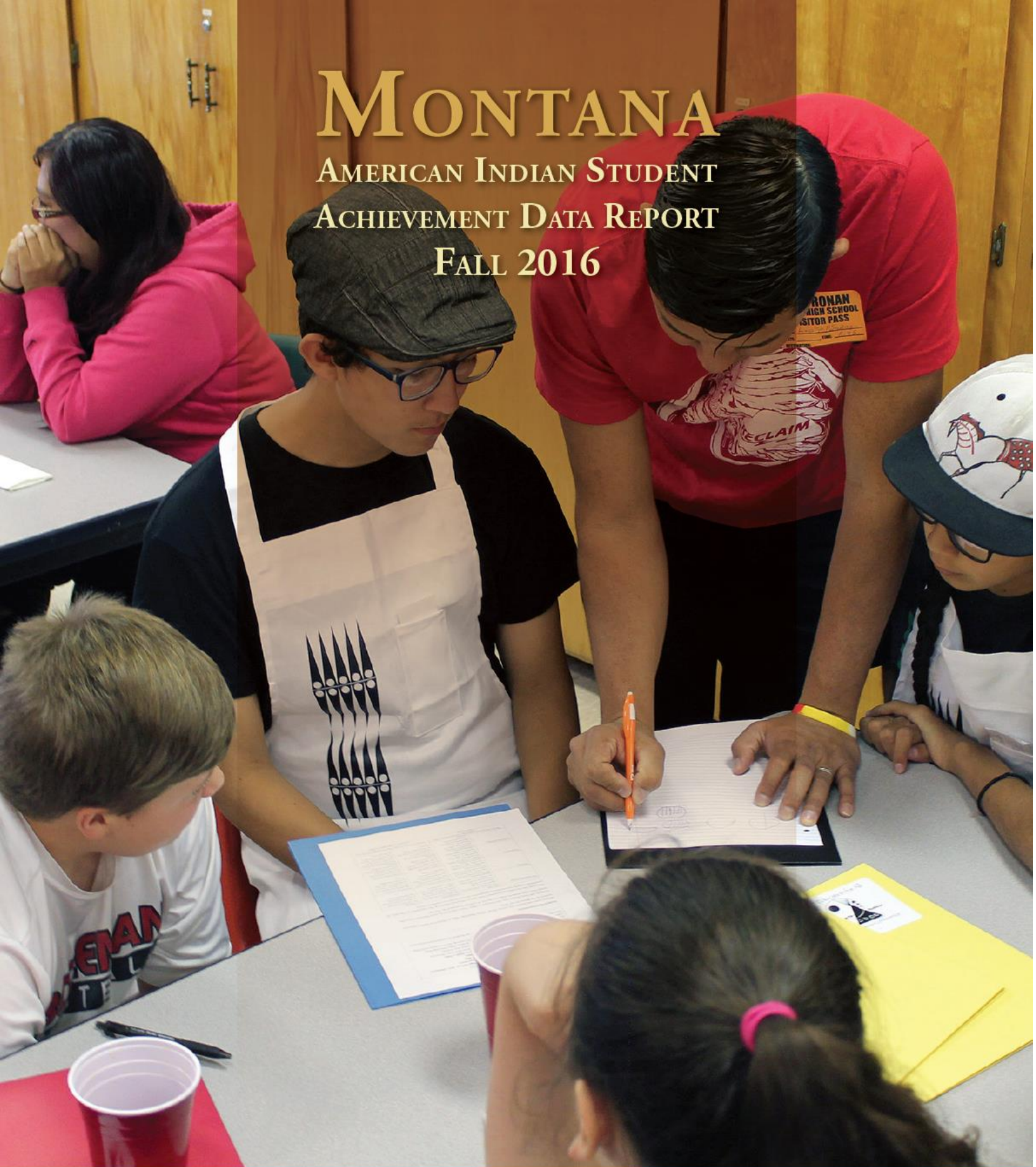


# MONTANA

## AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA REPORT FALL 2016



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# Montana

American Indian Data Report  
Fall 2016

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**Indian Education**

Montana Office of Public Instruction  
Denise Juneau, Superintendent



# Montana

## American Indian Student Data Report

Fall 2014

*From Montana's urban centers to our rural and reservation communities, the strength, determination and resiliency of our American Indian youth serves as an inspiration and impetus to advocate for the very best educational environments we can provide. As the Office of Public Instruction, school districts, communities, families and various partners work together across the state of Montana to ensure that all students' graduate career and college ready, it is important to use reliable data and effective data practices to make certain those goals are being met. For American Indian students in particular, in light of disparities in education and other life outcomes, this work is especially important. This data report is intended to cultivate a growing awareness, and to assist local schools in their ongoing efforts to properly support American Indian youth in achieving their hopes and dreams for the future. This important work will provide greater equity and ensure we are providing all students with rigorous and meaningful educational opportunities for lifelong success across our state.*

*Mandy Smoker Broaddus, Director of Indian Education*

### 2007 MCA 20-9-330

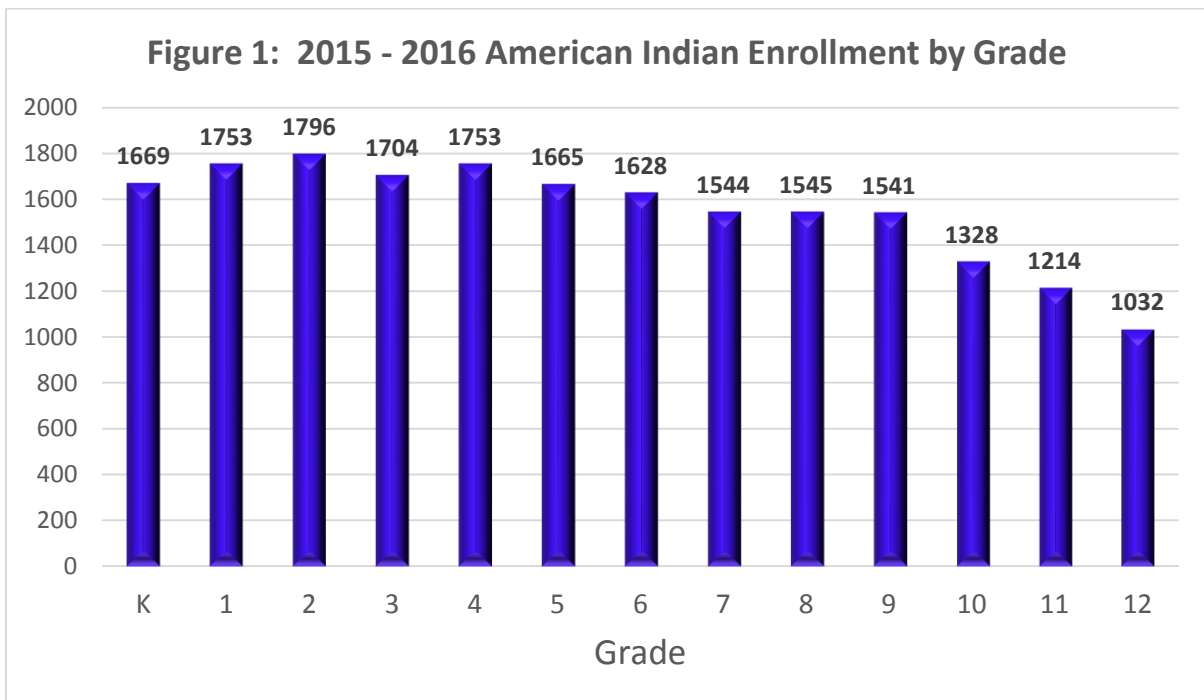
In 2007, the Montana State Legislature passed Montana Code Annotated 20-9-330, appropriating \$200 per American Indian child, totaling over \$3 million dollars per year, to provide funding to school districts for the purpose of closing the educational achievement gap that exists between American Indian students and non-Indian students. According to MCA 20-9-330 (2) (a), funds were to be determined by "...using the number of American Indian students enrolled in the district based on the count of regularly enrolled students on the first Monday in October of the prior school year as reported to the Office of Public Instruction" and deposited into the district's general fund.

