on education.

Each school also has its own school improvement plan that is aligned with the district plan and principals are held accountable to monitor and reach their goals. The Central office assists them and ensures the plans are being followed. All curriculum is state-approved Mississippi curriculum.

8.3 TRIBAL CULTURAL AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The CTSS motto is that all children will learn. A major part of their culture and tribal education is derived from their language program and language tests. The Education Committee of the Tribal Council works closely with the tribal language program. They developed their own standards and tests. The Coordinator for Language has tried to recruit teachers from each community so as to have all dialects represented; they have also taught the language teachers the different Choctaw dialects.

Most of the certified teaching staff are not tribal members, so they try to use Choctaw instructional aides. In grades pre-K to 3rd grade, the school also has state-certified language instructors who are trained and certified by the tribe who teach classes for 30 minutes each day.

One challenge they face is that parents are not teaching the language at home. To get parents more involved last year, the school opened a Parent Center in the afternoons, sent resources, and provided vocabulary for parents. This year they have seen more parental interest; 48 parents attended a two-hour "immersion" meeting where Choctaw was spoken the entire time. Other efforts to reinforce the language and culture include:

- Having the high school principal, who is only a small part Choctaw, take a six-week course on Choctaw culture;

- Developing an immersion class; and

- Playing recordings about Choctaw culture when callers to the schools are put on hold.

8.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One strategy they use to coordinate education is focused pacing guides for teachers. The schools work with consultants to update the guides yearly based on data on what worked and what did not work. If a student transfers to another school in the system, they will likely be working on the same unit and not fall behind.

The schools also utilize "lead teachers" and hold day-long grade-level meetings every 9 weeks. Teachers are required to turn lesson plans in electronically every week. Principals review them, and evaluate the teachers. Principals are given autonomy to review and evaluate the teachers. A principal may want teachers to flesh out lesson plans if he or she believe them to be inadequate. As long as pacing guide is followed, they try to give the teachers as much freedom as desired.

8.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Family and Community Engagement

The school is working to increase attendance rates, in part by creating more opportunities for parent, community, and business involvement. Examples of initiatives include:

- Home visits

- Parent nights

- A parent center

- Team meetings where parents are invited

- PTA or Advisory Councils (successful in only two schools)

- A "Local Advisory Council on Schools" (LACOS) for every school (the voice of the communities to the Tribal Committee and School Board)

- Mobile Parent Resource Center

Response to Intervention Program

The schools have an extensive Response to Intervention (RTI) Program that they designed from resources across the state. They created their own manual and personalized it to Choctaw. Lead teachers at each school oversee the RTI process. Their RTI looks at behavior and grades. They use a variety of RTI resources, including iReady, tutors three times a week, teacher interventions, and after school programs. The tribe pays for after school and summer enrichment four days a week or all day in the summer.

Special Education Services

The Special Education Coordinator at the central office creates a special education district plan with school, community, and parent input, and they have special education lead case managers who also teach. Previously they contracted out occupational, physical, and speech therapy. However, they studied the numbers and decided to hire their own staff and conduct those services in-house. Their program supports inclusion, but if students get too far behind, they do a blend of services.

Post-Secondary and Vocational Education

For students interested in attending college, they are able to give full scholarships to students who qualify – often more than 100 per year - with no strings attached. Additionally, the Choctaw schools have a strong career and technology program. At the Occupational Training Center (OTC), students gain culinary skills by operating the kitchen and serving the guests. The OTC also houses graphic design, shop, and solar car classes; they have won national awards for their solar cars. Many of the students get practical career experience working at the nearby casino.

Centralization

The main lesson to be learned from the Choctaw Tribe is value of continuity: continuity in high expectations for all staff and students, continuity in curriculum at the elementary grades due to the pacing guides, and continuity throughout the entire tribe as it works in unison for the betterment of education.

9. SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL, NEW MEXICO

The Ideal Graduate will understand the issues facing tribes in the Southwest and will be committed to maintaining Native American cultural values. They will participate in the culture of their communities, and will have the skills to pursue the education or careers that will benefit them, their families, and their people.

- Santa Fe Indian School Website

Student population: 650

Website: https://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/

Tribally-Controlled School:

Santa Fe Indian School (grades 7-12)

9.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) was established in 1890 to educate students from tribes from across the southwestern United States. It was established as a boarding school with the primary purpose to assimilate its students to white culture. Beginning in the 1920s, federal policy on Native education began evolving, including more control being given to the All Indian Pueblo Council in the 1970s. Eventually the Council assumed full control of the school, and in 2000, the land itself was turned over in trust to the governors of the 19 New Mexico pueblos.

The SFIS remains a boarding school that serves approximately 650 students at a middle school and a high school. Indian students may attend the school regardless of whether their tribe is part of the 19 pueblos or even located in New Mexico.

Although regarded as a successful school, the SFIS decided about eight years ago that it was not satisfied with its own practice and undertook a complete community-wide re-visioning of the school and its purpose. The change was spurred, in part, by the administrators' recognition that they were dismissing too many students. The timing coincided with the adoption of the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The Regional Education Laboratory Southwest recognized SFIS as a high-performing school in 2015, "Over the past 20 years, SFIS has coupled community-based, real-world problem-solving with higher-order thinking skills to intentionally prepare students for

success in both their home communities and the mainstream world."[27]   SFIS
accomplishes these goals even while juggling the interests of 19 Pueblo governors—the
"owners and operators" of the school—each of whom serves only a one-year term.

There are two elements of the SFIS that have helped it to be effective in providing
culturally-relevant education: SFIS has carefully defined and then adhered to tribal values
at every level of teaching and administration, and community input is a living component
of school planning that is embraced by students, parents and administrators.

Tribal Values

In 2007-2008, when the school conducted a visioning process, leaders there re-evaluated
what the school should be for students. The initial outcome was the articulation of ten
elements that are core values across the tribes. The ten elements include such bedrock
issues as environment, family, education and health. The entire school community,
including staff from custodial services, dormitories, athletics, facilities, and other academic
and non-academic staff, contribute to the infusion of the ten elements throughout school
life and to work toward S.M.A.R.T. goals (specific, measurable, achievable, results-
focused, and time-bound) that measure their progress. Today, the ten elements,
combined with the "Skills of the Ideal Graduate," all of which are aligned to the CCSS,
have become the basis of the SFIS.

Community Input

SFIS has had remarkable success at getting agreement among its many constituents for
pursuing a high bar of excellence in its academic and cultural pursuits. At the start of its
reformation in 2009, SFIS went to the community to discuss the difficult issues that
confronted families and students, including obesity, wellness, suicide, and discipline.
Using a comprehensive approach, administrators gathered data and viewpoints from tribal
governors, parents and students, and went to community sites not just school functions to
solicit feedback. This process produced the ten elements and reinforced agreement
around the Skills of the Ideal Graduate, as well as provided a common message and a
common language in the community that everyone understands.

There are two key aspects of the SFIS community engagement strategy.   First,
governors—whom both students and families recognize and respect as the leaders of their
tribes—have real responsibility to reflect the school's core values in interactions with the

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[27] SFIS Featured in the Regional Education Laboratory Southwest at SEDL Newsletter as a High-
Performing School, http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/news, September 10, 2015.

people. Through active engagement of the dean of students, SFIS has been able to maintain governors' support for the school mission, even though the tribal leadership typically changes every year.

Second, SFIS has institutionalized its open-communication policies. Students and parents are expected to understand and follow the policies expressed in the school handbook. Parents and students are included in planning activities. At the start of each year, administrators meet with each tribal leader to confirm the education goals for students of that tribe. There are routine meetings with the pueblo trustees who sit on the school board, and ordinary members of the community continue to provide strategic input.

9.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The SFIS is an independent organization that represents students from scores of tribes—including some who are not from New Mexico—at a high school and a middle school on a residential campus. Therefore, SFIS must operate with the scope and authority of a school district. It does this as a tribally-controlled BIE grant school under the stewardship of a board of trustees. The school's superintendent oversees two high school principals and a leadership team responsible for strategic areas like planning and evaluation, student services, finance and curriculum, parent engagement and professional development.

