

Arizona Indian Education Report

Office of Indian Education
SY2021-2022

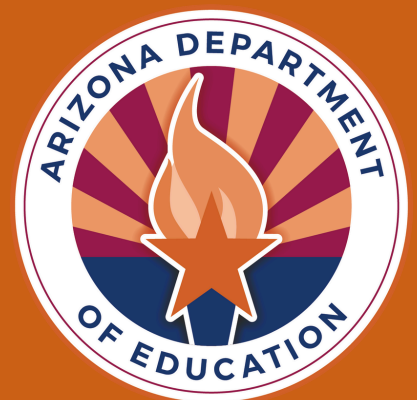


Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction	8
Characteristics of Native American Student Enrollment	9
Ethnicity	9
Special Education	10
Enrollment by County	11
Student Educational Achievement	14
English Language Arts	15
Math	16
Attendance	17
Chronic Absenteeism Rates	17
Graduation Rates	19
Dropout Rates	21
Dropout Prevention Initiatives	22
School Safety	23
Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Percentage Analysis	23
Additional Funding for School Safety Program	24
National Indian Education Study (NIES) Survey Results	24
National PTA (Parent-Teacher Association)	25
Tribal Gaming Contributions to Public School Education	25
Office of Indian Education	26
OIE Initiatives	28
Community Partnerships	29
OIE Programs	29
OIE Events	30
OIE Website	31
Conclusion	32
References	33
Appendix A: Arizona Tribal Lands Map	34



List of Figures

Figure 1: October 1 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity in SY22 and SY23	10
Figure 2: October 1 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity in SY22	10
Figure 3: Percent of High-and Low-Density Schools in Arizona	12
Figure 4: Percent of Native American students Enrolled in High-and Low-Density Schools in Arizona	13
Figure 5: Geographical Information of High-Density Schools	13
Figure 6: Geographical Information of Low-Density Schools	13
Figure 7: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at High-Density Schools in ELA by Race/Ethnicity in SY22.....	15
Figure 8: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at Low-Density Schools in ELA by Race/Ethnicity in SY22.....	16
Figure 9: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at High-Density Schools in Math by Race/Ethnicity in SY22.....	16
Figure 10: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at Low-Density Schools in Math by Race/Ethnicity in SY22	17
Figure 11: Chronic Absenteeism Rates of Grades K-8 Native American Students at High- and Low-Density Schools in FY18 to FY22	18
Figure 12: Chronic Absenteeism Rates of Grades K-8 Students at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity in FY22.....	18
Figure 13: Four-Year Graduation Rates for the Cohort Year 2022 at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity	19
Figure 14: Five-Year Graduation Rates for the Cohort Year 2022 at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity	20
Figure 15: Four-Year Graduation Rates of Native American Students at High- and Low- Density Schools for the Cohort Years 2017-2021	20
Figure 16: Dropout Rates of Grades 7-12 Native American Students at High- and Low- Density Schools in FY18-FY22.....	21
Figure 17: Dropout Rates at High- and Low- Density Schools for Grades 7-12 by Race/Ethnicity in FY22	22
Figure 18: Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Percentage Among Ethnic Groups with Total Population Percentage (All Grade Levels)	23



List of Tables

Table 1: Data Included in Report	8
Table 2: Percent of Special Education Students in SY22 & SY23 October 1 Enrollment	11
Table 3: County Level SY22 October 1 Native American Student Enrollment & High Density Schools and Low-Density Schools	11
Table 4: County Level SY23 October 1 Native American Student Enrollment & High Density Schools and Low-Density Schools	12
Table 5: Arizona Counties and Tribal Lands	14
Table 6: SY22 Assessment Performance Level List	15
Table 7: A List of Statewide Programs That Address Dropout Prevention	22
Table 8: FY21 Instructional Improvement Fund Payment	25
Table 9: OIE Initiatives	28
Table 10: OIE Community Partners	29
Table 11: A Summary of Approved Reimbursements - Tribal College Dual Enrollment Program Fund	29
Table 12: The Number of Language Certified Teachers in AZ for Native American Languages	30



Executive Summary

The Arizona Department of Education's **Office of Indian Education (OIE)** presents the **2022 Annual Report** to highlight the educational landscape for Native American students across the state during **School Year 2021–2022 (SY22)**. Arizona is home to **22 federally recognized tribal nations** and serves over **55,000 Indigenous students** representing more than **110 sovereign tribal nations** nationwide.

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of Native American student enrollment, academic performance, attendance, graduation and dropout rates, school safety, and culturally responsive initiatives. It also compares outcomes between **high-density schools** ($\geq 25\%$ Native American enrollment) and **low-density schools** ($< 25\%$).

Key Findings

- **Enrollment & Demographics:** Native American students comprise approximately 4% of Arizona's total student population. High-density schools are concentrated in **Apache, Coconino, and Navajo counties**, while low-density schools are primarily in **Maricopa and Pima counties**.
- **Academic Achievement:** Native American students scored lower in **English Language Arts (ELA)** and **Math** compared to other ethnic groups. Proficiency rates were **13% in ELA** and **10% in Math** at high-density schools, versus **22% and 17%** respectively at low-density schools.
- **Attendance & Absenteeism:** Chronic absenteeism rates were higher among Native American students, especially in rural high-density schools. Transportation challenges and seasonal weather conditions were contributing factors.
- **Graduation & Dropout Rates:** Despite academic challenges, Native American students at high-density schools had **higher graduation rates** than those at low-density schools:
 - **4-year graduation:** 65% (high-density) vs. 61% (low-density)
 - **5-year graduation:** 75% (high-density) vs. 66% (low-density) Dropout rates increased in SY21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **School Safety:** Native American students represented **7% of long-term expulsions/suspensions**, exceeding their proportion in the overall student population.

OIE Initiatives, Programs, and Events

The Office of Indian Education made significant strides in SY22 to expand its reach and impact to address adverse data trends.

Strategic Initiatives

- Elevated the OIE Director role to **Deputy Associate Superintendent (DAS)**.
- Formed the **Indian Education Advisory Council (IEAC)** to provide quarterly feedback from tribal leaders, educators, and community members.
- Expanded the OIE team from **1 to 5 full-time staff** using federal recovery funds.
- Developed culturally responsive training and partnerships with internal ADE offices and external organizations.
- Launched culturally relevant programs such as the **Indigenous Text Project**.

Educator Pathways

- Allocated **\$1 million** to Arizona's three state universities to support Indigenous educator development:
 - Indigenous Teacher Education Project (ITEP) – University of Arizona
 - Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Arizona Schools (PITAS) – Northern Arizona University
 - Preparing Educators for Arizona's Indian Communities (PEAIC) – Arizona State University

Curriculum & Digital Equity

- Partnered with **Discovery Education** to launch the **Native Stories of the Southwest Channel**.
- Piloted the **Comprehensive Systems of Support (CSS)** program to address the digital divide in rural schools.

Community Engagement

- Hosted monthly **Policy & Program Updates for Indigenous Stakeholders**.
- Strengthened partnerships with tribal colleges for **Dual Enrollment Programs**.
- Increased **Native American Language Teacher Certification**, with **371 certified teachers** as of June 2022.

Flagship Event: Indigenous Text Project (ITP)

A three-part initiative focused on elevating Indigenous literature in K–12 classrooms:

1. **Changing the Narrative Symposium** – In-person Professional Development for educators.
2. **Indigenous Author Panel** – Webinar featuring award-winning Native American authors.
3. **Educator Panel** – Teachers sharing best practices for integrating Indigenous literature in the classroom.

Conclusion

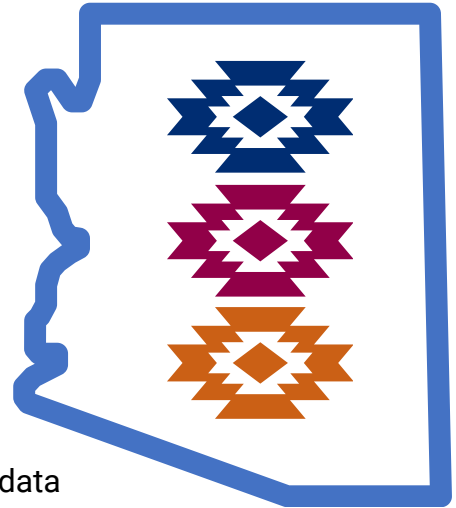
The SY22 report reveals persistent disparities in academic achievement and attendance for Native American students, particularly in high-density schools. However, higher graduation rates in these schools suggest that culturally responsive environments and targeted support can positively influence outcomes. The Office of Indian Education remains committed to reducing barriers, fostering partnerships, and advancing equity for Indigenous students across Arizona.

Through strategic planning, expanded staffing, and innovative programming, OIE continues to build a foundation for long-term success and collaboration with tribal nations, educators, and families.

Introduction

Arizona is home to a diverse population of Native American peoples. Stretching from all corners of the state, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribal nations.¹ Furthermore, Arizona schools serve over 55,000 Indigenous students that represent over 110 sovereign tribal nations across the country.

On a national level, Arizona is home to the largest population of Native Americans within the United States. Arizona is ranked the second out of five states that accounts for more than half of the American Indian population across the entire United States. According to the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population grew by 27.1% and the American Indian and Alaska Native in combination population grew by 160% since 2010.²



An understanding of the context of Indigenous students both within Arizona and on a national scale is vital to understand the data that will be discussed within the following report. This Arizona 2022 Annual Indian Education Report focuses on the following information with the most updated data.

Table 1: Data Included in Report

Data	SY21	SY22	Grade Level
Characteristics of Native American student October 1 enrollment by county, ethnicity, and special education (SPED)	X	X	All
Student educational achievement	X	X	3-12
Chronic absenteeism rates	X	X	K-8
Cohort Graduation rates	X	X	12
Dropout rates	X	X	7-12
School Safety information including long-term suspension and expelled percentages	X	X	All
Dropout prevention initiatives	X	X	NA
Tribal gaming contributions to education Instructional Improvement Fund (IIF)	X	X	NA
The Number of Language Certified Teachers in AZ for Native American Languages (Educator Certification System)		X	NA

¹ Full map of Arizona tribal lands by county are displayed in Appendix A, learn more at <https://itcaonline.com/>

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. §15-244), the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) compiled information regarding Native American students' educational achievements and other educational indicators.³ Thus, the following report will cover the July 2021 - June 2022 timeframe based on the Arizona Department of Education's fiscal year (FY) and corresponds to school year (SY)⁴ 2021-2022.

Characteristics of Native American Student Enrollment

The characteristics of the Native American Student Enrollment section in this report includes October 1 enrollment data which is a snapshot of student enrollment in Arizona schools on October 1st each year. This data has been published on the Arizona Department of Education website (<https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>) and collected consistently across years.