This report is provided to track the American Indian achievement gap and provide data on the Montana American Indian student population.

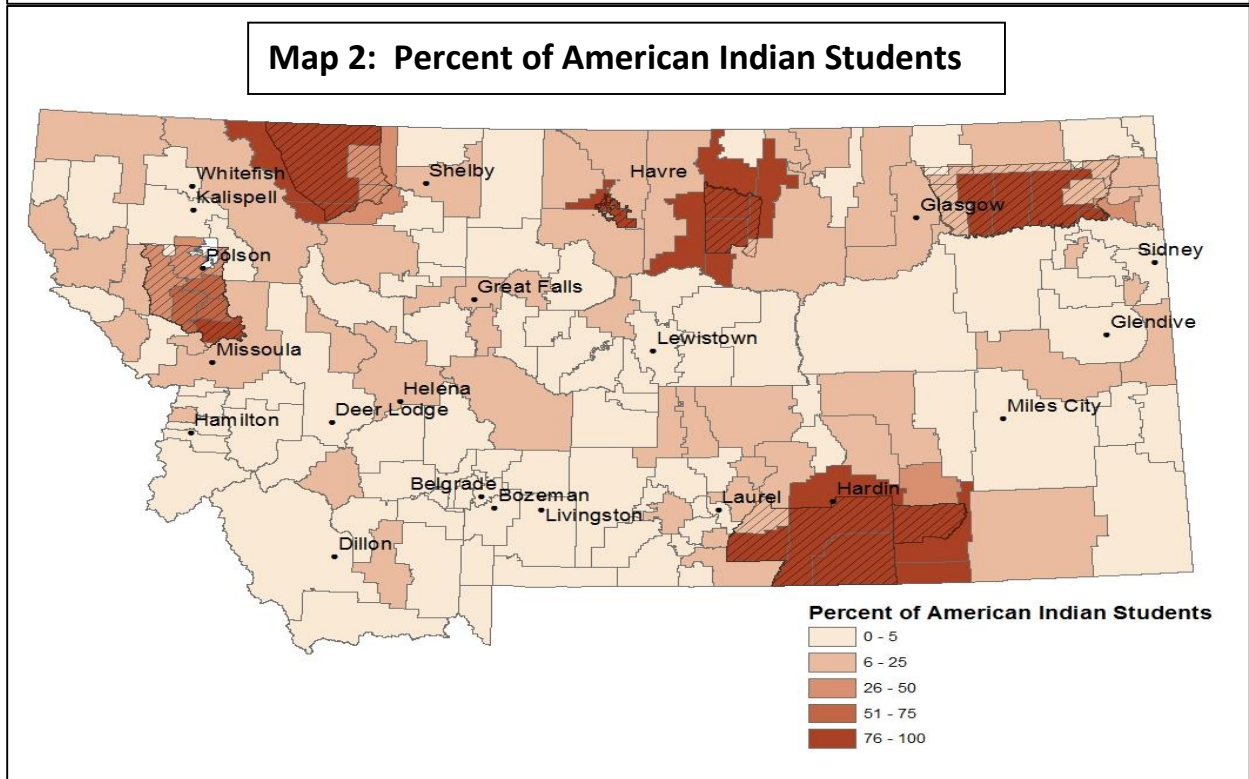
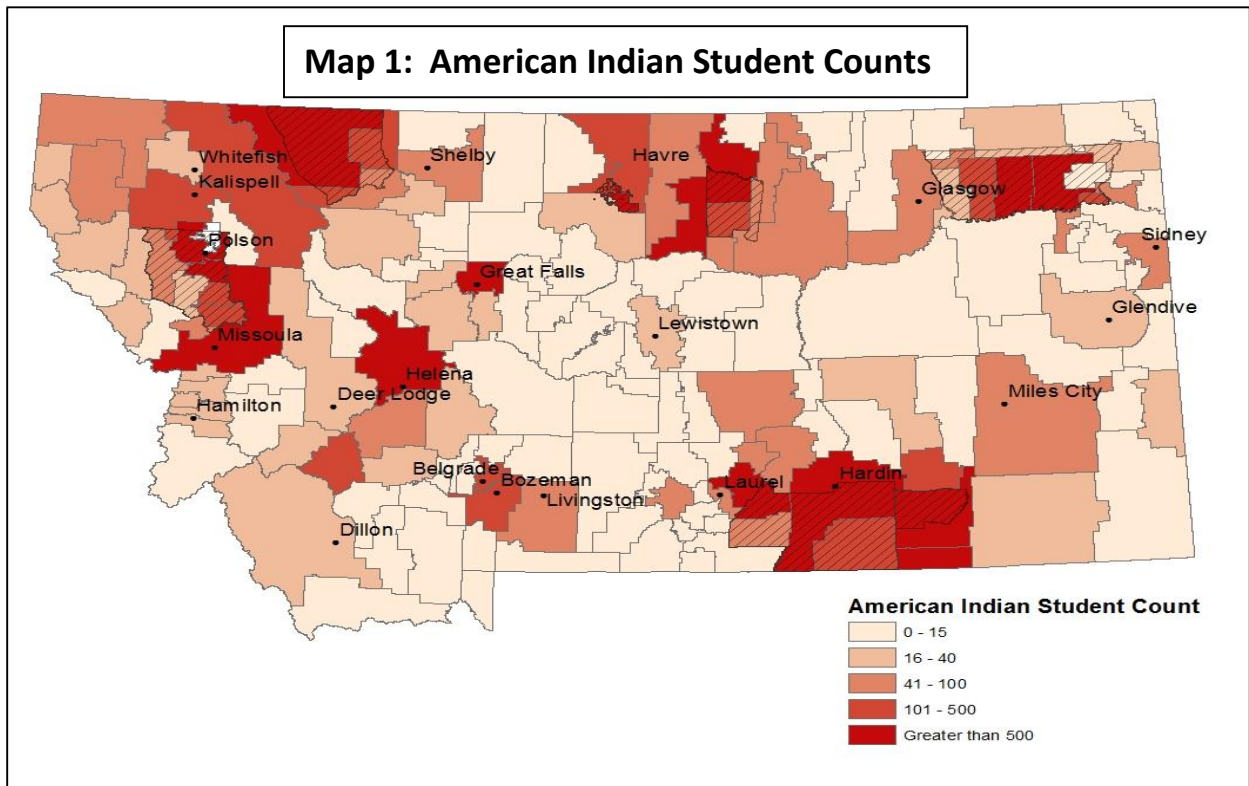


## 2015-2016 Student Population Data

- 6.6% of Montana’s total population is American Indian (2015 Census Estimate), made up mostly of the twelve tribal nations of Montana: Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d’Oreille, Salish, Sioux
- For the 2015-2016 school year there were 20,401 American Indian/Alaska Native students in Montana that report American Indian/Alaska Native as at least one of their races. The number of American Indian students in Montana is increasing every year. 14.0% of Montana’s students are American Indian.
  - 44.9% or 9,151 of American Indian students attend a school physically located within a reservation with 55.1% or 11,250 located outside a reservation boundary.
- Of 821 public schools in Montana:
  - 61 public schools report 75 – 100% American Indian students within their school population.
  - 18 public schools report 50 – 75% American Indian students within their school population.
  - 32 public schools report 25 – 50% American Indian students within their school population.
- Figure 1 shows the distribution of American Indian student enrollment numbers for Montana public schools by grade.



