



Arizona Department of Education

**Native American Dropout Prevention Workgroup Meeting (NADPI)**

August 19, 2008

2005 North Central Avenue, 7th Floor Conference Room (700)

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Introduction of Current and New Participants** - Leon Oosahwe

In attendance: Maxine Daly, Bonnie Talakte, Leon Oosahwe, Bob Coccagna, Lenny Dempsey, Fred Ferreira, Eileen Hill, Fred Hubbard, Claire Brown, Laurie Larson

Membership Topics of Concern: Lack of Native American superintendents, perhaps new superintendents working on reservations, when they admit that they are not there for the long-haul would mentor from day one prospective Native superintendents so that when the time comes, they would be ready for the job. Make the knowledge of loan forgiveness programs more widespread. Many do not know that there are programs that if one teaches at school with many at-risk students, your school loans may be forgiven. The JOM Conference is being held November 9-11, 2008 at the Marriott Southern Hills Hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma, focusing on children's issues. Eileen Hill and Tara Frank will be attending.

**Year-3 Workgroup Plans** – Bonnie Talakte

- Capacity Building and Sustainability: The first part to go over is the definitions, and for the past two years the NADPI Grant has been doing exactly that.

**Capacity Building:** Capacity building is the development of an organization's core skills and capabilities, such as leadership, management, finance and fundraising, programs and evaluation in order to build the organization's effectiveness and sustainability. It is the process of assisting an individual or group to identify and address issues and gain the insights, knowledge and experience needed to solve problems and implement change. Capacity building is facilitated through the provision of technical support activities, including coaching, training, specific technical assistance and resource networking.

It is also the mobilization of individual and organizational assets from the community and combining those assets with others to achieve community building goals.

**Sustainability:** The likelihood of a strategy to continue over a period of time, especially after specific funding ends. It is also the ability to continue any given activity into the future within the likely existing resources of an organization, as part of its ongoing budgetary and management processes.

**Meetings:** Quarterly meetings will continue throughout 2008 – 2009. Members are expected to attend the 2009 Native American Dropout Prevention Conference.

Funding for the 3-year NADPI grant project ends 4/30/2009. In February 2009, the NADPI office will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Education for a "no cost extension" for a fourth year from May 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010 to complete unfinished administrative and performance objectives and activities. Both sub-grantee schools will complete any unfinished grant objectives or activities in the 4<sup>th</sup> year, operating on unspent funds. As part of capacity building and sustainability, it is highly recommended that beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the NADPI Workgroup continue as an organized and viable statewide Native American Dropout Prevention Organization.

**How will the NADPI Workgroup sustain itself after the grant funding ends?**



**Fred Ferreira:** Keeping the programs /momentum going after the funding ends is always a problem. Hard work is necessary to sustain them, perhaps future funding could occur from the school districts or the Tribal Councils.

**Maxine Daly:** Have the school districts and Tribal Councils ever merged funding for the same project? Have working relationships been established?

**Eileen Hill:** Yes, especially with Tribal Education Department funding.

**Fred Hubbard:** Speak to Sally Reel, the Program Director for A.H.E.C. (Arizona Area Health Education Centers) [www.azahec.org](http://www.azahec.org) , [sreel@nursing.arizona.edu](mailto:sreel@nursing.arizona.edu) (520)626-6767. Their purpose is to provide pathways to careers in health fields and their issues match what the NADPI grant is also trying to accomplish. Lots of money may be available there to sustain the grant. On 8/25 they are meeting with Ken Poocha talk about the possibility of starting a Native American A.H.E.C., tribes will have to be onboard for this idea to work. Funding cycles would be in-line to sustain NADPI. Gila River Indian Community Judicial Branch is an example, using state funding, school districts and health care organizations contributing. They have a Diversion Programs Division that deals with domestic violence, Teen Courts, Drug Courts, community service projects & cognitive life skills classes. They do community outreach presentations on probation, meth, gangs and more. For more information: (520)562-9865, 721 E. Seed Farm Rd., Sacaton, AZ, 85247. Usually at their meetings thirty or more community members always attend. Getting to the Tribal Health Directors is key to reaching the Tribal Councils.

**Bonnie Talakte:** At the next NADPI Workgroup meeting, I'll make sure to invite any tribes that have similar programs to NADPI.

