



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

Snapshot of American Indian and Alaska Native Education

Updated December 2011

The following information is meant to provide a quick snapshot of student and school demographics for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Please note much of the data is several years old as Native students are rarely oversampled.

There are approximately 644,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students in the U.S. K-12 system, representing 1.2 percent of public school students nationally.ⁱ

- 90 percent attend regular, public school.
- 8 percent attend schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

States where Native students compose the largest proportions of the total student populations include:ⁱⁱ

- Alaska (27 percent); Oklahoma (19 percent); Montana (11 percent); New Mexico (11 percent); and South Dakota (11 percent)

In the 2007–08 school year, 28 percent of Native students attended a high-poverty public elementary school, compared to only 5 percent of white students.ⁱⁱⁱ

- In 2009, 68 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native fourth graders and 61 percent of eighth graders were eligible for free-or reduced-price lunch.^{iv}
- Reading and math scores of Native students were lower if they were eligible for free school lunch programs.^v

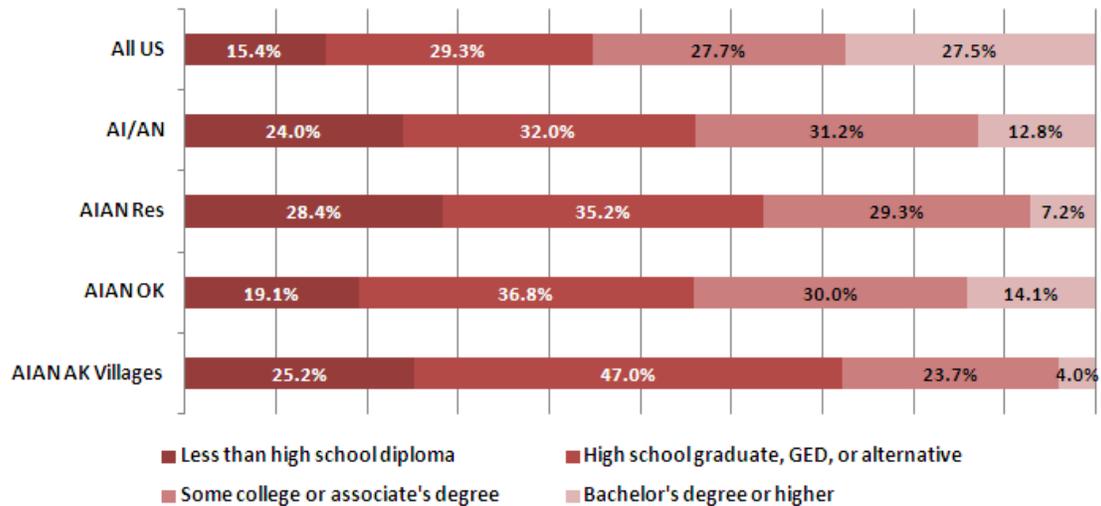
American Indian and Alaska Native students reading and math scores continue to fall behind their peers.

- 70 percent of BIE-administered schools failed to satisfy Adequate Yearly Progress requirements in 2005.^{vi}
- Students attending BIE schools had, on average, lower math and reading scores.^{vii}
- In reading, the percentages of Native students performing at or above the *Basic* level were 50 percent at grade 4 and 62 percent at grade 8 in 2009.^{viii}
- In math, the percentages of Native students performing at or above the *Basic* level were 66 percent at grade 4 and 56 percent at grade 8 in 2009.^{ix}
- 74 percent of Native twelfth graders read below grade level, compared to 57% of white twelfth graders.^x

American Indian and Alaska Native students are less likely to graduate high school or continue to college.

- In 2009, 13 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native 16-24 year olds were not enrolled in high school and have not earned a high school credential, compared to 8 percent of the total population.^{xi}

- The national graduation rate for American Indian high school students was 50.6 percent in the 2004–05 school year, compared to 77.6 percent for white students.^{xii}
- In fall 2009, approximately 189,000 Native students were enrolled as undergraduates at a degree-granting institution, comprising 1 percent of the total undergraduate population.^{xiii}



Economic Impact of Increasing High School Graduation Rates

If just half of the 24,700 American Indian and Alaska Native students who dropped out from the Class of 2010 had graduated, together these 12,350 new graduates would likely be earning an additional \$147 million each year compared to what they will earn without a high school diploma.¹

These increased earnings would have filtered throughout the economy and created additional economic benefits, including the following:²

- *Increased spending and investment:* New graduates' increased earnings, combined, would likely have allowed them to spend up to an additional \$107 million and invest an additional \$40 million during an average year.
- *Increased home and vehicle sales:* By the midpoint of their careers, these new graduates, combined, would likely have spent as much as \$387 million more on home purchases than they will spend without a diploma. In addition, they would likely have spent up to an additional \$14 million on vehicle purchases during an average year.