The following maps show the distribution of American Indian students in public schools across Montana by high school districts. Map 1 shows the total number of American Indian students and Map 2 shows the percent of all students in that district that are American Indian.



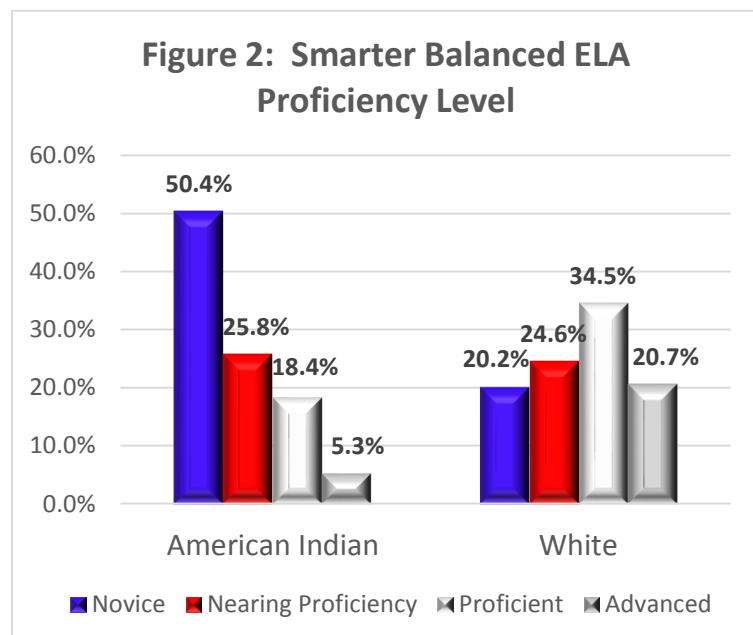
## Smarter Balanced Test

In December 2015 the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), P.L. 114-95 was signed and officially replaced No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESSA continues the requirement that each state must develop a statewide assessment to assess their students. In the spring from 2006 - 2013 the criterion-referenced test was given in Reading, Mathematics and Science to meet the requirements of the law (the science portion of the test was not given in 2006 and 2007).

Starting during the 2013 - 2014 school year the state of Montana started administering the Smarter Balanced Assessment in English Language Arts and Mathematics to properly align the assessment with the Common Core curriculum. Science is still tested using the CRT. The first year of the Smarter Balanced test in 2014 was a pilot run of the test and therefore no test results were available. During testing of the 2014 - 2015 school year issues were encountered during the administering of the Smarter Balanced test and results were determined to be unreliable. The 2015-2016 test is the first year that reliable results are available for the Smarter Balanced assessment.

The Smarter Balanced assessment was given to 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students during 2015 - 2016. 10<sup>th</sup> grade students were not tested using the Smarter Balanced test as that portion of the test has been replaced by the ACT testing of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. Similar to the CRT the Smarter Balanced assessment has 4 proficiency levels: Novice, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced. Scale scores for the Smarter Balanced Assessment range between 2000 and 3000, with each grade having a slightly different range. Because of this, the scale scores can't be compared between grades and only proficiency levels will be discussed in this report.

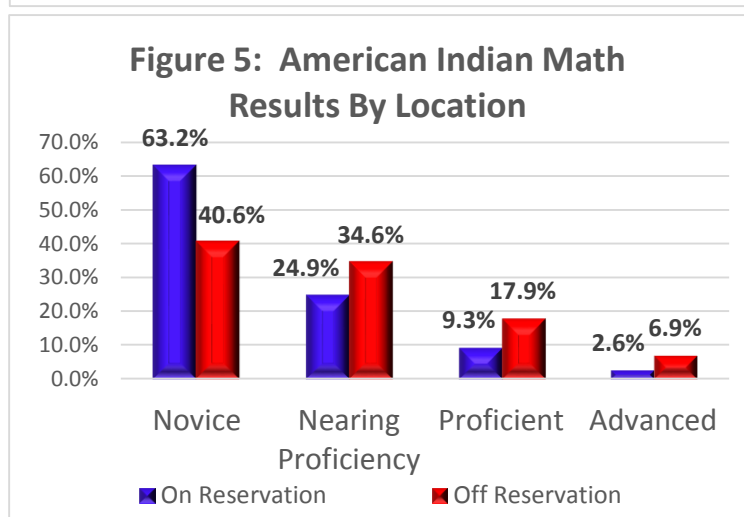
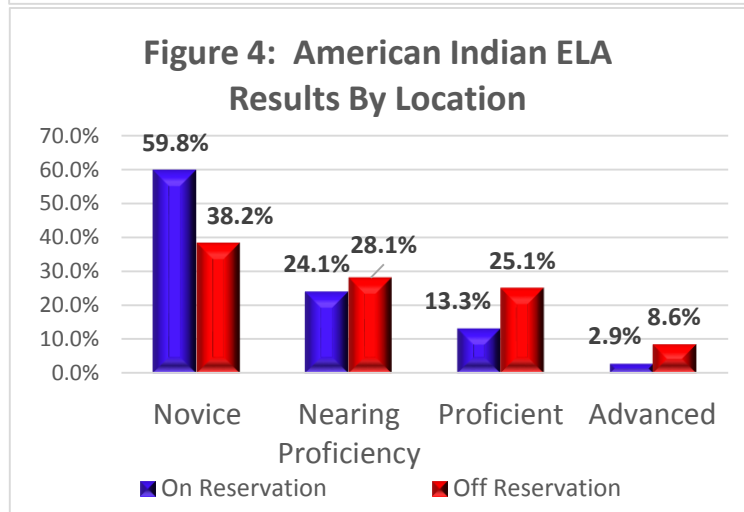
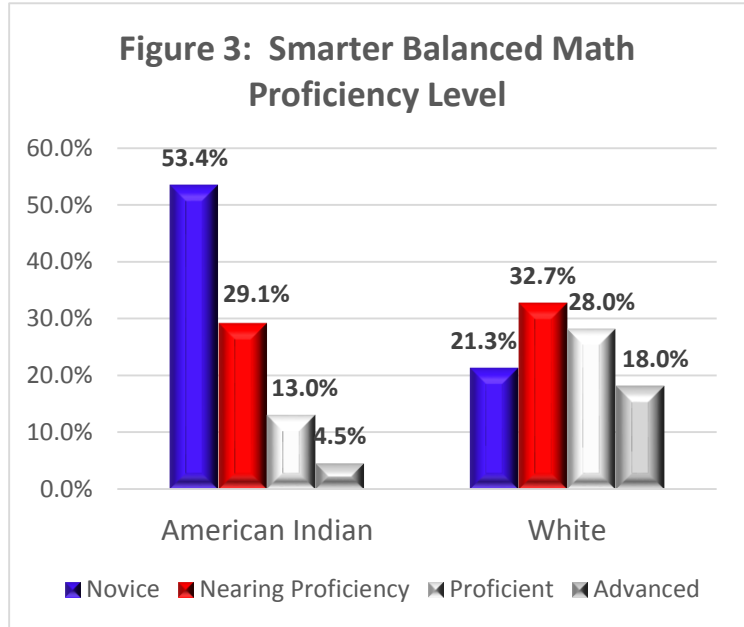
Figure 2 shows the English Language Arts (ELA) results when comparing American Indians to White students. There is a significant difference in the distributions shown in Figure 2 with 23.7% of American Indian students scoring proficient or above, 55.2% of White student's scoring proficient or above. The difference can also be seen in the larger number of American Indian students (50.4%) scoring in the Novice category as compared to White students (20.2%). The achievement gap when comparing for proficiency in ELA between American Indian students and White students in ELA is 31.5% (55.2% for White students vs. 23.7% for American Indian students)