Additionally, the following data will examine the differences in educational environments because of its direct correlation to student performance. According to the National Indian Education Study (NIES) 2019, "Native American students' experiences may vary depending on the types of schools they attend."⁵ To study differences in how Native American students perform in distinct educational environments, the Arizona 2022 Annual Indian Education Report largely compares Native American students who attend high-density schools to Native American students who attend low-density schools. High-density schools refer to the schools with 25 percent or more Native American students. Low-density schools refer to the schools with less than 25 percent of Native American student- this definition aligns with the 2019 NIES study report.

Ethnicity

According to October 1 enrollment data in SY22 and SY23, Native American students comprised approximately 4% of October 1 student enrollment population (preschool-grades 12) in Arizona schools. The largest student population in Arizona is Hispanics/Latinos, followed by Whites (see Figure 1).

³ Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. §15-244), read the full statute at <https://www.azleg.gov/ars/15/00244.htm>

⁴ In general, the school year starts from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022, which may vary for some schools in Arizona.

⁵ The 2019 National Indian Education Study is the most recent report from their respective organization, <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/studies/pdf/2021018.pdf>

Figure 1: October 1 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity in SY22 and SY23

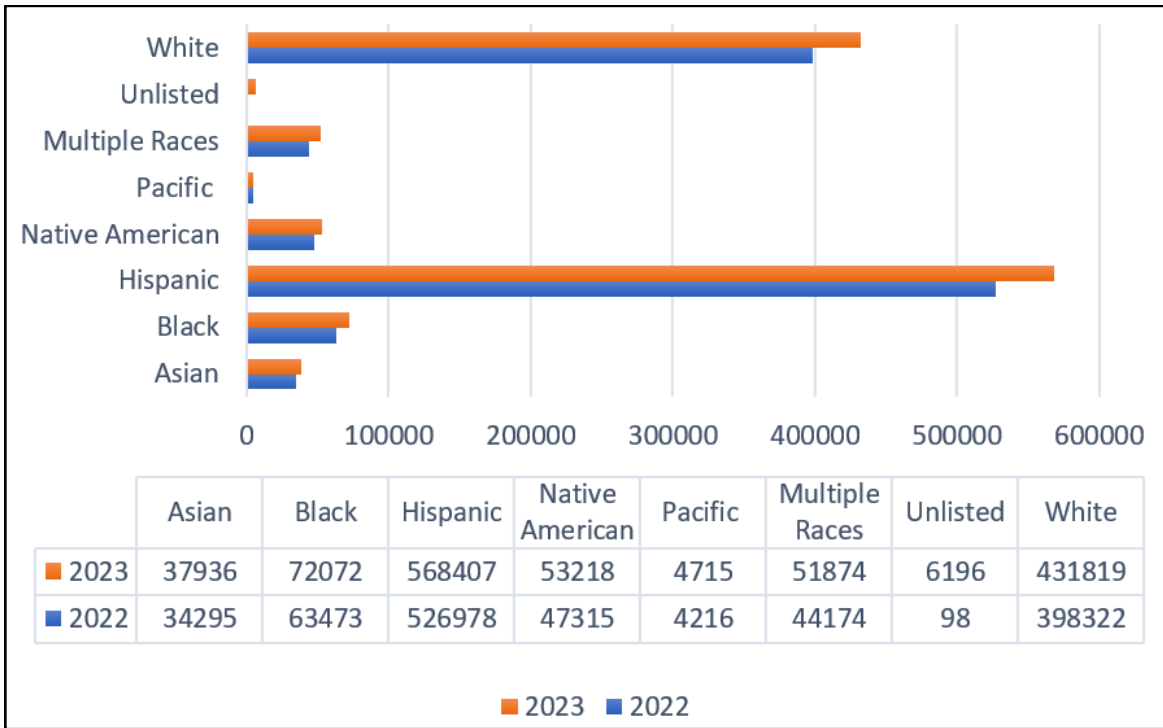
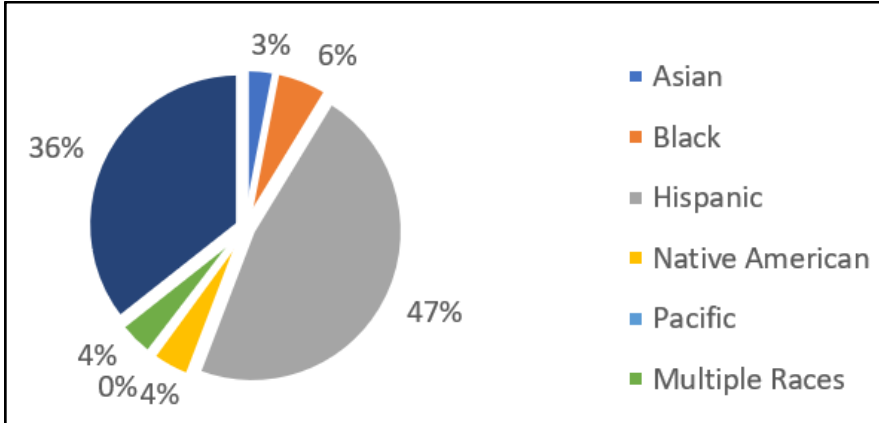


Figure 2: October 1 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity in SY22



Special Education

Special Education (SPED) is the education of students with special needs. When a student enters a special education program, their information is recorded in the Arizona Education Data Standards (AzEDS) for funding and accountability purposes. As shown in Table 2, SPED students comprise approximately 14% of the total October 1 student enrollment population in SY22 and 12% in SY23. Around 16% of the Native American students are classified as students with a disability, while 13% of the students in Other Ethnicity/Race are classified as students with disability (see Table 2).

Table 2: Percent of Special Education Students in SY22 & SY23 October 1 Enrollment

School Year	Race/Ethnicity	# of Non-SPED	# of SPED	Total Student Population	% of SPED in Total Student Population
2022	Native American	39,122	8,259	47,381	17%
	Other Ethnicity/Race	921,345	150,592	1,071,937	14%
	Total	960,467	158,851	1,119,318	14%
2023	Native American	46,736	7,791	54,527	14%
	Other Ethnicity/Race	140,858	140,858	1,192,541	12%
	Total	1,098,419	148,649	1,247,068	12%

Native American Student Enrollment by County in SY22 and SY23

Table 3 and Table 4 summarize the number and percent of Native American students enrolled in each county by high-density and low-density schools. Similar size is found in both SY22 and SY23. Approximately 64% of high-density schools in Arizona are in Apache, Coconino, and Navajo counties. About 60% of low-density schools are in Maricopa.

Table 3: County Level SY22 October 1 Native American Student Enrollment & High-Density Schools and Low-Density Schools

County	# of Native American Students	# of Total Enrollment	% Native American Students	# of Schools	# of High-Density Schools	% of High-Density Schools	# of Low-Density Schools	% of Low-Density Schools
Apache	7,267	9,972	73%	38	27	71%	11	29%
Cochise	105	18,226	1%	62	0	0%	62	100%
Coconino	6,128	16,943	36%	48	27	56%	21	44%
Gila	2,004	7,759	26%	25	9	36%	16	64%
Graham	645	6,800	9%	24	4	17%	20	83%
Greenlee	89	1,667	5%	6	0	0%	6	100%
La Paz	540	2,274	24%	12	6	50%	6	50%
Maricopa	14,715	746,585	2%	1,148	7	1%	1,141	99%
Mohave	609	23,277	3%	60	4	7%	56	93%
Navajo	7,654	17,255	44%	51	24	47%	27	53%
Pima	4,202	142,933	3%	301	9	3%	292	97%
Pinal	2,672	54,296	5%	106	5	5%	101	95%
Santa Cruz	6	9,880	0%	25	0	0%	25	100%
Yavapai	514	23,798	2%	79	1	1%	78	99%
Yuma	257	37,533	1%	65	0	0%	65	100%
Total	47,407	1,119,198	4%	2,050	123	6%	1,927	94%

Note: Schools under Arizona Department of Corrections, Arizona Department of Education, and Out of Arizona in the October 1 data were categorized as Others in this report.

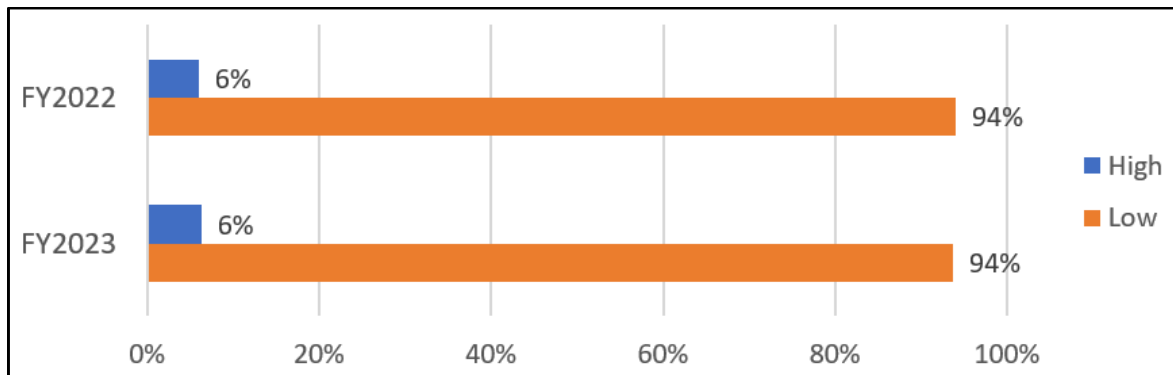
Table 4: County Level SY23 October 1 Native American Student Enrollment & High-Density Schools and Low-Density Schools

County	# of Native American Students	# of Total Enrollment	% Native American Students	# of Schools	# of High Density Schools	% of High-Density Schools	# of Low-Density Schools	% of Low-Density Schools
Apache	7,573	10,785	70%	37	26	70%	11	30%
Cochise	130	19,673	1%	73	0	0%	73	100%
Coconino	6,775	18,317	37%	55	32	58%	23	42%
Gila	2,408	8,071	30%	24	9	38%	15	63%
Graham	747	7,837	10%	33	5	15%	28	85%
Greenlee	100	2,058	5%	6	0	0%	6	100%
La Paz	569	2,487	23%	11	6	55%	5	45%
Maricopa	18,787	795,885	2%	1,305	7	1%	1,298	99%
Mohave	758	26,381	3%	70	6	9%	64	91%
Navajo	9,810	20,756	47%	77	40	52%	37	48%
Pima	4,948	169,702	3%	364	10	3%	354	97%
Pinal	3,099	61,975	5%	118	6	5%	112	95%
Santa Cruz	10	10,978	0%	26	0	0%	26	100%
Yavapai	558	26,160	2%	95	2	2%	93	98%
Yuma	318	40,408	1%	72	0	0%	72	100%
Total	56,590	1,221,473	5%	2,366	149	6%	2,217	94%

Note: Schools under Arizona Department of Corrections, Arizona Department of Education, and Out of Arizona in the October 1 data were categorized as Others in this report.

