



## American Indian Achievement Gap Report

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## **Introduction**

### **2007 MCA 20-9-330**

In 2007, the Montana State Legislature passed Montana Code Annotated 20-9-330, appropriating \$200 per American Indian child, totaling over \$3 million dollars per year, to provide funding to school districts for the purpose of closing the educational achievement gap that exists between American Indian students and non-Indian students. According to MCA 20-9-330 (2) (a), funds are 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.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) prepared this report to track the American Indian achievement gap and provide data on the Montana American Indian student population.

### **Important Note on the Race/Ethnicity Data in the American Indian Achievement Gap Report:**

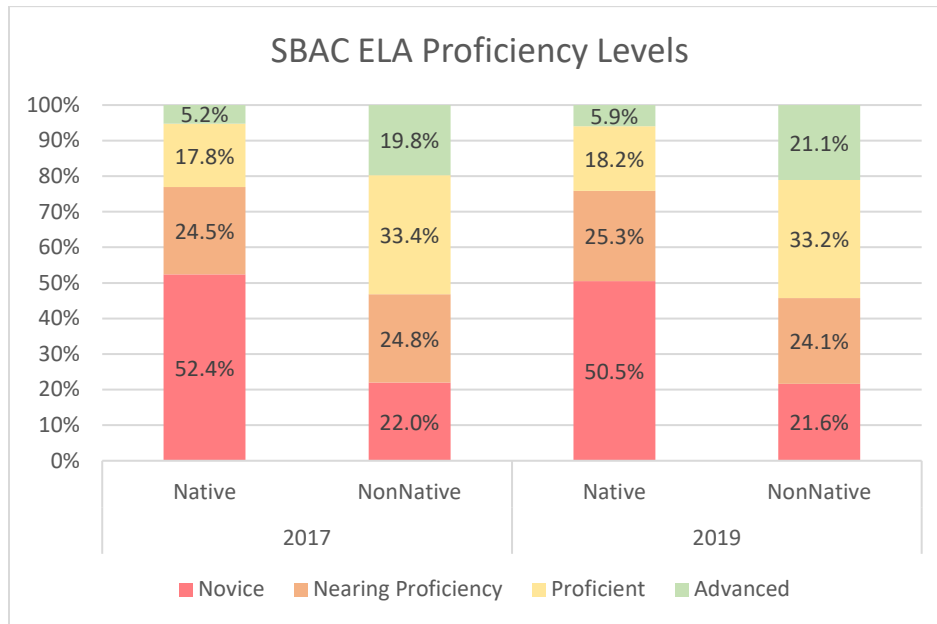
The underlying legislation authorizing the American Indian Achievement Gap Report, "American Indian Achievement Gap Payment 20-9-330, MCA," is intended to support ALL American Indian students in Montana, including those who may identify with more than one race/ethnicity. The OPI follows a two-part race/ethnicity and multi-racial population methodology for all state and federally required reports EXCEPT for the American Indian Achievement Gap Report, therefore, students who otherwise are identified as "multi-racial" in other published data and reports are identified and accounted for as American Indian Students in this report if one of the races they identify with is American Indian. Please use caution when comparing or referencing data published in the American Indian Achievement Gap Report to other published data and reports.

