

# Six Directions Indigenous School

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An Introduction

# Founding Mission

## **Mission Statement**

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The Six Directions Indigenous School, through a commitment to culturally relevant indigenous education and interdisciplinary project-based learning, will develop critically conscious students who are engaged in their communities, demonstrate holistic well-being, and have a personal plan for succeeding in postsecondary opportunities.

## **Foundational Commitments**

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## Engaged in Community + Critically Conscious

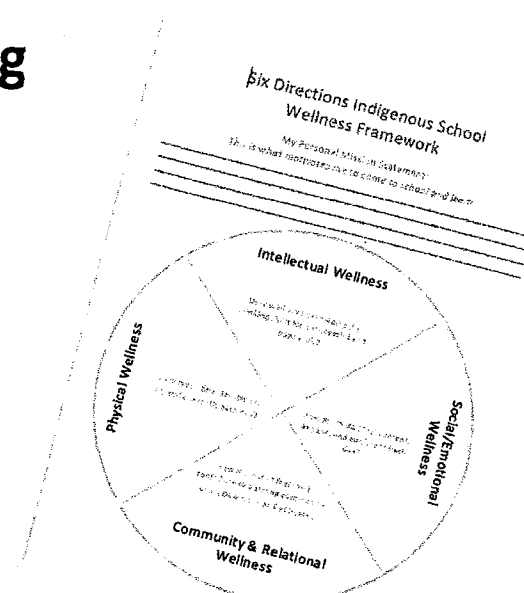


Students spent a month researching the proposed Pinon Pipeline in their Dine Studies class, mapped sacred sites the proposed project would cross on tribal lands, and hosted an in-class debate between the four sides of the issue (Saddle Butte Oil Company, Navajo Nation Government, Bureau of Land Management, and Community Members). Students also learned how to write formal letters to their elected officials to voice concerns or support.



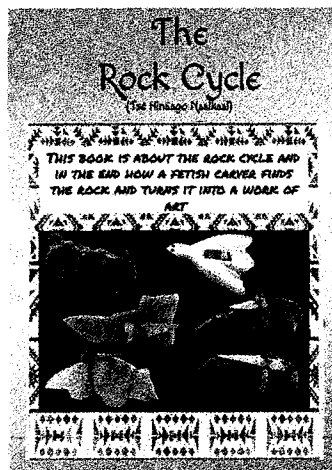
The unit culminated with a field trip to a public scoping meeting in Window Rock hosted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Students attended the public hearing, took notes on presentations made in Navajo and English, interviewed community, BLM, and Navajo Nation stakeholders, and even voiced their questions about the pipeline to the BLM at the podium during the public comment portion of the meeting.

## Holistic Well-Being



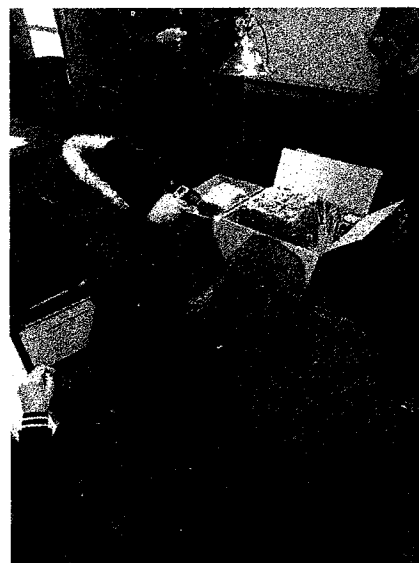
## Interdisciplinary Project-Based Learning and Culturally Relevant Practices

In a unit on the Rock Cycle, Mike Yawakaia of Zuni visited the class to discuss his fetish carvings and the different types of rocks encountered in the area--metamorphic, igneous, and sedimentary. In the end, students used art skills to create rock cycle books.



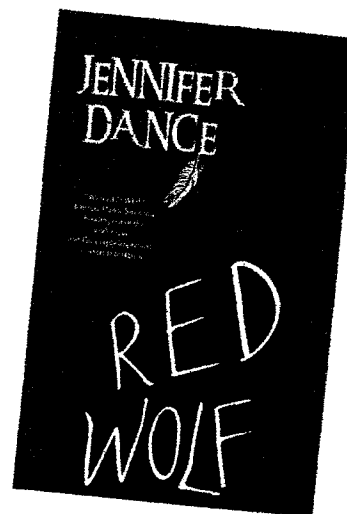
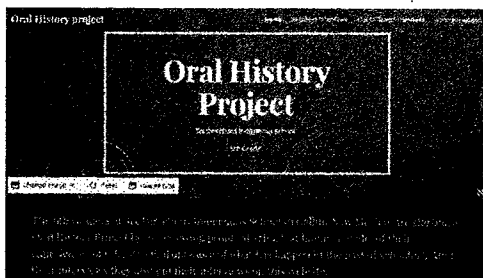
## Interdisciplinary Project-Based Learning and Culturally Relevant Practices

In a different project, students utilized architecture skills while learning standards about energy by building traditional structures and testing their energy efficiency using heat lamps and thermometers.



## Interdisciplinary Project-Based Learning and Culturally Relevant Practices

In a Humanities project, students studied local history while practicing the skills of a historian and reading skills by reading a novel, Red Wolf, about the boarding school era followed by learning about oral history projects and conducting interviews with family members to learn about their experiences with schooling. Students compiled their work on a google website they created.