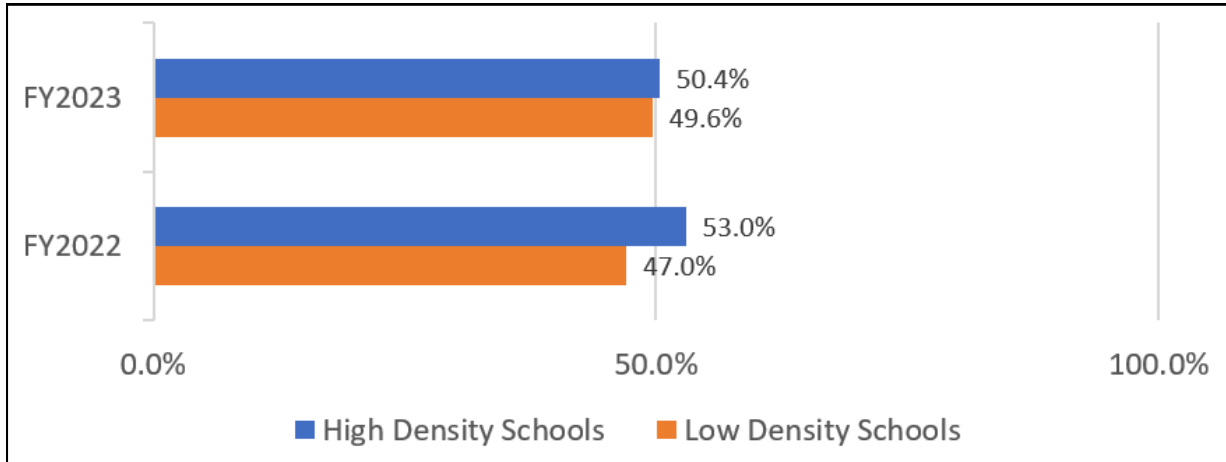
In FY22 and FY23, the percentage of high-density and low-density schools remained the same. In both years, 6% of Arizona schools were identified as high-density schools and 94% of Arizona schools were identified as low-density schools (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Percent of High-and Low-Density Schools in Arizona



Similarly, when we compare the total student population of Native American students in high-density and low-density schools in Arizona in FY22 and FY23, the pattern remains the same for both years. Around 50%-53% of Native American students were enrolled in high-density schools and 47%-49% of Native American students were enrolled in low-density schools (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percent of Native American students Enrolled in High-and Low-Density Schools in Arizona



Native American students at high-density schools are concentrated in counties in which tribal lands are located (see Figure 5 and Table 5). In contrast, most Native American students at low-density schools are enrolled in Maricopa and Pima counties (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: Geographical Information of High-Density Schools

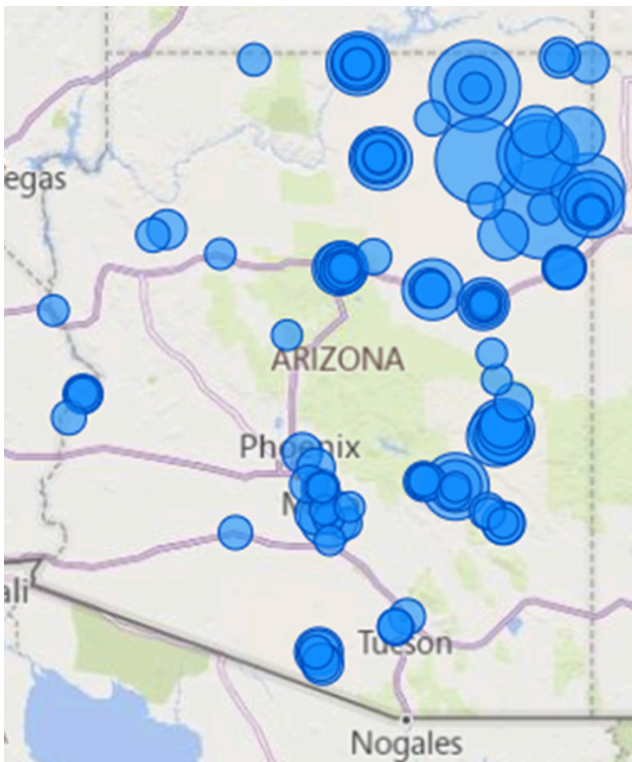
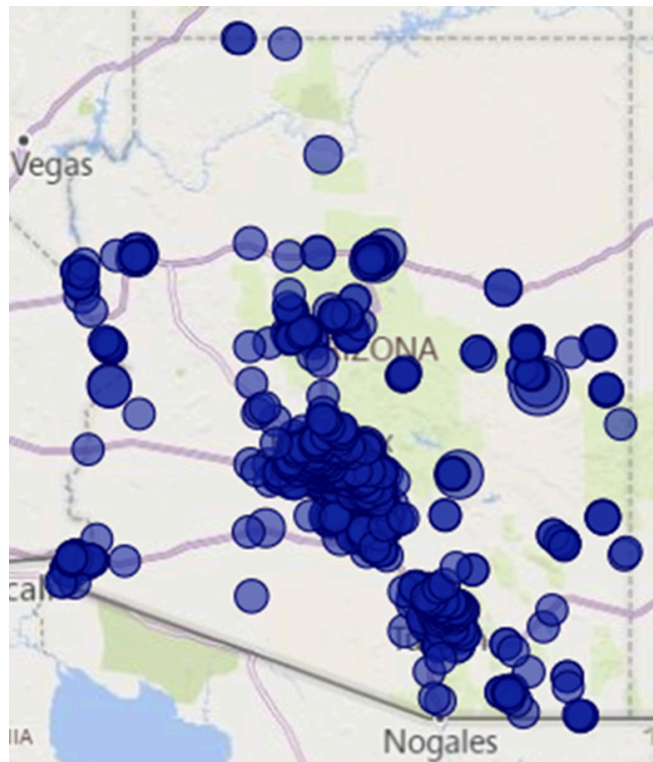


Figure 6: Geographical Information of Low-Density Schools



Note: The darker color represents more overlapping of schools in the same area. The bigger bubble represents the higher NA student counts in October 1 enrollment.

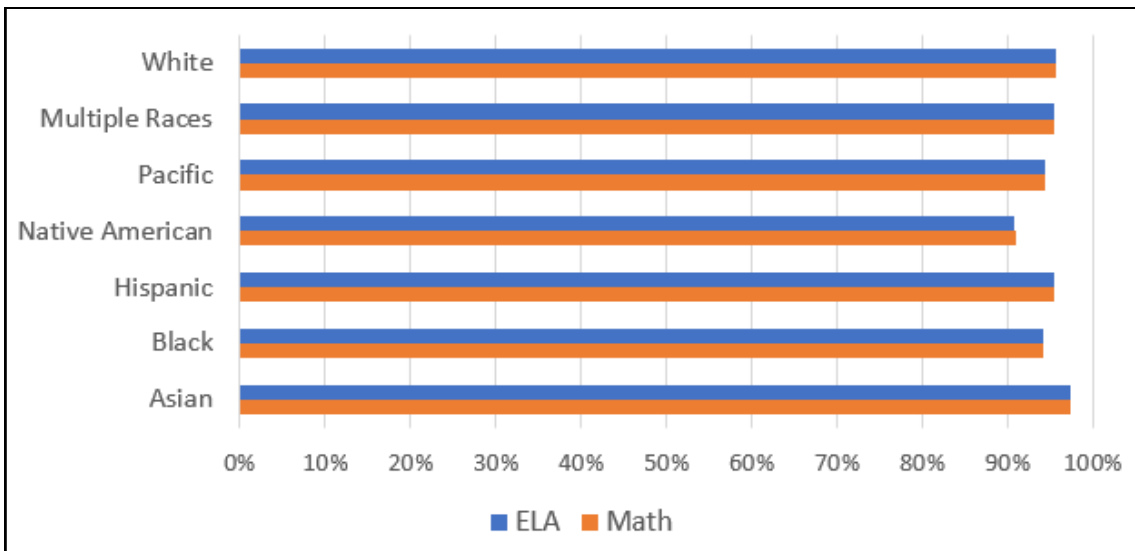
Table 5: Arizona Counties and Tribal Lands

County	Tribal Lands
Apache	Navajo Nation, Pueblo of Zuni
Cochise	None
Coconino	Havasupai Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe
Gila	San Carlos Apache Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribe, Tonto-Apache Tribe
Graham	San Carlos Apache Tribe
Greenlee	None
La Paz	Colorado River Indian Tribes
Maricopa	Tohono O’Odham Nation, Gila River Indian Community, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
Mohave	Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Hualapai Tribe, Fort Mohave Indian Tribe
Navajo	Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, White Mountain Apache Tribe
Pima	Tohono O’Odham Nation, Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Pinal	Tohono O’Odham Nation, Ak-Chin Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, San Carlos Apache Tribe
Santa Cruz	None
Yavapai	Yavapai-Prescott Indian Community, Yavapai Apache Nation
Yuma	Quechan Tribe, Cocopah Indian Tribe

Source: Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona <https://itcaonline.com/maps/>. Three counties (Apache, Coconino, and Navajo) are highlighted in orange to indicate that the majority of Native American students attending high-density schools are enrolled here.

Student Educational Achievement

In SY22, Arizona’s new assessments were introduced, the Arizona’s Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) and the Multi-State Alternative Assessment (MSAA), which replaced the AzMERIT and Arizona Science (AzSci) assessments. For high school, ACT was administered for Grade 11 (Cohort 2023). Participation rates significantly improved, rising from a post-pandemic low of below 85% to 94.7%. However, Native American participation remains the lowest among all ethnic groups at 90.7% in English Language Arts and 90.9% in Math.



Grades 3-12 student scores on AASA, MSAA, or ACT fall into one of four performance levels as shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: SY22 Assessment Performance Level List

Level 1	Minimally Proficient	Meets Expectations
Level 2	Partially Proficient	
Level 3	Proficient	
Level 4	Highly Proficient	

Note: The Arizona State Board of Education determined a 'passing' score to be at Performance Level 3 or Performance Level 4.

Valid test results from the SY22 administration of the AASA, MSAA, and ACT assessments were disaggregated by race/ethnicity for all students in grades 3-12. The percentage of students proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math by attaining a performance level of Proficient or Highly Proficient was computed for both high-density and low-density schools respectively.

English Language Arts

As demonstrated in Figures 7 and 8, the percentage of Native American students who attained passing scores in SY22 AASA, MSAA, and ACT ELA was lower at high-density schools (13%) than those at low-density schools (22%). In comparison to other ethnic groups, Native American students had one of the lowest percent proficient at both high-density and low-density schools.