### **Explanation of Data Used**

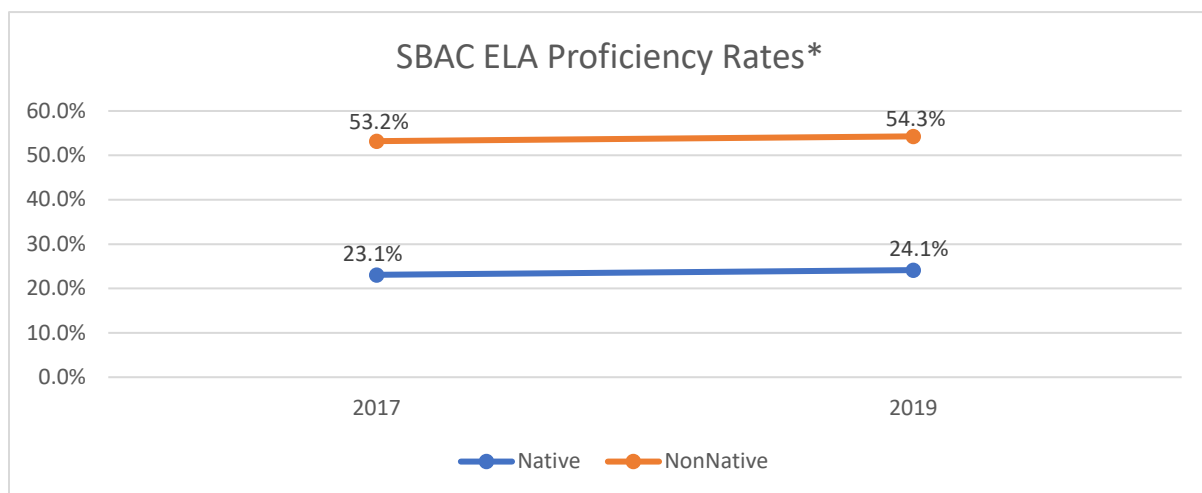
The data used in this report comes from the statewide assessments given in the 2016-17 and 2018-19 school years.

- SBAC- The Smarter Balanced assessment serves as the Math and English Language Arts (ELA) assessments for Grades 3-8.
- CRT- The Criterion Referenced Test is the science assessment for Grades 4, 8, and 10.
- ACT- The ACT is used as the statewide assessment for Grade 11 for English and Math.
- There are four proficiency levels for each test, two below obtaining proficiency in a subject - Novice and Nearing Proficiency- and two at proficient or above -Proficient and Advanced.
- Cohort Dropout Rate- High School Dropout rates are calculated by taking the number of students who dropped out in four years or less, divided by the total number of students in their anticipated graduation year.
- Cohort Graduation Rate- Graduation rates are calculated by taking the number of students who graduate (1) in four years or less with a regular high school diploma, or (2) a State-defined alternate high school diploma for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, divided by the number of students in their expected graduation year.

