



Indian Affairs Committee Presentation

August 20, 2015



## **Native American Community Academy**

*Where Education, Community, and  
Culture Come Together*



To engage students, educators, families, and community in creating a school that will prepare our students to grow from adolescence to adulthood and begin strengthening communities by developing strong leaders who are academically prepared, secure in their identity and healthy.



# NACA Core Values: Shared and committed to students

*NACA Core Values: New Mexico's communities and leaders embody critical core cultural values and traditions*

**Respect** – Having concern for harmonious relationships; honoring yourself, your peers, your family, your elders, your ancestors, your teachers, your school, your community, your tribe/nation. Having courteous regard for others' feelings and values. Respect helps people get along better with each other.

**Responsibility** – We are responsible to our People; past, present and future, as well as our environment and other living things. Being responsible is a form of trustworthiness; being accountable for your words, actions, and conduct in all that you do.

**Community/Service** – We belong to the NACA community as well as the communities of our neighborhoods, cities, pueblos, reservations and nations. This means that, along with rights, we have the responsibility to provide service to make our community a better place for all.

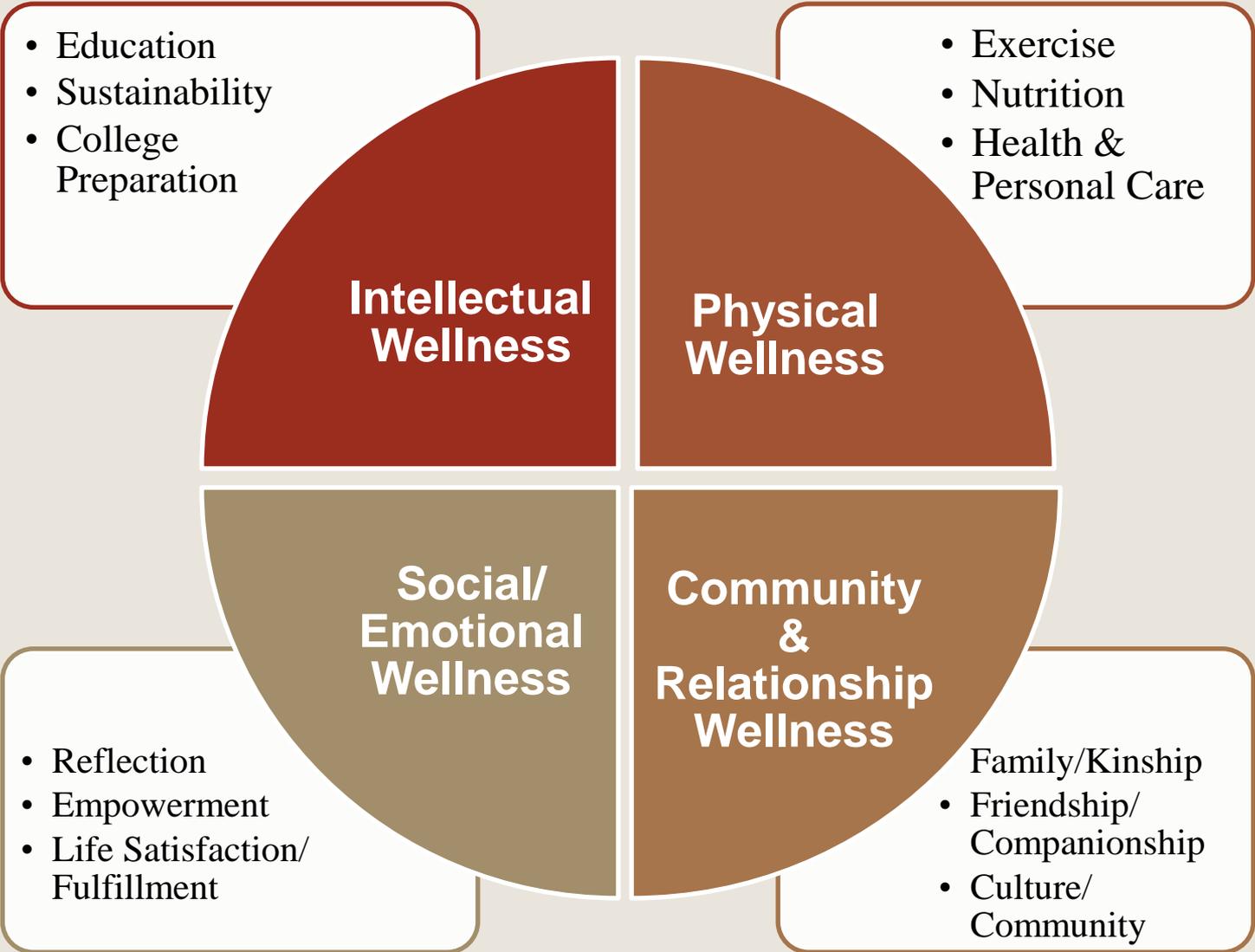
**Culture** – We honor and value our own cultures and those of others. We recognize we are influenced by many cultures, including Indigenous, youth, and contemporary western cultures and are mindful in how this impacts the development of identity.