The leadership team at SFIS has made documented progress over the past eight years in meeting its improvement goals. **Public Works** identified three elements that are have produced this change: consistency (SFIS has had only three superintendents in its history and several top directors have been at the school for more than two decades); quality (because of its unique mission, SFIS has been in the position to hire highly qualified faculty and staff, and it has rigorously set expectations for each staff member in their role); and common purpose (SFIS has intentionally embedded the systems that sustain its vision at every level of the organization).

9.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The SFIS curriculum addresses the New Mexico and Common Core State Standards. However, it also seeks to: 1) address the ten elements or universal themes and core values common to most Native communities; 2) include aspects of community-based education; and 3) have a unique health and wellness agenda. These goals, when

coupled with state and national academic standards, work to more fully articulate what SFIS students are expected to know and do.[28]

The SFIS uses certified language instructors, who teach in six of the northern pueblo languages. As part of the curriculum revitalization process of 2009, SFIS administrators tapped the expertise of the school's certified language instructors to create the curriculum, and are now working with teachers to implement it. The SFIS faculty identified "Ideal Graduate Skills" (IGS) many years before but they had not previously been used intentionally or incorporated into the curriculum. The new, fully-articulated curriculum aligns the IGS with the academic requirements of the CCSS and the steering components of the ten elements. "ELA and Math departments have been implementing these curricula since Fall 2014. Other departments delved into the Common Core State Standards Literacy and Mathematical Practices, aligning state standards for each content area with CCSS and IGS."[29]

9.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

SFIS invests in intellectual capital in two significant ways. First, there is continuous embedded professional development in lesson planning and other areas of need supported by Title II. Professional development training is designed to maximize learning, and there are several blocks of time set aside during the week for planning and collaboration. Scheduled planning time happens at the department level, grade level, and in open-ended settings. It also has dorm staff implement the health and wellness units as an innovative means to increase time for teacher planning and collaboration. SFIS makes it a priority to "train stakeholders to analyze data,"[30] evaluate progress, and make adjustments.

SFIS also builds capacity by "growing its own" teachers and administrators. Individuals are mentored to fill key leadership positions, and the school has opened up a new digital learning center to help increase the ranks of certified language instructors.

9.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

The Restorative Justice Model

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[28] Curriculum/Professional Development,
http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/curriculumprofessional_development.
[29] Curriculum/Professional Development,
http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/curriculumprofessional_development.
[30] Santa Fe Indian School website: http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/strategic_planning

As a residence school, SFIS has been challenged with discipline issues that do not confront most schools. In response, the school has created a novel method of dealing with student behavioral infractions that, in the words of administrators, "mirrors the community and incorporates the culture." As with the instructional programs, the alignment between policy and core values is proving highly effective. The Partnership for Alternative Student Success (PASS) program focuses on keeping students in school rather than having them expelled. Students who get into trouble first must join with the dean of students and multi-generational representatives of their families to "tell the story" of how discipline and honor are handled in the tribe. If needed, SFIS helps students to get into native-run substance abuse programs, and the school assigns a PASS teacher to go to the student's facility once per week to provide direct instruction during treatment. This model is considered an alternative dispute resolution process and is accepted by the legal system and SFIS has a Department of Justice-funded officer who works to support students at school with their remediation plans.

Dual-Credit Programs

SFIS makes instruction valuable to students through both cultural relevance and a focus on career opportunities. Through partnerships with Santa Fe Community College and the University of New Mexico, SFIS is able to provide dual-credit learning on its campus which reduces the time commitment and the cost of transportation. The program focuses on trending fields, such as health sciences, welding, and digital storytelling. The school is moving toward enabling students to complete Associate's degrees by the end of high school. Middle school students receive short-term study in which they cycle through a series of career pathways programs such as artisanship, construction, creative writing, and electronics to gain experience in the practical demands of these fields.

Leadership Institute

For nearly twenty years, the SFIS Leadership Institute has been "transform[ing] the impacts of externally-developed policy on Tribal community institutions by cultivating emerging intergenerational Indigenous leaders."[31] The Institute's programming always incorporates core values, federal Indian policy, and the question, "What will be your contribution?" Participants include community members and students from the 22 tribal nations of New Mexico. There are multiple leadership programs offered, including the Summer Policy Academy, a three-year summer program. In the first year, students must

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[31] Santa Fe Leadership Institute, http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/leadership_institute.

independently develop and implement a community-based improvement project. In the second year, students attend summer study at Ivy League institutions. In the third year, students are aided in securing work internships in career areas of their choice.

Rigorous Standards and Expectations

SFIS considers it essential for each student to graduate. In 2013 the four-year cohort graduation rate for SFIS was 82.1 percent, significantly better than New Mexico's state graduation rate of 70.3 percent and slightly better than the national rate of 81 percent.[32] SFIS staff credit the school's culture and language for creating an environment supportive of student learning. According to the SFIS website, "[Our] teaching philosophy is really a learning philosophy that life in the classroom and school is just one of many places where learning takes place."[33]

At the same time, SFIS is implementing a rigorous academic curriculum that prepares students to enter and complete four-year college degree programs, to pursue career paths, to work, and to be contributing members of the community.

There is evidence of the SFIS commitment to accountability that includes the following:

- The establishment of the office of Planning and Evaluation;

- The measures that the school has taken to implement CCSS;

- Quick adoption of the PARCC (Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) exam: "Of the 183 BIE schools located in 23 states across the nation, SFIS was one of only two that administered the PARCC computer-based assessment";[34] and

- Investment in technology and technological training for both students and staff.

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[32] SFIS Featured in the Department of Ed Southwest REL Newsletter as a High-Performing School, http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/news, September 10, 2015.
[33] SFIS website
[34] SFIS Featured in the Department of Ed Southwest REL Newsletter as a High-Performing School, http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/news, September 10, 2015.

Senior Honors Project

To graduate, all seniors must complete a Seniors Honors Project. Students are required to conduct extensive research on an issue related to the health, vitality, and sovereignty of tribal communities. This project is the culmination of the SFIS education program. Project are evaluated using the Ideal Graduate Rubric, a Common Core-aligned rubric developed by SFIS stakeholders. [35]

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[35] SFIS Featured in the Department of Ed Southwest REL Newsletter as a High-Performing School, http://www.sfis.k12.nm.us/news, September 10, 2015.

10. GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY, ARIZONA

The role of the Tribal Education Department is to ensure all programs are administered properly, meet education performance standards, comply with federal, state Develop regulations, and provide direction to meet the educational needs of the community.

- Gila River Indian Community Tribal Department of Education

Tribal population: 21,000, with 12,000 living on the reservation

Student population: Approximately 2000

Website: http://www.gilariver.org/

Tribally-Controlled Schools:

- Casa Blanca Community School (Pre-K–4)
- Blackwater Community School (Pre-K-5)
- Gila River Community School (Pre-K-8)

Public Schools:

- Sacaton Elementary School
- Sacaton Middle School
- Skyline Gila River Charter School (5-12)

Nearby Public Schools:

- Coolidge School District
- Casa Grande School District
- Phoenix Unified School District

10.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

With a tribal population of about 21,000, of which 12,000 reside on the reservation, the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) is located along the southern boundary of the Phoenix metropolitan area in Arizona. GRIC is comprised of the Akimel O'otham (Pima) and Pee-Posh (Maricopa) tribes, two culturally and linguistically distinct indigenous populations.

The Community is divided into seven districts. Each district has its own jurisdiction and maintains 1-4 seats on the Tribal Council (with 17 members in total).

