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Project Abstract

The FPCC Demonstration project is a partnership between Fort Peck Community College and four school districts on the Fort Peck Reservation. The four school districts are Brockton School District, Frazer School District, Poplar School District, and Wolf Point School District. These schools serve the children of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes. The purpose of the FPCC Demonstration project is to improve the educational opportunities and achievement of Indian students in the K-12 school districts on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation through services designed to provide social-emotional support, tutoring as alternative educational support, after-school and summer educational and cultural activities, and college exploration activities. The expected outcomes of the project include increases in school attendance rates, student self-confidence and motivation, math and reading achievement rates, and college and career readiness.

The FPCC Demonstration project meets qualifications for the absolute priority as a Native Youth Community Project and two of the competitive preference priorities: 1) FPCC is an eligible TCU and serves as the lead partner, and e) the project promotes equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities. The project has the potential to impact over 2000 students across four school districts on the Fort Peck Reservation. The project will provide access to professional tutoring for at least 100 students and peer tutoring to 16 classrooms. The project will provide after school activities to at least 720 enrollments, summer camp activities for 80 enrollments, and cultural activities for at least 360 enrollments annually. Finally, the project will expand dual enrollment courses, provide career fairs, and provide college visits for 40 students annually. These activities are designed to help students become more career and college ready.

Grantee: Fort Peck Community College

PR#: S299A220047

Project Name: The Fort Peck Community College (FPCC) Demonstration project

Number of Students Served: ~2000 across four school districts

Tribe(s): Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes

Location: Montana

Grade Levels: K–12 school districts on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation

Funding Amount: \$499,945.00

Abstract

Objective: The FPCC Demonstration project is a partnership between Fort Peck Community College and four school districts on the Fort Peck Reservation. The purpose of the FPCC Demonstration project is to improve the educational opportunities and achievement of Indian students in the K-12 school districts on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation through services designed to provide social-emotional support, tutoring as alternative educational support, afterschool and summer educational and cultural activities, and college exploration activities.

Population Served: The four school districts served are Brockton School District, Frazer School District, Poplar School District, and Wolf Point School District. These schools serve the children of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes. The project has the potential to impact over 2000 students across these districts.

Primary Activities: The project will provide access to professional tutoring for at least 100 students and peer tutoring to 16 classrooms. The project will provide after-school activities to at least 720 participants, summer camp activities for 80 participants, and cultural activities for at least 360 participants annually. Finally, the project will expand dual enrollment courses, provide career fairs, and provide college visits for 40 students annually. These activities are designed to help students improve career and college readiness.

Outcomes: The expected outcomes of the project include increased in-school attendance rates, improved student self-confidence and motivation, higher math and reading achievement rates, and college and career readiness.

FORT PECK COMMUNITY COLLEGE (FPCC) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT NARRATIVE

Priorities:

Absolute Priority – Native Youth Community Project

The FPCC project qualifies under the Absolute Priority as a Native Youth Community Project. Fort Peck Community College is a Tribal College as defined in section 316(b) of the HEA and is the lead applicant in partnership with the four LEAs that serve the Fort Peck Reservation. The project is localized to the Fort Peck Reservation in the communities that provide K-12 education for Native American children. The four school districts in the partnership are Brockton School District, Frazer School District, Poplar School District, and Wolf Point School District. The purpose of the partnership is to improve educational opportunities for Indian students toward preparation for college and careers. This project builds on successes and lessons learned through evaluation from the previous demonstration project as well as community needs assessment data collected in spring 2022. The school systems, students, and parents in the project identified several significant barriers to college and career readiness for their students. The greatest barriers were *a lack of motivation and self-confidence* of students born out of historical and other trauma. These barriers are manifested through chronic absenteeism and are largely a result of prevalent addiction challenges in the communities as well as severely high poverty.