**Maxine Daly:** Those tribes could submit proposals for the April 2009 Conference, also April is the last month of the NADPI Grant. Build a coalition of supporters. How much money, minimally would be needed to sustain the major non-funded grant activities?

**Bonnie Talakte:** To fund the meetings and materials \$7000 yearly would suffice. Tribes could host meetings, perhaps headed up by Education Directors.

**Claire Brown:** What launching mechanism would be used to announce the next phase of NADPI? An event or perhaps at session at the April 2009 Conference?

**Fred Ferreira:** As the Health Director for the San Carlos Tribe, we could certainly host the event and subsequent meetings, we could certainly provide food, but not travel.

**Bonnie Talakte:** NADPI could be a main think tank with major Tribal stakeholders as Workgroup members.

**Claire Brown:** Have there been prior meetings of statewide Tribal Education Directors?

**Lenny Dempsey:** Not exactly, but there is the Arizona Education Association, who attempts to get all not just Native Education Directors together.

**Maxine Daly:** Maybe we could set up a special VIP session at the April 2009 Conference for the Tribal stakeholders we'd like to be in the future Workgroup.

**Eileen Hill:** One thing I'd like to see are more realistic goals for the tribes to meet, concrete things that directly relate to keeping kids interested in school.



**Fred Ferreira:** There's also many more grants tribes could be applying for, and they could fund the NADPI concept.

**Maxine Daly:** This group could then be a major force in crafting or lobbying for legislation that would foster the reduction of the Dropout Rate.

**Fred Hubbard:** Yes! Especially in regard to funding for "local control" and allowing more truancy officers to be hired.

**Eileen Hill:** More School Resource Officers are also needed.

**Bonnie Talakte:** Tribal grant writers could also be at the table.

**Leon Oosahwe:** Strong leadership will be critical to follow in Bonnie's example for NADPI to move forward after the grant funding ends.

### **How will the NADPI Workgroup be different in membership and mission?**

**Fred Ferreira:** Other agencies that touch on this issue are too broad and accomplish little. I like NADPI's current format, only more tribes need to be included not just San Carlos and Whiteriver. School Board Members would be a very welcome addition.

**Fred Hubbard:** Getting the Health Directors to be Workgroup members would also be crucial. Get on their agendas and draft resolutions.

**Eileen Hill:** The current NADPI Workgroup members could all call their contacts and leads. What works best is when it's community driven. Especially when cultural issues are focused on, letting the elders speak first, incentives are not as powerful.

**Claire Brown:** A plan to receive the resources would also be needed.

**Fred Ferreira:** Failing schools is our biggest issue and it mostly stems from the dropout problem, it's all inter-related. The information we are gathering here through NADPI is needed for all schools to address their largest issues. In San Carlos we are making steady progress, it's not as fast as we all would like but it is steady. Making flyers about NADPI would be important showing the personal economic impacts due to dropping out, how even missing a single day of school impacts the problem.

**Bonnie Talakte:** Engaging the parents is vital, San Carlos and Whiteriver could guide the other tribes.

**Fred Hubbard:** Rotating the locations of the NADPI Workgroup meetings would also be important.

### **NADPI Challenges**

- 1) Need a future strong, influential leader
- 2) Education needs to be a priority among all tribes, draft letters to the Tribal Councils
- 3) Funding, it's much easier for wealthy tribes to have stronger dropout Prevention Programs
- 4) The project must be sustained for the long haul, the Southern Utes program is a good example of this
- 5) More positive thinking is needed with more success stories from the communities
- 6) Enforcement of the few existing codes /laws is necessary
- 7) The behavior must change to achieve the desired results



- 8) The lack of economic growth, lack of jobs does not inspire kids to stay in school they don't see the point. They would have to move off the reservation for a better job and that would separate them from the family. Moral and economic development needs to improve
- 9) More accountability is needed

### **NADPI Opportunities**

- 1) Able to provide leadership to others
- 2) Positive community change
- 3) Creating a working model for other tribes to follow

**2009 National Forum on Native American Dropout Prevention Strategies Conference** - Bonnie Talakte

**Conference Theme:** *National Forum on Dropout Prevention Strategies for Native Communities: Reconnecting Native Youth to Education*