In Figure 3 the results of the Mathematics portion of the test is shown. These results are similar to the ELA results. 53.4% of American Indian students in Montana scored as Novice with only 17.5% scoring proficient or above in mathematics. These scores leaves the achievement gap between American Indian students and White students in Mathematics at 28.5% (17.5% for AI students vs. 46.0% for White Students). Although exact scores from the Math and Reading domains of the CRT assessment from 2006 – 2013 will not be discussed in this report, these achievement gap trends follow closely with what was seen in that assessment.

Figures 4 and 5 show the Smarter Balanced test results for American Indians in regard to whether or not they go to school on a reservation. For this report students are considered “On Reservation” when the school the student attends is physically located within the reservation boundaries. This does not include all Indian Country schools as some are just outside the boundaries of the reservations. In Figure 4 it can be seen that American Indian students attending schools outside the reservation boundaries are scoring better than those within the reservation. This is clearly seen by looking at the percentage of students that score at the lowest level, Novice. For students “On Reservation” it is a much higher percentage, almost 60% are novice compared to 38.2% of students off the reservation. In



Mathematics, shown in Figure 5, the gap is very similar. In math, 63.2% of American Indian students on the reservation score novice, compared to 40.6% off the reservation. It is also worth noting that while White students also do not score as well on the reservation compared to off the reservation, the difference is not as large as it is for American Indian students.

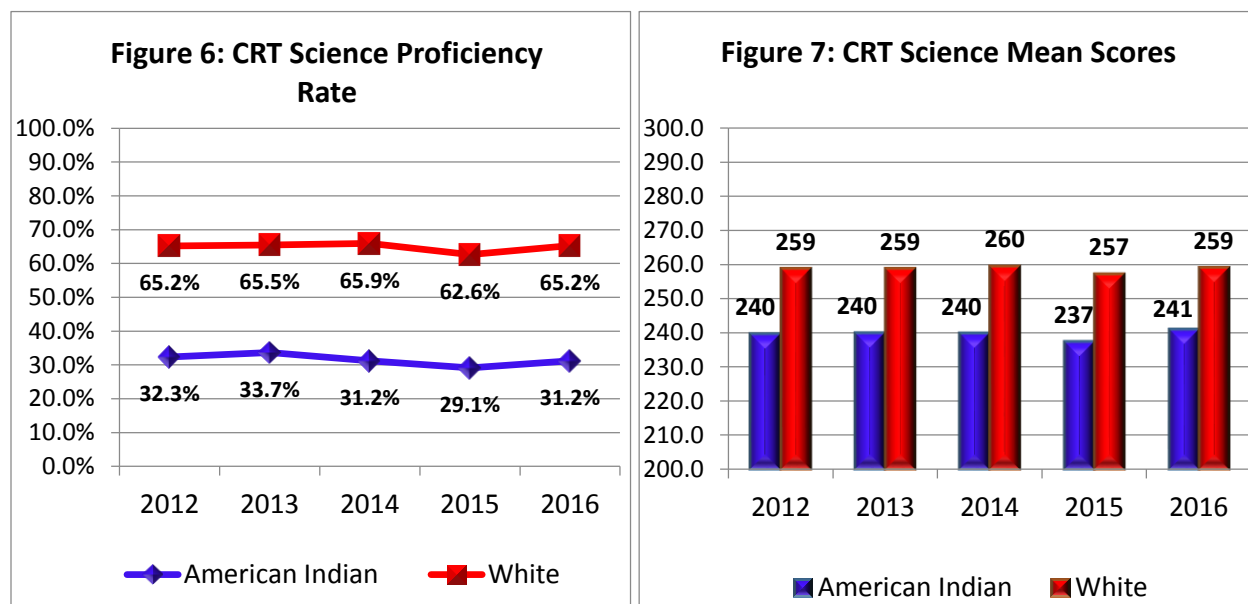
## CRT

Since the Smarter Balanced Assessment does not offer a Science domain, the Science portion of the CRT is still given. The CRT Science test has been given to 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students since 2008. Science scale scores on the CRT are scored on a scale from 200 to 300 with 200 being the low score. The proficiency levels are broken down as (there is some variability in the cut-off between Proficient and Advanced scores based on the grade the student is in):

- Novice                      200 – 224
- Near Proficient        225 – 249
- Proficient                250 – 275
- Advanced                276 – 300

A student who scores 250 or above in a subject is considered to be proficient. The CRT results are modeled such that if a student scores 250 in a subject during one school year and makes the appropriate progress in skill level for the next school year, his or her score for that subject will remain relatively unchanged.

Figure 6 and 7 show the trends for the past 5 years of the CRT Science scores for American Indian and White students in Montana. The percent of student’s proficient or above went up in 2016 compared to 2015. However the long term trend shows that the Science proficiency rates have remained fairly constant for both American Indian students and White students since the 2012 school year. The larger



concern here is the achievement gap between American Indian students and White students is a difference of 34% for 2016 (65.2% vs. 31.2%).

## National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)

The NAEP test is a national assessment that is given every two years to randomly selected schools across the nation and Montana. This test does not test every student in every school, but uses sampling to get their results. The most recent NAEP test was given during the 2014-2015 school year. The NAEP test in Montana has historically only been given to 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in mathematics and reading. The NAEP scores are on a scale of 0 – 500 with 500 being the highest score. Scores across grades or across subjects can't be compared to each other because they are not scaled the same, i.e. a 4<sup>th</sup> grade scale score can't be compared to an 8<sup>th</sup> grade scale score. The NAEP scores and results also can't be compared to the CRT or Smarter Balanced tests; the NAEP tests are designed differently and are essentially testing for different things. Any statistically significant changes discussed in the NAEP report are done at the  $\alpha = .05$  level.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Figure 8 shows the 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores of American Indian students for the past 5 testing cycles. 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores showed a slight increase from 2013, although the scores have remained mostly unchanged since 2011. None of the differences from year to year are statistically significant changes in Reading. There are 13 states that have a significant enough American Indian population in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading that sample sizes and test results are large enough to report. Of those 13 states Montana was 5<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading.