¹ Alliance for Excellent Education. Education and the Economy: Boosting the Nation's Economy by Improving High School Graduation Rates Among Students of Color and Native Students. May 2011. http://www.all4ed.org/files/EdEconBrief_sebsoc.pdf

² *Id.*

Higher Education

- In fall 2009, approximately 189,000 AI/AN were enrolled as undergraduates at a degree-granting institution, comprising 1 percent of the total undergraduate population.³
- 38 percent of first-time American Indian/Alaska Native students who sought a bachelor's degree or its equivalent and enrolled in a four-year institution in fall 2002 completed their degree at that institution within 6 years.⁴
 - This is compared to white (60 percent), black (40 percent), Hispanic (49 percent), Asian/Pacific Islander (67 percent).⁵
- 25 percent of first-time American Indian/Alaska Native students at two-year institutions completed a certificate or associate's degree within 150 percent of the normal time to degree.⁶
 - This is compared to white (29 percent); black (23 percent); Hispanic (26 percent); Asian/Pacific Islander (32 percent).⁷

Tribal Colleges and Universities (2007-08)

Graduation

- 75.5 percent of graduates were American Indians. Forty-nine percent of those graduates were female, and the remaining 25.5 percent were male.⁸
- 20.1 percent of graduates earned certificates and 78.0 percent earned an associate's degree or higher.⁹
- 37 percent of American Indian students earned an associate's degree and 39.4 percent of American Indian students earned a bachelor's degree with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.¹⁰

Student Academia

- The top majors by enrollment for 2007-08: Nursing and Health Careers; Liberal Art/General Studies; STEM; Business; Social Science; Education; Vocational; American Indian Languages and Studies.¹¹

³ Aud, S., Hussar, W., Kena, G., Bianco, K., Frohlich, L., Kemp, J., Tahan, K. (2011). *The Condition of Education 2011* (NCES 2011-033). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ American Indian Higher Education Consortium. 2010. *AIHEC-AIMS Fact Book 2008*. Washington, DC.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

- The top majors by graduation for 2007-08: Liberal Arts/General Studies; Social Science, Vocational; Business; Nursing and Health Careers; STEM; Education; American Indian Languages and Studies.¹²

ⁱ *Status and Trends in the Education of American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2008* (NCES 2008-084). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

ⁱⁱ *Id.*

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Statistics. *The Condition of Education 2010* (NCES 2010-028). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

^{iv} Aud, S., Fox, M., and KewalRamani, A. (2010). *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups* (NCES 2010-015). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

^v U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2005, 2007, and 2009 National Indian Education Studies.

^{vi} U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *The Nation's Report Card: Twelfth-Grade Reading and Mathematics 2005* (NCES 2007-468). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

^{vii} U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2005, 2007, and 2009 National Indian Education Studies.

^{viii} *Id.*

^{ix} *Id.*

^x Editorial Projects in Education [EPE]. 2008. Diplomas count 2008: School to College: Can State P-16 Councils Ease the Transition? Special issue, *Education Week*, 27, no. 40 (2008). for college, careers, and life after high school. Special issue, *Education Week* 26, no. 5.

^{xi} Aud, S., Hussar, W., Kena, G., Bianco, K., Frohlich, L., Kemp, J., Tahan, K. (2011). *The Condition of Education 2011* (NCES 2011-033). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

^{xii} A.S. Clarke, *Social and Emotional Distress among American Indian and Alaska Native Students* (ERIC ED459988) (Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education, 2002); U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *A Quiet Crisis*.

^{xiii} Aud, S., Hussar, W., Kena, G., Bianco, K., Frohlich, L., Kemp, J., Tahan, K. (2011). *The Condition of Education 2011* (NCES 2011-033). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.