**Perseverance** – Indigenous people have endured because of the perseverance and determination of those that came before. We make our ancestors proud by remaining constant to a purpose, idea or task in spite of obstacles. We engage our innate strengths and build relationships with others that support us in developing to our full potential.

**Reflection** – Indigenous thinking and learning is a reflective process involving a deliberate looking inward, self-awareness and contemplation of deeper meanings. We support this reflective practice to encourage thoughtfulness, personal growth, profound learning and meaningful change.



*NACA Wellness Wheel: Aligned to many Indigenous world views and used for on-going goal setting and growth*





# NACA GOALS

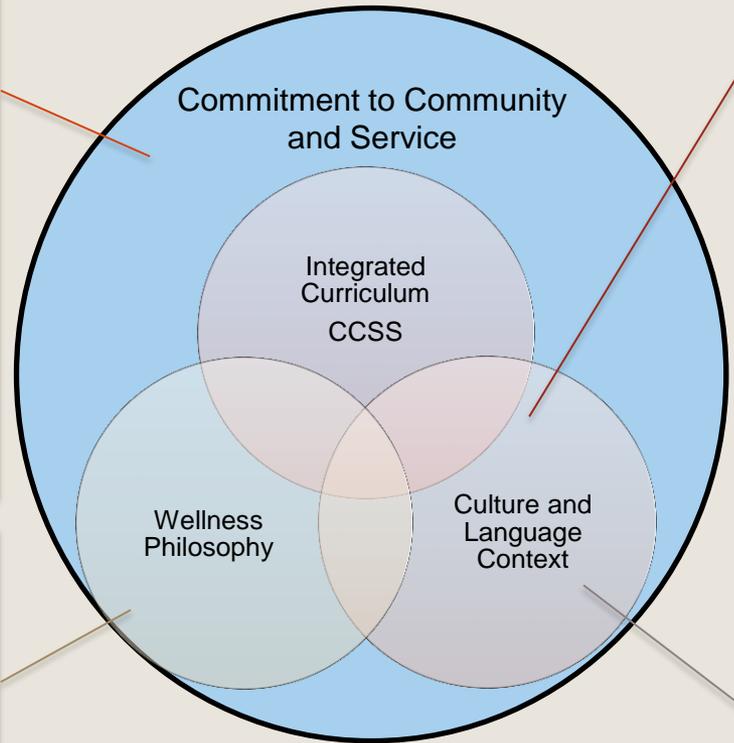
- ❖ Integrated curriculum
- ❖ Cultural relevancy
- ❖ Community Relations

- ❖ Wellness Philosophy
- ❖ Language Revitalization
- ❖ Enrichment & College-Preparatory Focus

- Year Round Community-based Out of School Time program
- Community presentations, open houses, guest speakers, cultural events, and mentoring
- Key community partnerships include: Americans for Indian Opportunity, NM Forum for Youth & Community, CNM, Southwest Youth Services, UNM School Based Health, UNM Tribal Service Corps, Institute of American Indian Arts, Sister Schools

- Student Support Services providing free, school-based, culturally-sensitive, high quality mental health services open to all students and families
- Experiential Education Program focused on students overall wellness; part of required Personal Wellness class for all students
- Supporting families with healthcare, nutrition, and social services at the on-site school based health center