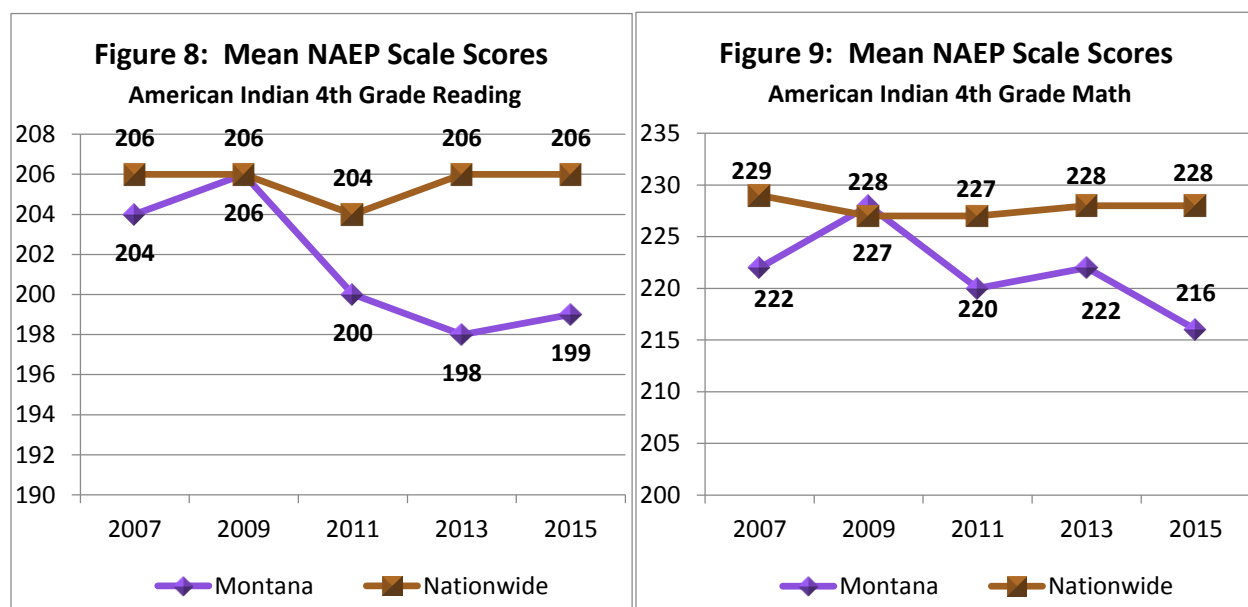
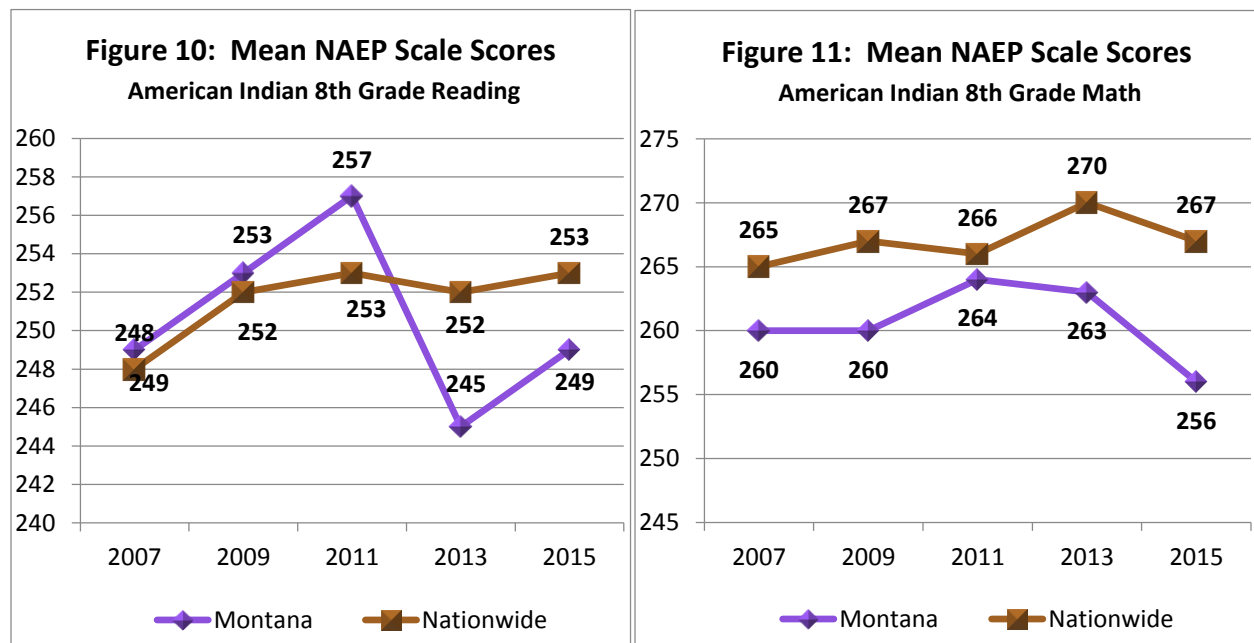


Figure 9 displays the 4<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics scores for American Indian students. 4<sup>th</sup> grade math scores declined by 6 points between 2013 and 2015. This decline is statistically significant and the difference between the national mean score and Montana mean score is also statistically significant for 2015. This is especially concerning since even as recent as 2009 Montana scored above the National mean score in 4<sup>th</sup> grade math. Of the 12 states that have a significant enough population to report American Indian test scores, Montana ties for last with two other states.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Scores for 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading increased while scores for 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics decreased in 2015. Figure 10 shows the mean scale scores for 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading for the past 5 testing cycles. The increase in reading scores is not statistically significant from the 2013 results. The 2015 results for Montana are also not statistically significant from the nationwide mean. Of the 12 states that tested enough American Indian students to report test scores, Montana was 6<sup>th</sup> for 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading.

In Figure 11 the mean scale scores for 8<sup>th</sup> grade math are displayed for both Montana and nationwide. 8<sup>th</sup> grade math scores did experience a large decrease (7 points) in the mean scale score. The decrease in mean scale score in 2013 of 263 to 256 in 2015 is not statistically significant. However the difference between the nationwide mean and the Montana mean for 2015 is statistically significant. Of the 13 states that tested enough American Indian students to report test scores in 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, Montana was 11<sup>th</sup>.

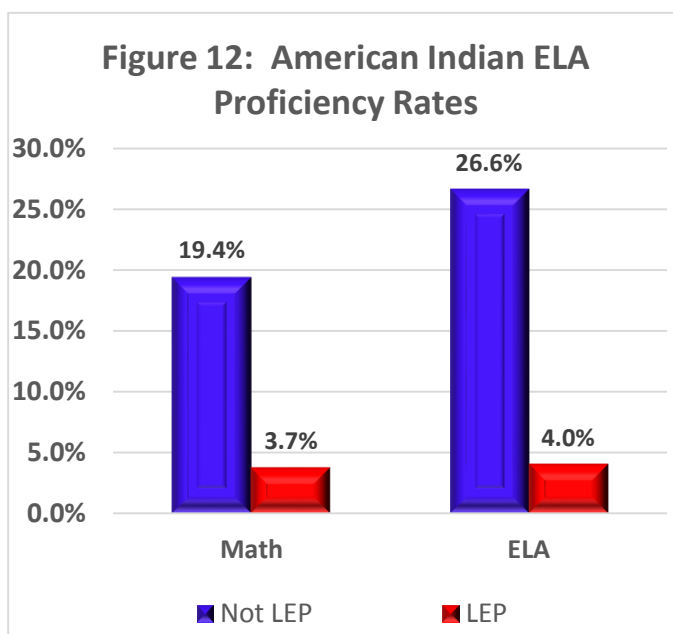


## English Learner (EL) students and English Language Proficiency (ELP) Test

LEP students in Montana are generally students who have impact from a language other than English in their environment, usually at home. All LEP students in Montana are required to take the ELP test, as a result of NCLB and this requirement is continuing in ESSA. The students can then test out of LEP status and become Former LEP. Former LEP status is then tracked for at least two years. The ELP test is used to test the LEP students for English proficiency but other factors such as grades, state assessments, and teacher input are the determining factors for whether or not a student is moved to Former LEP.

