

DZIL DIT'OOÍ SCHOOL of EMPOWERMENT, ACTION, AND PERSEVERANCE

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TRIBAL EDUCATION STATUS REPORT 2020-2021



**K'É+HÓZHÓ+
EMPOWERMENT+
ACTION+SERVICE+
PERSEVERANCE+REZILIENCE**

Dził Dítł'ooí School of Empowerment, Action, and Perseverance (DEAP)

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HISTORY OF DEAP

The Dził Dítł'ooí School of Empowerment, Action and Perseverance (DEAP) is a New Mexico public charter school located in the rural northwest corner of the Navajo Nation. DEAP was founded by two local Diné women in 2015 with the purpose to empower students and community through education, culture, service and wellness. DEAP currently serves 50 students in grades 6-12. In DEAP's short existence, students have led and participated in several empowerment initiatives including a moccasin making project, hogan construction, traditional ecological knowledge activities and Diné language focussed experiences.

TIMELINE

2013-2014: Bi-State Charter Study Committee launched with support from NM Representative Patricia Lundstrom via NM House Memorial 43. Committee concludes that best option is to initiate application for a charter school to be authorized by the New Mexico Public Education Committee. Local Red Lake-Navajo leaders, Kayla Dawn Begay and Prestene Garnenez lead community discussions and planning for school in collaboration with the NACA Inspired Schools Network. DEAP earns support from Red Lake Chapter and Navajo Nation HESC members.

2014: Notice of Intent and DEAP School Application submitted to New Mexico Public Education Committee

September 2014: NMPEC votes to approve DEAP School for a 5 year term

September 2014 - August 2015: Planning Year Work for opening in 2015 including construction and site development

September 2015: DEAP opens and starts year 1 serving grades 6 and 7

August 2016: DEAP starts year 2 serving grades 6, 7, & 8

August 2017: DEAP starts year 3 serving grades 6-9

August 2018: DEAP starts year 4 serving grades 6-10

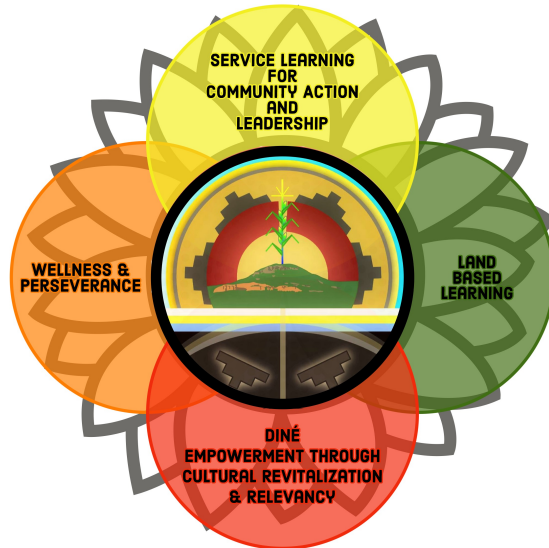
August 2019: DEAP starts year 5 serving grades 6-11

December 2019: DEAP is approved for 5-year Charter Renewal for second term. NMPEC commends DEAP as a model school for Indigenous communities.

June 2021: DEAP graduates its first class.

MISSION

As a result of a DEAP education, students will be able to use their cultural, vocational, and academic skills to analyze their surroundings in order to plan the transformation of their community and their world, live a healthy life and use the tools they were taught to achieve holistic wellness, use their understanding of identity, and its impact on local and global communities to promote the restoration and perpetuation of Diné culture, and honor the history and the legacy of the Dził Dítł'ooí area by consciously balancing the needs of the land with the needs of the people.



VISION

Our vision is to empower students and communities through responsive, relevant and meaningful education, culture, wellness and service.

++DEAP CORE VALUES++

+K'É+

We are all connected. Our wellbeing is tied to our relationship with the land, people, spirits and all living things. Adééhániih.

+HÓZHÓ+

Be your best self. We are sacred beings of the earth. We must respect our bodies, minds, hearts and spirit by taking care of ourselves. Our destiny is to live long healthy lives.
Ádaa Áháya. ++102++

+EMPOWERMENT+

We are blessed with many gifts and talents. When we choose to our gifts for good, we create a cycle of empowerment. We inspire and help each other achieve our goals.

+ACTION+SERVICE+

Everyday we see things that could be better—people, animals, the land, and all living things rely on us for help. We have the power to improve the world.
We are our own heroes!

+PERSEVERANCE+

Life is full of challenges, and there will be times when we fail. However, we must remember to keep trying. We do not give up, but learn from our mistakes. This means that we identify our needs and ask for help when we need it.