Figure 7: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at High-Density Schools in ELA by Race/Ethnicity in SY22

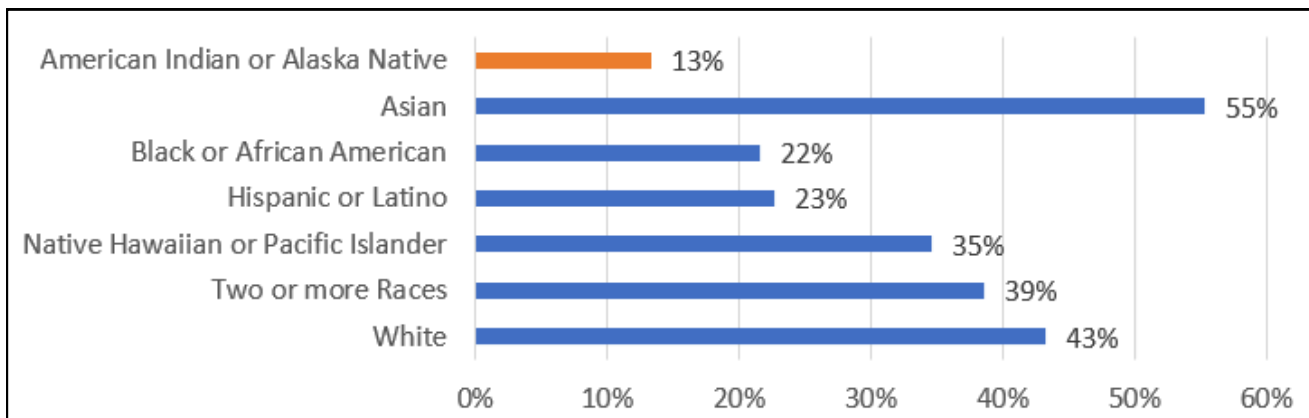
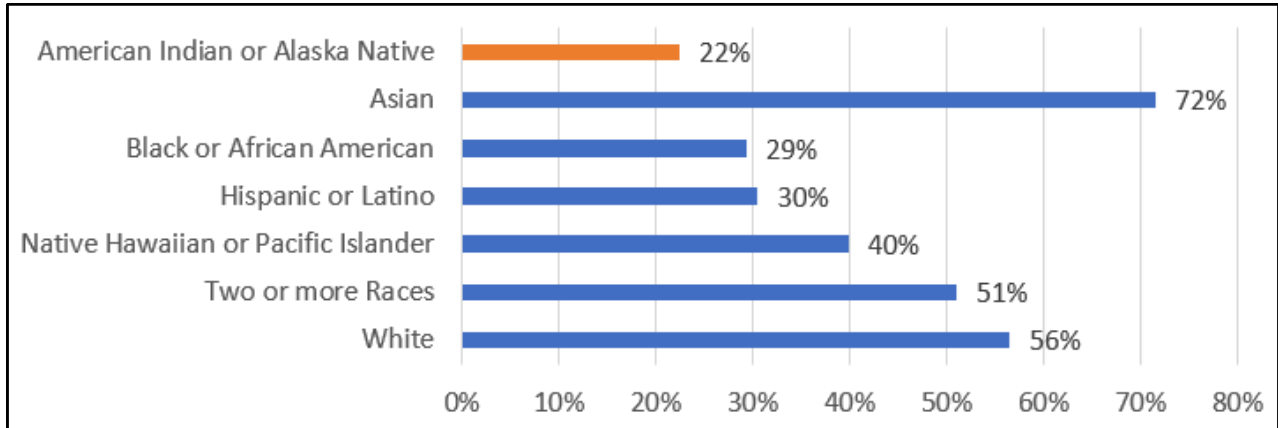


Figure 8: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at Low-Density Schools in ELA by Race/Ethnicity in SY22



Math

As shown in Figures 9 and 10, the percentage of Native American students who attained passing scores in SY22 AASA, MSAA, and ACT Math, was lower at high-density schools (10%) than those at low-density schools (17%). In comparison to other ethnic groups, Native American students had one of the lowest percent proficient at both high-density and low-density schools.

For both ELA and Math, the percent proficient for Native American students at high-density schools has been lower than those at low-density schools in Arizona. This pattern is similar to the findings of the National Indian Education Study (NIES) 2019. The performance results of NIES demonstrated that the Reading and Math average scores were lower for 4th and 8th grade Native American students at high-density schools than those at low-density schools in the past years.

Figure 9: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at High-Density Schools in Math by Race/Ethnicity in SY22

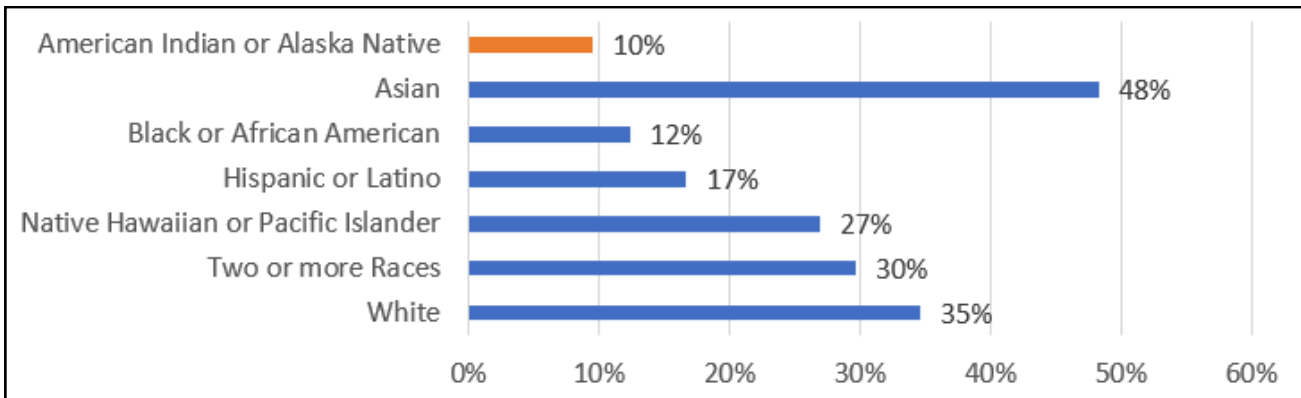
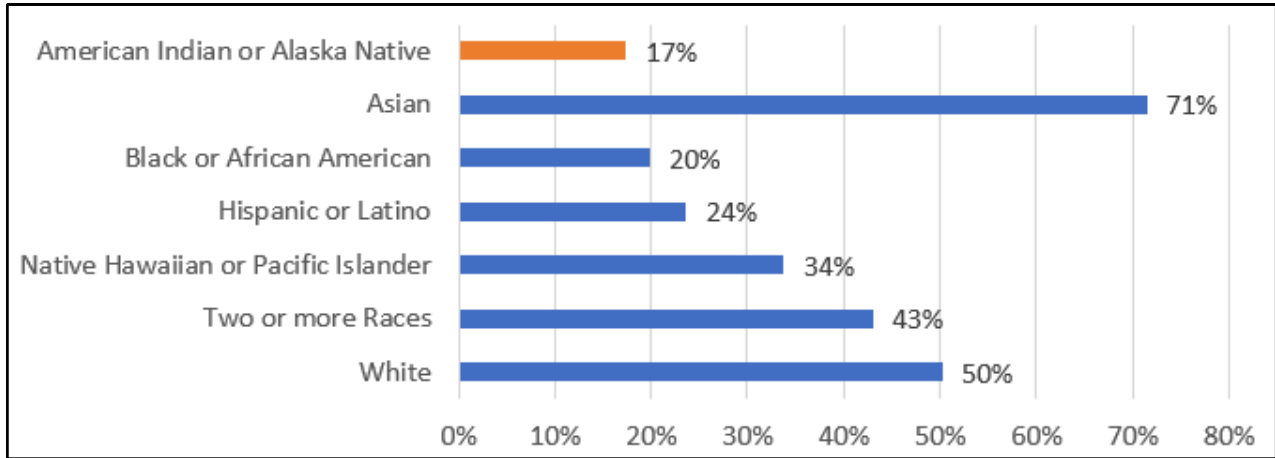


Figure 10: Percent Proficient of Grades 3-12 Students Enrolled at Low-Density Schools in Math by Race/Ethnicity in SY22



Attendance

Per Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. 15-244), the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) compiled information regarding Native American students’ attendance to include the following: Absenteeism, graduation rates, dropout rates, and dropout prevention initiatives. The sections below include detailed tables and figures for each of the categories listed.

Chronic Absenteeism Rates

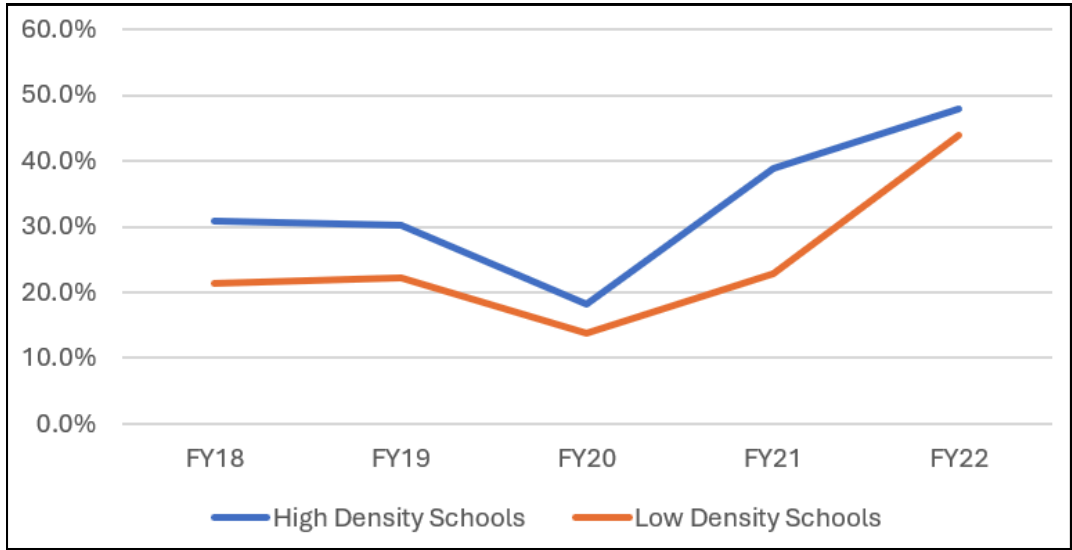
Definition of Chronic Absenteeism

A student is chronically absent if that student has absences (excused and unexcused) greater than 10% of a school’s calendar year (e.g., 18 days for a school meeting 5 days per week) - see the formula used to calculate to the right.

$$\frac{100 * (\text{The number of students who have greater than 10\% absences in each K-8 ethnic subgroup})}{(\text{The total number of students in each K-8 ethnic subgroup})} = \text{Chronic Absenteeism Rates}$$