**Conference Logo:** (Designed by: Laurie Larson)

**Conference Date:** April 19-22, 2009; Sheraton Crescent Hotel, Phoenix, AZ

**Conference Hosts:** Arizona Department of Education, Native American Dropout Prevention Initiative, National Dropout Prevention Center / Network (NDPC/N) & Clemson University

**Conference Planning Team:** Bonnie Talakte: Conference Chair, five representatives from ADE – Innovative and Exemplary Unit, two representatives from NDPC/N, Clemson University

**Online Registration:** October or November on the NDPC website

**Confirmed Keynote Speakers:** Dr. William G. Demmert & Dr. Greg Sarris



**NADPI Workgroup Members Role in Conference:** Source for presenter information, Workshop Facilitators, Potential Workshop Presenters

**Eileen Hill:** Since Native Youth is mentioned in the title, will there be a Native Youth Strand? And will students be able to attend?

**Bonnie Talakte:** Yes students can attend we can add that strand to our current list which includes:

School Safety	Parent / Community Involvement	Leadership	Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	School Climate
School Emergency Response Plans				Shared Philosophy of Culture of Excellence
Meth Prevention Resources		Heroes from Within	Instructional Planning	Facilities Conducive to Learning
Resources for Bullying Prevention	Family Perception, attitudes Towards Education	Mentoring	Alignment With Standards	Culture of Respect, Trust, Communication, and Collaboration
Prevention Research for Schools	Family Cohesiveness and Conflict Resolution	PDLA	Research-Based Strategies	
Effective/Model Programs	Parenting Skills	Training the Next Generation of Native Leaders	Assessments Aligned to Standards	
Internet Safety	Community Action Plans		State Accountability Program	
Child Abuse Prevention	Engaging the Community			
Comprehensive Health Education Standards				

**Fred Hubbard:** Karen Francis Begay from the Alumni Association would be a great keynote speaker, or perhaps Mary Kim Titla.

**Lenny Dempsey:** Will there be any strands on cross cultural competence or sensitivity training?

**Leon Oosahwe:** Will there be any Dropout Programs featured that use only cultural or native principles?

**Eileen Hill:** Cibique’s all-Apache Culture program is very successful. They have strong leadership, where they speak Apache first – then English at all functions. The student council is very active and the U of A provides a grant and partnership with them. The community is very isolated and hasn’t been exposed to gangs and drugs in the way other native communities have been. The leader there is very good and humble.

**Fred Hubbard:** Best Practices is a term that has been over-used. It must be modified, a best practice in an urban area won’t work in rural ones. Our best native communities do not brag, that is our tradition.

**Leon Oosahwe:** Oklahoma’s Jones Academy is also isolated, but a native success story. The long-range goals of their academic program is to develop capable students who can read and write proficiently and perform math functions necessary in life. They are fully supported in their academic endeavors as well as extra-curricular activities. Grades are monitored weekly to insure that the student is performing to the best of his/her ability and receiving proper instruction. Tutorial services are offered to students in all grades. Students receive incentives for academic achievements. High school students are provided career counseling for post-secondary education such as college or vocational training. The Jones Academy houses an alternative school for students whose needs have not been met in the traditional classroom or who are behind in grade level. The limited class size and self-paced curriculum allow the teachers to give the students individualized academic attention. The Choctaw Nation has begun the process of operating its own school at Jones Academy. Grades first through sixth are presently held on our campus. Construction of the new elementary school began in 2006.



A goal of Jones Academy involves all students in cultural, educational and recreational activities. Our facility offers a wide variety of services to the student. Students are encouraged to participate in our cultural and traditional programs. These activities include the Indian Club, traditional dance, drum and singing groups, pow-wows, visits to ancient burial mounds and tribal festivals/museums.

Recreational activities include intramural sports, camping, swimming, fishing, social dances, bowling, skating, movies, picnics, horseback riding, and many other services. Jones Academy offers a strong well-rounded program of activities to meet the individual needs of our youth. For more information:

Jones Academy  
HCR 74 Box 102-5  
Hartshorne, Oklahoma 74547  
Phone: 918-297-2518  
Fax: 918-297-2364  
Email: bspears@bia.edu

## **Year-2 NADPI Evaluation Report – Claire Brown, LeCroy & Milligan Associates**

### **Evaluation Methods**

#### **Process evaluation**

The process evaluation serves three important functions

- 1) describes the implementation process
- 2) evaluates the extent to which the programs were implemented as planned and
- 3) frames the outcome evaluation by documenting the context of each program and how this context might have impacted the outcomes.