## SBAC Reading

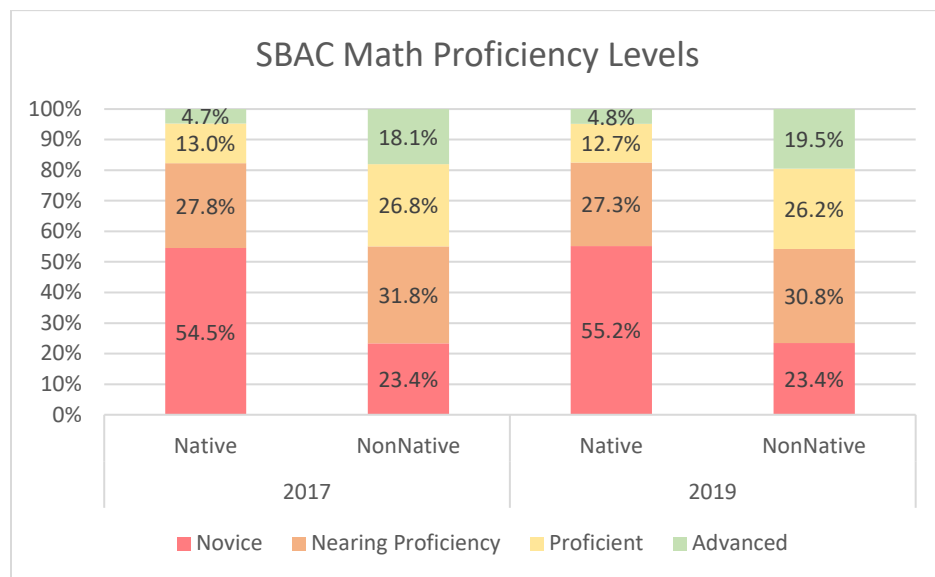


The above chart shows the percentages of students scoring in each proficiency level for the Smarter Balance ELA assessment. This data is broken out by year, comparing 2017 to 2019, and by race, comparing Native American and Non-Native American. In both years, there is a substantial gap between Native American students and the rest of the student population. Above, it is evident that for Non-Native American students, the Novice group only makes up about 22% of the population, while for the Native American students, more than half the population is scoring at the Novice level. The graph below shows the percentages of students considered proficient, and it illustrates the gap in proficiency even more clearly. The Non-Native American population had about 30% more students scoring Proficient or Advanced than the Native American population in both years, meaning the gap has not closed nor widened over the last two years.

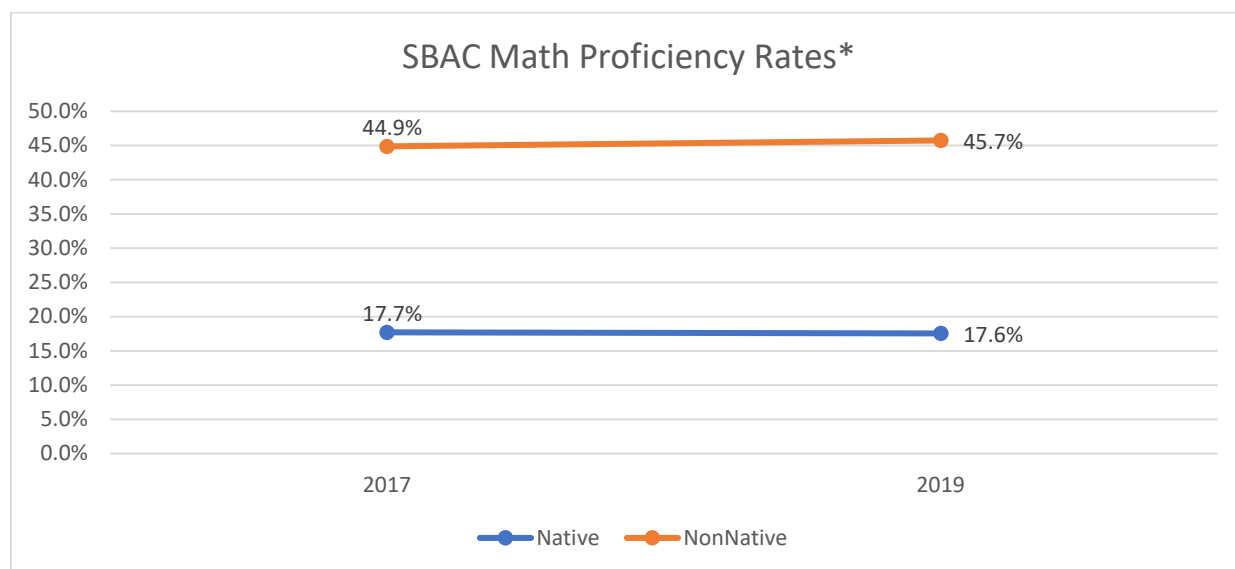


\*Percentage of students obtaining a proficiency level of proficient or advanced.