+REZILIENCE+

We come from a line of intelligent and strong ancestors. They have survived droughts, colonization, pain and uncertainty. We must continue their legacy and continue to fight for what is right for the land and our people. We are proud to be from the Rez and honor our ancestors by continuing traditions.

GOVERNING COUNCIL 2020-2021

The DEAP Governing Council was established to help DEAP succeed and flourish. The GC meets every second Tuesday of the month. Meetings are open to the public. If you are interested in serving on the DEAP GC, please submit a letter of interest to the GC Chair.

Benita Litson, Chair

Benita Litson serves as the Director of Diné College Land Grant Office since 2005. She has provided professional experiences in project development for Navajo Ranchers and Farmers by offering technical service around rangeland management, conservation planning workshops, and various extension and outreach programs. In addition to her responsibility to the Navajo Communities, she and her staff have developed a Natural Resource Certificate Program and serves as an Instructor for some of its courses. Her education background includes a Masters of Science in Environmental Resource Management from and a Bachelors of Science in Agribusiness and Pre-Veterinary Medicine. She serves as a board member to the First American Land Grant Consortium and the Western Rural Development Center.

Gavin Sosa, Vice Chair

Gavin moved to New Mexico in 2002. He taught English/Language Arts for 6 years in the small town of Navajo, NM. He was also a successful cross country and track coach, with his girls and boys teams winning numerous State Championships. After leaving the classroom in 2008, Gavin attended Stanford University's Graduate School of Education, earning his master's degree in educational leadership. After completing his degree he returned to the Southwest, working as a Leadership Fellow at the Native American Community Academy (NACA) in Albuquerque. As a NACA Leadership Fellow Gavin worked with NACA's founders and administrators to learn about the charter school start-up process and school leadership. In 2012 he moved to Shiprock to coach the Diné College cross country and track programs, and to work with the Dream Diné Charter School founding team. Along with working with the students, staff and families of Dream Diné as Director of Operations, Gavin is also involved with various community projects across Shiprock. Michaela Shirley

Michaela Paulette Shirley is Water Edge, born for Bitterwater. Her maternal grandfather is Salt and her paternal grandfather is Coyote Pass. She was born in Fort Defiance, AZ and grew up in Kin Dah Lichii (Red House), AZ. She received her bachelor's in urban planning from Arizona State University, and a master's in community and regional planning from the University of New Mexico. Michaela's background is in urban planning, community planning, and Indigenous planning, with research interests in community development, community-school relationship, youth engagement/development, biographies of landscape, decolonization, and Navajo feminism/cultural studies. Shirley's master's thesis, entitled, "The Role of Schools in the Community Development of Kin Dah Lichii, Arizona", will provide the foundation for her PhD work. Michaela is the Program Specialist for the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute(iD+Pi). Shirley plans and coordinates the development and implementation of subprograms, special projects, and other initiatives to achieve the overall mission of iD+Pi. Shirley oversees the day-to-day operations of the various iD+Pi programs and activities. Michaela serves as a primary liaison for the iD+Pi and represents the University with respect to program activities on a local, regional, national, and international basis.

Becki Jones (She/They) identifies as a Diné Queer Femme based out of occupied Tiwa territory, Albuquerque, NM. They are Tótsohnii, born for 'Áshjiihi', their maternal grandpa is Mą'ii deeshgiizhinii, and their paternal grandpa is Tábaqahá. She has been a sexual health educator with Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains for 5 years and the Program Manager for the Native Community Health Network for almost 2 years. Becki has been heavily involved with creating partnerships with local Indigenous organizations in Albuquerque, and after her grant with NM DOH ended, the NCHN program was created to continue that work. She is on the board of directors for CSVANW and Bold Futures. She also sits as a co-chair for the Southwest Indigenous Initiative, an HIV prevention and education coalition for the greater SW area. Becki is a certified HIV tester and Harm Reduction specialist for NM. She recently was certified as a transformational life coach. She is a full spectrum Diné Doula that can provide services for Diné clients and other Indigenous clients. Becki also serves as a committee member of the Red Ant Collective, a communist organization that serves the greater SW area. On her off time, she enjoys playing music in her bands, making resin jewelry, reading and studying, and hanging out with family, comrades and friends.

Dr. Jennie Jimenez is a grandparent member of the DEAP school. She has spent many years serving as a teacher and education administrator on the Navajo Nation. Jennie hopes to see DEAP continue to grow.



STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section describes the laws and rules that apply to the Tribal Education Status Report in relevant part as follows:

22-23A-7. Report.