#### **Outcome Evaluation**

- 1) documents the results of the program and to determine to what degree each site met the program goals.
- 2) reports on changes in participation rates, attendance rates, retention, and scores on AIMS tests.

### **Literature Review on best practices in Dropout Prevention**

#### **Evaluation Sources of Data**

##### **Program Context**

Community background information and focus group findings

- reasons students do or do not attend and complete school

##### **Process Evaluation**

Summary of Statewide activities

- NADPI Workgroup Meeting minutes
- Education Summit on Dropout Prevention

Summary of school and community activities

- written and oral reports from NADPI project staff on activities conducted under the grant

##### **Outcome Evaluation**

- reported from ADE sources
- enrollment data reported by each school



## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES:**

### **I. Significantly reduce school dropout rates**

- **Changing cultural norms that undermine student attendance**
- **Increase daily attendance**
- **Conduct staff development in assessment, referral, and coordination of services for Native American students**

### **II. Improve student achievement on AIMS**

- **To increase the number of students meeting or exceeding the AIMS standards**
- **To provide extra resources to students to pass AIMS.**

### **III. To significantly increase high school graduation rates**

- **To use school-initiated strategies for student connectedness**
- **To reform high school practice to meet the cultural needs of Native American students**
- **To provide a menu of culturally competent support services for youth who re-enter high school**

## **Selected Project Activities**

- Create a Native American Dropout Prevention Work Group within ADE;
- Conduct an annual education summit;
- Conduct community advisory council meetings on a monthly basis;
- Implement a social marketing campaign about dropout prevention;
- Create community/school attendance teams;
- Strengthen attendance enforcement (by collaborating with tribal leaders and officials regarding the development of truancy laws);
- Develop youth leadership programs in the high schools;
- Host parenting skills workshops;
- Conduct staff development in assessment and referral of at-risk students, cultural competency, IDEAL and Breaking Ranks II;
- Provide tutoring and tutoring guides to students who don't pass AIMS;
- Develop recognition for students who are improving attendance and achievement;
- Develop a 5-year graduation plan with 9th grade students;
- Develop individualized performance plans for at-risk 8th graders;
- Facilitate teen parent support groups;
- Provide a work/study program for teen parents to work in child care center while attending school;
- Develop an adult mentoring program with tribal government leaders;
- Establish student peer support groups; and
- Refer youth to social services such as behavioral health, substance abuse treatment, etc.

## **GOALS AND MEASURES:**

- **3% decrease in high school dropout rates each year;**
- **20% increase in daily attendance each year;**
- **15% increase in youth who reenter school and graduate each year;**
- **15% increase in year-to-year retention rates;**
- **Self-reported annual staff skill increase in assessment of at-risk students;**
- **Individual performance plan completed for at least 85% of at-risk 8th grade students;**
- **Completion by at least 75% of 9th graders each year of a "five-year graduation plan"; and**
- **Demonstrated improvement in AIMS test scores.**



## **Summary of Statewide Activities**

- **NADPI workgroup**
  - ❖ **key stakeholders at the state level meeting to highlight issues and needs**
- **Education Summit on Native American Dropout Prevention**
  - ❖ **made great headway in bringing together national, state, and community leaders as well as tribal members, school officials, and students to discuss ways to address the dropout issue in the two schools.**
  - ❖ **New collaborations were formed among key stakeholders and decision makers within and across the communities to move forward on school attendance and school completion goals.**
- **These efforts contributed to fostering the passage of a new truancy code by the San Carlos tribal council in May, 2008.**

## **Summary of School and Community Activities**

**Many of the activities outlined in the project involve the community, the students, and the cooperation of the full faculty and administration at each school.**

**The evaluation report contains a table of each of the activities with the comments of the grant staff at each school, what was implemented, and the level of success or impact.**

**The greatest implementation successes in both schools were under the direct control of the two project staff members, the dropout prevention special and dropout prevention coordinator, working individually with students to provide the support they need to help them in school.**