## SBAC Math

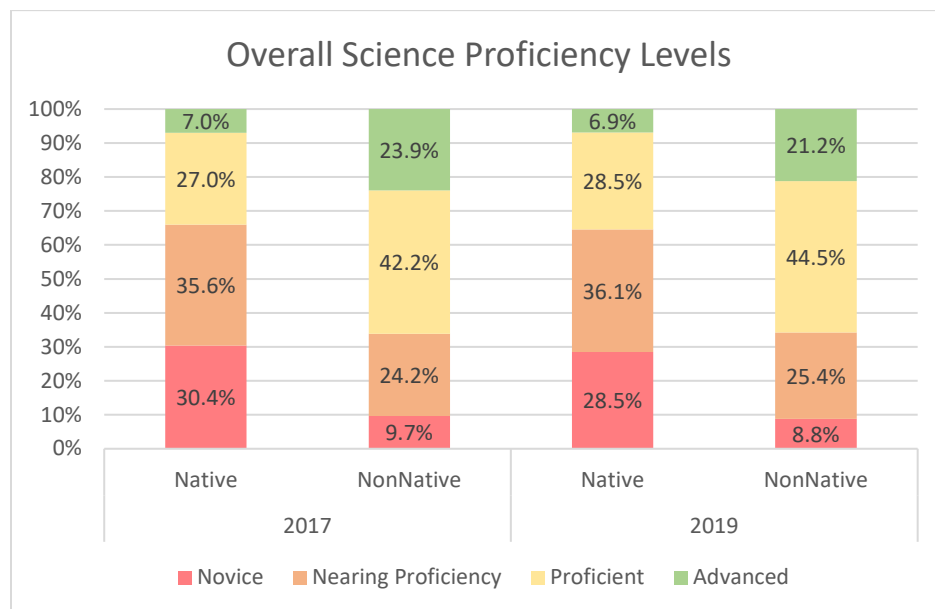


These charts show the difference in proficiency rates for the Smarter Balanced Math assessment between Native American and Non-Native American students across two years. Paralleling the data for reading, the data below shows that the rates of proficiency are much higher for Non-Native American students, at around 45%, with Native American students around 17%. Another similarity to the ELA data is the 30% gap in Novice scores across both years. Native American students with a Novice score in math make up more than half of the population, with Non-Native American students sitting at 23%. While Native American students have stayed at nearly the same proficiency rate, only dropping by .1%, the rest of the student population has gained almost 1% in that measure, slightly widening the gap between the two groups.

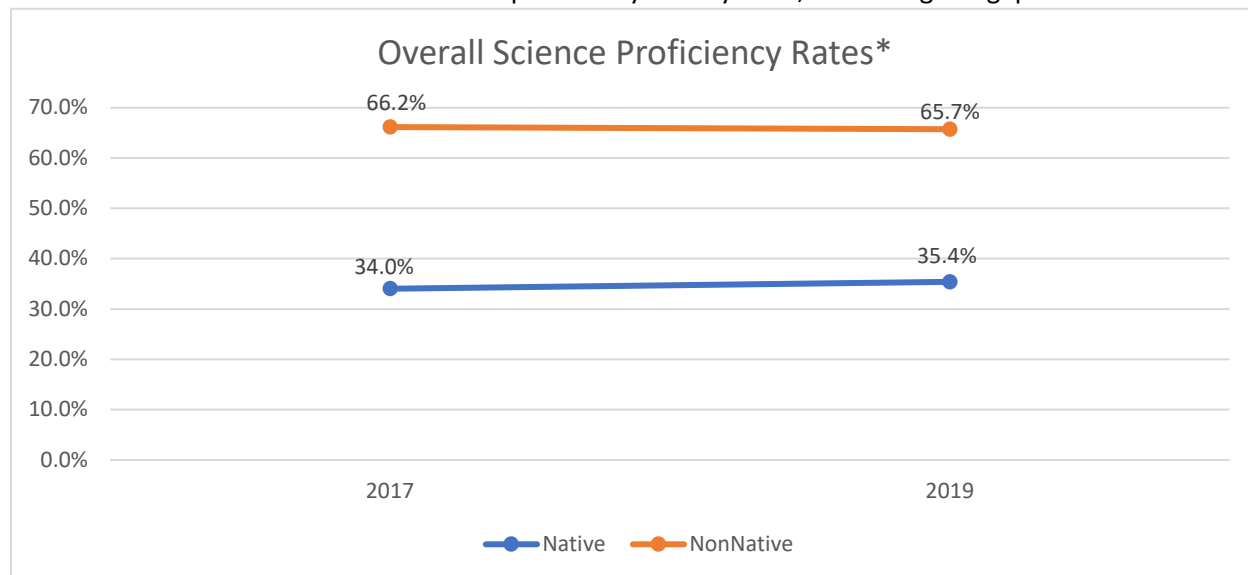


\*Percentage of students obtaining a proficiency level of proficient or advanced.

