How No Child Left Behind Benefits American Indians

In the past, many American Indian and Alaska Native students were shortchanged by the education system.

- Prior to the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, the U.S. did not track the achievement gap between American Indian / Alaska Native students and their peers.
- Today, only about one in six American Indian and Alaska Native 8th-graders is proficient in reading and one in seven is proficient in math, according to the 2005 Nation’s Report Card.

The bipartisan No Child Left Behind law is making sure schools are held accountable for the academic progress of every child.

- Closing the achievement gap is now a national priority, with schools held accountable for the achievement of all American Indian and Alaska Native students.
- Their parents are given regular updates on the academic progress of their children and schools.
- Those with children in public schools (about 90 percent) are offered new options and choices, such as free tutoring, if the school regularly underperforms.
- School officials must develop a plan with families, tribal leaders, teachers, and others to turn around underperforming schools.
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs has its own accountability plan in place to ensure that its schools leave no child behind.

No Child Left Behind is working.

- The 2005 Nation’s Report Card Long-Term Trend report found steady academic growth and gains nationwide, particularly among younger and minority students.
- Reading scores for nine-year-olds improved more over the last five years than in the previous 30.
- Math scores for American Indian and Alaska Native 4th-graders rose a significant 3 points since 2003, and reading scores are also trending upwards, according to the Nation’s Report Card State-by-State results.

President Bush and Secretary Spellings are working to ensure that No Child Left Behind meets the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native citizens.

- In 2004, President Bush signed an Executive Order recognizing the “unique educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students.”
- The Executive Order pledged to meet No Child Left Behind’s high standards “in a manner that is consistent with tribal traditions, languages and cultures.”
- U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings is working with tribal leaders to implement the law in a sensible and workable way.
- In April 2005, the Department’s Office of Indian Education hosted a national conference on Indian education with more than 600 national, state and tribal leaders and experts.

President Bush and Congress have provided historic levels of education funding.

- Support for America’s neediest students has risen by more than 45 percent.
- Total funding under No Child Left Behind to benefit American Indian and Alaska Native students has increased 43 percent to more than $300 million.
- Title I Bureau of Indian Affairs funding to help low-income students has grown by more than 60 percent to more than $91 million, including a $30 million multi-year Reading First grant to improve literacy.
- Grants have been awarded to professionally develop hundreds of Indian teachers and administrators.

Call 1(800) 872-5327 or visit www.nclb.gov for more information on No Child Left Behind.