## NACA Curriculum and Instruction Framework



- Integrated Curriculum - culturally based education, holistic wellness philosophy, and community/ based education – to guide the development of school programs, wellness, and academic curriculum
- Rigorous college prep curriculum and vigorous testing (students complete at least 6 hours of dual enrollment credit prior to graduation)

- Using Native literature, Pre-AP, AP, language, and culture as the framework for rigorous, college-prep curriculum
- Specific studies include storytelling, oral traditions, cultural history, Native languages, community presentations, and Native American literature



# NACA Course of Studies

## NACA student coursework consists of:

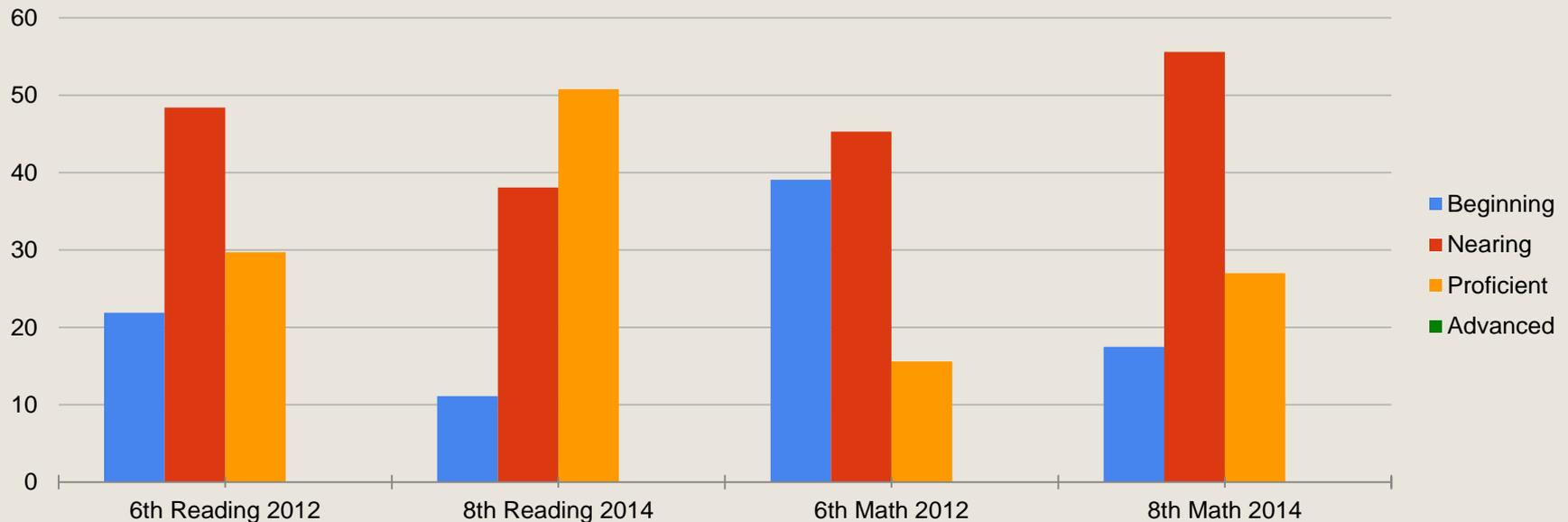
- Native Literature Grades 6-12<sup>th</sup> with opportunities for dual enrollment
- Indigenous History – Local, Continental, Global, Senior Capstone
- Mathematics – Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus
- Science – Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Environmental Science
- Language – Navajo, Tiwa, Keres, Zuni, and Lakota
- Personal Wellness and Indigenous Core
- NACA Rock, Indigenous Art, Technology, and other electives
- Dual Enrollment
- Pre-Advanced Placement & Advanced Placement courses
- Junior Seminar/ACT Prep & Junior Internship
- Senior Seminar/College Access/Financial Planning
- Advisory for every student takes place from middle school to college



# Class of 2018 Scores as 6th Grade versus 8th Grade

Students coming to NACA in 6th grade frequently score in the beginning step on state mandated assessments. By 8th grade, we are able to see a great deal of growth in the number of students who have moved up 1 or more categories and into the proficient range.