## CRT Science

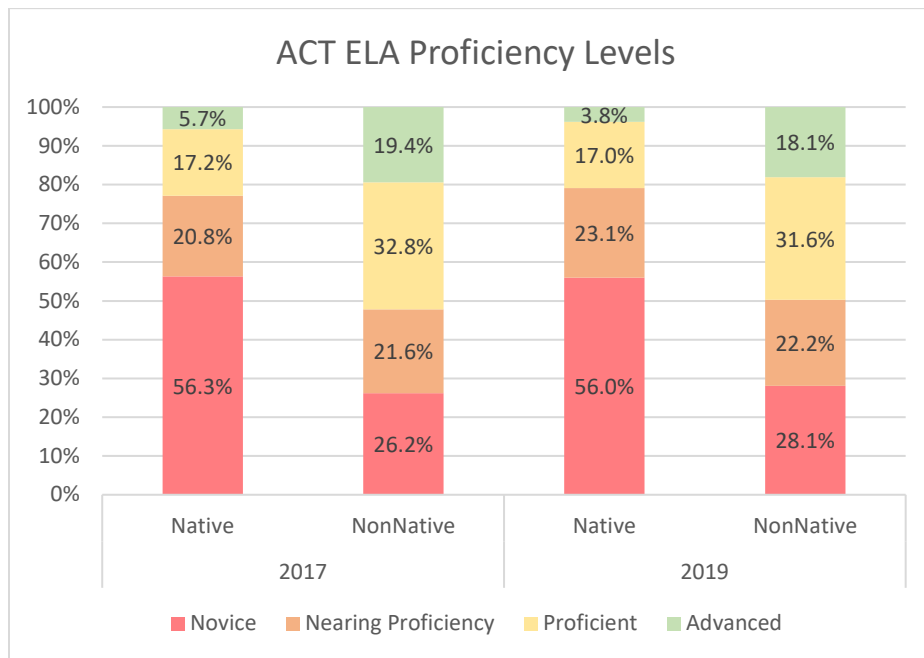


The above graph displays the percentage of students scoring in the four proficiency levels, across two years, split out by sub-populations of Native American and Non-Native American for the CRT Science assessment. Like the last two sets of data, there is an obvious gap in the percentage of Novice scores between the two groups, but the difference between them is not as large, sitting near 20% for both years. The graph below shows only the percentage of students in each population whose scores were considered proficient. While Non-Native Americans saw a decrease in proficiency, dropping by .5%, the Native American students increased their proficiency rate by 1.4%, narrowing the gap between them.