There are three tribally-controlled schools on the reservation:

- **Casa Blanca Community School (CBCS)** serves 250 students in grades K-4, plus the preschool students in its Family and Child Education program (FACE). Its "Roadrunners Running to OUR Future" after-school program is run through a partnership between the school, the Boys and Girls Club, the Tribe, and the federally-funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. http://www.cbcschools.com/

- **Blackwater Community School (BWCS)** is a hybrid school. Along with its preschool programs, it operates Kindergarten thru 3rd grade under the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) while 4th and 5th grades operate under the Arizona State Charter Board as the Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School. In 2016, BIE approved the 3rd grade expansion request and announced a new school construction. http://bwcs.k12.az.us/

- **Gila Crossing Community School** is a PreK through 8th Grade school with a current enrollment of about 550 students. Formerly a BIA school, it became a grant school in 1995. In 2002, the school assumed another neighborhood school formerly known as Estrella Mountain Accommodation School. The five-member Board of Trustees is the governing body of both these campuses. http://www.gccseagles.org/

In addition to the three grant schools, GRIC students attend Sacaton Elementary School and Sacaton Middle School of the public Sacaton School District. They also attend the Skyline Gila River charter school in Bapchule, AZ, a non-profit, tuition-free public charter with individualized instruction and small classes. The Skyline Gila River charter system has eight sites, including the one in Bapchule which includes a Middle School (grades 5-8) and High School (grades 9-12). GRIC students also attend two private schools in the Community.

As none of the tribally-controlled GRIC schools offers high school, when the students reach high school age, they spread out to attend nearby public high schools, which include Casa Grande Union, Cesar Chavez, Coolidge, Coolidge Alternative Program, Betty Fairfax, Vista Grande, and Riverside.[36] Many also apply to and attend off-reservation boarding schools. According to a TED Boarding School Advisor in a May 2017 article, about 100 GRIC students apply each year, and about 60 students are accepted and able to enroll in their choice boarding school, all of which are out-of-state. Their most popular boarding schools are Chemewa (Salem, OR) and Sherman Indian School (Riverside, CA). While the TED does not track the academic progress of GRIC students who leave the reservation to attend high school elsewhere, the TED's Boarding School Advisor does visit the students to "check in" on them.

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[36] According to the Gila River Indian News, "*Congratulations GRIC Graduates*," June 3, 2016 article, the 95 high school graduates from GRIC are spread across about 20 high schools off-reservation.

10.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Tribal Education Department

The GRIC Tribal Council has an Education Committee, and the Tribe's "Administrative Support" includes a Tribal Education Department (TED). Without managerial jurisdiction over the schools themselves, the TED currently pursues the goal of "self-reliance through tribal education" as a broad-based collaborative entity. http://mygilariver.com/gricted/ The TED oversees many programs that support GRIC students along the continuum:

- **Early Childhood**: The TED manages an "Early Childhood Special Services" program (including 14 staff that provide screenings and other services for children with special needs), Child Care, a Family and Child Education program (FACE), and four Head Start sites (serving about 200 children), and a month-long transition to kindergarten.

- **School-Age Students**: The TED supports K-12 students through its K-12 Division, which administers the Johnson O'Malley Program (JOM) funds. The TED supports K-12 students with JOM Student Advisors; an Off-Reservation Boarding School office (with a full-time Boarding School Advisor to facilitate the admission process); and "Behavior Specialists," who provide support regarding behavior and discipline.

- **Higher Education**: The TED Student Services division helps those pursuing higher education by helping with applications and providing scholarships on a yearly basis. It employs nine staff, including five "Student Advisors," a Student Financial Aid Advisor, and two secretaries to help GRIC students with forms and financial assistance.

Tribal Allocation Grant

In addition to program management, the TED administers Tribal Allocation (TA) grants to schools for certain programs as approved by the GRIC Council through Tribal Resolution. The Community wants to ensure that students are exposed to Tribal culture and language at school, and that they receive other auxiliary services, so each year, the Tribal Council allocates $1.9 million to the tribally-controlled, public and private schools, based on pupil enrollment. For example, the TA funds supplement Blackwater Community School's Physical Education, Gifted and Talented (GATE), STEM Programs, Teaching of Tribal Native Language & Culture, Gardening and Farming, and Student Council, Cheer

Leading, Color Guard, and after-school programs.[37]   Because the Tribe provides "tribal Allocation funds" to each of the seven on-reservation schools to increase enrichment opportunities, and because a NYCP grant's objectives include increased STEM opportunities, the TED serves as a partner in developing and supporting these activities. One example is the Sacaton Middle School Robotics STEM Club, run by a Sacaton Middle School science teacher for the last five years. In 2017, around 50 students from different schools in GRIC attended the RoboRAVE held in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

SIE Grant – School Unification Plan

In September 2014, the U.S. Department of Interior awarded a Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) grant to the GRIC Tribal Education Department (TED). The GRIC TED was a recipient of a $200,000 SIE grant in 2014 and reported its objectives in 2015.

For now, the three tribally controlled schools consider themselves each a "single-school district". But the Community is using the SIE funds to explore how it can unify the local grant schools under the TED. To start the process, the Community developed a comprehensive five-year plan.

For the first year of the grant, key objectives included: (1) Hiring a consultant to help with a unification plan for the three grant schools; (2) Creating a Research and School Reform Committee to advise the Tribal Education Department and the consultant; (3) Identifying crucial areas of school operations for possible consolidation and/or consistency in finance, human resources, school governance, academic standards, and curriculum; (4) Finding potential partnerships with community entities for culture and language coursework; (5) Conducting community engagement; and (6) Conducting research to inform further decision-making. See the 2015 SIE report. According to the report, "Gone will be the ideas of silos, whereby different areas of assistance are closed off unto themselves; instead we would like to share information and resources between the schools and the tribe and unite our efforts, erasing the thought of silos."[38]

For subsequent years, the consultant recommended that the Tribe should:

(1) **School Governance** – Strengthen relationships between the grant schools and tribal council to include more regularly planned collaboration; modify the existing Governance policies and procedures to create unified Fiscal and Personnel Policy

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[37] Blackwater Community Schools website - http://mygilariver.com/gricted/.
[38] https://www.bie.edu/cs/groups/xbie/documents/document/idc1-031975.pdf

Manuals; and revise existing education code to transfer responsibility for all three Grant Schools to the GRIC.

(2) **Finance and Human Resources** – Assume responsibility for the financial and operational functions of the three grant schools; and modify the existing Financial policies and procedures and Human Resources ones to create unified ones.

(3) **Academics** – Establish a Curriculum Steering Committee to establish structure and consistency of academic learning across all three grant schools; and align curriculum and instructional practices across all three schools.

At the request of GRIC Governor Stephen Lewis, the Tribe established the Govenor's Ad Hoc Committee, made up of legislative and policy stakeholders, including school administrators, school board members, GRIC Council members, and community members. In addition, with the help of a consultant, a separate Curriculum Steering Committee is now guiding the alignment of the "Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Practices" across the three GRIC grant schools. They plan to create a comprehensive, "community-adapted curriculum" by adapting the Arizona standards and tailoring them to GRIC.

To compile data from the schools and support further decision-making, the TED has continued to gather input through teacher surveys that will be collected and analyzed. In December 2016, the TED organized and managed a TED Education Summit, with over 100 participants discussing the future of GRIC educational system. Overall, in over two years, the TED staff held or attended over 60 community meetings. "Collectively, were coming up with the answers," said the TED Director. The TED is organizing another Education Summit scheduled for February 10, 2018.

Next, with the assistance of the GRIC Tribal Council's Standing Education Committee, the TED will go before the Council and request codification of its role to "oversee all educational activities in the community." It is important to note that, even when the schools are unified, the TED expects that the local Governing Boards will still directly manage the schools. The TED will use a hybrid model, between a State Education Agency that provides technical assistance and a district office managed by a schools' superintendent. While the Tribal Council will likely have to allocate funding for the superintendent and staff to start, the hope is that, over time, the office can be self-funded based on savings from the consolidation of services (i.e. consolidation of human resource managers, finance directors, and/or lawyers, for example).

