

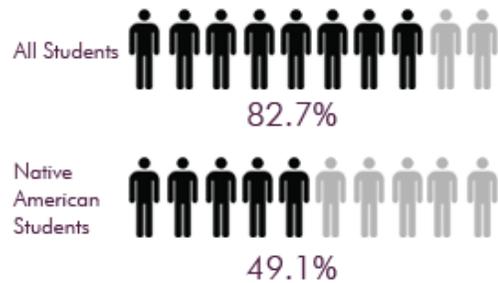
College, Career and Life Ready

Goal: Increase the academic success of Native American students.

RATIONALE

Native American students make up approximately 11 percent of the student population in South Dakota. Many of these young people face unique challenges, including struggles with poverty. The connections between poverty and lower academic achievement have been well documented.

SD Graduation Rate 2013



Strategy: Professional development for teachers

Provide professional development on topics such as differentiated instruction, data use, content knowledge, and cultural sensitivity. Turnover among staff can be a challenge for schools on or near South Dakota's reservations. Ongoing, targeted professional development is one strategy to bolster teachers' skills and to improve instruction and longevity. The outcome? Teachers who are more confident and better equipped to address students' needs.

Strategy: Professional development for principals

Provide professional development opportunities for principals on topics such as instructional leadership and cultural sensitivity. Research indicates that a strong instructional leader is vital to ensuring a safe and effective learning environment for staff and students.

Strategy: Student development

Help students develop an academic mindset by raising awareness of opportunities for college and careers after high school. This strategy involves focusing on college and career readiness with students as early as 7th grade. The intent of this strategy is to engage students, as early as possible, in meaningful activities to keep them focused on opportunities post-high school. Programs such as GEAR UP, College Access, and Jobs for America's Graduates fall under this strategy.

**Graduation rate
for JAG students
in 2012-13**

100%

Strategy: Exploration of ESA-like organization

Explore the possibility of establishing an organization that brings together tribes, state departments, and federal government programs to consistently address the issues facing Native American students. The result? By having key stakeholders come to consensus and focus on the issues, all students could be better supported in their progress to academic success.

5

**districts with JAG
programs in SY 2013-14,
serving 126 students**

Strategy: Oceti Sakowin standards

Integrate language and culture in the classroom. When students see themselves in the work of learning, they become more engaged. The Oceti Sakowin standards, which outline a set of essential understandings of the Dakota/Lakota/Nakota people, provide that avenue. This strategy involves focusing on integrating the standards into the classroom, resulting in a more relevant and valid educational experience for Native American students.