The previous demonstration project (Chanté), scheduled to end with fiscal year 2021-2022, has begun to make significant progress in turning the tide for students on the Fort Peck Reservation through targeted strategies designed to promote student self-discovery, build student self-awareness, and provide opportunities for student voice and healing. Student academic gains were hindered by the challenges brought on by the pandemic with isolation and remote learning for almost two years of that four-year project. However, there is evidence of student gains in

growth mindset and other non-cognitive skills; but this is just a beginning and more work needs to be done. The FPCC project builds on the relationships that have been forged among Fort Peck Community College, the school districts, Tribal Education Department, and community-based organizations to coordinate community level services and integrate Tribal languages and traditional cultural practices. The communities within the project share many commonalities, but they each have their unique resources and challenges. This project leverages professional services and community-level resources funded through Tribal and other sources to meet the unique educational needs of the children in those communities. The project is designed to be responsive to each community's and school district's needs as a means toward promoting equity in student access to educational resources designed to prepare Native American students for college and careers. Community driven, evidence-based strategies designed to support students toward meeting measurable objectives address challenges to academic success specific to each school district on the Fort Peck Reservation.

Competitive Preference Priority 1 – Tribal Lead Applicant

The lead partner for this project is Fort Peck Community College (FPCC). FPCC is a Tribal College (TCU) located on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeastern Montana. FPCC was chartered by the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation in 1978 and has maintained its accreditation in good standing since then. FPCC requests five (5) additional points for this priority.

Competitive Preference Priority 3 – Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities

Equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities takes on a much different flavor in the schools located on the Fort Peck Reservation than how it might be defined in other areas of the country or even in other parts of Montana. This project has been developed

through input of parents, students, and school personnel to supplement what the schools currently offer to meet the needs of children and families. Two of the schools, Brockton and Frazer, are K-12 districts with all grades located under one roof, while the Poplar and Wolf Point school districts serve larger student populations across more distinct grade-level buildings. All of the students served by these schools are economically disadvantaged. These school systems are the centers of the communities offering stability, safety, activities, and meals for children. Yet, the rural and remote settings of the school districts have created challenges to finding qualified teachers. In recent years some schools have hired Filipino teachers to work in their schools through the J-1 Teacher Program. The Filipino teachers are highly qualified and experienced teachers but need support to develop cultural competence to work with Native students and families. The project offers strategies that help these and other teachers increase their cultural competency at the schools and expands the learning space to after school and summer activities, culturally centered learning activities, social-emotional supports for students, supplemental academic support, and college readiness activities. Each school will have the flexibility to utilize services provided through the project to ensure students have equitable access to the supports and resources they need to be better prepared for college and careers. FPCC requests seven (7) points for this priority.

a. Need for Project

(1) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses

The Fort Peck Reservation, located in northeastern Montana, is 110 miles long and 40 miles wide, encompassing just over 2,093,318 acres (approximately 3,200 square miles). The reservation is home to two separate American Indian Nations, each composed of numerous bands and divisions. The Sioux divisions of Sisseton, Wahpetons, the Yanktonais, and the Teton

Hunkpapa and Assiniboine bands of Canoe Paddler and Red Bottom are all represented. Like most tribes in the US, the Fort Peck Tribes have endured over 200 years of Federal assimilation and termination policies resulting in a fractionated land base, loss of Tribal language and cultural traditions, and broken family circles. This destruction is difficult to rectify and the wounds run deep into the genetic fiber of the people. There is limited economic development that exists on the Fort Peck Reservation, due in no small part to regulations related to its trust relationship with the Federal government. Limited economic development means limited employment opportunity which contributes to the poverty on the Fort Peck Reservation. The lack of opportunity can manifest itself into hopelessness.

The greatest barriers for students on the Fort Peck Reservation are those associated with poverty and the effects of intergenerational trauma manifesting in lack of self-confidence and academic motivation. Information gleaned from a community needs assessment identified gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities they believe could be improved to better support students. One opportunity identified for improvement is to ***provide cross-cultural support for teachers***. The school systems have well-qualified teachers, many of whom come from non-Native cultures, including the Philippines. These teachers, while qualified to teach, need assistance in understanding the cultures in the communities and providing culturally responsive support for students. A weakness in ***social-emotional services for students*** was identified in the community needs assessment. Students struggle with high levels of anxiety and depression. There needs to be a more formal way for students to find their “voice” and talk about their concerns and struggles on a regular basis. ***Limited access to alternative educational support*** was identified as a service gap. Student performance in reading and math is significantly lower overall for students on the Fort Peck Reservation than for their peers across the state. The

