

American Indian Education

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Highlights

“Idaho’s education system must ensure that all students are prepared for success in life. The State Board of Education appreciates the work of the Indian Education Committee in identifying ways to improve outcomes for American Indian students.”

— Emma Atchley, President, Idaho State Board of Education

Idaho’s American Indian students are a diverse group representing many tribes. Some, but not all, live on reservations; some go to tribal schools while others attend public schools. This report focuses on Native students’ enrollment, academic achievement, postsecondary education, and educational attainment. Major findings point to the need for improving education outcomes:

- ◆ The gap between Native and non-Native students on achievement tests is persistent. ^{a, b}
- ◆ Native students are less likely than others to be college-ready in math and reading. ^c
- ◆ Native adults have lower levels of educational attainment than non-Native adults. ^d
- ◆ Native enrollment at Idaho’s postsecondary institutions is increasing, but shifting away from 4-year institutions and toward 2-year institutions and certificate programs. ^e

This report also highlights a few of the many education efforts of Idaho’s tribes. Tribes are working with public schools to implement place-based education that incorporates cultural knowledge and language into hands-on projects that also help students meet state education requirements. Many tribal leaders view education as a life-long process essential not only to preparing for a career, but also carrying on a tribe’s cultural knowledge, language, and traditions.

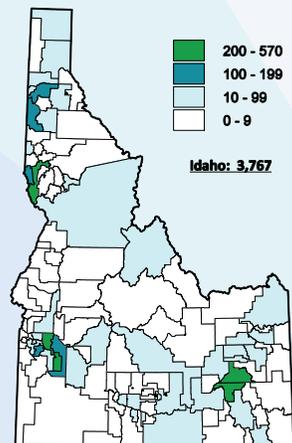
K-12 Student Enrollment

In 2011-12, Idaho’s 3,767 American Indian students made up 1.3% of the state’s public K-12 students. Almost half of all Native students are enrolled in four districts: Pocatello (570 Native students), Blackfoot (470), Lapwai (448), and Meridian (234). Districts with the highest percentage of Native students include Lapwai (85%), and Plummer-Worley Jt (38%). ^f

Idaho has three tribal schools: the Coeur d’Alene Tribal School (K-8) serves about 120 students, the Shoshone-Bannock Junior/Senior High School (grades 7-12) serves about 130 students, and the Chief Tahgee Elementary Academy (K-6) serves about 80 students. ^g

Very few students from the Coeur d’Alene Tribal School attend the local public high school. Instead, most leave home to attend the Chemawa Indian School, a boarding school in Salem, Oregon. The same trend is not found among other Idaho tribes. ^h

American Indian students in public schools (#), by district, 2011-12



Idaho: 3,767

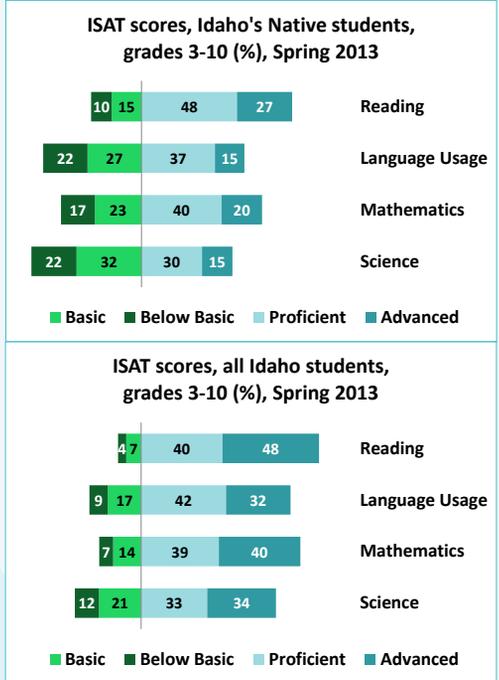
SOURCE: National Center for Ed Statistics

Educational achievement

Student educational achievement is measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Between 2005 and 2011, Native K-12 students were the nation's only racial/ethnic group that did not have improved performance on the NAEP's 4th and 8th grade reading and math scores. Nationwide, Native scores remained level while other groups' scores improved, widening the gap between Native students and others. ^a

Until Spring 2013, all Idaho students in grades 3-10 were administered the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), which measures proficiency in reading, language usage, math, and science. While Native students were about as likely as others to receive proficient scores in all four subject areas in Spring 2013, they were only half as likely to receive advanced scores. ^b

Among Idaho districts with a large American Indian population, Native students from the Meridian and Coeur d'Alene school districts were most likely to have proficient or advanced scores in all four ISAT subject areas. ^b



SOURCE: Idaho Department of Education ^b
 NOTE: The science ISAT is administered in grades 5, 7 & 10, so science scores apply to students in those grades only.