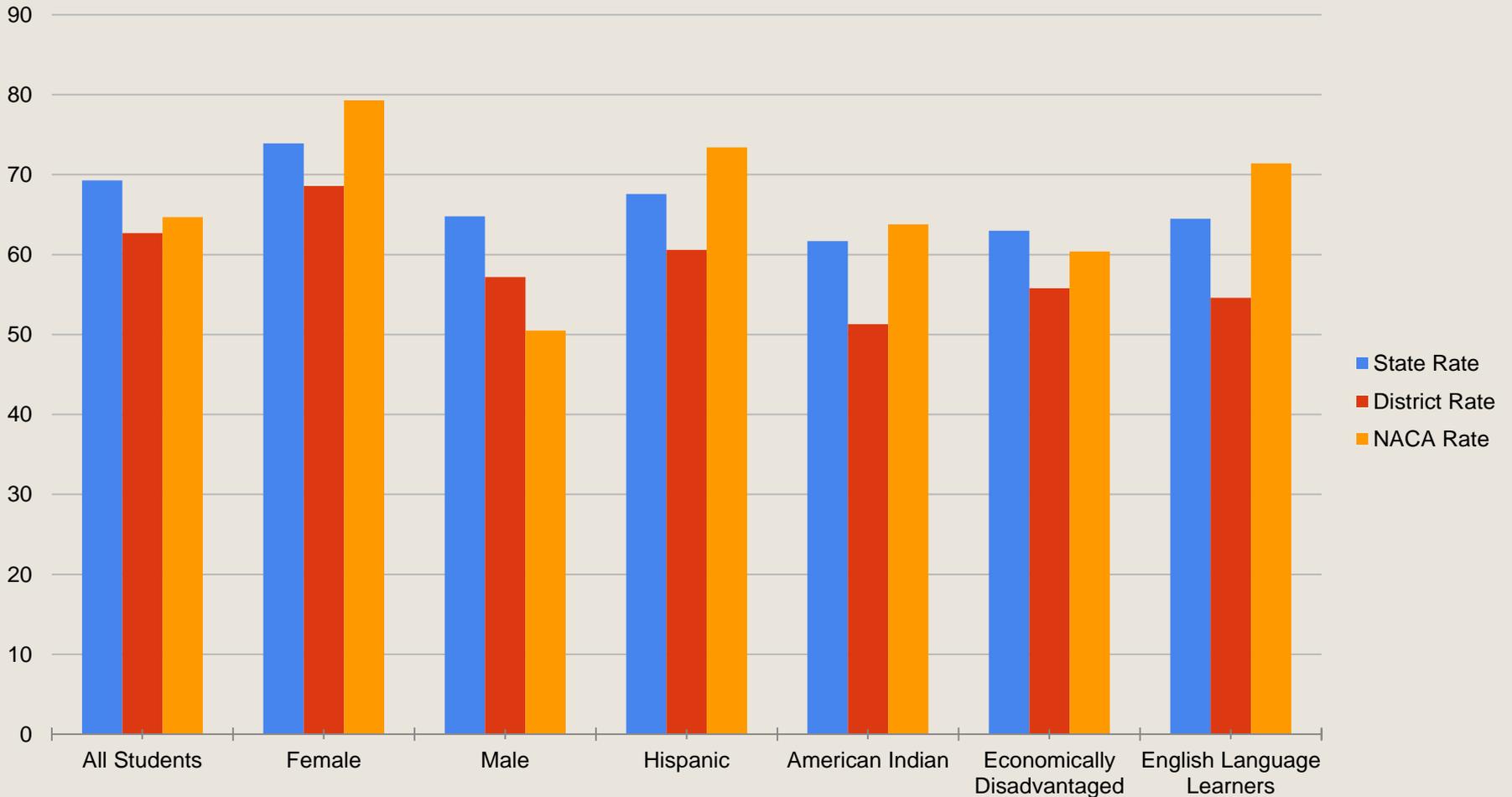
**Class of 2018 Scores as 6th Grade versus 8th Grade NACA Students (percent of students scoring in each area)**