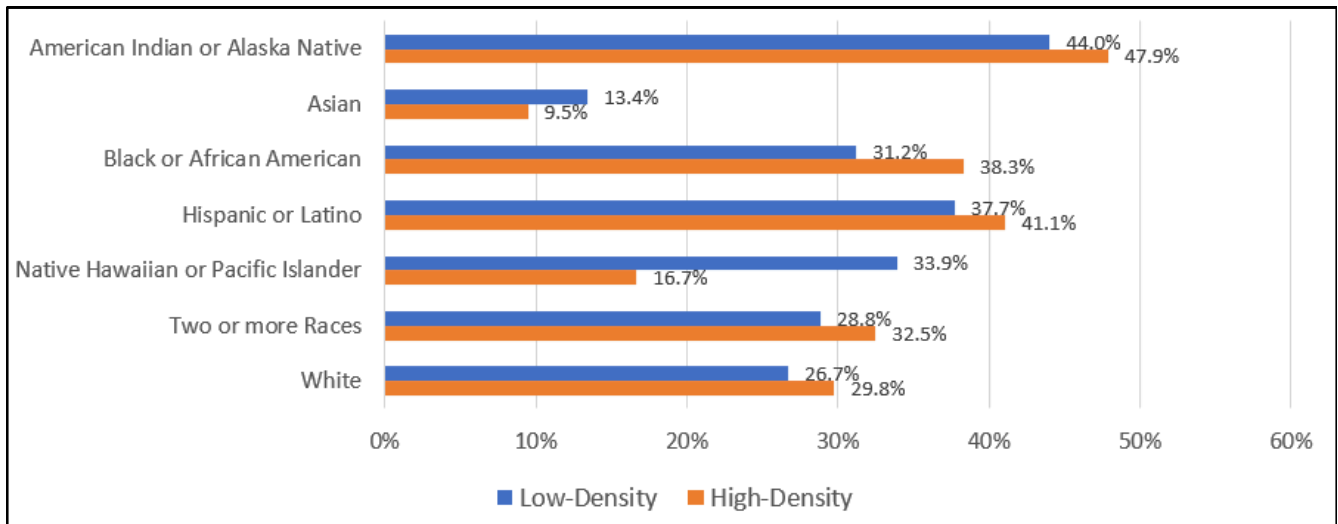
Please note: In this report, the Chronic Absenteeism rates calculation included K-8 students who were in the October 1 data file. The students who were not enrolled on October 1 were not included in the calculation. Using October 1 data is a change to the business rule used for the chronic absenteeism calculation in the Arizona 2022 Annual Indian Education Report. We have decided to use October 1 data as the baseline since this data is more consistent with other ADE reporting.

Figure 11: Chronic Absenteeism Rates of Grades K-8 Native American Students at High- and Low-Density Schools in FY18-22



The chronic absenteeism rates for grades K-8 Native American students at high-density schools was consistently higher than those at low-density schools from FY18 to FY22. When comparing the chronic absenteeism rates among ethnicities, the chronic absenteeism rates for Native American students were higher than other ethnic groups in both high-density and low-density schools in FY22 (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Chronic Absenteeism Rates of Grades K-8 Students at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity in FY22



The chronic absenteeism rate is a key factor in student success. In Arizona, 64% of high-density schools are in rural counties (i.e., Apache, Coconino and Navajo) where distance, weather and transportation challenges can hinder attendance. These rural barriers may contribute to higher absenteeism rates and lower academic performance among Native American students in high-density schools compared to those in low-density schools.

In FY20, due to the pandemic lockdown, students were attending classes remotely from home beginning March 2020. With transportation no longer an issue, attendance for Native American students increased in both high- and low-density schools, resulting in the chronic absenteeism rate decreasing in FY20. However, with the ongoing pandemic in FY21, students struggled with transportation and access to the internet as they experimented with in-person, remote, hybrid, and periodic quarantines, resulting in significantly higher chronic absenteeism rates for FY21 and FY22.

Graduation Rates

From the beginning of Grade 9, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort. Cohort 2021 four-year graduates graduated as of August 31, 2021. Any students

$$\frac{\text{Number of Graduates}}{\text{Number of Graduates} + \text{Number of Non-Graduates}} = \text{Graduation Rates}$$

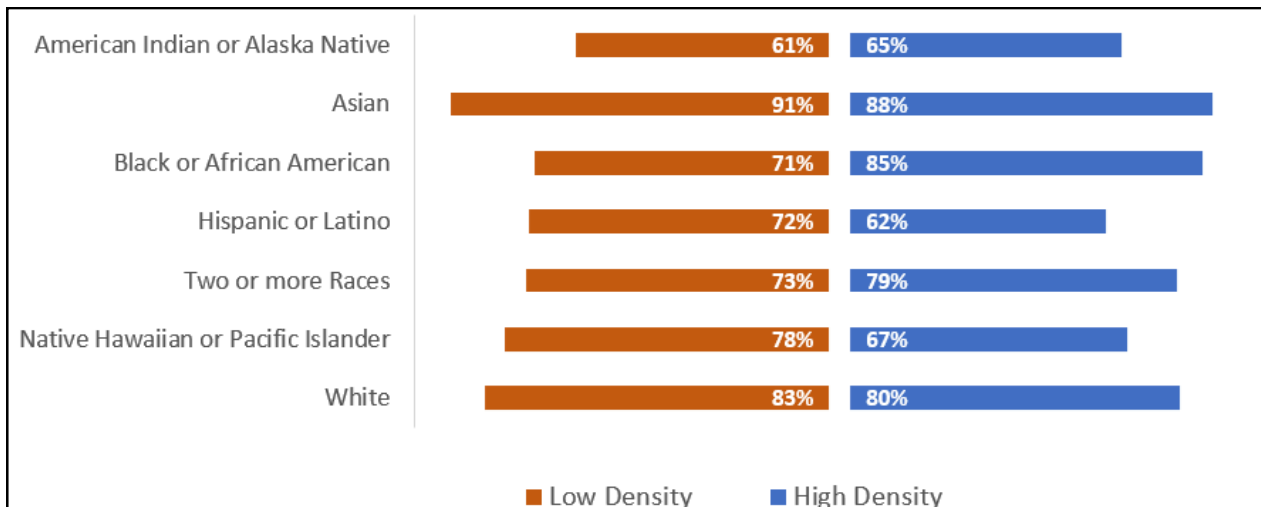
who remain in school after August 31, 2021 and graduate before June 30, 2022 would be considered a five-year graduate.

Please note: all graduation data are lagged by one year every year for Accountability purposes because four-year graduates may graduate after the fiscal year their cohort year ends. The detailed information for graduation rates can be found in the link below.

(<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=598a34233217e10ce06647ff>)

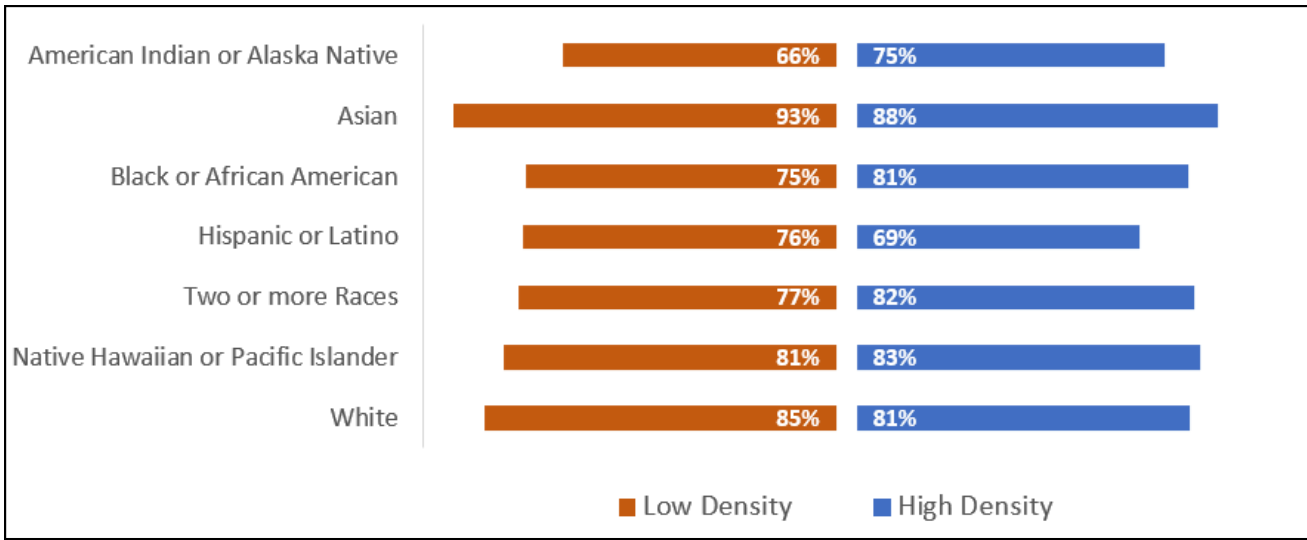
As shown in Figure 13, 65% of Native American students graduated from high-density schools in 4 years for Cohort 2022. However, only 61% of Native American students graduated from low-density schools in 4 years. The four-year graduation rate of NA students that attended high-density schools was 4% higher than their Native American peers at low-density schools.

Figure 13: Four-Year Graduation Rates for the Cohort Year 2022 at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity



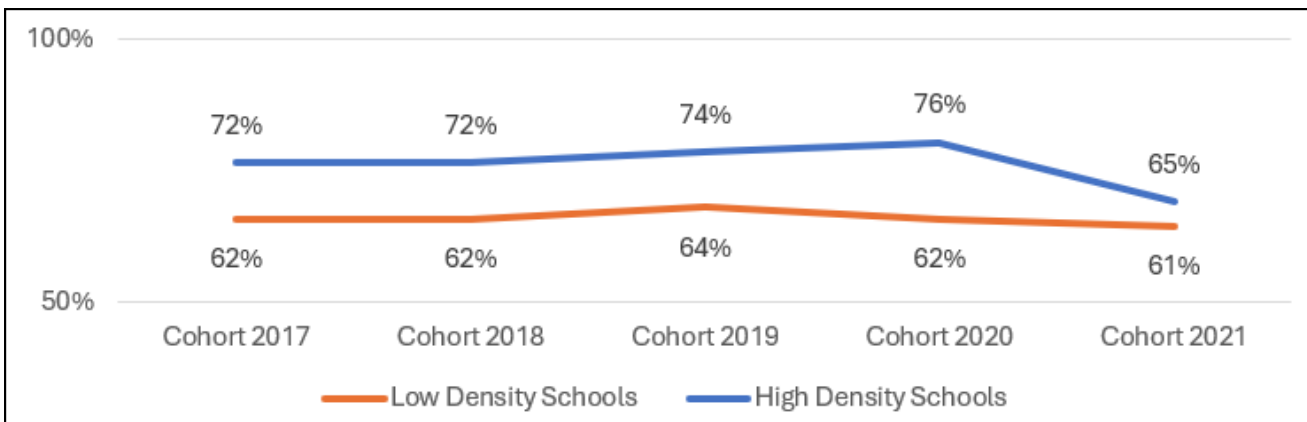
For the Cohort 2022 five-year graduation rate, 75% of Native American students graduated from high-density schools in 5 years. However, only 66% of Native American students graduated from low-density schools in 5 years. The five-year graduation rate of Native American students that attended high-density schools was 9% higher than their Native American peers at low-density schools (as shown in Figure 14).