College aspirations and readiness

Though many American Indian students have aspirations for attaining a postsecondary degree, some are not prepared for college. While data are not available for Idaho, national data indicate 86% of all Native students hope to attain at least a 2-year postsecondary degree. However, only 62% took the minimum core high school curriculum needed to be ready for college. When taking the ACT in 2013, only 22% were college-ready in math and only 26% were college-ready in reading. ^c

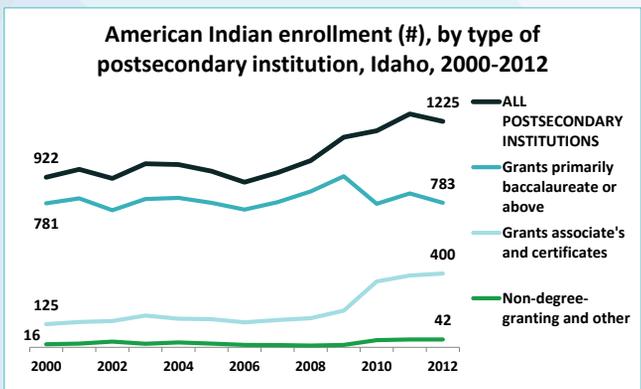
NOTE: Dropout rates and graduation rates are not reported here due to questions surrounding reliability of the data.

Enrollment in postsecondary education

The number of Native students attending Idaho's colleges, universities, and certificate programs increased from 922 in 2000 to 1,225 in 2012, an increase of 33%. This compares to a 67% increase among all postsecondary students.

The make-up of the Native student body has changed in recent years. Through 2009, more than 80% of Native postsecondary

students attended one of Idaho's 4-year colleges and universities (public and private). Since 2010, this percentage has dropped to about 65%, while the percentage of Native students attending institutions granting primarily associate's degrees and certificates has grown to 33%. Very few Native students attend non-degree granting institutions such as cosmetology schools. ^e

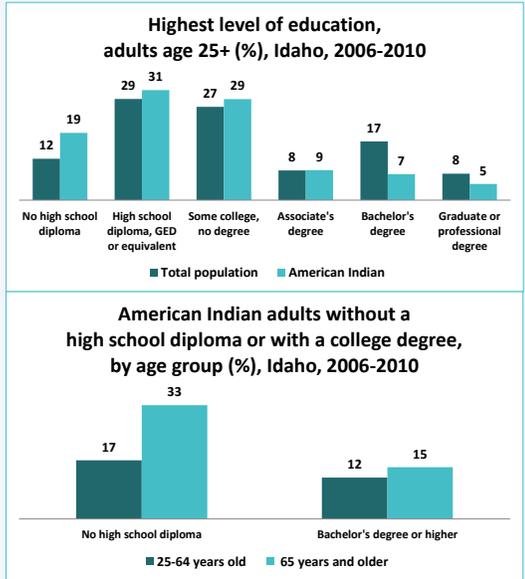


SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics ^e
 NOTE: Data include both public and private institutions

Educational attainment

Adults without a high school diploma are much more likely to be in poverty, unemployed, and without health insurance. American Indian adults have lower levels of educational attainment: only 12% have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24% of Idaho's total population; and 19% do not have a high school diploma, compared to only 12% of the total population.^{d, i}

Overall, Idaho's working-age adults are more educated than elderly adults. A similar pattern is found among the state's Native adults. Idaho's American Indians aged 25-64 are half as likely as those 65 and older to be without a high school diploma. However, both groups are about as likely to have a college degree.^d