A. The Indian Education Division in collaboration with the education division of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs and other entities that serve tribal students shall submit an annual statewide tribal education status report no later than November 15 to all New Mexico tribes. The division shall submit the report whether or not entities outside state government collaborate as requested.

B. A school district with tribal lands located within its boundaries shall provide a district wide tribal education status report to all New Mexico tribes represented within the school district boundaries.

C. These status reports shall be written in a brief format and shall include information regarding public school performance, how it is measured, and how it is reported to the tribes and disseminated at the semiannual government-to-government meetings. The status report generally includes information regarding the following:

(1) student achievement as measured by a statewide test approved by the department, with results disaggregated by ethnicity;

(2) school safety;

(3) graduation rates;

(4) attendance;

(5) parent and community involvement;

(6) educational programs targeting tribal students;

(7) financial reports;

(8) current status of federal Indian education policies and procedures;

(9) school district initiatives to decrease the number of student dropouts and increase attendance;

(10) public school use of variable school calendars;

(11) school district consultations with district Indian education committees, school-site parent advisory councils and tribal, municipal and Indian organizations; and

(12) indigenous research and evaluation measures and results for effective curricula for tribal students.

DEAP STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

During the 2020-2021 school year, DEAP served:

- 48 students
- 100% of DEAP students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch.
- 100% of DEAP students are enrolled members of the Navajo Nation.

DEMOGRAPHICS SY 2020-2021	120th Day
Student Demographics	Totals
Female	22
Males	26
Students with IEPs	Less than 10*
EL Students	17
Total Students	48

*DEAP serves a student population of 48. A break down of demographics has been omitted from this report to protect student FERPA rights.



I. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

For the 2020-21 school year, New Mexico received an accountability waiver from the US Department of Education. This waiver exempts New Mexico from reporting many pieces of accountability data, including achievement data, due to the challenges presented by the pandemic. Given the low participation rates on statewide summative assessments, aggregated data from these assessments are not a reliable picture of academic achievement for New Mexico students. Given the low participation on the Measures of Student Success and Achievement (MSSA) PED will not produce school or district reports unless certain participation thresholds are met. This includes the assessments for science readiness (ASR) since no reports will be available to districts.*

*This section is a reflection of the "Dzit Dit Lool School of Empowerment Action and Perseverance Data Profile" that was sent to DEAP on 9/2/2021 from indian.Education@state.nm.us.

II. SCHOOL SAFETY

OBJECTIVE: Indian Education Department's (IED) objective is To ensure that students in New Mexico schools attend safe, secure, and peaceful schools.

BACKGROUND: New Mexico—as do other states in the rest of the nation—looks at strategies to keep students, staff, and faculty safe in schools.

The School Safety plan offers new research and new approaches with the intent to:

- *assist schools and their community partners in the revision of the school-level safety plans;*
- *prevent an occurrence and/or recurrences of undesirable events;*
- *properly train school staff, faculty, and students to assess, facilitate, and implement response actions to emergency events; and*
- *Provide the basis for coordinating protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency.*

New Mexico school districts have developed supports to ensure the safety of students within the schools. These provisions include the following: policies and procedures for school safety, safety committees, safety implementation plans, prevention plans, anonymous tip lines, emergency response plans, recovery plans, safe schools reports, and a school safety report submitted to the PED Coordinated School Health and Wellness Bureau (CSHWB). <http://ped.state.nm.us/sfsb/safeschools/>

METHODS: DEAP submitted their current school safety process through a district-wide survey issued by NMPED IED. The NMPED IED team analyzed the data to determine which districts or charter schools required additional assistance to ensure students have a safe school environment. Behavioral incidence data were collected by each school in the district and recorded in the district's student information system. Data were summarized and collapsed into the most highly reported student infractions. Sources: New Mexico Public Education Department, Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (S.T.A.R.S.)

RESULTS

DEAP has a small student body and low student to teacher ratio. As a result, students are rarely left unattended.

DEAP prides itself on creating a school safety climate that is tied to our core values. In the 2020-2021 school year, DEAP did not report any infraction incidences as DEAP did not operate in person school.

CONCLUSION

One of DEAP's focus areas includes a Wellness & Perseverance Philosophy. Part of that curriculum specifically focusses on social emotional learning methods to curb risky behaviors. DEAP also partners with various entities including the Tse Ho Tsoi Medical Center, Project Venture and Community Outreach Patient Empowerment Program to provide students with options to address safety concerns.