During the 2015 – 2016 school year there were 3189 LEP students enrolled in Montana. 73.1% of all LEP students were American Indian. The percent of LEP students who have been LEP for 5 or more years is 23.7% of all LEP students. Decreasing this number of students that have been LEP for 5 or more years has been a focus of OPI and these students are now a focus in the ESSA law. It is well known in the education community, both nationally and in Montana, the lowest scoring demographic of students are the LEP students. The longer the student is an LEP student the more effect it has on that student later on. Figure 12 shows the difference between LEP students and other students on the Smarter Balanced test during the 2015 – 2016 school year. LEP students also have the lowest graduation rate of any student group, for 2015 – 2016 it was 62.2%

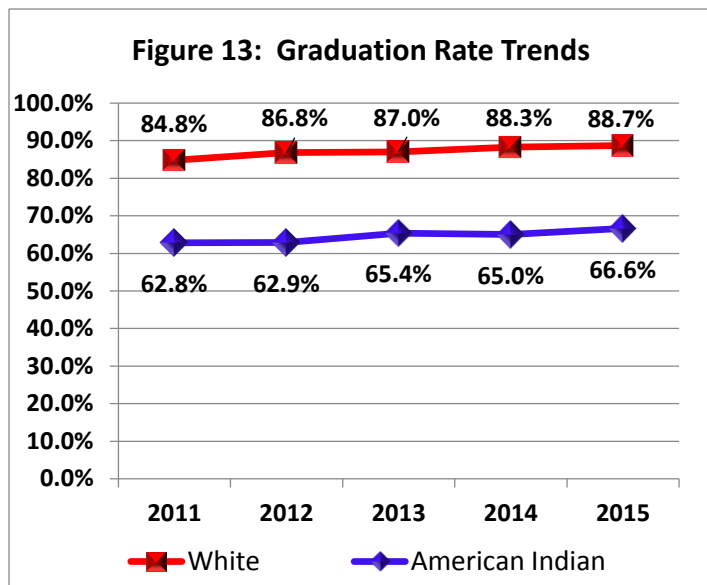
For the 2015 – 2016 school year there were 2,951 total students that took the ELP test. The ELP test has 5 different domains for testing LEP students: Writing, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Literacy. A total score is then found using the result from the 5 domains. To be considered proficient in Montana a student must score at least 4.0 on literacy and 5.0 on total proficiency. Of the students who took the test in 2016, 394 of them, or 13.4% were tested as proficient.



## Graduation Rates

The graduation rates discussed in this report are the rates that determine the percentage of students who graduate from high school in four years or less. For the fifth year in a row, the graduation rates in





Montana continue to increase. The overall graduation rate in Montana for 2014 – 2015 was 86.0% which is an increase from 85.4% the year before.

In figure 13 the graduation rates for White and American Indian students over the past 5 years are displayed. Both student groups have increased their graduation rates steadily since 2011. In 2015 the American Indian graduation rate increased 1.6 percentage points compared to 2014. However the American Indian graduation rate is still 22.1 percentage points lower than the White student graduation rate.

## Dropout Rates

The dropout rates presented in this report are an event rate, which is the percentage of total students who dropped out during that year. Dropout rates in Montana continued to drop during the 2014 – 2015 school year. The overall dropout rate in Montana was 2.3% with the American Indian dropout rate at 6.3%. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of dropout rates by race and school grade for 2014 – 2015.

As evidenced by the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade dropout rates, American Indians start dropping out at a younger age than White students. The dropout rate for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students is 10 times higher for American Indian students than White students, while for high school students it is 3.7 times higher for American Indian students. The grade with the highest dropout rate in the state is the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

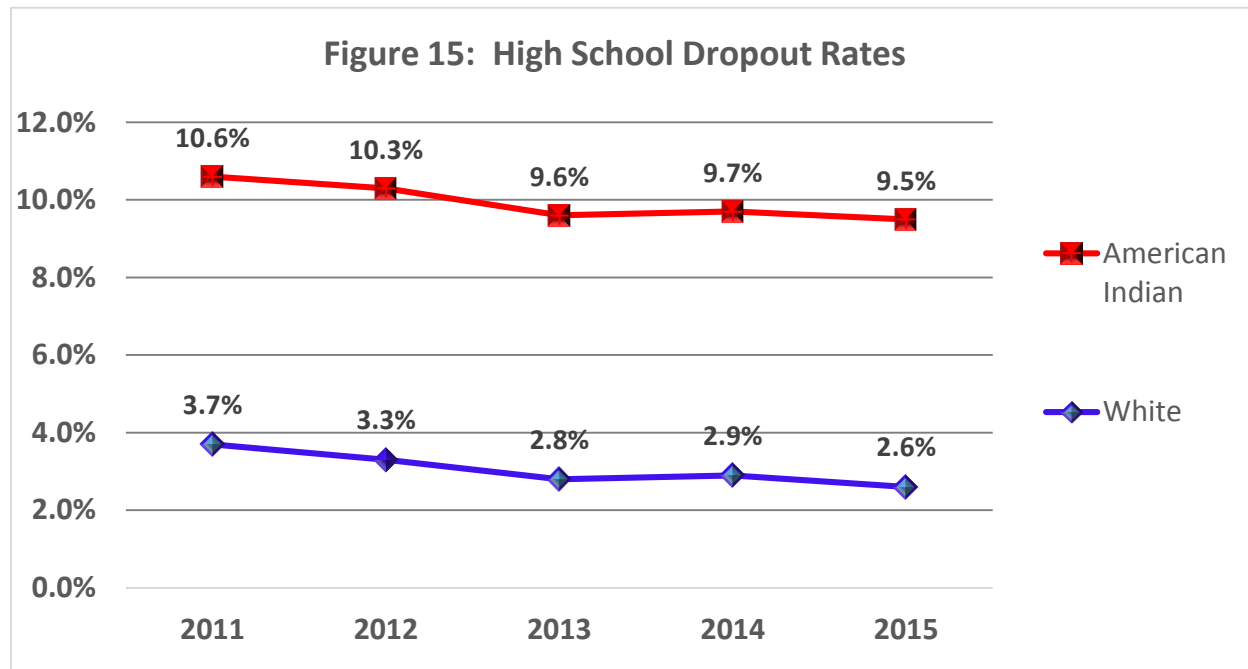
**Figure 14: 2014 – 2015 Dropout Rates by Grade**

	Grades 7 – 8	Grades 9 – 12	Total
American Indian	1.0%	9.5%	6.3%
White	0.1%	2.6%	1.8%
Overall	0.2%	3.4%	2.3%

The chart in Figure 15 shows the change in dropout rates over time. The general trend is that dropout rates are decreasing and have been for quite some time. While the decreasing rates are a great sign, the American Indian student dropout rate is still much higher than the White student subgroup. What is not shown in Figure 15 is American Indians that do end up dropping out are staying in school longer than they have in the past. Up until the 2013 – 2014 school year, a grade other than 12<sup>th</sup> grade always had the highest dropout rate for American Indians but in 2014 and 2015 12<sup>th</sup> grade had the highest dropout rate of any grade among American Indian students. There is also a slight difference in the dropout rates



of American Indian students dependent on whether they attend a school physically located within the reservation boundaries or not. American Indians that attend schools located within a reservation boundary have a 10.6% dropout rate for 2015 – 2016 where students in schools located outside the reservation boundaries have a dropout rate of 8.6%.