Student Tracking

The K-12/JOM Division is also working closely with the Management Information Systems department to develop a student tracking mechanism that will allow databases in the schools that GRIC students attend (both on- and off- reservation and including the off-reservation boarding schools), and tribal district, court, and administrative offices to communicate.[39]

10.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Culture Coordinator

The TED employs a Culture Coordinator and Assistant Culture Coordinator who serve as the Cultural Programs staff. In recent years, in coordination with the University of Arizona Indian Language Development Institute, the TED brought two language development workshops to the reservation. The TED also worked closely with Arizona State University (ASU) to bring college classes to the reservation. To develop O'Otham culture and language teaching for GRIC schools, core classes were held at convenient locations on the reservation. Eight recent graduates in May 2017 earned college degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis on Indian Education.

10.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual In-Service Training Days

The GRIC TED holds an annual day of professional development in August. One year, attendance included over 500 administrators, K-8 teachers, and bus drivers, representing all seven schools that serve students in the Community. The TED also facilitates an annual pre-service program for early childhood educators, including 200 – 250 staff from the Head Start, Child Care, and FACE programs. This annual training is a financial and consultative partnership between the TED, the early childhood programs, and the K-8 schools, and it provides opportunity for collaboration among the various program managers and educators.

Professional Learning Committee

The TED provides training to teachers from all schools. It currently has a cohort of 20-25 teachers. In total, the TED has trained over 100 teachers in improved and high impact teaching strategies.

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[39] K-12/JOM Division website - http://mygilariver.com/gricted/k12-jom.html

Teacher Recruitment and Retention Plan

BWCS has a recently-modified Teacher Recruitment and Retention Plan (Sy2016-17) posted directly on the school website. According to the new plan, "The goal was to recruit and retain the highest quality employee, as well as making it a collaborative and thoughtful process with stakeholder input. Our current practice maximizes stakeholder involvement, but minimizes timelines to ensure the highest quality candidates are hired."[40]

Teach for America-Native Alliance Initiative

In summer 2016, the TED brought the Teach for America-Native Alliance (TFA-NAI) teacher trainings to the Sacaton Elementary School where a corps of teachers gained experience working with native students. According to the TED Director, the Community hopes that they can employ TFA-NAI teachers in the future in their tribally controlled schools where they will bring the program's already-developed "culturally responsive teaching" to GRIC schools.[41]

10.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Literacy Initiative

Started in 2016, and funded through a four-year grant from Native Youth Community Project (NYCP), the TED plans to put 100 books inside 80% of homes in the Community with young children under the "Growing Readers and Developing Leaders" (GRDL) project. The Community recognized that GRIC students were not developing the vocabulary they needed to come to kindergarten ready to learn. Based on national research, they also conducted a survey of students in grades 3-8 and realized that only 1% of them had 100 books in their homes, and that the numbers correlated directly with their own student achievement data. As a result, the TED recognized that they "needed to change habits of reading in the community." To do so, they addressed the issue of book scarcity by distributing over 20,000 in 2017, with the plan to distribute even more in 2018. They also developed a template for community members to write books, so they would feel more personal to the children. They are working collaboratively, with both the

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[40] The Recruitment and Retention Plan can be found on the Blackwater Community School's website.
http://www.bwcs.k12.az.us/hqt_tr&rplan16_17/BWCS%20Recruiting%20and%20Retention%20Plan%20for%20HQT%20SY2016-17.pdf

[41] "Initiative brings Teach for America to Gila River Indian Community," *Gila River Indian News*, April 1, 2016. http://www.gricnews.org/view/download.php/pdf-archives/2016-pdf-archive/april-01-2016-pdf

schools and the community on board. Next, they are working with Blackwater Community School (BWCS) as a demonstration preschool that focuses on literacy and vocabulary development. With the hope that the BWCS preschoolers will be more kindergarten-ready, then the TED can replicate that model to the other schools. On the elementary level, BWCS is "relentlessly pursuing to help increase the literacy among our community". Connected with the NYCP grant-based preschool program, the school hosts "Family Literacy Nights" once a month to enhance parental involvement. It also distributes g books free of cost for children during these events.

Early Childhood Education – FACE, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care
On the Blackwater Community School campus, there are three preschool programs – one run by the BIE-funded Family and Child Education program (FACE), one funded by ESSA Title VII, and the other by Quality First.[42] Coordinated by the TED, Gila Crossing and Casa Blanca schools both also runs a FACE program for families with young children. The benefits of the FACE program are two-fold because it offers a center-based program and also a home-based program:

- **Home-Based**: Families with children up to five years old receive a home visit from a "home-based educator" every week or two. Each visit includes: age-specific information about parenting issues, family well-being, child development, and an educational activity between the parent and the child that is often adapted to emphasize the local culture and language. Home-based parents are invited to a group meeting at least once a month. They hear speakers on topics related to family well-being, development-centered parenting, parent-child interaction; make books and toys for their children that often include the local culture and language; participate in parent-child activities; get to know the school-based FACE staff; and learn to feel good about being a part of the school.

- **Center-Based**: The Center-based educational program for 3- to 5-year-old children focuses on literacy development, particularly pre-reading skills, like letter identification, the sound and letter connections, vocabulary development and learning to love books, stories and language. Children also learn other socio-emotional skills that will help them transition and succeed in elementary

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[42] Blackwater Community School Student Parent Handbook - http://www.bwcs.k12.az.us/SPHANDBOOKS/SPHANDBK2016-17.pdf

school. The native culture and language are seen as "essential components of the learning environment, teaching practices and curriculum."

Concurrently, FACE parents also work toward their own learning goals in several areas: education, employment, culture and language, technology skills, and personal and family life. For more information on FACE, see the Gila River school website, http://www.gccseagles.org/parents/f_a_c_e, or http://face.familieslearning.org/index/.

The TED also runs the four Head Start sites, in Sacaton, Santon, Vah0Ki, and District 6, that serve the GRIC community in Districts 2-7. The Head Start sites serve preschool children from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm, while Early Head Start serves infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. According to a 2012-13 Annual Report, all sites were 100% full and Head Start staff includes a "Family Services Advocate" and a "Mentor Teacher" (currently a vacant position).[43] Lastly, run as a "sub department" of the TED, the Early Education/Child care Center serves children ages 6 weeks- 5 years old, while parents/guardians are working, in training or pursuing their education.

Student Behavior Specialists

One of the ways that the TED supports the K-8 schools is that it funds an "Behavior Specialist" office, which provides support regarding behavior and discipline. A small team of specialists with extensive experience, or in one case a master's degree in social work, provide educational resources for community members and educators alike. The Specialists consult with teachers, make observations, and give recommendations. The teachers have provided positive feedback about this support. Moving forward, the newly titled "Student Support Specialists" will *also* help to support parents as advocates in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. The division's website includes a discipline plan for class, effective class management tools, and a truancy handbook. http://mygilariver.com/gricted/studentbehaviorspecialists.html

JOM Student Advisor

Using Johnson O'Malley (JOM) funds, the TED employs seven JOM Student Advisors. These advisors provide daily support services to GRIC students enrolled at the JOM school sites off-reservation. The advisors monitor academic and social progress of GRIC students, make home visits, make referral to other agencies when a need is identified that

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[43] 2012-2013 Annual Head Start Report
http://mygilariver.com/gricted/images/other/HSP_AnnualReport2012-2013.pdf.

will benefit the student, establish positive working relationships with parents and guardians, and provide resources.[44]

Collaboration

In addition, the TED Director collaborates with other tribal services, such as the Youth Council Coordinator, and they address the needs of at-risk youth comprehensively. For example, the GRIC Youth Council holds annual Youth Council conferences. In December 2017, the Tribe held a two-day Youth Roundtable, including leaders and youth sitting on panels and sharing experiences.   In October 2017, the GRIC Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator held a Juvenile Drug Court Conference. To reduce alcohol, drug abuse, ang gang influence, Sacaton Middle School runs a customized gang prevention program and Gila Crossing Community School runs a DARE program.

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[44] "The Office Site for the Members of the Gila River Indian Community" - http://restoretest.mygilariver.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=85:about-jom-program&catid=97&Itemid=539

11. NAVAJO NATION, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, AND UTAH

The Department of Diné Education's vision is to ensure that any Navajo child regardless of where they reside on the reservation will have equal standards and will enjoy a strong curriculum that highlights Diné language, history and culture. These standards will be central in educating all of our children across the Navajo Nation.