community needs assessment identified *limited activities for kids* to do in the communities after school or during the summer as a service gap. Students need a safe place and opportunities to try new experiences in the arts and cultural arts (aside from competitive sports) to develop their gifts and abilities and grow in confidence. Currently there is no state or district funding for after school or summer programs on the Fort Peck Reservation. Many parents of students on the Fort Peck Reservation do not have a college degree. This classifies these students as “*first generation college students*” when they go to college. First generation college students are less likely to enroll in higher education and are at significantly higher risk for success once in college. First generation students and parents can be circumspect about college as a new environment and a new situation. Students perceive limited options after high school. Attending college visits, even as early as the eighth grade, can help students begin to form decisions regarding college choice and preparation.¹

(2) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project

Poverty is a key contributor to low academic readiness. The Fort Peck Reservation, located primarily in Roosevelt County, has experienced chronic high unemployment and poverty. The unemployment rate in February 2022 for Roosevelt County was 3.9% compared to that of 2.6% overall in the state.²² The median family income in 2019 in Roosevelt County (\$38,409) was 32.9% lower than the median family income for Montana overall (\$57,248). Almost half (49.8%) of children up to age 17 live in single-parent homes and almost one out of

¹ Swanson, Elise and Kopotic, Katherine and Zamarro, Gema and Mills, Jonathan and Greene, Jay and Ritter, Gary, An Evaluation of the Educational Impact of College Campus Visits: A Randomized Experiment (February 5, 2019).

² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://data.bls.gov/>

four children (22.4%) experiences food insecurity in Roosevelt County.³ It is well documented that conditions of poverty affect the children and academic achievement in many ways. Physical and mental health issues compound that effect. Joblessness, along with substance abuse and other factors of poverty, contributes to higher crime rates and other negative health effects on the Fort Peck Reservation.⁴ “Many youth are also dealing with complex family histories of abuse and addiction which makes it even more challenging to break free and grow into healthy, independent adults with dreams and plans for the future.”⁵ According to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, the highest rate of suicide is among American Indians in the state, with the highest rates in Roosevelt County at 41.3 per 100,000. The social factors associated correlated most highly with suicide include social isolation, downward social mobility, and rural residency. About 90% of those who die by suicide have major depression.⁶

There were at total of 2,047 students enrolled in the school districts served by the project, all of whom are economically disadvantaged. Homelessness ranges from 4% at one school up to 33% at another for K-8 students across the districts and from 9% up to 23% for high school students.⁷ The people in the communities served by this project are a collective people and a relation-based people. Barriers to academic success for Native students were exacerbated by the isolation and remote learning situations spurred by the pandemic, according to Dr. Billie Jo Kipp, associate director of research and evaluation at the Aspen Institute’s Center for Native

³ KidsCount Data Center. (n.d.). Retrieved from Annie E. Casey Foundation: datacenter.kidscount.org

⁴ Wulfhorst, E. (2016, May 17). Business Insider. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/r-fueled-by-drugs-sex-trafficking-reaches-crisis-on-native-american-reservation-2016-5>

⁵ Native Hope. (n.d.) Retrieved from www.nativehope.org

⁶ Rosston, K (January 2021) Suicide in Montana: Facts, figures, and formulas for prevention. (<https://dphhs.mt.gov/>)

⁷ Montana Office of Public Instruction: Growth and Enhancement of Montana Students (GEMS) <https://gems.opi.mt.gov/>

American Youth.⁸ Fort Peck Reservation is no different. The isolation and separation from the schools and from their peers and teachers is believed to have been detrimental to their overall well-being and academic growth. And this may be part of what is reflected in student achievement scores from the state assessments.