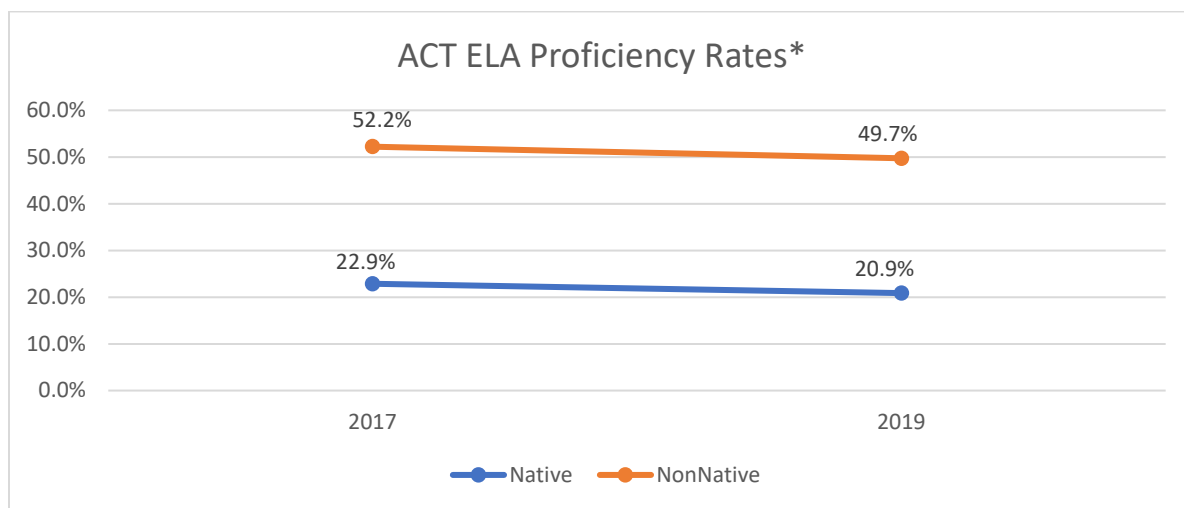


\*Percentage of students obtaining a proficiency level of proficient or advanced.

## ACT ELA

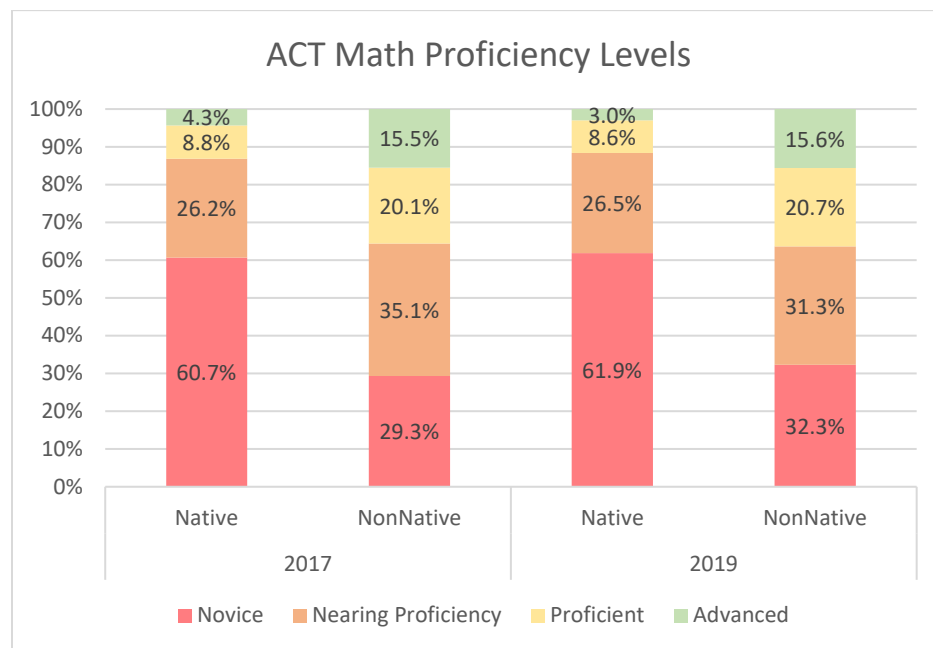


The above chart shows the percentages of students scoring in each proficiency level for the ELA portion of the ACT assessment. This data is broken out by year, comparing 2017 to 2019, and by race, comparing Native American and Non-Native American. Across both years, it is apparent that more than half of Native American students who take this assessment score at the Novice level, while Non-Native students stay below 30% at that level. However, in 2019, Non-Native American students saw an increase in Novice scores, while Native American students had a slight decrease. This data is mirrored in the percentage of students who were considered proficient in the graph below. Both groups show a drop in proficient scores over the two years, though, while Non-Native American students decreased by 2.5%, the Native American group dropped by only 2%. This narrows the gap by .5%.