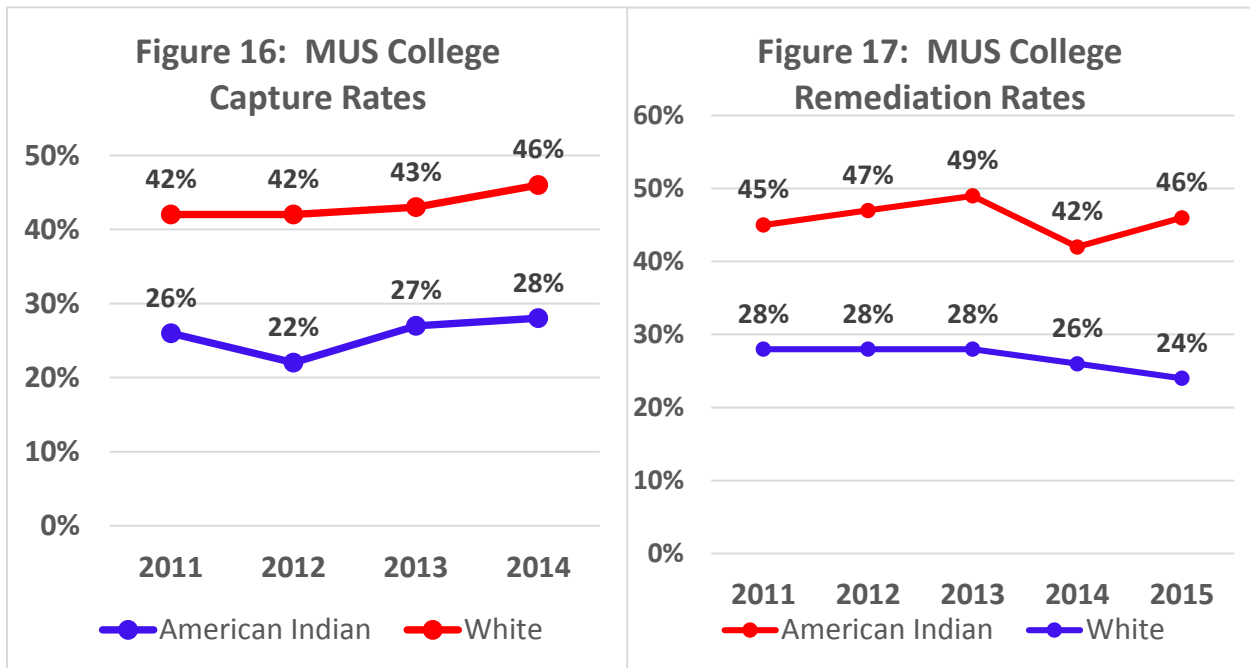


Another piece of information that can't be seen in Figure 15 is why the students are dropping out. When investigating the reasons why students dropped out in 2014 - 2015 there are some significant differences for American Indian students when compared to all other students. While 8.1% of Non-American Indian dropouts specify "Academic Difficulty" as the reason for dropping out, only 2.6% American Indians specify this as the reason for dropping out. The most common reason for American Indians dropping out is "Attendance Difficulty" which is at 53.3% compared to 27.8% of Non-American Indian dropouts. Another significant difference is the number of students leaving school because of the HiSET tests (replacement of the GED in Montana). 33.1% of Non-American Indian dropouts cite "Pursuing HiSET" or "Completed HiSET" as the reason for dropping out when only 7.2% of American Indians do so.

## College Data

College data presented here does not include Montana Tribal College enrollment numbers and data since it is not available from those schools. One way of determining what students are doing after graduating from high school is the college capture rate. This is the rate of students who enroll in college within the U.S. within 16 months of graduating. Capture rates for Montana students entering the Montana University System are shown in Figure 16. Figure 16 shows the capture rates for American





Indian students are much lower than White students. The data for 2015 is not shown in Figure 16 since at the time of this report those students still had time to enroll in a school

Remediation rates are another way of tracking students once they enter college. A Remediation rate is the rate of students who enter college within 16 months of graduating high school and enroll in either a remedial writing or math class (remedial courses are usually courses with course numbers less than 100). The rates presented in this report are only for campuses of the Montana University System.

Figure 17 shows the remediation rates for Montana students attending a school in the Montana University System. Remediation rates are much higher for American Indian students. Math remediation rates are much higher than writing remediation rates for both races. Math remediation rates for American Indian students are 40% while it is 20% for White students. Writing remediation rates are lower for both subgroups with the American Indian remediation rate for writing at 19% compared to 9% for White students. When comparing the remediation rates of math and writing it indicates that many students who take a remedial course in one subject also take on in the other.

## Student Surveys

There are two student surveys administered in the state of Montana, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the My Voice Student Survey. Neither survey polls every student and both surveys use sampling procedures to estimate for the entire population. The YRBS survey has been conducted once every two years since 1993, with the last one being during the 2014-2015 school year. Some results are discussed here but you may find the entire YRBS report at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/yrbs>. The My Voice survey has been conducted annually since the 2010-2011 school year. The full My Voice report for 2014-2015 can be found at [http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/index.html#gpm1\\_8](http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/index.html#gpm1_8).





The 2015-2016 My Voice report was not available at the printing of this report, but it will be posted on the OPI website when it is available. The 2014-2015 results will be discussed in this report.

Figure 18 shows some selected questions and demonstrates the differences between American Indian students on or near reservations and those in urban schools. Some of the differences in Figure 18 also demonstrate a difference between American Indian students and all students.

<b>Figure 18: 2014 – 2015 Selected YRBS Results</b>			
		AI – R: American Indian students on or near reservations	AI – U: American Indian students in urban schools
	All	AI – R	AI - U
Carried a weapon anytime in the past 30 days.	26.4%	16.5%	34.3%
Were bullied on school property during the past 12 months.	25.3%	26.0%	28.6%
Felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months.	29.3%	37.5%	41.1%
Attempted suicide during the past 12 months	8.9%	19.3%	19.8%
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more days during the past 7 days	54.0%	46.4%	79.9%
Ever tried cigarette smoking in their life.	39.1%	66.1%	54.4%
Ever drank alcohol	69.9%	59.3%	72.6%
Currently used marijuana, past 30 days	19.5%	40.6%	29.8%

There are a few things of note in Figure 18. The percentage of students that were bullied on school property during the past 12 months does not have big differences between the different populations. The reason the results for this question were selected is in the past the American Indian students on reservations used to be lower than the all student percentage, this percent went up from 21.1% in 2012-2013. The same percent for American Indian student in urban schools decreased since 2012-2013 from 31.8%.

For question #3, “Felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months”, all the student groups had their highest percentage ever seen since the question was introduced to the YRBS in 1999. There are several more questions related to suicide on the YRBS that all were either the highest they’ve ever been or close to it for all subgroups.

The YRBS reports also include a trend analysis report which allows you to see the change over time of the responses to the survey. Figure 19 shows some selected questions and how they have changed since 1999 (some questions in the YRBS report have been asked for longer than that). All of the questions in Figure 19 have decreased steadily since 1999 for all subgroups.



**Figure 19: YRBS Trend Data**

		Subgroup	1999	2015
		AI – R: American Indian students on or near reservations      AI – U: American Indian students in urban schools		
Rode in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days.	All	43.1%	23.0%	
	AI – R	53.3%	27.6%	
	AI - U	49.3%	25.9%	
Used any form of cocaine in their life.	All	9.8%	5.2%	
	AI – R	21.4%	8.0%	
	AI - U	21.2%	8.2%	
Used methamphetamines during their life.	All	13.5%	3.0%	
	AI – R	26.8%	6.6%	
	AI - U	24.1%	7.3%	

The My Voice survey asks different types of questions than the YRBS survey. Examples are questions relating to the students belonging in school, sense of accomplishment, curiosity, and leadership. There are several ways the MyVoice survey data may be disaggregated. Three groups of students will be focused on for this report: American Indians in schools where the majority of students are American Indian (AI majority), American Indians in schools where the majority of students are not American Indian (AI minority), all White students.