Figure 14: Five-Year Graduation Rates for the Cohort Year 2022 at High- and Low-Density Schools by Race/Ethnicity



When comparing the trend data for the four-year graduation rate of Native American students at high-density and low-density schools, as demonstrated in Figure 15, Native American students at high-density schools constantly have a higher 4-year graduation rate than those at low-density schools in the Cohort Years 2017 through 2021.

Figure 15: Four-Year Graduation Rates of Native American Students at High- and Low-Density Schools for the Cohort Years 2017-2021



In Arizona, the State Board of Education sets up the statewide minimum requirements for graduating high school students, which can be found in Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-302, or at <https://azsbe.az.gov/resources/graduation-requirements>. However, schools may establish additional graduation credit requirements for their students on top of the statewide requirements. Further research on the high school’s specific graduation requirements will contribute to better understanding of why Native American students at high-density schools have consistently higher graduation rates than those at low-density schools from Cohort 2017 to Cohort 2021.

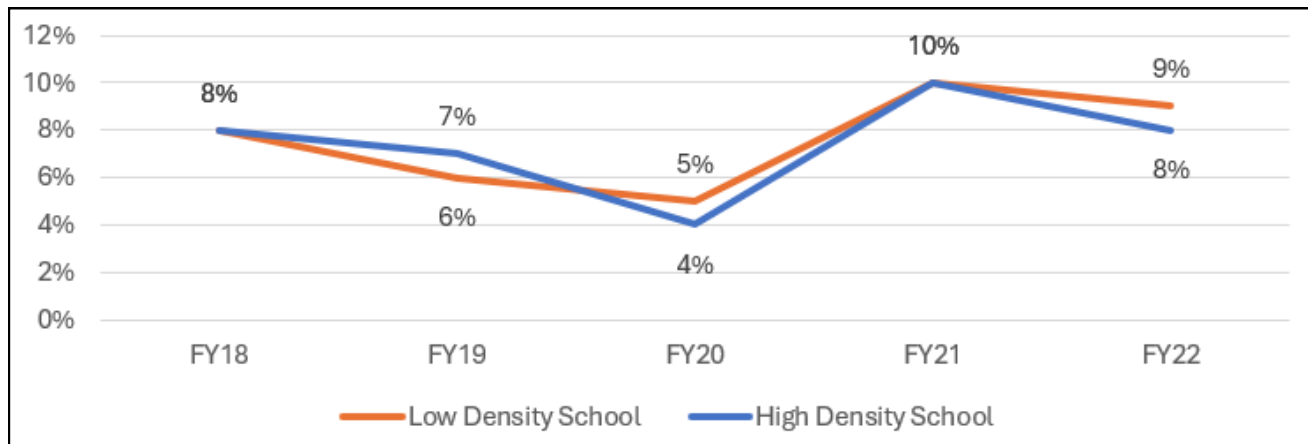
Dropout Rates

Dropouts are defined as students who are enrolled in school at any time during the school year but are not enrolled at the end of the school year and did not transfer, graduate, or were reported as deceased. Students withdrawn due to chronic illness are excluded, however, students grades 7 through 12 are included in the dropout rate calculation.⁶

$$\frac{\text{Number of Dropouts}}{\text{Number of Students Enrolled}} = \text{Dropout Rate}$$

When reviewing the trend data in Figure 16, it shows that attendance among grades 7-12 Native American students increased dramatically for Native American students in both low-density schools and high-density schools from FY20 to FY21, and slightly lowered in FY22.

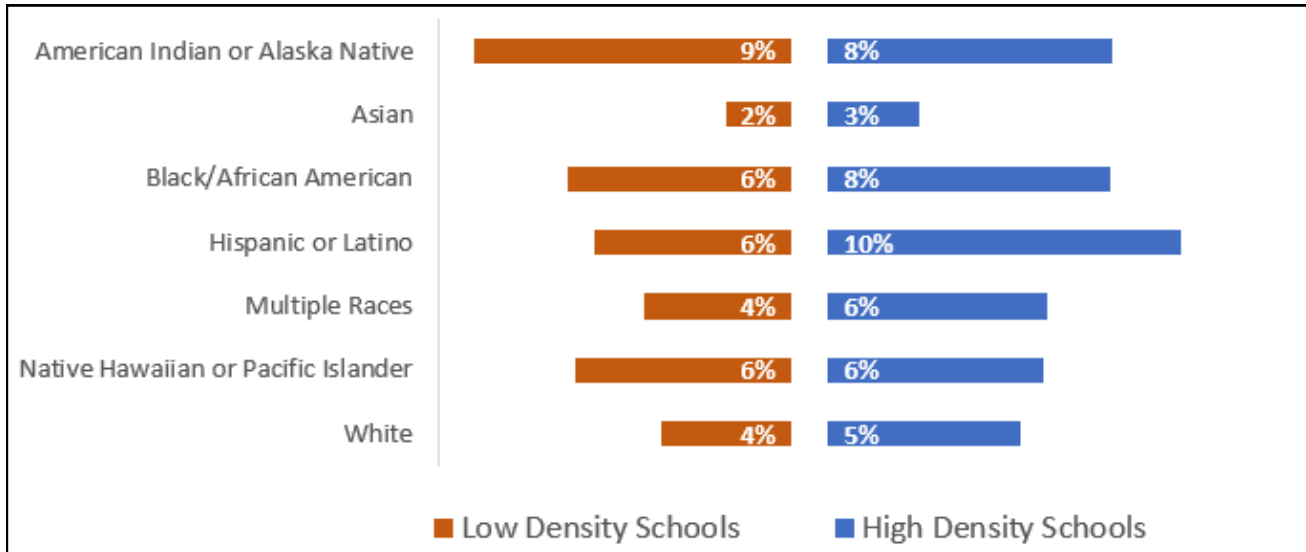
Figure 16: Dropout Rates of Grades 7-12 Native American Students at High- and Low-Density Schools in FY18-FY22



The Native American student dropout rate is the highest among all race/ethnic groups in low-density schools (see Figure 17), however, they did decrease from 11% in FY21.

⁶ Additional details about dropout rates available at: <https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2021/11/FY22%20Grad%20Drop%20and%20Persistence%20Rate%20Tech%20Manual.pdf>

Figure 17: Dropout Rates at High- and Low- Density Schools for Grades 7-12 by Race/Ethnicity in FY22



Dropout Prevention Initiatives

LEAs address dropout prevention through a wide variety of initiatives in order to decrease the dropout rates of Native American students. Johnson O’Malley is one program that provides support for dropout prevention. An examination of the 2022 Johnson O’Malley (JOM) grantee programs found that LEAs incorporated a broad range of strategies, activities, and practices to support dropout prevention tailored to Native American students. The focused areas were parent engagement, cultural competency, and targeted interventions. In addition, extracurricular activity fee payments and instructional supports and materials were offered. The statewide programs that address dropout prevention are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: A List of Statewide Programs That Address Dropout Prevention

Title I & Title II	Alternative School Programs	Dual Credit Programs
School Improvement	School Guidance Counseling	Online Education
Career and Technical Education	Athletic Programs	McKinney-Vento Homeless Ed
Title VI Indian Ed	Johnson-O’Malley Program	Education & Career Action Plans

School Safety

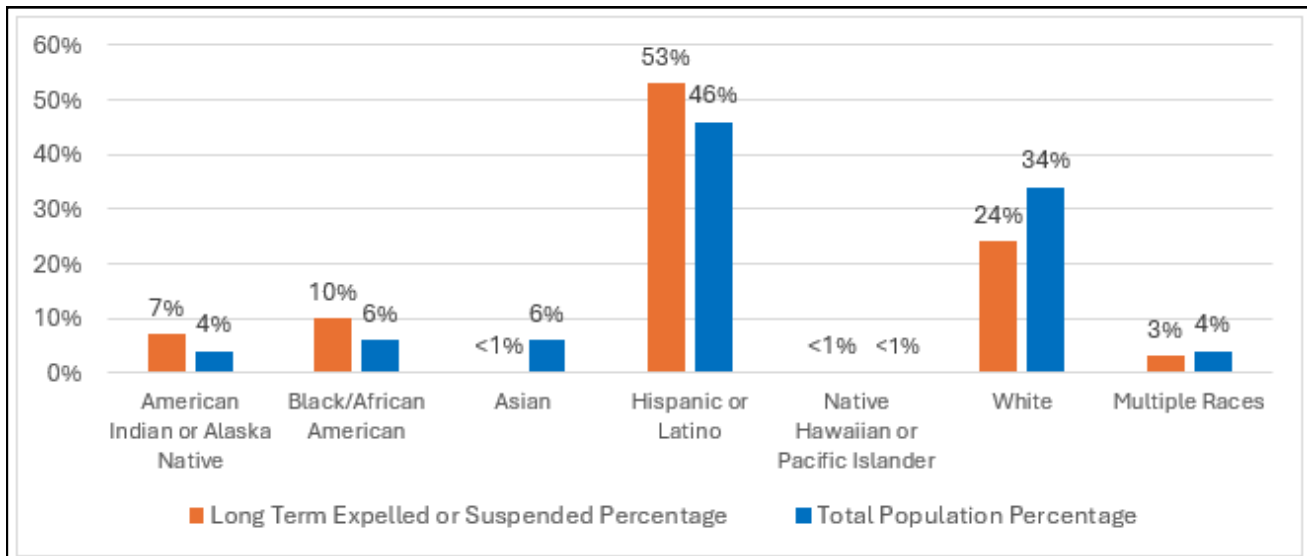
Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Percentage Analysis

In FY22, the total number of students who are expelled or suspended on a long-term basis before scheduled end of school year or during summer increased to 1,275. Of these, 88 were American Indian or Alaska Native students.

Expelled or Suspended Formula:	
$\frac{\text{Number of Long-Term Expelled or Suspended NA Student}}{\text{Number of Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Students in FY22 in AZ}} = \text{Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Percentage}$	

When comparing the long-term expelled or suspended percentage among ethnic groups with the total population, Native American students comprised 4% of the total population (see Figure 18). However, Native American students comprised 7% of the long-term expelled or suspended population in Arizona.

Figure 18: Long-Term Expelled or Suspended Percentage Among Ethnic Groups with Total Population Percentage (All Grade Levels)



Additional Funding for School Safety Programs

The School Safety Program is established within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to support, promote, and enhance safe and effective learning environments for all students by supporting the costs of placing school resource officers, juvenile probation officers, school counselors, and school social workers on school campuses, per Arizona Revised Statute § 15-154.

In FY22, the School Safety Program funded 464 positions in schools across Arizona:

- School Counselors/Social Workers: 325
- School Resource Officers/Juvenile Probation Officers: 139
- School Safety Officers: NA
- Total: 464

Please visit <https://www.azed.gov/ssp/school-safety-program-grantees> for more information.