ACTION PLAN

In light of the unique challenges the pandemic has created, DEAP has committed to continue to provide students with opportunities to address their safety needs including increased access to healthy foods, culturally relevant health resources and goal setting conferences.

III. GRADUATION RATE

OBJECTIVE: The graduation objective is to ensure that all American Indian students are given the opportunity to graduate from high school with a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence. The high school experience and diploma together provide students with solid preparation for college and career readiness

BACKGROUND: Transitioning to the National Governors Association (NGA) cohort computation method, New Mexico implemented its first 4-year cohort graduation rate in 2009. This adjusted cohort graduation rate improves our understanding of the characteristics of the population of students who do not earn regular high school diplomas or who take longer than four years to graduate. Numerous statistics and reports from the US Department of Labor indicate the importance of a high school diploma and reflect the high economic costs of not completing high school. Since 2003, New Mexico has reported on a 5-year cohort graduation rate for American Indian students in order to better capture the number of students acquiring the New Mexico Diploma of Excellence

RESULTS:

Graduation Rates

4 Year Graduation Rate 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020 (N/A) *

DEAP had its first graduating class in 2021. However, DEAP has a small senior class of less than 10. Data is not included to protect student FERPA rights.

*This section is a reflection of the "Dzit Dit Lool School of Empowerment Action and Perseverance Data Profile" that was sent to DEAP on 9/2/2021 from indian.Education@state.nm.us.

CONCLUSION

DEAP graduated a small class in 2021. There is not much data to share at this point, but DEAP is consistently making improvements to create pathways for high school students to reach graduation requirements.

IV. ATTENDANCE

OBJECTIVE: The attendance objective is to assure that all students attend school every day and on schedule. This will be accomplished by supporting school district initiatives addressing the decrease in dropout rate and increase in attendance.

BACKGROUND: The Compulsory School Attendance Rule (6.10.8.9 NMAC) takes into consideration the sovereignty of every American Indian pueblo or tribe. The rule requires an established set of policies to be identified with each governing entity in support of the cultural well-being of the student, with the goal of keeping children in school until the age of eighteen. The local school board/governing body of the public or charter school adopts the attendance policy. The attendance rate is reported by each district that serves a large American Indian student population or one that borders on or around tribal lands. New Mexico pursues programs and strategies to meet the needs of at-risk students and to address obstacles associated with keeping students in school. New Mexico districts and schools actively pursue programs focused on addressing the academic needs of at-risk students and building capacity of truancy intervention programs. In addition, some school districts have established agreements with outside agencies to jointly provide for the educational and social needs of students who are at risk of dropping out. Students who drop out negatively affect the four-year (freshman) cohort graduation rate for the state, which results in a lower graduation rate.

METHODS: The Compulsory School Attendance Law requires districts to maintain an attendance policy that provides for the early identification of students with unexcused absences and truancy while providing intervention strategies that focus on keeping truant students in an educational setting. NM districts identify these students using demographic data obtained from the Student Snapshot and Membership (school cumulative enrollment between the first and last days of the school year) records stored in Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS). Student membership is collected and reported at the school, district, and state level—including the number of pupils in each of several categories from grades K (kindergarten) through 12. Dropout data and rates are calculated only for grades 7–12. Dropout statistics provide the number of students dropping out in a given school year and are collected at the school district level. These statistics are then reported to the PED. Additional information can be found for dropout rates on the PED website. The school districts and charter schools report absences with excused and unexcused identifiers through the STARS. They certify that the information is being reported consistently at intervals at the 40th-, 80th-, and 120th-day, and end-of-year in a manner as specified by the PED. Average Daily Attendance is based on the total number of days present of all students enrolled at the school at any time during the school year divided by the total number of days in membership of all students enrolled at the school at any time. Includes both excused and unexcused absences. STARS tables were sorted by the attendance rates of AI/AN students within the districts for the 2020–2021 school year, capturing the 40th, 80th, 120th day attendance snapshots. A student is considered habitually truant if he or she has a total of 10 or more full day, unexcused absences in a school year within that district. Student stability is defined as the percent of students enrolled in the first 40-day STARS snapshot who were also enrolled in the final EOY snapshot.

RESULTS & CONCLUSION

DEAP has maintained at 96% Attendance Rate for the 2020-2021 school year. However, DEAP reported that roughly 30% of our students were identified as habitually truant. DEAP's Attendance Policy aligned with Compulsory Attendance Rule and communicated attendance concerns after the 3rd, 5th and 7th absence. Identified students were placed on an Attendance contract that was completed with the family, student and DEAP staff. Each contract proved to be an effective way to address truancy. However, many challenges related to attendance and learning engagement existed due to internet/connectivity issues and struggles with online learning expectations.