# NACA 2014 Graduation Rate

## Graduation Rates NACA vs. State vs. District (by percentage)





# NACA: Recognized as a Middle School Beating the Odds

- *A few middle schools in New Mexico are “beating the odds.” Twelve middle schools, or 8 percent of all non-charter middle schools in New Mexico may be considered “beating-the-odds.” The middle schools were selected based on factors such as positive results from the predicted versus the actual proficiency scores on the SBA in both reading and math, school grades of C or above for the last three school years, and high poverty rates or free and reduced lunch (FRL) percentages above the state average of 72.8 percent.*
- NACA was recognized for our focus on wellness, lunch time play (Playworks), culturally relevant curriculum, boys group and our ability to be awesome!
- Report Highlights: Focus on college and career readiness • Student wellness emphasized • Teachers create unique curriculum • Culture and language integrated into curriculum • Personal wellness course • Organized “play” time during lunch • Boys program- community service activities for boys with behavioral infractions and our wish list was to have access to a better system to receive data from feeder elementary schools.



# The NACA model has put students on the path to success in college and their communities

## *NISN and NACA Mission and History*

A

NACA received New Mexico's **highest rating for student growth** in 2012–13, outperforming the state average for improving academic achievement.

A

NACA received an A in College and Career Readiness on the NM report card.

100

100 percent of NACA seniors are **accepted into college**.

4x

Of graduating seniors, 83 percent have **gone on to college immediately after their Senior year**. This is four times the national average for Native American students. NACA kids outperformed many high schools.

90%

90% of a student's day is rooted in rigorous, culturally relevant learning



# NACA differs from many high-performing schools in three critical ways

## NACA Mission and History

NACA Element	What it looks like
<b>Integration of Academic Excellence &amp; Cultural Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Curriculum, pedagogy, and assessments satisfy Common Core standards and practices, with data-backed evaluation of outcomes</li><li>• Education is done in whole or part using Indigenous Languages, or through Indigenous teaching practices (e.g. integrating geology curriculum with Native creation stories, impact of policy on tribes, impact of Ind.Ed)</li></ul>
<b>Focus on holistic wellness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holistic Wellness Wheel used as a framework for students and staff to assess growth and set goals</li><li>• Services, supports, and programs oriented around Intellectual, Physical, and Social/Emotional Health and Wellbeing</li><li>• Respectful interaction between teachers, students &amp; families sensitive to impact of boarding schools in Native communities</li></ul>
<b>Community Transformation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NACA is a key facilitator of connections within the community, creating and leading partnerships with organizations like the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, UNM's NAS, SYS, Inc., AIO</li><li>• NACA leads community events such as the NACA Feast day, Pow-wow and host schools interested in Indigenous Education and leadership development</li></ul>



## ... as well as a common teaching and learning framework

*Professional Development Framework: NACA Teachers participate in 254 hours of PD as compared to 16 days Hours*

**Curriculum:** Encompasses Common Core State Standard skills with culturally relevant content and real-world application as a means to achieve Indigenous Perspectives and rigor.

**Assessment:** Student outcomes are judged at the end of each unit, and ultimately used to inform decisions about the future units of study.

Indigenous perspectives are integrated throughout the teaching and learning framework, ensuring a high level of consonance and meaning.

**Instruction:** Teachers use the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework, emphasizing student onus, questioning, and inquiry.

**Professional development:** Based on collaborative critique model emphasizing transparency, availability, and vulnerability in teachers' curriculum, assessments, and instruction.



# Consequently, NISN schools are aligned through a common guiding philosophy and six commitments...

*NISN Operating Model and Strategic Plan: Sharing our work and building a community focused on Innovation*

## NISN Guiding Philosophy

Each school will be a leader in Indigenous education, **integrating personal health, cultural identity, and academic excellence** so that every student is academically prepared, **holistically well** (intellectual, physical, social / emotional, relationships) and **prepared to lead in and contribute to** their communities

## Expressed through the Six Community Commitments

### Academic Excellence & Relevance

Student excellence in college, career, and community through culturally relevant curriculum and instructional practices

### NISN Core Values & Culture

Embodiment of the NISN core values, reflecting and supporting the cultural diversity and perspectives of their communities

### Community Transformation

Community designed and led schools that transform the lives of their students, families, and stakeholders

### Reflection and Continuous Improvement

Continual deliberate reflection on, and improvement in, practices in service of their communities and mission

### Leadership in Indigenous Education

Contributions to the creation and sustaining of a national movement for excellence in Indigenous education

### Operating Effectiveness & Efficiency

Creation of long-lasting impact through effective and sustainable practices and use of resources