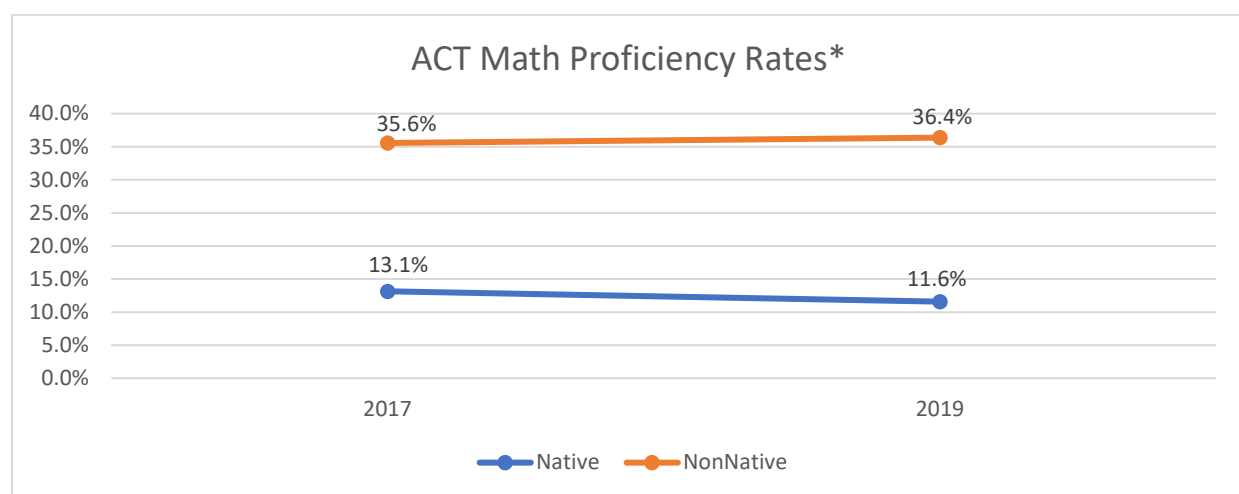


\*Percentage of students obtaining a proficiency level of proficient or advanced.

## ACT Math



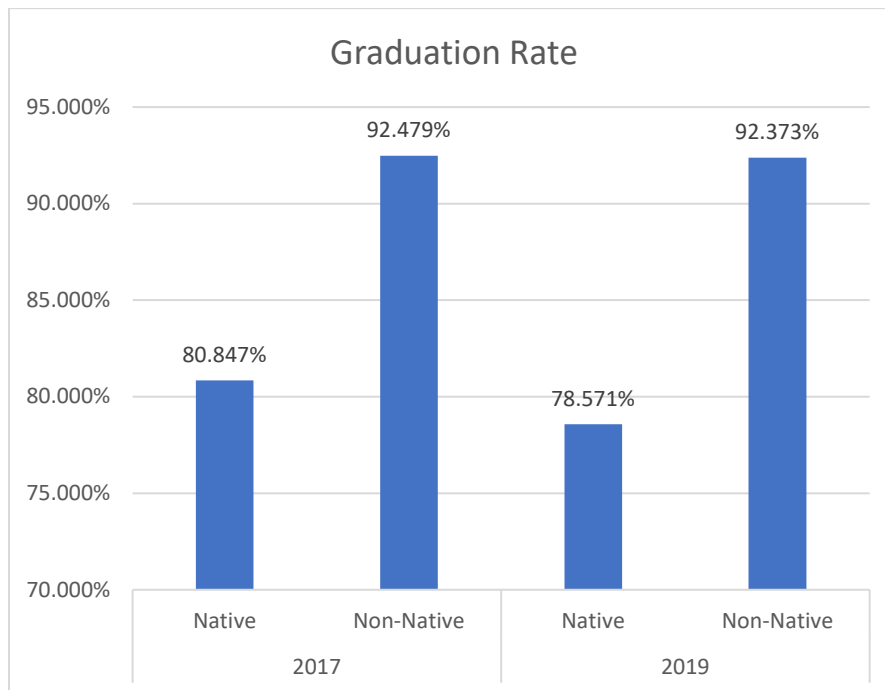
These charts show the difference in proficiency rates for the ACT Math assessment between Native American and Non-Native American students across two years. Both groups saw an increase in their percentage of Novice scoring students with the Native American group increasing by 1.2% and Non-Native American students increasing by 3%. Though the Non-Native American group saw a greater increase of Novice scores, there was also a large decrease in Nearing Proficiency scores and not much change in the other two levels. On the opposite side, with the increase of Novice scores, Native American students also had a sizable drop in Advanced scores and not much change in their Nearing Proficient scores. The graph below reflects this data. For the Non-Native American group, we can see a slight increase in proficient students, whereas, with the Native American group, we can see a drop of 1.5%, further increasing the gap between them.