ACTION PLAN

DEAP has hired a Student-Family Liaison to help bridge the needs of families with the demands of school. The Liaison works in collaboration with families and school leadership to track attendance and identify interventions to improve attendance. In addition, DEAP provided office hours to all students that struggled with attendance due to connectivity as well as live and recorded courses for student to engage in learning through both preference and need.

V. PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

OBJECTIVE: The parent and community objective is to ensure that parents; tribal departments of education; community-based organizations; urban American Indian community members; the DOE; universities; and tribal, state, and local policymakers work together to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students by encouraging and fostering parental and community involvement within public and charter schools.

BACKGROUND: The importance of parent involvement in education has been documented as benefitting students, parents, teachers, and schools—whether the program is at the preschool or elementary, middle or high school levels. Studies have shown that when parents participate in their children's education, the result is an increase in student academic achievement and an improvement in the student's overall attitude and school behavior. There is also improved attendance, fewer discipline problems, and less bullying. Higher aspirations have been correlated to parent involvement as have improved attitudes, enhanced interest in science among adolescents, increased language achievement, and sustained achievement gains.

METHODS: DEAP strongly values the involvement of families and has incorporated many opportunities for intergenerational learning. In addition, we strongly value our community leaders and have made great efforts to bring local knowledge into our learning spaces. DEAP keeps sign in sheets of all community and parent activities including minutes from monthly Parent Advisory Committee meetings.

RESULTS DEAP has prioritized a variety of activities for family and community involvement. Despite our shift to virtual learning, we were still able to continue activities through online gatherings. Below is a list of activities and resources provided for the SY 2020-2021:

+Student Goal Setting Days	+Student Led Conferences	+Diné Story Telling
+Navajo Cultural Arts Program	+Land Based Learning	+College & Career Readiness
+Community Presentations	+Harvest Day	+Community Seed Distribution
+Food & Aid Distribution	+Parent Advisory Committee	+Monthly Culinary Lessons

In addition, DEAP partnered with local community organizations and members during the construction of the traditional hogan and provided support for various COVID-19 informational activities.

CONCLUSION

DEAP has a very strong parent and community involvement rate. We credit participating in various school wide activities to the relationships that school staff intentionally build with students, families and community members and leaders. We have a variety of community partners that help our education program be successful.

ACTION PLAN

Given this uncertain moment in history, DEAP firmly believes that parent and community involvement is key in identifying solutions forward. We have started SY 2020-2021 with this in mind and have prioritized many of our resources to support families and connect community including the procurement of technology, survival tools and creation of community centered curriculum. We are also focused on providing training and resources for families and community members in the areas of health, safety, economic security and advocacy.

VI. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TARGETING TRIBAL STUDENTS

OBJECTIVE: The tribal students' educational programs objective is to recognize and support the unique cultural and educational needs of American Indian students enrolled in public schools and charter schools.

BACKGROUND: The Indian Education Act prioritizes support to meet the unique educational and culturally relevant academic needs of American Indian and Native Alaskan students through the efforts of LEAs, Indian tribes and organizations, postsecondary institutions, and other entities. American Indian students are challenged to meet the same state academic standards as all other students are expected to meet. Integrated educational services, in combination with other programs, are offered to best ensure that American Indian students and their families can meet and take advantage of those academic opportunities.

METHODS: DEAP is a school that was founded by two Diné women to help student have access to Diné culture and education relevant to their needs. As a result, DEAP's four focus areas guide us in the curriculum and programming we implement. DEAP's new charter contract explicitly outlines mission specific goals tied to both Diné Culture and Land Based Learning. As a result, all students participate in a Diné Studies course. In addition, DEAP offers Native Literature and Indigenous STEAM courses to middle school students. High School students have opportunities to participate in dual credit courses at Diné College in Navajo Studies and the Navajo Cultural Arts Program.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS: Mission Specific Goal 2 Rating: Meets Standard- 75-89% of all DEAP students, enrolled on the 40th and 120th day, will complete a Diné studies course with a grade of at least 70% which includes demonstration of proficiency in core cultural competencies (Navajo Content Standards) through portfolios, cultural arts projects, and performances evaluated by cultural experts OR complete a dual credit Diné Studies course with a grade of 70% or higher.