**Project activities that required full participation of faculty (professional development, IDEAL, Breaking Ranks II) were difficult to document in terms implementation or impact**

**Several project activities for students (teen parent support groups, youth leadership activities, work/study in child care centers, peer support groups) were difficult to implement due to lack of student interest or scheduling issues.**

**Project activities that involved the tribe and community members were difficult to conduct in terms of getting regular participation (monthly community advisory meetings, community attendance teams) or were not feasible due to the need for background checks (mentoring program).**

## **Important Gains**

**The NADPI staff members gravitated towards activities that they could implement successfully with the resources and time they had.**

- **providing more attention and support for at-risk students by establishing one-on-one relationships through the dropout prevention specialist and counselor;**
- **bringing greater attention to the dropout issue in each school and increasing communication among school staff, including teachers and principals, about at-risk students;**



- tracking student attendance, maintaining communication with chronically absent students, and increasing communication with parents and family members about the importance of attending school;
- providing more academic counseling to students falling short on credits;
- providing counseling and support to students experiencing significant personal and family challenges;
- at Alchesay, creating new procedures and supports for re-entry students;
- and increasing community awareness of the dropout issue through monthly community advisory meetings and through communications using posters, artwork, bulletins, and announcements.

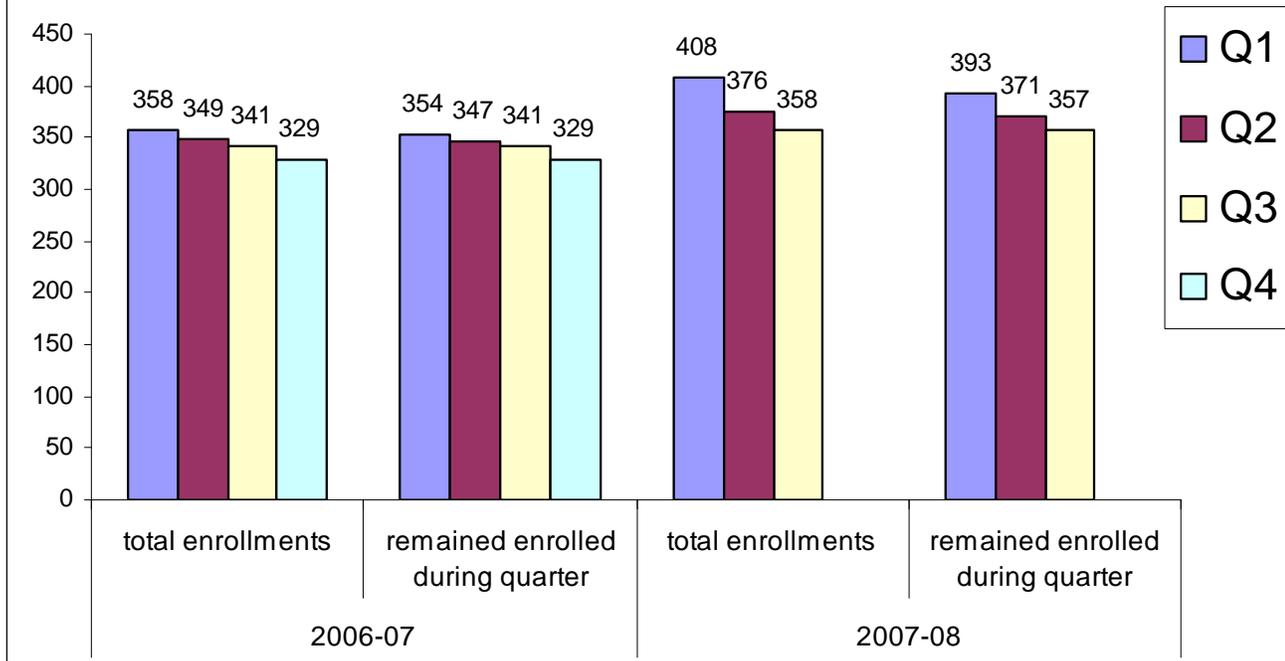
San Carlos High School	2005-06 (pre-program year)	2006-07 (year one)	Goal	% change
Dropout rate	12%	10.5%	3% decrease	1.5%
Average Daily Attendance	91%	89%	20% increase	-2%
Students who reenter and graduate (used graduation rates below)	No ADE source available	No ADE source available	15% increase	n/a
Retention rate – see figure on enrollments for each school	No ADE source available	No ADE source available	15% increase	n/a
4-year graduation rate	68%	51%	not specified	-16%
5-year graduation rate	(not available)	54%	not specified	n/a
Number of graduates	57	54	not specified	-5%
Staff Assessment of at-risk students	No specific measure	No specific measure	self-reported increase	n/a
Promotion rate (students passing from one grade to next)	68%	83%	not specified	+15%
8th grade Individual Performance Plan	Not reported	About 80%	85% completion	Yearly goal nearly met
9th grade 5-year graduation plan	Not reported	About 80%	75% completion	Yearly goal met
% passing AIMS (meets or exceeds standards)	Math 9% Reading 26% Writing 40%	Math 23% Reading 37% Writing 36%		Math + 14% Reading +11% Writing- 4%