National Indian Education Study (NIES) Survey Results

The National Indian Education Study (NIES) is designed to describe the condition of education for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in the United States (<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nies/>). The NIES survey is conducted every two to four years (2009, 2011, 2015, and 2019). Due to the COVID pandemic, it was not conducted in 2021. In 2019, the NIES was conducted in conjunction with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) between January and March, 2019. The NIES has two parts: the NAEP reading and mathematics assessments in grades 4 and 8, and the NIES survey questions related to students' traditions, languages, and culture. Approximately 7,000 AI/AN fourth-graders and 6,300 AI/AN eighth-graders participated in the student survey. The study also surveyed parents and school principals. The report provides performance results in reading and mathematics for AI/AN fourth- and eighth-graders, a nationally representative sample (including public, private, Bureau of Indian Education, and Department of Defense schools). Due to high population of AI/AN students, Arizona state level results are included in the NIES.

Composite variables of cultural knowledge, interest in reading about cultures, engagement at school, and perceptions about effort in school were summarized in the report. Language use and exposure was one of areas of interest. One of the survey questions asked, "How often do you attend classes in school that are taught in an AI/AN language?" The data revealed students in high-density and BIE schools had significantly more exposure to AI/AN language classes than low-density schools. Visit the NIES study to view a more detailed analysis of the findings.⁷

⁷ The detailed information can found on pages 36, <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/studies/pdf/2021018.pdf>

National PTA (Parent-Teacher Association)

The National PTA (<https://www.pta.org>) has a myriad of resources for advocacy and family engagement. Their Center for Family Engagement provides the latest research and tools, including engagement in a virtual world.

Tribal Gaming Contributions to Public School Education

In compliance with Proposition 301, the Office of the Auditor General conducts biennial review reports on all local educational agencies (LEAs) which include public school districts and charter school holders (<https://www.azauditor.gov/reports>). Native American tribes in Arizona contribute to the state from gaming revenue pursuant to A.R.S. §5-601.02(H)(3)(a)(i) and 5-601.02(H)(3)(b)(i), and the portion that is provided to education is known as the Instructional Improvement Fund (IIF). Pursuant to A.R.S §15-979, the ADE shall pay the monies in the IIF to school districts and charter holders. Reported in Table 8 are the total IIF payments to each county including the breakdown of November 2021 and May 2022 payments.

Table 8: FY22 Instructional Improvement Fund Payment

County	Total Payment	November 2021 Payment	May 2022 Payment
Apache	\$445,926.87	\$210,102.42	\$235,824.45
Cochise	\$793,799.47	\$375,086.87	\$418,712.60
Coconino	\$753,993.71	\$356,275.50	\$397,718.21
Gila	\$315,515.58	\$148,959.72	\$166,555.86
Graham	\$295,692.50	\$139,592.37	\$156,100.13
Greenlee	\$72,186.44	\$34,092.05	\$38,094.39
La Paz	\$98,358.78	\$46,452.67	\$51,906.11
Maricopa	\$32,227,440.28	\$15,197,641.13	\$17,029,799.15
Mohave	\$978,052.13	\$461,089.05	\$516,963.08
Navajo	\$753,073.67	\$355,635.21	\$397,438.46
Pima	\$6,555,952.39	\$3,086,039.35	\$3,469,913.04
Pinal	\$2,070,410.07	\$978,990.28	\$1,091,419.79
Santa Cruz	\$436,873.62	\$206,440.86	\$230,432.76
Yavapai	\$1,018,602.17	\$481,964.36	\$536,637.81
Yuma	\$1,613,689.38	\$762,205.15	\$851,484.23
Total	\$48,429,567.06	\$22,840,566.99	\$25,589,000.07

Source: County payment based on FY2022 ADE School Finance Reports (<https://www.azed.gov/finance/countyappor>)

LEAs may expend these funds as follows:

1. Utilize up to fifty percent for teacher compensation increases and class size reduction
2. Monies that are not utilized as provided above shall be utilized for maintenance and operation purposes (i.e., dropout prevention programs and/or instructional improvement programs, including programs to develop minimum reading skills for students by the end of third grade).

*None of these funds are specifically targeted for Indian Education.

Office of Indian Education

The Office of Indian Education (OIE) administers federal and state programs to meet the educational and cultural needs of Native American students. Outreach is provided to all of Arizona’s LEAs on reservations and urban areas with high populations of Native American students. Technical assistance, conferences, and professional learning opportunities are also provided.

Prior to efforts made by the Arizona Department of Education and Superintendent Kathy Hoffman in early 2020, all OIE statutory requirements were the sole responsibility of one individual. It was in 2020 that ADE and Superintendent Hoffman received a request regarding a Policy Statement on Indian Education, originally adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education in 1985, and last revised and adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education on August 26, 2002. The request and recommendation were that the statement be brought forth as a renewed commitment to strengthening and furthering Indigenous education in Arizona.

On October 25, 2021, Superintendent Hoffman presented to the Arizona State Board of Education, requesting their renewed commitment to Indigenous education through the Policy Statement on Indian Education. These efforts resulted in a renewal of commitment to Indigenous Education by the Arizona State Board of Education. The commitment included a renewed policy statement that was directly aligned to ADE which would ensure there was actionable progress taking shape through the Office of Indian Education - use the chart below to identify the 8 action steps and read how OIE has moved each step forward.

Step 1	Elevated position of OIE Director to Deputy Associate Superintendent.
OIE Action Step	In October 2019, the Superintendent of Public Instruction elevated OIE leadership from a Director to a Deputy Associate Superintendent (DAS). The DAS serves as the liaison between Arizona’s twenty-two tribes and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

Step 2	Established the Superintendent’s Indian Education Advisory Council with quarterly meetings.
OIE Action Step	An updated advisory council was formed for the 2021-2022 SY. The IEAC discusses issues important to the Native American community and provided feedback/advice to Superintendent Hoffman. The IEAC is comprised of students, Arizona tribal council representatives, educators, community leaders, parents, and Indian Education experts.
Step 3	Leveraged federal recovery dollars to expand the OIE team from one to 5 full-time employees.
OIE Action Step	In May 2020, the OIE DAS welcomed two new team members (Tribal Policy Specialist and Tribal Grants Specialist). In May 2021, OIE grew by adding two more team members (Program Coordinator and Director of Strategic Partnerships). OIE brought on one last team member, a Professional Learning Specialist in November 2021.
Step 4	Developed program collaboration and training to build culturally responsive processes that support Indigenous students and families.
OIE Action Step	With the on-boarding of the Professional Learning Specialist, OIE offered a variety of opportunities such as webinars and recordings, online courses, and in-person events to educators across the state. Additionally, OIE partnered with five internal offices and eight external organizations to build the capacity of Arizona educators.
Step 5	Allocated federal recovery dollars to support Arizona’s Indigenous educator pathways and trainings offered through our three state universities
OIE Action Step	In 2021, Superintendent Hoffman granted \$1 million dollars to the three-state university to assist in the growth or development of Indigenous educators across the state. The funding produced three unique programs: <u>Indigenous Teacher Education Project (ITEP)</u> at the University of Arizona, <u>Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Arizona Schools (PITAS)</u> at Northern Arizona University, and <u>Preparing Educators for Arizona’s Indian Communities (PEAIC)</u> at Arizona State University.
Step 6	Engaged in Discovery Education partnership to provide culturally relevant curricular resources.
OIE Action Step	In 2022, OIE offered feedback to Discovery Education (DE) to assist in the creation of the Native Stories of the Southwest Channel. DE produced a creative and engaging learning experience through videos, text, interviews, maps, and interactive graphic organizers - read more about the channel here .

Step 7	Developed pilot programs to address the digital divide and increasing leadership capacity.
OIE Action Step	In the summer of 2021, OIE and the Policy and Government Relations team created a Community of Practice (COP) entitled the Comprehensive Systems of Support (CSS) group which included seven rural/remote schools. The overall purpose of the COP was to supporting distance/remote learning and the digital divide, increasing learning opportunity, SEL, Special Education Compensatory Services and Related Services.
Step 8	Providing opportunities for Indigenous stakeholder information and resource sharing.
OIE Action Step	In collaboration with the office of Policy and Government Relations, the Office of Indian Education created a monthly gathering aimed at providing rich information and highlights from ADE programs, state legislative updates, and other federal and state policy information that support efforts across education. This virtual convenings entitled Policy & Program Updates for Indigenous Stakeholders piloted in July 2021.

In short, the successful advocacy from Superintendent Hoffman for state funding for the Office of Indian Education has truly mobilized and positively influenced Indigenous students across the state. The renewed commitment from the Arizona State Board of Education as well as the state funding was the first time the Office of Indian Education received dedicated funding since its inception.

Office of Indian Education Initiatives

In addition to the opportunities, resources and overall expansion noted above, OIE supported numerous programs, events, and trainings. OIE also administered funding for various grants as well as attended a variety of conferences to build the capacity of Indigenous serving educators. Use the table below to see a full list of OIE initiatives.

Table 9: 2021-2022 OIE Initiatives

Support Type	Specific Initiatives
Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnson O'Malley (JOM) • Native American Code Writer's Project (NACWP) • Tribal College Dual Enrollment
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Systems of Support (CSS) • Policy & Program Updates for Indigenous Stakeholders • Indian Education Advisory Council
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADE-OIE Program Area Collaboration • Johnson O'Malley Quarterly Forum • Integrating Indigenous Perspectives in Social Studies Summer Virtual Series • Reclaiming the Narrative: Teaching about Native American Boarding Schools Virtual Series
Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Indian/Indigenous Teacher Education Conference (AIITEC) • National College Attainment Network (NCAN) • National Indian Education Association (NIEA) • National Johnson O'Malley Association (NJOMA) • Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS) HOPE • ESSA Conference • Teacher's Institute and Leading Change • Native American Grant School Association (NAGSA) • Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL)

Community Partnerships

The Office of Indian Education has taken steps toward cultivating an understanding of shared responsibility of Indigenous students across Arizona. Through intentional collaboration with both internal and external organizations, OIE has cultivated and maintained a handful of partnerships to drive positive change for Native American students.

Table 10: OIE Community Partners

Partner Type	Respective Entity
Internal (ADE affiliate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts, Secondary <i>Division of Academic Standards</i> Social Studies and Native & World Languages <i>Division of Academic Standards</i> Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion <i>Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion</i> Office of English Language Acquisition Services <i>Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion</i> Homeless Education Program <i>Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion</i> Division of Policy and Government Relations
External (Non-ADE affiliate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arizona State University Next Education Workforce Heard Museum Arizona Humanities Phoenix Indian School Visitor Center WestEd Arizona Council on Economic Education Indigenous Teacher Education Project (ITEP) at the University of Arizona Institute for Native-serving Educators (INE) at Northern Arizona University Labriola National American Indian Data Center at Arizona State University

OIE Programs

Tribal College Dual Enrollment Program

Diné College, Navajo Technical University, and Tohono O’odham Community College offer Tribal College Dual Enrollment Programs to Arizona high school students pursuant to A.R.S. §15-244.01 Tribal Dual Enrollment Program Fund. Reimbursements to community colleges are based on eligible students receiving a grade of “C” or better in a 100-level or higher course. Additional funding will be requested for future years.