Prior to the pandemic, our Diné Studies course focussed heavily on activities where students connected with local knowledge holders and resources, we were very limited in what we could offer. Additionally, DEAP struggled to secure a Navajo Language teacher in the 2020-2021 school year. In light of these challenges, DEAP took direct action to reassess our Diné Studies Curriculum and contracted with local cultural experts to redesign the DEAP Diné Studies Curriculum. We have completed the first phase and will work toward implementation in the 2021-2022 school year.

Despite all the challenges, DEAP was still able to implement our Diné Studies courses by inviting presenters to our virtual class sessions, distributing materials for Diné Studies activities and supporting families with more literature written by Navajo and Native authors. Some of our Diné Studies Course highlights include the following:

- Mini-Moccasin Project
- Monthly Storytelling
- Navajo Language Lessons and Assessments
- Exploring Navajo Culture through Literature
- Dual Credit Opportunities for High School Students in Diné Studies
- Navajo Hogan built in Spring 2021
- Beginning work on DEAP Diné Studies Curriculum

In total, 76% of DEAP students completed their Diné Studies courses with a 70% or higher as measured by final grades. One student completed a dual credit course. While DEAP met the standard, the number of students that met the target is quite low in comparison to prior years. This is largely due to the way that virtual learning presented additional struggles regarding attendance and engagement.

CONCLUSION DEAP is providing high quality and meaningful programs to not only support student cultural and educational needs, but also to create opportunities for students to use their academic, cultural and vocational skills to transform the world around them.

ACTION PLAN

DEAP will continue to create pathways for students to engage in meaningful and relevant cultural programs. DEAP is the recipient of several grants to create dynamic cultural programming and instruction. DEAP also will invest facilities resources in developing traditional learning spaces such as a hogan and land based learning spaces and infrastructure.



VII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

OBJECTIVE: The financial objective is, through the use of public school funds, to ensure that New Mexico schools provide adequate operational resources to provide and improve services to NM tribal students. These services will meet the educational needs and provide opportunities to tribal students attending NM public schools.

BACKGROUND: *The New Mexico public school funding formula is based on a model developed by the National Education Finance Project (NEFP) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As a tool for better decision making, the model had great potential because of the variety of data that could be accommodated and the ease with which new data could be added and new decision options made available.*

Prior to the creation of the current formula, school funding methods had created a high degree of dis-equalization among districts because of differences in local wealth. The gap between rich and poor districts was broad, and the revenue that would be required to reach full equalization with the richest districts was staggering.

The goal of the new formula, therefore, was clear: to equalize educational opportunity at the highest possible revenue level, while minimizing the financial loss to the richest districts. As a result of the committee's work, the 1974 New Mexico Legislature enacted the Public School Finance Act, which has been widely acclaimed as one of the most innovative of the school finance plans currently being used across the country.

The formula is designed to distribute operational funds to school districts objectively and in a non-categorical manner, while providing for local school district autonomy. Formula dollars received by local districts are not earmarked for specific programs. Within statutory and regulatory guidelines, school districts have the latitude to spend their dollars according to local priorities.

In place for more than four decades, the public school funding formula has been under constant analysis. For the most part, the results of these analyses have supported statutory data-based refinements to the structure of the formula, while maintaining the philosophical concept of educational equity for all students.

METHODS DEAP applies annually for the School District Initiative Grant through NMPED's Indian Education Division.

RESULTS DEAP uses operational resources to ensure that resources are applied to American Indian students' educational opportunities. In addition, DEAP applies for additional supplemental grant opportunities.

In the 2020-2021 school year, DEAP received a total of \$90,000 from the NMPED Indian Education Grant.

CONCLUSION Given that DEAP serves 100% Native Americans students, we receive a variety of funds to create programs focussed in culture. However, more funding is needed to adequately meet the needs of all students. The majority of the funds from all sources are utilized to pay teachers, Native language teachers, and to contract with cultural specialists. For the 2020-2021, school year, DEAP a large chunk of the grant to construct a Diné hogan. This culturally responsive learning space allowed students to engage in Indigenous architecture and engineering as well as Navajo story telling. The space will serve as the location for future cultural activities.

ACTION PLAN DEAP has not yet applied for Impact Aid or JOM funding. As a result, DEAP is missing out on key resources to enhance our programs for student cultural awareness and development. DEAP will work to identify pathways and process to access these funds.

VIII. INDIAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

OBJECTIVE: The objective of Indian policies and procedures (IPP) is to ensure that New Mexico schools provide adequate tribal consultations with regard to the basic support payment requirements under the federal Impact Aid regulations.