- *Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education*

Tribal population: 300,000, with about 180,000 living on the reservation

Student population: 89,000

Website: www.navajo-nsn.gov

www.NavajoNationDODE.org

Tribally-Controlled and Public Schools:

The largest Indian reservation, there are hundreds of elementary and secondary schools on or near the Navajo Nation, including public, private, and Bureau of Indian Education-funded schools.

11.1 HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

With a tribal population of about 300,000, of which about 180,000 reside on the reservation, the Navajo Nation is the second largest tribe and the largest reservation.[45] Encircling the Hopi Reservation, the Navajo Reservation's 27,000 square miles cover parts of northeastern Arizona, Southeastern Utah, and Northwestern New Mexico.

There are 17 school districts serving the Navajo Nation, with a total of 244 schools and approximately 89,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The elementary and secondary schools on or near the Navajo Nation include public, private, and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. Even the "public" schools are under the authority of six different systems: BIE, Association of Navajo Controlled Schools, Navajo Preparatory School, and the public school systems of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Of the 66 schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education ("BIE-funded"), 32 are BIE operated, 33 are tribally-controlled grant schools, and one is a "638 contract" school.[46] The BIE schools also use a variety of models, including community schools, charter schools, and boarding schools.

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[45] http://navajobusiness.com/fastFacts/Overview.htm

[46] These are May 2015 numbers, according to Superintendent of Schools Tommy Lewis in testimony before Congress. https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-114shrg98435/html/CHRG-114shrg98435.htm

11.2 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Tribal Education Department

The Navajo Nation is regulated by a very detailed Education Code – Title 10 - Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act. Updated with sweeping amendments in January 2005, the code describes how the Navajo established its educational system.[47] Most noteworthy in the amendments, the code created a structure of oversight through the Tribal Council's Education Committee, the Navajo Nation Board of Education, and a Department of Diné Education ("DODE"), who all have very specific authorities and responsibilities. Section 1(B) delineates that the Navajo Nation's Council Education Committee has oversight authority over the Board of Education, DODE, and over the implementation of education legislation. The Department is the administrative agency within the Navajo Nation with authority to implement the educational laws; it is under the immediate direction of the Navajo Nation Superintendent of Schools, subject to the overall direction of the Board of Education. By law, the Board of Education consists of both elected and appointed members.

DODE is headed by Dr. Tommy Lewis, Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Timothy Benally serves as the Assistant Superintendent of Schools. A Planner, Data Network Specialist, Programmer Analyst, Administrative Assistant, Legislative Analyst, Accountant, Office Specialist, and Public Information Officer also serve in administration.

Without managerial jurisdiction over the schools themselves, the DODE supports and oversees the schools through requirements for data collection and reporting. Notably, DODE "shall seek to work cooperatively with schools serving the Navajo Nation," although the code gives DODE the authority to inquire into the educational situation of Navajo students in any school or educational program serving the Navajo Nation. Because the Nation does not manage the schools directly, it acts like a state educational agency, posting quarterly newsletters, [48] an annual status report, and making efforts to set up an alternative accountability system. www.NavajoNationDODE.org Within that framework, however, the code still leaves most responsibilities to the local school boards.

Like other tribes supporting their students along the continuum, the DODE also oversees programs that include Early Childhood (Early Intervention Programs and Department of

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[47] http://www.navajocourts.org/Resolutions/CJY-37-05.pdf

[48] Please see this 2016 newsletter as an example.
http://navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/5dd753676e3e448680a1a72b07652b0d/NNDODE_Newsletter_FY_2016_Fourth_Quarter__July__August__and_September_2016_.pdf

Head Start); School-Age Students (Johnson O'Malley Program), and Higher Education (Scholarship/Financial Assistance). In particular, the Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program provides supplemental funding to assist eligible Navajo students. Diné language and culture are high priorities for JOM. Services include: at-risk counseling, tutoring, computer lab, community-based learning centers, home school liaison, and bilingual teacher assistants.

It should be noted that the Navajo Nation Department of Workforce Development is an entirely separate department from the DODE.

What distinguishes the Department of Diné Education is its interest in becoming a state educational agency (SEA). To support and implement these efforts, the Navajo Nation DODE now has a number of divisions not seen in other tribes, such as the Office of Diné School Improvement; Office of Standards, Curriculum, and Development; Planning and Research/Statistics; and the Office of Diné Youth. According to the FY 2017 DODE Budget Summary, for example, DODE budgeted $1.29 million dollars for its Administration, $92,630 for the Navajo Nation Board of Education, $417,049 for the Office of Diné Accountability and Compliance (ODAC), $612,781 for the Office of Diné School Improvement, $243,444 for the Office of Diné Youth (administration and five regional offices), and $100,000 for Diné Language Immersion.[49] In the FY 2018 DODE Budget, the Navajo Nation Council appropriated $900,000 to the Department of Diné Education to assist with the implementation of the Diné School Accountability Plan (DSAP).

SIE Grant

In September 2014, the U.S. Department of Interior awarded a Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) grant of $200,000 to the Navajo Nation. According to a 2015 report, the SIE project "supported development of a Navajo Nation-wide school reform plan to improve educational outcomes for students, revitalize Navajo language and cultural instruction, to improve efficiencies and effectiveness in the operation of BIE-funded schools within the Navajo Nation, and to build the capacity of the Department of Diné Education to effectively serve Navajo Nation schools. This project seeks to strengthen

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[49] The FY 2017 DODE Budget Summary was published in the quarterly newsletter.
http://navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/5dd753676e3e448680a1a72b07652b0d/NNDODE_Newsletter_FY_2016_Fourth_Quarter__July__August__and_September_2016_.pdf

and unify all Navajo BIE-funded schools and to integrate the Navajo Nation's unique culture into the curriculum."[50]

As the first step, the Tribe conducted a feasibility study on assuming control of the 32 BIE operated schools on the Navajo Nation, with the intent to merge the 34 tribally-controlled schools into the new system later on. To clarify, according to a 2015 presentation, "It is proposed that the Navajo Nation convert the 32 BIE operated schools to "Tribal Controlled Schools" as allowed by P.L. 100-297. The 32 schools will be transferred into a new education system called Diné Consolidated School System."[51] The plan maintained the same system of direct funding from BIE to the schools based on their ISEP formulas.

The study was completed in December 2014. To refine the recommendations made by the Feasibility Study, the DODE held six public hearings, meetings with school boards, conferences, and BIE Principal meetings, and to the Navajo Nation Tribal Council and the Navajo Nation Board of Education. Recommendations covered four targeted areas:

- **Human Resources** - Align Human Resources policies, position descriptions, and salary scales, school staff evaluations into uniform policies; and develop an effective recruitment process to attract and retain highly qualified personnel;

- **Finance** – Align a single Finance policy and procedures manual, establish internal controls that ensure responsibility and accountability, define roles and monitor the effectiveness;

- **Academics** - Deploy the existing curriculum framework developed by the Diné Content Standards (DCS) to the BIE schools into classroom instruction; train staff, and align the DCS to Common Core State Standards; and

- **School Governance** – Review and refine a single School Governance and School Board policy and procedures manual that addresses the code of ethics and by-laws; review and refine school board roles and responsibilities; apply best

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[50] "Implementing a Tribally-Managed School System: Tribal Presentations," August 21, 2015. https://www.bie.edu/cs/groups/xbie/documents/document/idc1-031975.pdf
[51] Sovereignty in Indian Education grant presentation, 2015 - http://navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/31f906180aec42ca8deee332e33638ec/SIEG_Revised_November_Public_Hearings.pdf

practices; and collaborative with school board associations on professional development programs.

TED Grant

In July 2015, the U.S. Department of Interior awarded a Tribal Education Department (TED) grant to the Navajo Nation to promote tribal education capacity-building, including development and enforcement of tribal education codes, policies and standards applicable to curriculum, personnel, students, facilities and support programs; to facilitate tribal control in all matters relating to the education of children on the reservation; and to provide for the development of coordinated educational programs on reservations and by encouraging tribal administrative support of all BIE-funded educational programs.