Figure 20 shows some questions that were selected from the My Voice survey. Some questions were selected for differences between White students and American Indian students. Others were selected because of the difference in answers provided by American Indian students. The full My Voice report has breakdowns by race, gender, and grade.

**Figure 20: Select 2015-2016 My Voice Survey Results**

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



## Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

There were 4789 total AP exams given to Montana public school students during the 2014-2015 school year, data for the 2015-2016 school year was not available at the time of the printing of this report. The number of AP exams given was slightly down from the previous year but in general the number of AP exams taken in Montana has been increasing for the past 30 years. Some students took more than one AP exam. 106 of the exams were given to American Indian students, with English being the most common subject tested at 58 exams.

On any AP exam taken for any subject, a passing test is scored as a 3 or higher. For 2014-2015 there were 2,971 exams passed, which results in a passing rate of 62.0%. For American Indians there were 32 passing scores resulting in a passing rate of 55.2%.

## ACT Test

The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in Mathematics, Reading, English, Writing and Science. Montana students are given the opportunity to take the ACT test during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year free of charge thanks to grant money provided by the GEAR UP program. Many 12<sup>th</sup> grade students also take the test a second time for their college admissions requirements. The test results discussed in this report are from the 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. During the 2015-2016 school year there were 7708 White students and 975 American Indian students who took the test as 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

The ACT College Readiness scores are the scores ACT has determined a student needs in that domain to have at least a 50% chance of getting a B or higher in the corresponding college courses. Keep in mind these test scores are for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, and the college readiness score is used from their 12<sup>th</sup> grade ACT score. Figure 21 shows the mean scores for 11th grade test takers during the 2015-2016 school year. It can be seen in Figure 21 that American Indian scores are lower in all domains with the biggest difference coming in Writing. Most domains have increased just slightly from the 2014-2015 results but the difference is not significant.

	Composite	English	Math	Reading	Science	Writing
American Indian	17.0	15.3	17.2	17.6	17.5	14.0
White	20.3	18.9	20.3	21.0	20.5	18.0
College Readiness	22	18	22	21	24	-



## Special Education Students

For the 2015 – 2016 school year there were 17,051 total special education students in public schools in Montana. This was an increase in the number of students for the third year in a row. Of those students, 3,074 are American Indian students. Of all American Indian students in Montana, 15.1% were identified as special education students. This compares to only 9.7% of all White students that are identified as special education students.

## Attendance Rates

Before discussing attendance rates a few things should be mentioned first. There is no statewide policy for how attendance should be counted at schools. Each school is left to count attendance in a way they see best. This leads to differences between schools on how they count things such as missing school for school related activities, tardies, missing partial days and other things. That being said, when looking at the statewide data that OPI does have, we can get some ideas of what may be occurring.



Native Traditional Foods and Culinary Arts Day at Ronan High School

For 2015 – 2016 the statewide attendance rate for American Indian students was 88.7% compared to 93.8% for White students. This is a significant difference between these two subgroups. While the attendance rates have remained relatively stable for subgroups since the 2011 – 2012 school year there has been a slightly decline for American Indian attendance rate from a high of 90.0% in 2011 – 2012. Chronically absent students are currently defined as students missing 10% or more of school. The data then reflects that the average American Indian student in Montana is chronically absent from school. There are many reports and studies showing the negative effects on students from being chronically absent.

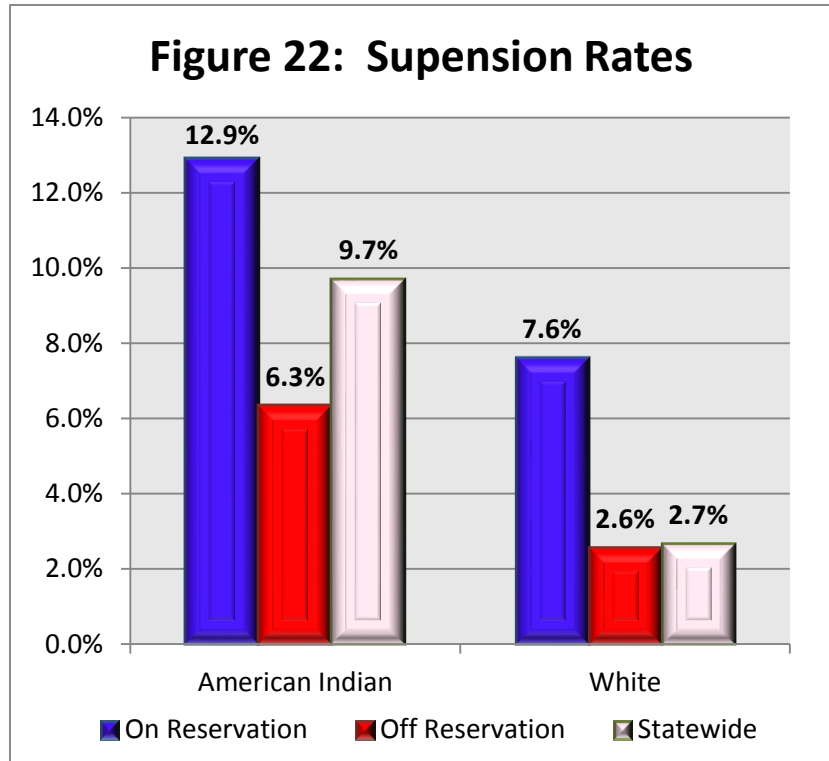
## Suspension / Expulsion Data

As of the writing of this report, the 2015 – 2016 suspension and expulsion data had not been finalized. The 2014 – 2015 data will be discussed in this report. Statewide, 9.7% of all American Indian students



were given at least one out of school suspension during the 2014 – 2015 school year. That compares to only 2.7% of White students who were given an out of school suspension. All suspension data shown here reflects out of school suspension data, as OPI does not collect in-school suspensions for the entire state.

Figure 22 shows several different trends that are occurring in Montana. First, regardless of race, students located in schools within reservation boundaries were about twice as likely to be suspended compared to those



located outside the reservation boundaries. Also, regardless of their location, American Indian students are much more likely to be suspended than White students. This trend is not unique to Montana, as numerous studies have shown nationally that minority students are more likely to be suspended. The good news is that American Indian suspension rates have been declining every year since 2010 – 2011 when the suspension rate was 11.7%

Students expelled from school for any time frame also show similar trends to that of the out of school suspensions. Expulsion counts for the state are relatively small, which causes a lot of fluctuation from year to year and makes comparisons difficult. There were 32 American Indian students expelled for some time period during the 2014 – 2015 school year while the number of White students expelled was 24. This means that even though the White student population in Montana is much larger than the American Indian population, there were more American Indian students expelled.

## Summary

The American Indian student achievement gap is shown in several areas throughout this report. However, there is improvement shown in narrowing that gap but there is obviously still room for more improvement. Improvements in these areas will not happen overnight, but it is important for the future of Montana for the American Indian student achievement gap to continue to narrow.

This document is also located electronically on the OPI webpage at <http://opi.mt.gov/Reports&Data>.







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