## Interdisciplinary Project-Based Learning and Culturally Relevant Practices

In a summative experience, students studied uranium mining's history and health and environmental impact, Mount Taylor as a sacred site, survey design, and podcasting. Students took a trip to survey in public spaces in Grants followed by hiking and giving of blessings on Mount Taylor led by NIYLP. We were blessed with snow on May 12th!



## Indigenous Language and Culture

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We offer daily Dine' and A:shiwí class for all students.

We have welcomed visitors who specialize in cultural knowledge, like Curtis Quam from the A:shiwí Museum to share stories and linguistic knowledge with students.

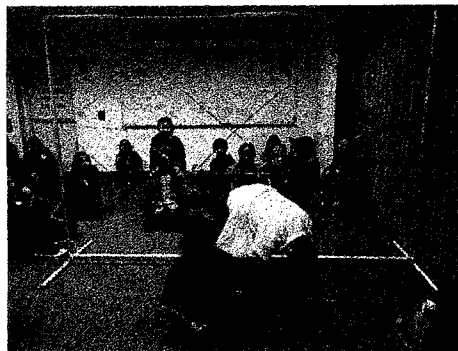
In October, students and staff put on an Indigenous Peoples' Day Celebration!



## National Indian Youth Leadership Project (NIYLP)

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The National Indian Youth Leadership Project facilitates Project Venture each Wednesday afternoon after our early release. Students participate in team building, outdoor activities like rock climbing and mountain biking, and traditional skills like archery and fire making.



## **Restorative Practices**

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Community building occurs daily through Advisory and Community Meeting. Professional Development has included topics like Non-Violent Communication and Restorative Questioning.

Restorative Questioning occurs informally through the use of the SDIS Reflection Form in order to resolve conflict and whenever harm has been committed in a classroom.

## **Outcomes and Performance Framework**

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## Enrollment

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Met contract capacity of 50 for 2016-17 sy, grades 6 and 7

Carried a wait list for students desiring enrollment all year

Already at 80 enrolled for 2017-18 sy, grades 6, 7, 8

## NWEA Summary

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### MATH

Average of **9.6** RIT scale points of growth from fall to winter.

**75%** of students met their end of year goal.

**41%** tested on grade level in spring, compared to **18%** in fall.

### READING

Average of **9.8** RIT scale points of growth from fall to spring.

**79%** of students met their end of year goal.

**47%** tested on grade level in spring, compared to **31%** in fall.



## 2016-17 PARCC Summary

### Grade 6 Math

<b>STATE</b>					<b>24,552</b>	<b>724</b>
20	31	29	18	2		
<b>DISTRICT</b>					<b>22</b>	<b>718</b>
36	18	27	18	0		

### Grade 6 ELA/L

<b>STATE</b>					<b>24,401</b>	<b>730</b>
15	28	32	23	2		
<b>DISTRICT</b>					<b>22</b>	<b>724</b>
9	50	23	18	0		

## 2016-17 PARCC Summary

### Grade 7 Math

<b>STATE</b>					<b>23,890</b>	<b>724</b>
17	33	33	15	1		
<b>DISTRICT</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>722</b>
8	48	28	16	0		

### Grade 7 ELA/L

<b>STATE</b>					<b>23,900</b>	<b>727</b>
23	24	28	22	4		
<b>DISTRICT</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>726</b>
16	40	20	20	4		

## Tripod Survey

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*\*Data about school climate, student perceptions of relationships, and student perceptions of discipline.*

*\*Questions answered on a 5-point Likert Scale and reported as a whole school.*

“This school feels like a safe place to me”:  
55% positive - 25% neutral - 20% negative

## Tripod

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“The way adults treat me at this school makes me angry”:  
58% positive – 25% neutral - 17% negative

“Teachers in the hallway treat me with respect, even if they don’t know me.”:  
51% positive – 32% neutral - 17% negative

## Tripod

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“I treat adults at this school with respect, even if I don’t know them”:

77% positive – 16% neutral - 7% negative

## Tripod

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“When it comes to being punished at this school, I expect to be treated fairly”:

56% positive – 30% neutral - 14% negative

“Adults at this school treat me just as fairly as they treat other students.”:

60% positive – 31% neutral - 9% negative

## Synthesis - Given the data, our plan for 2017-18

### **Immediately**

**(What can you do next year to immediately improve teaching and learning against the mission?)**

- New-staff orientation in the tenets of SDIS culture and relationship-building.
- Launching college and career-pathways experiences for 8th graders
- Implement 5Cs as assessment method for PBL
- Collect data on language instruction
- Collect data on parent/family experiences (Quad)
- Advisory Curriculum

### **17-18 Big Pushes**

**(What items will require a yearlong focus of PD to accomplish?)**

- Institutionalizing staff and student climate and culture.
- Making PBL more interdisciplinary (as a rule instead of just opportunistically)
- Critique of 5Cs (EOY)
- Increasing family voice and power (Family Advisory Committee)
- Complete Core Values
- Defining goals, assessments, vertical alignment, etc. of language instruction

### **Challenges**

**(What long-term questions is the school still grappling with in order to meet its mission?)**

- How do we counter the history of family disenfranchisement in schools by building parent voice/power/agency?
- How do we balance educational imperatives with the desire to qualify for funds (ie bilingual, indian ed, etc.) in our design processes?
- How do we build sustainability?