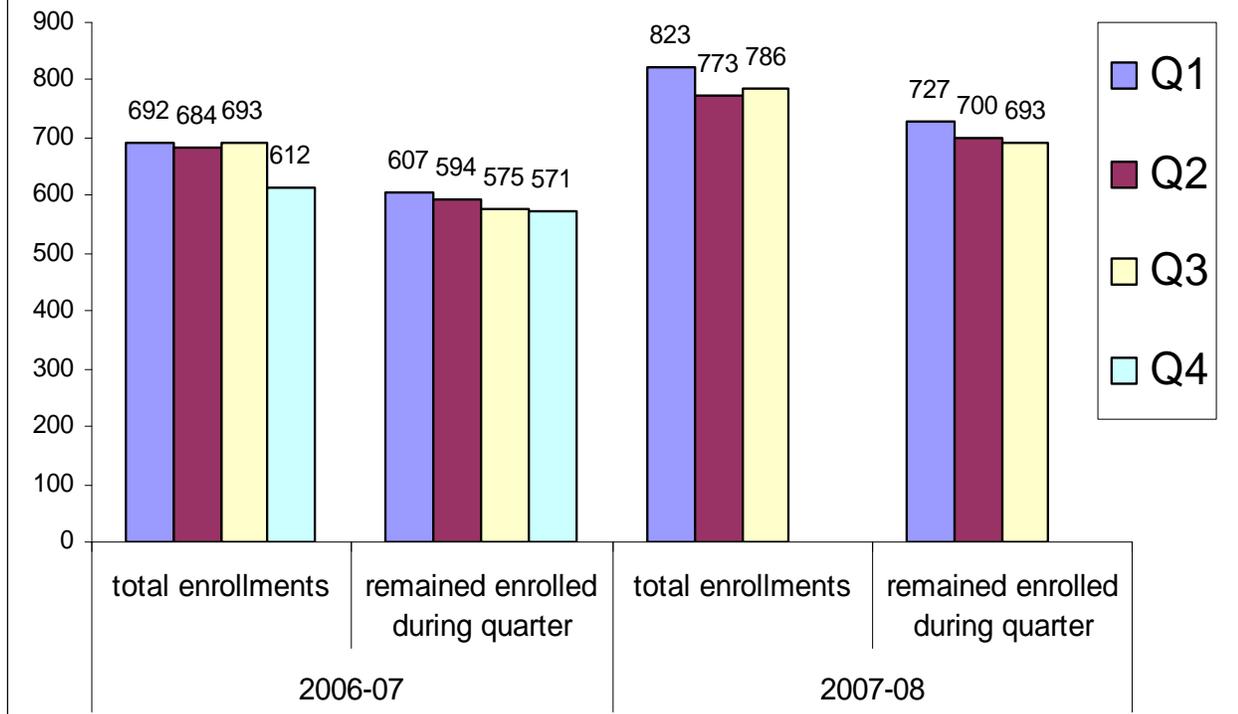
<b>Alchesay High School</b>	<b>2005-06 (pre-program year)</b>	<b>2006-07 (year one)</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>% change</b>
<b>Dropout rate</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>3% decrease</b>	<b>+16.8%</b>
<b>Average Daily Attendance</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>20% increase</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Students who reenter and graduate</b>	<b>No ADE source available</b>	<b>No ADE source available</b>	<b>15% increase</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Retention rate</b>	<b>No ADE source available</b>	<b>No ADE source available</b>	<b>15% increase</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>4-year graduation rate</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>not specified</b>	<b>-22%</b>
<b>5-year graduation rate</b>	<b>(not available)</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>not specified</b>	<b>not available</b>
<b>Number of graduates</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>not specified</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>Promotion Rate (students passing from one grade to next)</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>not specified</b>	<b>+12%</b>
<b>Staff Assessment of at-risk students</b>	<b>No specific measure</b>	<b>No specific measure</b>	<b>self-reported increase</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Individual Performance Plan (8th grade)</b>	<b>Not reported in year one</b>	<b>146 students</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>% change not available</b>
<b>5-year graduation Plan (9th grade)</b>	<b>Not reported in year one</b>	<b>111 students (about 43%)</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>% change not available</b>
<b>% passing AIMS (meets or exceeds standards)</b>	<b>Math 36% Reading 36% Writing 47%</b>	<b>Math 35% Reading 48% Writing 37%</b>		<b>Math -1% Reading +12% Writing -10%</b>