> *A.1.* State Educational Agency Initiative

Based on its work with the SIE and TED grants, the Department is seeking federal State Educational Agency (SEA) status to become the central authority for accountability and school improvement, working collaboratively with tribally-controlled schools.

The Navajo Nation is moving forward toward its goals:

- **Data-Driven Decision-Making**: Implement using data process initiatives with 24 BIE grant schools;

- **Alignment of Educational Services:** Work with schools on standards-based curriculum alignment, teaching and learning (Common Core);

- **Math and Science:** Work with math and science programs across Arizona, New Mexico and Utah;

- **Partnerships:** Work with Diné College, NTC, Arizona State University, Fort Lewis, University of Utah and Northern Arizona University; and

- **Student Tracking System:** Continue with the development of the Navajo Education Information System.

To reach these goals, DODE developed an Accountability Plan, established an Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI) to implement it, and designed a student tracking system.

School Accountability Plan

As part of the initiative to become an SEA, the Department originally sought an alternative definition of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)*;* it developed and submitted an *"Accountability Workbook"* that addressed the requirements of No Child Left Behind. The workbook included a definition of AYP and how the SEA would measure, test, and gather data, among other activities. Subsequent to the passage of the updated federal education law, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Department re-submitted a waiver and request for alternative accountability measures.[52] The Navajo Accountability Plan was approved in September 2016, and DODE is currently implementing it.[53]

Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI)

One of DODE's divisions, the Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI) was created to improve schools through professional development, coaching and mentoring of educators; enhancing and training educators on data analysis and making data-driven decisions; developing and implementing school improvement plans with educators; strengthening leadership skills and knowledge of educators and parents; and leveraging technology in new and innovative ways for the purposes of systemic support, instructor excellence and student academic achievement. According to its website, **t**he Office of Diné School Improvement is now funded 100 percent by the Navajo Nation as a "General Funded" program. For more information, see http://www.odsmt.org/**.**

The Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI) is focused on improving the quality of instruction for K-12 in science, mathematics, and technology in the classroom. In addition to ODSI, DODE "central program offices" include:

- **Office of Educational Research and Statistics** - provides quality statistical analysis on the status of education; conducts data analysis; develops and manages a comprehensive database system; and initiates new technological advances in the field of management information systems;

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[52] Navajo Nation's request to BIE for a waiver and approval of alternative accountability measures http://www.navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/8dbc3347d3854011b2b42cc8990c5846/NNAWB_Final__1__1.pdf

[53] DODE Quarterly Newsletter 2016 - http://navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/5dd753676e3e448680a1a72b07652b0d/NNDODE_Newsletter_FY_2016_Fourth_Quarter__July__August__and_September_2016_.pdf

- **Office of Diné Accountability and Compliance -** assists education institutions with compliance of Federal, state, and Navajo Nation laws through monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance**; and**

- **Office of Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Development (OSCAD)** - conserves, promotes, and perpetuates the Diné Cultural and Language instructional programs in coordination with schools, institutions of higher education, the state department of education, community organizations and the Traditional Navajo Apprenticeship Project. [54]

Student Tracking - Navajo Education Information System
The Office of Diné School Improvement established the Navajo Education Information System (NEIS) which serves as a vehicle to sponsor and accelerate SMT reform efforts currently undertaken by the program, as well as plans by the Department of Diné Education (DODE) to create the Navajo Nation Educational Department. DODE hopes that the network being established through NEIS will provide access to database from the three state departments of education (NM, AZ, UT), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and other school systems on the Navajo Nation. The ultimate goal is to streamline the data analysis capability of the program in tracking achievement of Navajo students in SMT.[55] The Navajo leadership recommended an expert in IT infrastructure and database management to design a system that belongs to the Tribe.

11.3 TRIBAL CULTURE AND NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

New Content Standards/Office of Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Development
The Tribe has developed Diné Government and History Curriculum per grade, as well as a Lesson Planning Handbook. It is now developing culture and language curriculum and standards to create "new content" standards. They will be required of schools, with different standards for different grade levels. Its first implementation will be to require the content standards of all BIE-funded schools, with the hope to implement in the public schools on the Reservation as well. DODE's Office of Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Development (OSCAD) works with schools on curriculum development and teaching strategies, and it monitors the progress of implementing the new content standards.

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[54] http://navajonationdode.org/department-of-dine-education.aspx
[55] For more information, see the Office of Diné School Improvement's website. http://odsmt.org/

Language Development Institute

In collaboration with the University of Arizona Indian Language Development Institute, DODE's Culture and Language Office runs quarterly meetings, attended by about 150+ staff who are teaching culture and language. The DODE has also brought related workshops to the reservation. Staff that are both certified and getting certified attend.

Language Immersion School

Tséootsooí Dineé Bi' Olta' is an immersion school that teaches the Navajo language to its 133 students.[56] It is not managed by the tribe or the DODE. It is a school within the Window Rock Unified School District, one of many public school districts on the Navajo reservation. For more information, see the school's website at https://www.wrschool.net/Domain/12.

11.4 CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher Education Consortium (NNTEC)

For more than 25 years, the Tribe has been participating with the Navajo Nation Teacher Education Consortium (NNTEC), whereby it works with 16 colleges and universities, including Northern Arizona University, Arizona State University, Diné College, and universities from New Mexico and Utah as well. This consortium prepares teaches to teach on the Navajo Reservation and addresses issues related to teacher certifications and academics.

Teacher Institute

In August 2016, DODE held the annual "Teachers Institute" in the John Pinto Center at the Navajo Department of Transportation. Over 100 attended the two-day conference, which included several presentations and group work. On some years, it holds a "Winter Teachers Institute" too.

Quarterly Meetings

Run by DODE's Office of Diné School Improvement (OSDI), the Reservation's K-12 teachers meet quarterly to review the Common Core and new Tribal content standards. They meet in peer groups of grade level. Generally, about 150 teachers attend, whomever the school chooses to send.

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[56] "Navajo Nation School Focuses on Language Revitalization," *Indian Country Today*, May 24, 2017. https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/education/native-education/navajo-nation-school-focuses-language-revitalization/

Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators (DINE)

Beginning in 2018, Northern Arizona University will partner with DODE and two nearby public school districts - Kayenta Unified School District and Chinle Unified School District - to offer long-term professional development seminars to K-12 teachers in the Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators (DINE).[57] DINE is a Yale National Initiative program. According to a recent newspaper article, the new institute will launch its first two seminars in April 2018. "Teachers must apply for the seminars; participation will increase their knowledge base on the particular topic and provide a high-quality, culturally responsive curricular unit to use in their classrooms. The seminars will feature university faculty and K-12 teachers as equal partners in the learning process, with the goal of strengthening teaching in schools serving Navajo youth."[58] According to the DINE website, the institute will be "teacher-driven," whereby K-12 teachers will play an important role in the Institute's decision-making. Experienced teachers may choose to serve in additional leadership roles, including as a Teacher Representative or Seminar Coordinator. For videos of teachers describing their experiences with the Yale National Initiative, see their YouTube videos.[59]

11.5 PROMISING PRACTICES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

Rural Systemic Initiative/Office of Diné Science, Mathematics, and Technology

Established in 1998, and funded with a $10 million multi-year grant from the National Science Foundation,[60] the Navajo Nation-Rural Systemic Initiative (NN-RSI) worked to enhance the academic achievement of Navajo students in Science, Mathematics, and Technology (SMT). NN-RSI was a collaborative endeavor of the DODE, the six school systems operating on the reservation, Diné College (formerly Navajo Community College), the local business community, and other nearby universities.[61] The mission of the NN-RSI was to create a standards-based, student-centered teaching and learning environment in science, mathematics, technology for all the K-12 students on or near the Navajo Reservation. The NN-RSI assisted schools in implementing this program by providing instructional strategies and assisting teachers to teach those SMT subjects

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[57] For more information on DINE, see its website - https://nau.edu/ONAI/Diné-Institute-for-Navajo-Nation-Educators/Home/