The students at the participating schools scored significantly lower than their peers on state assessments and ACT exams. A range of 73-88% of students grades 3-8 in the districts tested at the novice (lowest) level in math compared to just 33% statewide on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2020-21 school year. A range of 81-100% of students taking the ACT Junior Test scored at the novice level in math compared to 43% statewide in the 2020-21 school year. The graph below illustrates the percent of students who scored at proficient or higher in math at each school compared to statewide.

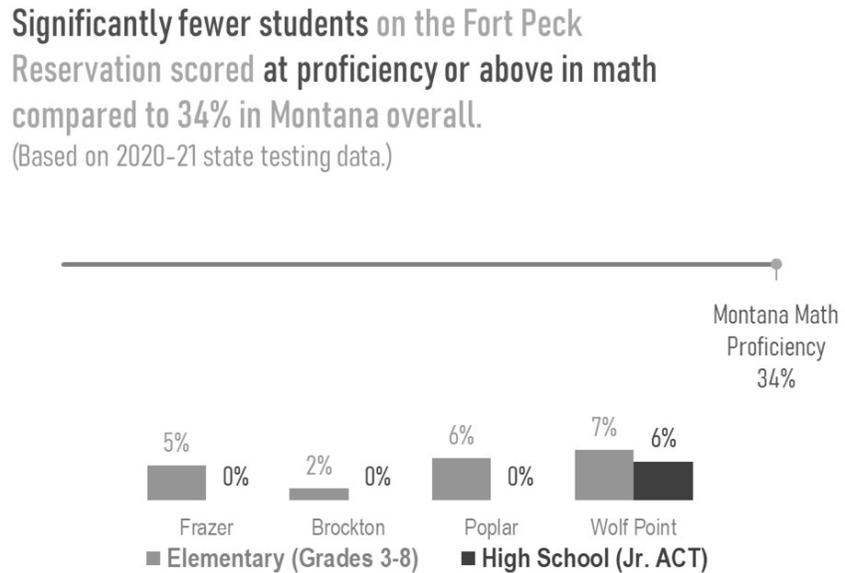


Figure 1: Math Proficiency Comparisons

⁸ Saccone, K. (September 9, 2020) The pandemic has widened gaps in Native Communities – Now is our chance to close them. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/the-pandemic-has-widened-gaps-in-native-communities-now-is-our-chance-to-close-them/>

A disparity of up to 34 percentage points exists in math achievement scores between the students at schools on the Fort Peck Reservation and those overall in Montana. English Language Arts scores in grades 3-8 in the districts on the Fort Peck Reservations ranged from 57% at one elementary school up to 80% at another scoring at the novice (lowest) level on the Smarter Balanced Assessment for English Language Arts compared to just 28% statewide. A range of 64-100% of students taking the ACT Junior Test scored at the novice level in English Language Arts compared to 34% statewide in the 2020-21 school year. The graph below illustrates the percent of students who scored at proficient or higher in English Language Arts at each school compared to statewide. A disparity of up to 46 percentage points exists between the students at schools on the Fort Peck Reservation and those overall in Montana.