### San Carlos Enrollment Data by Quarter 2006-07 & 2007-08



### Alchesay Enrollment Data by Quarter 2006-07 & 2007-08





## **Conclusions**

**NADPI is making an important and meaningful contribution to increasing the awareness of the dropout issue in the communities served by San Carlos and Alchesay High Schools.**

**The project is operating in schools with very challenging environments.**

**The needs in each school are far greater than the scope of the grant.**

**Making a substantial change in dropout rates is a long-term proposition that requires:**

- **The efforts of a broad constituency of stakeholders and actors, including leaders, adults and parents from each community, as well as the district and school leadership and staff.**
- **A substantial influx of additional resources (not only dollars)**
- **A renewed focus on effective teaching and learning for Native American students. This includes making education relevant, interesting and culturally appropriate.**
- **The ownership and leadership of the tribes in setting educational goals and priorities for their youth, for their future and for the future of the tribe is essential. This includes holding parents accountable for having their children attend school.**

## **Recommendations**

- **A grant coordinator at each site (probably not feasible).**
- **Rethinking and limiting project activities for year three that are targeted and feasible with current staff.**
- **Make a presentation to each tribal council on the economic implications of dropping out of school**

## **Additional Recommendations**

- **Develop a red-flag data tracking system that will allow school administrators, counselors and faculty to monitor not only school attendance but grades and credits earned and missed for all students in their classrooms. This system needs to be available to all teachers and staff on their office and classroom computers for immediate access. Other schools in Arizona serving at-risk populations have developed such a system.**
- **Enhance and expand currently existing transitional supports for high-risk and reentry students who come back to school. Academic remediation programs with close teacher interaction outside alternative and mainstream classrooms are needed for chronically absent students.**
- **Create a high school transition program for all 9th graders based on effective models from other schools in Arizona**
- **Provide faculty members with the opportunity to visit schools school using programs that have demonstrated success with high-risk students in increasing AIMS scores and graduation rates. There are many such programs across the state.**
- **Provide faculty with the opportunity to see and visit demonstrated models of effective teaching and learning for Native American students in Arizona.**



**Native American Dropout Prevention Initiative Conceptual Model:**

**CONTEXT:**

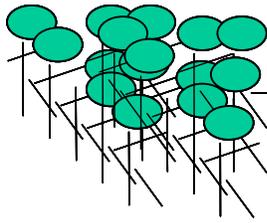
White Mountain and San Carlos  
Apache Tribes  
Existing community environment  
Existing family environment  
Existing school environment

**NADPI PROJECT**

Resources  
Goals  
Objectives  
Strategies  
Activities

**Including:**

Community awareness and engagement  
Dropout prevention strategies  
New educational support systems  
Increased resources for at-risk students



**Reduce  
Dropout Rates**



**Long-term impact:**

- Fulfill personal and tribal goals
- Access to continued and higher education
- Expanded career opportunities
- Productive tribal and community members

Alchesay and San Carlos High School and  
Middle School Students

**Evaluation of Session/Announcements** – Leon Oosahwe

**Date and Time of Next Meeting** – November 13, 2008, 9:00 a.m., ADE Central Avenue Facility