Table 11: A Summary of Approved Reimbursements - Tribal College Dual Enrollment Program Fund

Fiscal Years 2016 through 2022		
Tribal College	# of Students	Reimbursement
Dine College	500	\$184,805
Navajo Technical University	1682	\$839,574
Tohono O’odham Community College*	400	\$67,696
Totals	2,582	\$1,092,075

Note: Per ARS 15-244.01, funds are 15% of unclaimed lottery funds, capped at \$250K per year

* Tohono O’odham Community College waived tuition fees for Native American students

Native American Language Teacher Certification–Preservation of Native American Languages

Of the 115 Indigenous languages spoken in the U.S. today, 34 are in danger and 79 will go extinct within a generation.⁸ To become certified to teach a Native language in Arizona, the teacher must take and pass an assessment developed by the tribe, then provide an official letter from the tribe to ADE’s Certification Unit. Although many Native Americans want to teach their language, they may find that their tribe does not have an assessment to take. In addition, some languages are not written, which puts teachers at a disadvantage, and the number of people fluent in them has diminished significantly. As a result, the number of Native languages being taught and teachers becoming certified to teach in Arizona has slowed down significantly. Per the Educator Certification system, 366 certified teachers were authorized to teach a Native language in Arizona (see Table 12).

Table 12: Number of Language Certified Teachers in AZ for Native American Languages

Language	Certified Count
Akimel O’odham	15
Apache	49
Cheyenne	1
Hopi	10
Hualapai	2
Navajo	276
Pima	1
Tohono O’odham	9
Yaqui	2
Yavapai	1
Total	366

OIE Events

While the Office of Indian Education made several crucial steps forward, the continuous movement of the office served as a barrier to host large scale events such as a stakeholder summit. From June 2021 through July 2022, OIE moved through 3 divisions and received direction from 4 different Associate Superintendents. Despite the shifts in leadership, movement within divisions and transitioning out of the COVID-19 pandemic, OIE began plans for one of the first in-person professional learning opportunities after the pandemic - the *Indigenous Text Project (ITP)*.

⁸ According to High Country News as retrieved at <https://www.hcn.org/issues/51.21-22/indigenous-affairs-the-u-s-has-spent-more-money-erasing-native-languages-than-saving-them>

OIE Website

The Office of Indian Education strives to meet the educational and cultural needs of Native American students across Arizona. Through consistent communication, sharing of resources, and highlighting beneficial opportunities, OIE can serve the greater Indigenous community to the best of our ability. OIE continues to provide professional development and on-site resources to our constituents, which is listed on our website. To browse these student, parent, and educator resources, visit <http://www.azed.gov/oie/> and feel free to contact us with feedback (IndianEducation@azed.gov). As OIE continues to offer virtual engagement and learning opportunities, select recorded webinars and presentations will be archived on corresponding web pages.

Conclusion

The data in this report demonstrated that in SY22, the percent proficient of Native American students at high-density schools were lower than those at low-density schools. Also, when comparing the chronic absenteeism rates for Native American students at high-density and low-density schools, Native American students at high-density schools tended to have higher chronic absenteeism rates than those at low-density schools. The Chronic absenteeism has been considered an important indicator that is closely related to students' academic success. In Arizona, 64% of Arizona high-density schools are in rural counties (i.e., Apache, Coconino and Navajo) where transportation time and weather conditions in some seasons could be hurdles for Native American students. Encouraging Native American students at high-density schools to attend schools every day may greatly contribute to the improvement of their academic performance.

The four-year graduation rates of Native American students at high-density schools are continuously higher than those at low-density schools in the past three years. Since each school has their own graduation requirements in addition to the minimum requirements set up by the State Board of Education further research on the graduation requirements between high-density and low-density schools may shed light on this result.

Dropout rates in SY22 increased for Native American students in both high- and low- density schools due to the impact of COVID-19. The long-term expelled or suspended rate is 8% for Native American students which is higher than the percentage (4%) of Native American students in the total population.

OIE continually strives to reduce barriers impacting academic progress for Native American students. The strategic plan will assist in in establishing direction for the restructured office by assessing where we have been and where we need to go. Using an Indigenous approach to gather stakeholder input will help us build a community that can respond to opportunities as well as challenges. The plan will also assist with resource allocation decisions and priority alignment. We look forward to continuous collaborations with our existing partners and building new kinships with others as we collectively work towards supporting Arizona's Indigenous students, their families, their educators and Tribal Nations.

References

Arizona Auditor General. Retrieved from <https://www.azauditor.gov/reports>

Arizona Department of Education Finance Reports. Retrieved from <https://www.azed.gov/finance/countyappor>

Arizona Department of Education Oct 1 enrollment data
<https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>

High Country News. Retrieved from
<https://www.hcn.org/issues/51.21-22/indigenous-affairs-the-u-s-has-spent-more-money-erasing-native-languages-than-saving-them>

Graduation Rate/Dropout Rates Technical Manual. Retrieved from
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=598a34233217e10ce06647ff>

Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona. Retrieved from
<https://itcaonline.com/maps/>

The Office of the Indian Education. Retrieved from
<https://www.azed.gov/oie/>

National Indian Education Study (2019). Retrieved from
<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/studies/pdf/2021018.pdf>

National PTA
<https://www.pta.org>

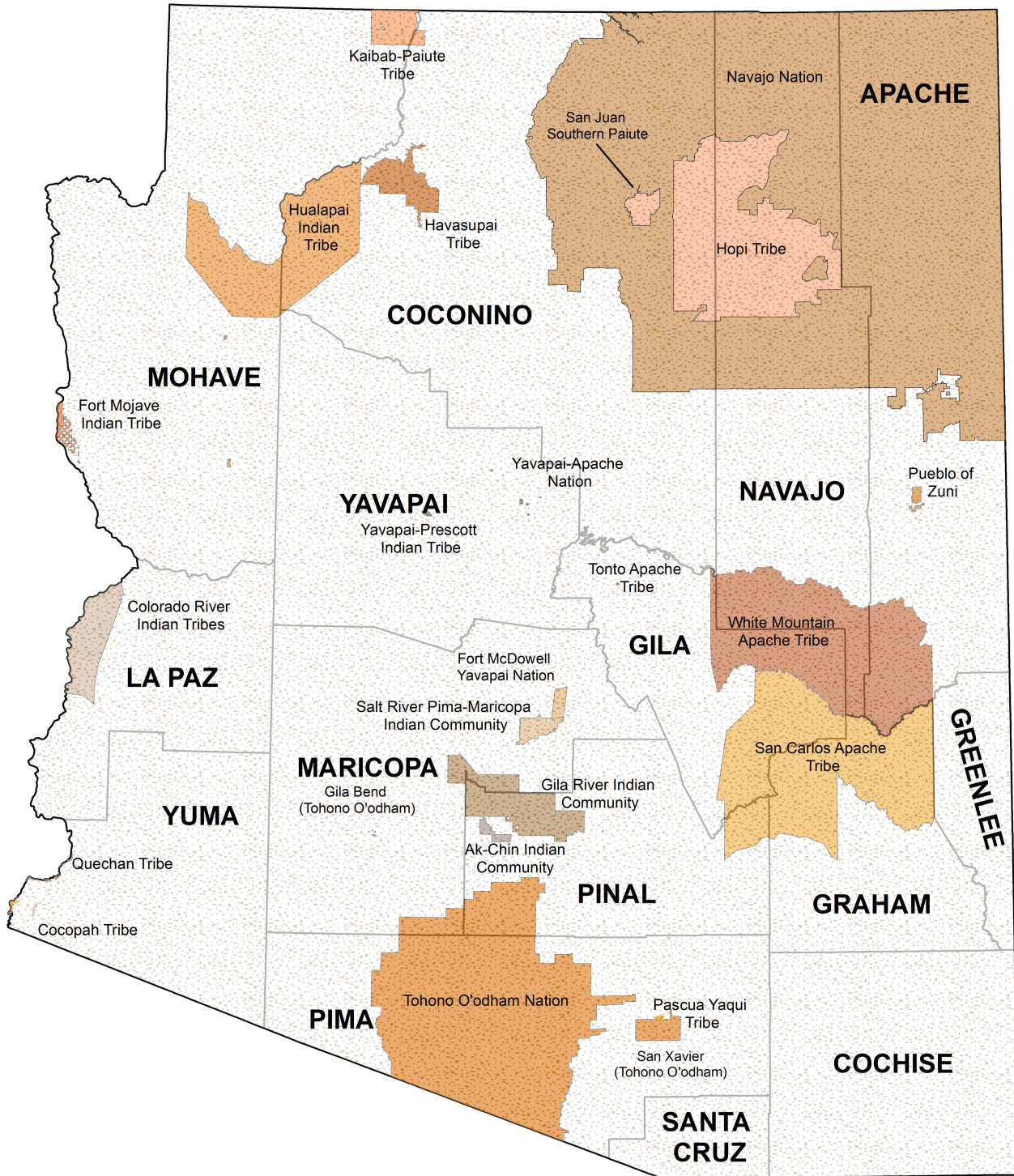
School Safety Program Funding Information. Retrieved from
<https://www.azed.gov/shs/ssp/>

State Board of Education- Graduation Requirement. Retrieved from
<https://azsbe.az.gov/resources/graduation-requirements>

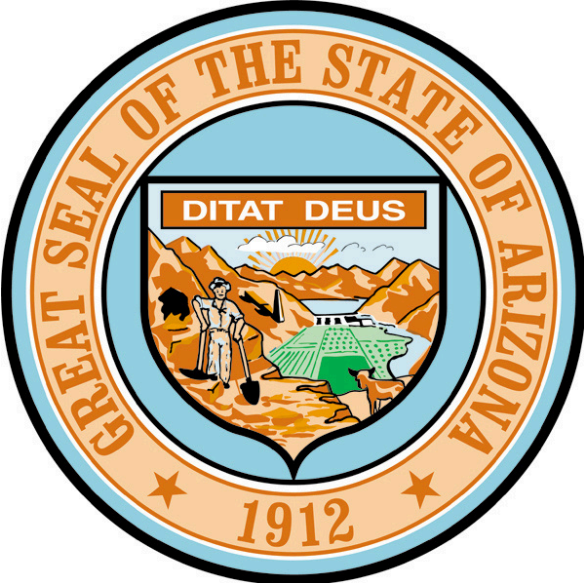
Appendix

Appendix A: Arizona Tribal Lands Map

The map below represents the land areas of Native American tribes by county in Arizona.



Source: Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (<https://itcaonline.com/maps/>)



The Arizona Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or in its hiring and employment practices. For questions or concerns regarding this statement, please contact Administrative Services at 602-542-3186.