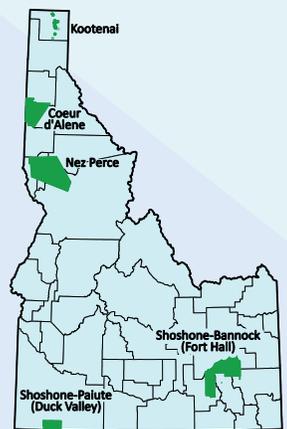


Enhancing Native education

Idaho's American Indian tribes have educational programs for early childhood, K-12, higher education, and adult education. Examples include Head Start, K-12 enrichment programs, helping students apply for college and financial aid, helping students succeed in college, career fairs, workforce training, and vocational rehabilitation. Federal funding does not cover all costs for these programs, so tribes supplement with grants, gaming revenues, and other resources. Examples from Idaho's tribes are highlighted below:^h

- ◆ **Coeur d'Alene Tribe**—Strengthening the Spirit is an after-school enrichment program that provides middle school students with place-based education. It incorporates elements of culture, language, STEM education, and healthy living, and it has helped reduce the number of Coeur d'Alene youth involved in the juvenile justice system.
- ◆ **Kootenai Tribe**—The Kootenai Tribe focuses on improving students' academic achievement by employing a full-time tutor, providing a homework club, and rewarding students who are doing well. Students also learn life skills.
- ◆ **Nez Perce Tribe**—The tribe was one of only five tribes chosen nationwide to be part of the State Tribal Education Partnership, an effort to increase state-tribal collaboration and improve academic achievement. The tribe will build its capacity to provide technical assistance and professional development to the Lapwai and Kamiah school districts as they incorporate elements of Native education into their standard curriculum.
- ◆ **Shoshone-Bannock Tribes**—The Chief Tahgee Elementary Academy, a K-6 public charter school, provides a student-centered learning environment and language immersion program. The curriculum is based on academic excellence, a multilingual environment, and cultural enrichment.
- ◆ **Shoshone-Paiute Tribes**—Students from the Duck Valley Reservation grow up in a very rural and isolated area, so going to college is a big change. The tribe helps students succeed by providing financial aid application assistance, a scholarship program, and connecting students with mentors and advisors while they are away at college.

Idaho's American Indian tribes and reservations



Selected education indicators

	IDAHO	
	American Indians	Total Population
STUDENT ENROLLMENT		
K-12 public schools: ^f		
2011-2012 (#)	3,767	279,873
2000-2001 (#)	3,226	245,117
Change 2000-01 to 2011-12 (%)	17	14
Postsecondary institutions granting bachelor's degrees or above: ^e		
Fall 2012 (#)	783	80,504
Fall 2000 (#)	781	54,822
Change 2000-2012 (%)	0	47
Postsecondary institutions granting associate's degrees or certificates: ^e		
Fall 2012 (#)	400	26,148
Fall 2000 (#)	125	10,331
Change 2000-2012 (%)	220	153
ACHIEVEMENT		
ISAT, Spring 2013 (% scoring proficient or advanced): ^b		
Math	60	79
Science	45	67
Language Usage	52	74
Reading	75	88
ATTAINMENT		
Population without a high school diploma, 2006-2010 (%): ^d		
Age 25 years and older	19	12
Age 25-64 years	17	10
Age 65 years and older	33	18
Population with a bachelor's degree or higher, 2006-2010 (%): ^d		
Age 25 years and older	12	24
Age 25-64 years	12	26
Age 65 years and older	15	19

AMERICAN INDIAN: Refers to American Indian or Alaska Natives, who include those with origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America and who maintain a tribal affiliation or community attachment (Census Bureau).

IDAHO INDIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Established by the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) in 2013, this committee advises the SBOE and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on policies and issues affecting K-20 Indian education in Idaho. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/native_american for more information.

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DATA SOURCES:

a—National Congress of American Indians, *Policy Issues: Education*; The Education Trust, *The State of Education for Native Students*

b—Idaho Department of Education, Assessment and Accountability, 2013 ISAT Results

c—ACT, Inc., *The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2013*

d—U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

e—National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

f—National Center for Education Statistics, Elementary/Secondary Information System

g—U.S. Bureau of Indian Education, Division of Performance and Accountability, School Report Cards, and Idaho State Department of Education, Office of Indian Education

h—Interviews with Dr. Chris Meyer (Coeur d'Alene Tribe), Jennifer Porter (Kootenai Tribe), Joyce McFarland (Nez Perce Tribe), and Rochelle Thomas (Shoshone-Paiute Tribe)

i—U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey, Single-Year Estimates

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