BACKGROUND: Districts that claim federally identified American Indian students residing on Indian lands for Title VIII Impact Aid funding shall develop and implement policies and procedures in consultation with tribal officials and parents. The New Mexico Indian Education Act requires that school districts obtain a signature of approval by the New Mexico tribal governments or their designees residing within school district boundaries, verifying that New Mexico tribes agree to Indian education policies and procedures pursuant to federal Title VIII Impact Aid funding requirements.

METHODS: DEAP worked with the Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education to complete the annual tribal consultation on March 24, 2021. The consultation provided data to the Department as well as pathways for collaboration on developing Diné language and culture programs. In addition, DEAP works with the local Navajo Nation chapter, Red Lake, to identify opportunities for students and education ideas to thrive.

RESULTS A copy of the signed tribal consultation was submitted to NM Indian Education Division and is available to review upon request.

CONCLUSION The Tribal Consultation meetings will continue in the coming months and years. In addition, DEAP strives to have a governing council that is comprised of various tribal members to ensure that we have Native voices and ideas built into school leadership and key decisions.

ACTION PLAN DEAP will continue to provide updates to key tribal organizations and institutions as well as nurture opportunities for collaboration.

IX. SCHOOL DISTRICT INITIATIVES

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this initiative is to ensure that New Mexico schools provide their district office with the initiatives they are employing to increase attendance support for and decrease the number of student dropouts of American Indian students.

BACKGROUND: New Mexico pursues programs and strategies to meet the needs of at-risk students and to address obstacles associated with keeping students in school. New Mexico schools continue to be challenged in obtaining resources required to keep students in school despite including an “at-risk” factor in the state’s funding formula to assist in addressing the issue.

The assurance of collaboration and engagement from educational systems and pueblos/ tribes for input regarding academics and cultural awareness has positive effects on developing and implementing a variety of administrative and instructional practices to reduce school dropouts and increase students’ success in school. Additionally, dropouts negatively affect the four-year (freshman) cohort graduation rate for the state, which results in a lower graduation rate.

METHODS:

Dropout statistics report the number of students dropping out in a given school year and are collected at the school district level. Student membership is also collected and reported at the school, district, and state level, including the number of pupils in each of several categories from grades K through 12. Dropout data and rates are calculated only for grades 7–12. A student is considered a dropout if he or she was enrolled at any time during the previous school year, is not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, and does not meet certain exclusionary conditions. This means that students dropping out during the regular school term in year one, who are not reenrolled in school on October 1 of year two, are reported as year one dropouts. This is recorded in the dropout report in year two.

RESULTS

DEAP’s dropout rate data is masked. The following data was provided in the “Dzit Dit Lool School of Empowerment Action and Perseverance Data Profile” that was sent to DEAP on 9/2/2021 from indian.Education@state.nm.us.

Student Dropout rate 2019-2020 (one year lagged)

Ethnicity	2019-2020 Drop Gr. 7-12	2019-2020 Overall % Rate
American Indian/Alaskan Native	*	*
Multiracial	*	*

Source: STARS Staging Reports>Public Folders>eScholar Framework-Verify>District and Location Reports>Dropout Reports>Final Dropout Rates

*Indicates less than 10 students so results are masked

CONCLUSION New Mexico students drop out for a variety of reasons and the data does not always capture the underlying causes. The top three reasons reported include student: 1) did not re-enroll; 2) had an invalid transfer; and 3) intends to take GED. What is not reflected in the reported reasons are the social, health, and economic stresses that can affect dropout rates. Poverty is an underlying stress factor. For example, without adequate health care and nutrition, students may be absent more often from school due to poor health. Sometimes, family economics may require an older sibling to care for younger siblings who are at home, thereby affecting the student’s regular school attendance. Students may leave school to help support their families. Some other factors that can influence dropout rates are: experimentation with drugs, teen pregnancy, chronic diseases, and being the victim of bullying. In addition, many DEAP students transfer to schools in Arizona which may not accurately be counted under the same methods.

ACTION PLAN DEAP continues to provide opportunities for students to engage in interventions to combat drop out rates including credit recovery options, attendance contracts and accommodations for students situations such as teen pregnancy as well as opportunities to engage in social emotional learning activities. DEAP also work closely with families to identify solutions when transferring from DEAP or moving to another state. Additionally, DEAP offer credit recovery and social emotional learning programming to support students struggling with academics and other areas.

X. VARIABLE SCHOOL CALENDARS

OBJECTIVE: The variable school calendar objective is to ensure that New Mexico schools collaborate with Tribal governments to identify the important cultural events in their American Indian students' lives. By using variable school calendars, schools directly address their AI students' cultural and family responsibilities and enhance these students' ability to more regularly attend their public school.