[58] "AU Partners with Navajo Schools to Develop Innovative New Teachers Institute," *NAU News*, December 19, 2017 - http://news.nau.edu/navajo-schools-teachers-institute/

[59] YouTube videos about Yale National Initiative/DINE - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYHgXK4inoYoZFe0RpzHLKNXtBkdqJLOm

[60] For more information, see the National Science Foundation page, https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=9813616, or the Navajo Nation education page,

[61] https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED429755

within the context of the cultural environment of Navajo students. Participation of representatives from community, businesses, institutions of higher education, state departments of education for AZ, NM, and UT, and other stakeholders increased the sustainability of these SMT reforms. As noted in a 2012 report, Navajo Nation RSI hosted its first school leadership conference, using indigenous knowledge of leadership and education as the centerpiece of training.[62] Originally administered under the Office of Diné Science, Mathematics, and Technology (DSMT), the NN-RSI maintained a central office and regional centers to promote SMT curriculum dissemination and professional development and to assist schools in the systemic reform process. Recently, the DODE changed the name of the Office of Diné Science, Math & Technology to the "Office of Diné School Improvement (ODSI)," which now has a broader mission, but is still charged with closing the academic achievement gap between Navajo students in math, science and technology, among other subjects.

Science Fair

One of the many exciting programs run by the ODSI is the Navajo Nation Science Fair, scheduled for February 27-28 and March 1, 2018 in Church Rock, New Mexico. Topics include Animal Science, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Biology, Chemistry, Engineering and Computer Science, Environmental Sciences, and Physical Sciences. For the flyer and registration information, see https://www.online-registration-system.com/az/nnsf/

Navajo Book Project

The Mobile Book Project delivers free books and non-book materials to chapters located across the reservation in all three states. It began as the "Navajo Book Distribution" in 1983 with 50,000 donated books for distribution purposes. In 1989, it was placed under the Office of Navajo National Library Services. In 1998 alone, the Book Project distributed more than 120,000 books to the 110 chapters across the Navajo Nation (some chapters could not accept books because of insufficient facility space).

Office of Special Education/Rehabilitation Services (OSERS)

Funded by federal grants, Navajo OSERS is a program within DODE that offers vocational rehabilitation to people with disabilities with the goal of assisting them to obtain or maintain employment. The division's services include early childhood intervention, vocational rehabilitation, independent living services, "Navajo _ ABLE," Trust Fund for Handicapped

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[62] "*Legacy of the Rural Systemic Initiatives: Innovation, Leadership, Teacher Development, and Lessons Learned*," January 2012. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED531890.pdf

Services, and Tuba City Industrial Laundry/Drycleaning. http://www.osers.navajo-nsn.gov/

Diné Youth

Under the auspices of DODE, the "Office of Diné Youth" supports healthy youth through collaboration and partnership with other organizations. For example, the Office works closely with the Navajo Housing Authority, I.H.S. Health Promotion/Disease Prevention, I.H.S. Department of Behavioral Health Services, Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral Health Services, local schools and school districts, and local law enforcement. Programs include a Youth Career Incentive Program (for ages 14-21), a recreation program, a youth counseling program, and high school preparatory and enrichment scholarship funds for talented youth in grades 7-12. http://www.dineyouth.com/.

Academic Excellence

With more than 60 BIE-funded schools on the reservation, student achievement varies widely within the Navajo Nation. Some of the schools on the reservation are ranked as the lowest-performing schools in the BIE-funded system, while others are on the top of that same list. For example,

- **Navajo Preparatory School** describes itself as "the only Navajo-sanctioned, college-preparatory school for Native Americans. … Navajo Preparatory School recruits some of the best and brightest students of the Navajo Nation. Looking to the future, the school offers students a challenging, innovative curriculum in science, math, computers, and other traditional academic subjects. In harmony with the past, it steeps the youth in a deep appreciation of the Navajo Language, culture, and history." Its rigorous academics includes the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. According to its website, over 95% of NPS graduates continue with a college education. https://navajoprep.com/

- **Tuba City Boarding School** is also one of the highest achieving schools on the Navajo reservation. There are 55 General Education classrooms, 8 Special Education classrooms, 2 Gifted and Talented classrooms, 5 Native American Education classrooms, and 6 large Computer Labs serving approximately 1,200 Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade students. https://tcbs.bie.edu

Higher Education

Among other activities, the DODE Office of "Student Services" coordinates visits to nearby colleges for high school students, manages a variety of "bridge" programs between high

school and college, provides financial assistance through scholarships and grants, and provides academic advising, counseling, and support to higher education students. In addition to the provision of scholarships, DODE's Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance (ONNSFA) works in partnership with the universities and Navajo students.

APPENDIX A: TRIBAL EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Standing Rock Sioux			
Emma Jean Blue Earth	Director of the Tribal Department of Education	(701) 854-7525	ejblueearth@standingrocksr.org
Juliana Taken Alive	Educational Manager, Tribal Department of Education; Facilitator, Standing Rock Education Consortium	(701) 854-7525	jtakenalive@standingrockr.org
Coeur d'Alene			
Dr. Chris Meyer	Director, Department of Education	(208) 686-5013	cmeyer@cdatribe-nsn.gov
Shawna Daniels	Manager, STEP Program	(208) 686-2069	sdaniels@cdatribe-nsn.gov
Bryan Samuels	Coordinator, Imagine the Future	(208) 686-0803	bsamuels@cdatribe-nsn.gov
Nez Percé			
Joyce McFarland	Education Manager	(208) 621-4610	joycem@nezperce.org
Alicia Wheeler	Technical Assistance Coach	(208) 621-4703	aliciaw@nezperce.org
Tess Woodward	Family Engagement Specialist	(208) 621-4704	julyw@nezperce.org
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes			
Julie Cajune	Education Director	(406) 675-2700 x1342	Julie.Cajune@cskt.org
Mandy Moran	Coordinator, STEP Program	(406) 675-2700	mandy.moran@cskt.org
Miranda Burland	Scholarship Officer	(406) 675-2700, x1074	Miranda.Burland@cskt.org
Jemez Pueblo			
Joseph Toya	Governor, Jemez Pueblo	(575) 834-7359	ltoledo@jemezpueblo.org

Name	Title	Phone	Email
William Waquie	First Lieutenant Governor, Jemez Pueblo	(575) 834-7359	ltoledo@jemezpueblo.org
Kevin Shendo	Director of Education, Jemez Pueblo	(575) 834-9102 (505) 753-4406	Shendo@jemezpueblo.org
Dr. Errol Wilkinson	Principal, Walatowa High School	(575) 834-0448	awilkinson@walatowahcs.org
Bernadette Garcia	Testing Coordinator, Riverside Elementary School	(575) 834-7419	Bgarcia.sdriverside@gmail.com
Odessa Waquiu	Director of Education, Zia Pueblo	(505) 867-3304	owaquiu@ziapueblo.org
Santa Clara Pueblo			
Michael Dabrieo	Principal, Kha'p'o Community School	(505) 753-4406	mdabrieo@khapoeducation.org
Santa Fe Indian School			
Roy Herrera	Superintendent	(505) 989-6333	rmherrera@sfis.k12.nm.us
Michael Pecos	Dean of Students	(505) 989-6330	mikepecos@sfis.k12.nm.us
Faith Rosetta	Principal	(505) 989-6330	Frosetta@sfis.k12.nm.us
Anya Dozier Enos	Director of Curriculum and Professional Development	(505) 989-6312	adozierenos@sfis.k12.nm.us
Kim Shije	Parent and Community Liaison	(505) 989-6330	krshije@sfis.k12.nm.us
Eastern Band of Cherokee			
Dr. Beverly Payne	Assistant Superintendent	(828) 554-5008	Beverly.Payne@ccs-nc.org
Mississippi Band of Choctaw			
William Brescia	Education Planner, Choctaw Tribal Schools	(601) 650-1625	William.brescia@choctaw.org
David Germany	Director of Schools, Choctaw Tribal Schools	(601) 663-7662	David.germany@bie.edu
Rae Nell Vaughn	Choctaw Office of the Tribal Chief, Chief of Staff	(601) 663-7543	Raenell.vaughn@choctaw.org