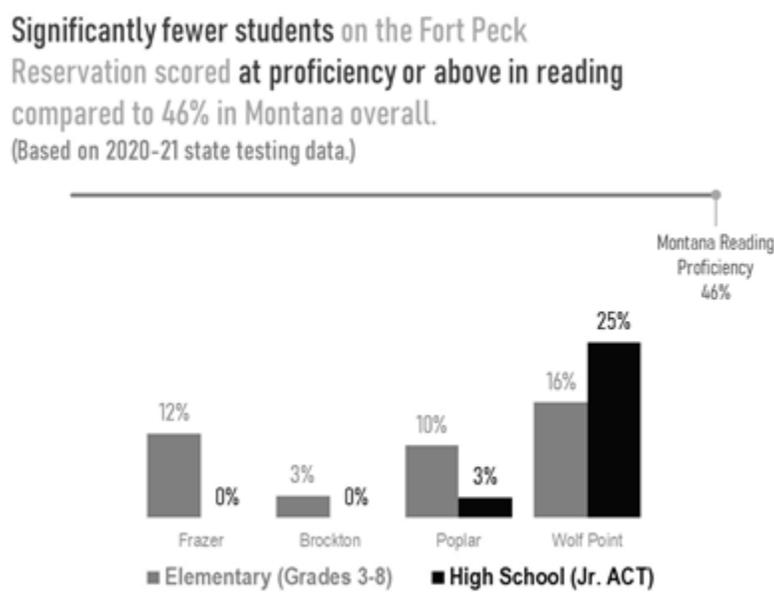


Figure 2: English Language Art Proficiency Comparison

These achievement scores are certainly worrisome and they serve as leading indicators to high school graduation and college entrance rates. The high school graduation rates in the districts range from just 40% to 78% across the districts on the Fort Peck Reservation compared to 86% statewide. There are many compounding factors that contribute to these statistics,

including the psychological impact of low socioeconomic status and poverty. Single-parent families, overcrowded housing arrangements, lack of transportation, and parental education levels all contribute to lower achievement of students.⁹ These conditions, along with serious substance abuse challenges, are common on the Fort Peck Reservation.

The school systems report absenteeism as one of the biggest challenges to student achievement. Absences occur when parents oversleep, lack reliable transportation or gasoline, or when a variety of other family issues occur. Attendance rates at the schools ranged from 75% to 89% across the schools. Only about 30% of the students at the elementary level and 28% at the high school level had an attendance of 95% or greater compared to 47% statewide in the 2020-21 school year.¹⁰ Inconsistent school attendance can greatly impact student achievement and success thereby student readiness for college and careers. “The greatest barrier for our students to be college ready is chronic absenteeism through their academic years which impacts growth in key areas such as math, English and reading resulting in the need for academic interventions or remediation in later years in order to meet college readiness benchmarks.”¹¹

(3) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure

The project will provide services and activities that fill gaps and address the needs of students on the Fort Peck Reservation. First, the project will collaborate with the schools and community organizations to provide a consistent, responsive adult available for students to when

⁹ The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development. (2016). The Impact of Poverty on a Child's Academic Performance. Retrieved from www.institutepa.org

¹⁰ Montana Office of Public Instruction: Growth and Enhancement of Montana Students (GEMS) <https://gems.opi.mt.gov/>

¹¹ School Administrator quote (Spring 2022) Community Needs Assessment

they need to talk. A Student Engagement Coordinator for each school district will work closely with the school administrators of the district and will be allocated a designated space within the school that will serve as a “safe space” for students to come and grab a snack or talk to a trusted adult outside of the classroom. This safe space will offer a source of **social-emotional support** for students. Each Student Engagement Coordinator will be someone who is from the area and understands the cultural values of the students and families. This allows them to also serve as a **cross-cultural resource for teachers** who are not familiar with the cultural values and traditions of the people on the reservation. Each Student Engagement Coordinator will assist with Restorative Justice Circles in collaboration with classroom teachers to foster student connectedness and belongingness and help increase school attendance. The project will also engage a professional counseling service to provide individualized and small group counseling for identified students. Students will be selected based on recommendations from parents or student request and sessions will be scheduled during school times that are conducive to students’ schedules. The project will offer professional tutoring and peer tutoring for students as a means for **alternative educational support**. The project will engage a professional tutoring service to provide individualized and small group instruction in math and language arts during the school day in cooperation with the students’ regular teacher. Peer tutoring will be employed in schools as determined relevant and appropriate for each district. The project will collaborate with the school and community resources to provide **after school and summer activities**. After school and summer activities will be designed with student interest in mind and offer opportunities for students to learn about cultural traditions and have new experiences. The after school and summer activities provide a safe and engaging environment for students and can also serve as a source of social-emotional support for students. Finally, the project will offer **college**

exploration opportunities for students. Dual credit options through Fort Peck Community College will be expanded to schools in the district who do not currently have it available for eligible students. The project will coordinate visits to colleges and universities in the region, and will work with FPCC to host college and career fairs. Other college exploration supports include assistance with college applications, FAFSA applications, and scholarships, as well as financial literacy information to help students better understand how to finance college.

b. Quality of the project design

(1) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed

The project design includes close working relationships among FPCC, the school districts, and community services on the reservation. The goals of the project are directly aligned to address the gaps and weaknesses identified in the community needs assessment and are designed to increase community collaborative efforts that promote college and career readiness of Indian children. The project evaluation process will elicit data about effectiveness of the activities and strategies on student outcomes and benefits. The evaluation will document lessons learned and participant perspectives, intended and unintended benefits of project activities and strategies, and any policy or processes that need to be in place to promote success. The evaluation itself will be documented as a strategy of the project. This information can be used to guide decisions about allocating resources for replication or adaptation in other contexts.