\*Percentage of students obtaining a proficiency level of proficient or advanced.

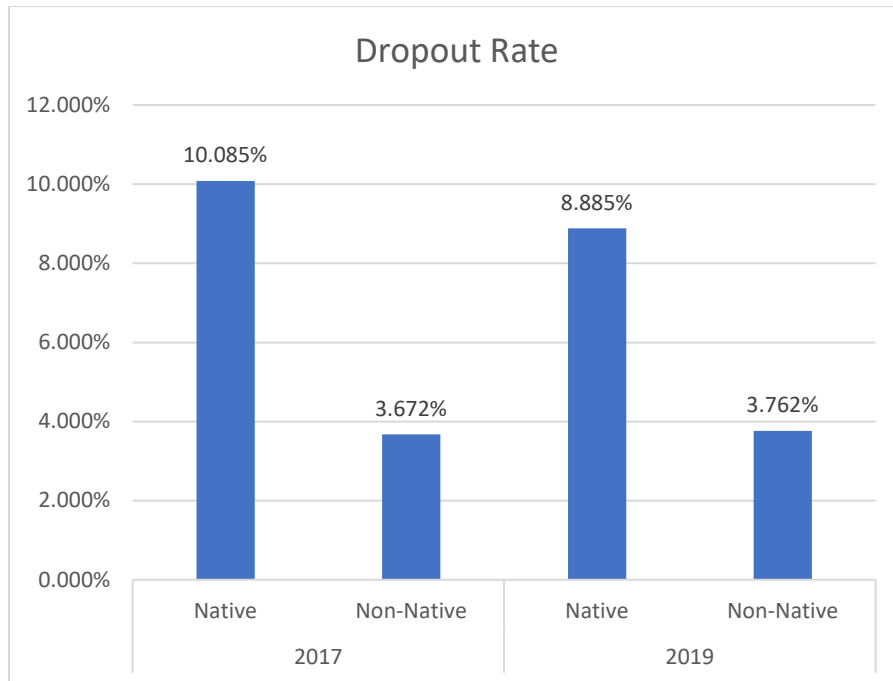


## Graduation Rate



This graph displays the graduation rate of Native American and Non-Native American students for 2017 and 2019. In 2017, there is a difference of about 11.6% between the two groups. In 2019, this difference widens to 13.8%, as the Non-Native American group stays nearly the same, and the Native American group drops by 2.3%.

## Dropout Rate



This graph shows the dropout rate for 2017 and 2019, for Native American and Non-Native American students. There is a sizable difference between the two subgroups in both years, but there is evidence of the gap closing in the more recent year. There was a difference of 6.4% between the two groups in 2017, but with a drop of 1.2% in the Native American group and a slight increase in the Non-Native American group, there is a difference of 5.1% in 2019.

## Summary

The data indicates that there are multiple areas where Montana could improve on closing the gap between Native American students and their counterparts.

- there has not been much change in the proficiency rates for the SBAC over the last two years
- the math portion of the ACT shows a widening of the gap
- there is evidence that the gap is narrowing slightly for the CRT assessment and English portion of the ACT
- there is a slight drop in graduation rates for the Native American group
- there is also evidence that the dropout rate has decreased greatly for the Native American group
- the data indicates that the Native American group are staying in school for four years but may take longer than four years to graduate.

Closing the gap is an ongoing process that will take time, but information, such as the data presented in this report, will continue to improve agency efforts to narrow the gap. This report is meant to display areas that may need more attention and to continue the conversation about how Montana can best serve its Native American students.

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