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Fredrick Hickmon	Principal, Choctaw Central High School	(601) 663-7772	Fred.hickmon@choctawtribalschools.com
Lucretia Williams	TED Project Coordinator, Choctaw Division of Education	(601) 663-7534	Lucretia.williams@choctaw.org
Gila River Indian Community			
Isaac Salcido	Director, Tribal Education Department	(520) 562-3662	Isaac.Salcido@gric.nsn.us
Navajo Nation			
Tommy Lewis	Superintendent, Department of Diné Education Administration	(928) 871-7475	tommylewis@nndode.org
Kalvin White	Education Administrator, Office of Diné School Improvement	(928) 871-7448	kalvinwhite@nndode.org

APPENDIX B: COEUR D'ALENE CULTURALLY-RELEVANT FRAMEWORK

Curriculum Framework

To develop more culturally-relevant curriculum, the Coeur D'Alene Tribal Education Department assembled a Cultural Leadership Team that included tribal staff, representatives and teachers from the tribal school and the local public school district, University of Idaho partners, and Coeur d' Alene language speakers. As described on the Coeur D'Alene website, the Cultural Leadership Team designed a framework using Culturally Sustaining and Revitalizing Pedagogy (CSRP). Its three main components include:

- Expression of Indigenous sovereignty

- Need to reclaim and revitalize what has been disrupted and displaced by colonization, including innovative approaches to second language learning and to "teaching culturally;"

- Need for community-based accountability, including:

  o "The four Rs" (Brayboy et al., 2012): Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility, and Relationships;

  o Education which serves the needs of communities as defined by communities; and need for community-based accountability.

Four Pillars

The Cultural Leadership Team also applied the Four Indigenous Principles to Coeur d'Alene, thereby creating the Four Pillars, "The following four principles are interweaving, interconnected and inseparable, all working together to achieve balance, wisdom and a sense of purpose. When the four R's are actively demonstrated, the outcome is achievement of the four pillars." As such, the "Four Pillars represent the heart of Coeur d' Alene people." It is the tribe's hope that "these pillars are so deeply rooted in our children's heart that we will see them carried out in a relational, reciprocal, respectful and responsible way for generations immemorial."[63]

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[63] http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/edu/STEP.aspx

Four Indigenous Principles	Coeur d' Alene Four Pillars
Relationship Relational education acknowledges and supports the interweaving relationships that exist between people, animals, places and ideas; enabling students to be who they are through active engagement in a place/community-based education that both revitalizes and sustains their cultural ways of knowing and being.	**t'u'lschint: Membership** Capable, decent, moral, 'a good person', a good citizen in your family, tribal, local and world community. A responsible, accountable and informed citizen in all spheres of relationship
Respect Respect emerges from the process of building & engaging relationships. Through respect, the place of everyone and everything in the universe is kept in balance & harmony. Respect is reciprocal, shared, constantly interchanging principle, which is expressed through all aspects of social conduct.	**snmiypnqwiln: Scholarship** Life-long, holistic learning with ideas rooted in tribal values, self-determination, self-government and sovereignty that produces deep knowledge to understand the world and meaningful application within the community
Reciprocity Through interweaving relationships, we are bound to care for those things around us. There is a clear sense of relatedness and that whatever is received makes its way back around to others. Genuine reciprocity includes the community as part of the whole process rather than passive recipients of a system designed outside themselves.	**'ats' qhnt' wesh: Stewardship** To care for all things with integrity, responsibility, accountability and social awareness in all spheres of life, human, animals, natural resources, and the cosmos, looking at each other from the heart.
Responsibility We are necessarily responsible to that which we are in relationship with. As people, we learn from, rely on, and survive and thrive because of that which surrounds us. Educating children necessitates careful thought, consultation and collaboration to care for both ideas, and the knowledge it generates, and the living being those ideas influence.	**hngwa' yqn; hnshat' qn: Guardianship** To protect our tribal ways of knowing and being through the protection, care and responsibility for our people, natural resources, culture, history, traditions, language and spirituality

The Coeur D'Alene Tribe also developed a set of "Essential Understandings," to provide a framework for curriculum development and pedagogical values.[64]

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The Essential Understandings lay the foundations of who the Coeur d' Alene people are, what makes them unique and why it is important to teach children culturally; acknowledging their ways of knowing and creating a safe classroom environment that nurtures, values and strengthens their identity

DIVERSITY - The peoples who make up the present-day tribes of Idaho have existed in this region for time immemorial. Their languages, means of organizing themselves, relationships to aboriginal landscapes, and histories are diverse and distinct. Each tribe asserts its right to tell its own story, whether as history, oral tradition, community practices, or other means of institutional memory. The stories, histories and experiences of Idaho Tribes enrich the diversity of our Idaho community

WORLDVIEW - Though unique and diverse, Idaho tribes share a rich culture rooted in interconnected, inseparable and interweaving relationships with landscape, community, animals and the cosmos. The world is viewed from a relational, reciprocal, respectful and responsible lens, creating a spiritual relationality that extends beyond humanity to include the environment, plants, animals and spiritual realms

IMPACTS OF FEDERAL INDIAN POLICY - The histories of Idaho tribes within the formation of the United States and Idaho statehood were and continue to be impacted by federal policies toward Indian (Tribal) people that were historically intended to assimilate tribal people into dominant society. Educational policies that were once intended to destroy tribal social, spiritual and cultural structure and reeducate them in western culture continue to reverberate in tribal families today and their interactions with the education system. Today, "Idaho tribes are striving to create vibrant educational systems and supports that reaffirm and revitalize their languages and cultures, bringing about a strong sense of identity."

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY - The federal and state governments of Idaho recognize Idaho tribes' inherent sovereignty. Idaho tribes through self-determination and self-governance are sovereign nations, whose members have the right to self-representation. Those sovereign rights are enumerated on a case-by-case, tribe-by-tribe, historical basis. Self-government by Indian tribes includes the determination of what role customs, traditions, and heritage languages play in community life. Each tribe defines those elements uniquely, reflecting a diversity of cultural practices between tribes and within tribes. Tribal members maintain their inherent sovereignty rights both on and off the reservation, whether traveling, working or living off reservation, just as all non-Indian people maintain their citizenship when on a reservation.

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[64] http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/edu/STEP.aspx

APPENDIX C: NEZ PERCÉ CULTURE AND LANGUAGE INDICATORS[65]

NATIVE STAR CULTURE & LANGUAGE INDICATORS

PROVIDING LEADERSHIP FOR CULTURE & LANGUAGE (L01-L04)

- The Leadership Team plans ways to infuse tribal customs and values into the school's operating procedures, rituals, and activities.
- The principal and other school leaders demonstrate an understanding of tribal culture, customs, and values and model a respect for them.
- The physical appearance of the school reflects the tribal culture.
- The promotion of Native American history, culture, customs, and values is done in a way that engenders respect for the history, culture, customs, and values of other groups.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY WITH CULTURE & LANGUAGE (EC01-04)

- The school provides training for all staff on local tribal history, culture, customs, and values.
  The school provides tribal mentors for non-Indian staff and others who request it.
- The school includes tribal elders, speakers, and leaders in planning and providing school events that feature Native American culture, customs, and values.
- Parent education programs include Native American and tribal history, customs, values, and language(s).

INFUSING CULTURE & LANGUAGE IN CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION (C101-106)

- The school provides professional development for teachers on how to integrate Native American culture and language into the curriculum.
- All teachers demonstrate in their lesson plans and materials that they have integrated Native American culture and language into the taught curriculum.
- Tribal elders, speakers, and leaders are engaged as volunteers in the school and classrooms.
- The school staff includes one or more speakers of the community's prevailing tribal language(s).
- The curriculum for all grade levels includes lessons on the accomplishments of Native Americans.

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[65] https://tribaleddepartmentsna.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/00048928.pdf