BACKGROUND: New Mexico has a rich American Indian history and culture that cultivates the 22 Tribal governments and urban Native communities. The assurance of collaboration and engagement from educational systems and pueblos/tribes for input regarding academics and cultural awareness has positive effects on the educational success of American Indian students. American Indian education in New Mexico represents rich cultural traditions and diverse educational practices through different protocols and paradigms of practice. The 35,000- plus students who represent the NM tribes and pueblos and other tribes from throughout the United States, who attend over 185 public schools and charter schools in the State of New Mexico, were the focus of state and tribal legislators who established the Indian Education Act (IEA) in 2003.

METHODS: Since DEAP's founding, the school calendar has operated on a four day school week with Fridays reserved for experiential learning in culture, community service, wellness, land based learning OR professional development for staff. Our school calendar includes annual activities such as the Fall Harvest Festival, Winter Celebration, MLK Day of Service, Planting Festival and other programs for enhancing connections to culture and wellness. In addition, DEAP abides by all cultural norms including restricting classes during eclipses and other natural phenomena.

CONCLUSION

DEAP's calendar is planned with cultural obligations and celebrations in mind. Before the calendar is approved by the DEAP Governing Council it is presented the DEAP's Parent Advisory Committee for feedback. In addition, DEAP offers a flexible attendance policy for students that attend ceremony to honor cultural protocol.

ACTION PLAN

DEAP will continue to build an annual calendar that reflects student and family needs as well as cultural significant occurrences.

XI. SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSULTATIONS

OBJECTIVE: The district consultations ensure that New Mexico schools provide a means of developing mutual understanding of educational programs and collaborate with Tribal entities to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students.

BACKGROUND: Districts that claim federally identified American Indian students residing on Indian lands for Title VIII Impact Aid funding shall develop and implement policies and procedures in consultation with tribal officials and parents. Additionally, the New Mexico Indian Education Act asserts that parent(s); families; tribal departments of education; community-based organizations; the Public Education Department; universities; and tribal, state, and local policymakers work together to find ways to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students.

METHODS: Monthly Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings are conducted as well as monthly Governing Council meetings where the public is invited. Each meeting is announced through a variety of venues, including the school website, Parent messenger (phone calls, texts, email), flyers, letters, and newsletters. DEAP also provides updates to various stakeholders including the local chapters, Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education and Diné College.

RESULTS A total of 13 PAC meetings were held in 2020-2021 SY. In addition, DEAP revamped its website and communication process to ensure the public was able to ask questions and connect to a DEAP staff member.

CONCLUSION & ACTION PLAN DEAP will continue to hold space for PAC meetings to continue by providing training for families to engage via online platforms like Zoom. In addition, DEAP will create quarterly newsletters and distribute stakeholders.

XII. INDIGENOUS RESEARCH, EVALUATION & CURRICULA

OBJECTIVE: The research objective ensures that New Mexico schools receive adequate assistance for planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of curricula in native languages, culture, and history designed for tribal and non-tribal students as approved by New Mexico tribes.

BACKGROUND: Indian Education has been working to strengthen the field of Native education research, data, and best practices. The development of resources for Native education researchers, evaluators, educators, professors, and others who are working within Indian Education has been to improve education for our American Indian students enrolled in all schools. The Indigenous research methodologies differ from the Western educational approaches. In Western academic models, the research project and data are separated from the researcher, who is merely an onlooker. Though the data collected by Indigenous research methodologies can be analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively, just like data collected by Western research methods, the acknowledged relationship between researcher and data naturally challenges Western research paradigms. Indigenous research methodologies are powerful and worthwhile despite this challenge because they provide vital opportunities to contribute to the body of knowledge about the natural world and Indigenous peoples

METHODS: DEAP works in collaboration with a variety of partners engaged in strengthening pathways for Indigenous scholarship and research. DEAP has established some formal relationships with partners in the form of an MOU as well as informal partnerships via participation and collaboration.

RESULTS & CONCLUSION DEAP has formal MOUs with Diné College for Dual Credit, Diné College Teacher Education Program, and the NACA Inspired Schools Network. In addition, DEAP has collaborated with various partners including Teach For America, COPE, Diné Studies Conference, Navajo Cultural Arts Program, UNM POLLEN Program and Teach for All. DEAP has a variety of strong partnerships to enhance outcomes for Indigenous students and communities.

ACTION PLAN DEAP will continue to collaboration and identify solutions in addressing the unique needs of Indigenous students. In addition, DEAP students and staff are also engaged in the planing, development and implementation of rigorous and culturally relevant curriculum through various trainings, activities and courses.