The project evaluation utilizes a participatory empowerment approach to evaluation which emphasizes processes of sharing information for the purpose of empowering those who are being evaluated and share in the meaning-making of evaluation data. Relationships are central to working in Indian Country. The findings from the formative evaluation are documented and shared with the project partners in a way that can be easily understood and used

to inform project decision-making and continual improvement appropriate for each of the project partners. Actionable insights from the evaluation will be discussed with project participants and partners as well as service providers who have insights about context that can add richness and meaning to the narrative of the discussion.

Each of the project services and activities will be documented and student outcomes tracked. Student Engagement Coordinators will track the number of students with whom they interact and monitor attendance of those with whom they work. The project director and Student Engagement Coordinators will work with school administration to track attendance and progress of students who participate in after school and summer activities as well as professional counseling and tutoring services. The project will hire a qualified evaluation service to set up data tracking systems, provide expertise on evaluation methodology, and serve as a resource in the evaluation process. Information about ongoing progress and lessons learned will be shared by project personnel at DOE sponsored sharing sessions, which may be of use to other funded projects. In addition, the final project evaluation report will be shared with the DOE so that other projects may learn from our experience and potentially adapt the strategies to their own contexts.

(2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable

The project has four primary goals designed to improve students' social-emotional development, improve student achievement, expand student experiences and cultural knowledge, and promote college and career readiness. The goals and associated objectives and outcomes are provided in the tables below.

Goal 1: Provide culturally responsive social-emotional support designed to increase attendance and improve student confidence and motivation in school

Objectives:	Outcomes:
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1.1 Qualified School Engagement Coordinator for each district will be hired by the end of the first quarter of the project.	Students have a trusted adult available outside of the classroom to talk to in each district.
1.2 School Engagement Coordinator works with students who have higher rates of absence to develop plan for improved attendance.	Increase the percent of students who have at least 95% school attendance 5% by the end of the project.
1.3 The project will offer professional social-emotional counseling for at least 5 students in each district annually.	Annually, at least 20 students will have received professional counseling.

Goal 2: Provide alternative educational support to students in the districts on the Fort Peck

Reservation

Objectives:	Outcomes:
2.1 Coordinate peer tutoring in at least 1 classroom at each district each year of the project.	By the end of the project, 16 classrooms will use peer tutoring.
2.2 Provide in-school professional tutoring for identified students who score at novice in language arts and math and who are willing.	Increase the percent of students who score at or above proficiency by 5 percentage points

Goal 3: Provide opportunities for students to have new experiences and connect with culture

Objectives:	Outcomes:
3.1 The project will offer 2 after school activities in each district monthly serving an average of 10 students each during the school year each year of the project.	Annually, at least 720 enrollments will have attended after school activities
3.2 The project will offer one cultural activity in each district monthly serving an average of 10 students each during the school year each year of the project.	Annually, at least 360 enrollments will have attended cultural activities

3.3 The project will offer 8 summer camp activities annually serving an average of 10 each camp students each summer of the project.	Annually, at least 80 enrollments will have attended cultural activities
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Goal 4: Increase college and career readiness for students on the Fort Peck Reservation

Objectives:	Outcomes:
4.1 FPCC will offer dual enrollment at all four high schools on the Fort Peck Reservation by year 2 of the project.	By the end of the project, the number of students taking dual enrollment courses through FPCC will increase by 10%.
4.2 The project will coordinate 4 college visit trips with at least 10 students each annually during the project.	Annually, 40 students will attend a college visit.
4.3 FPCC will hold a Career Fair for high school students annually.	80% of high school seniors on the Fort Peck reservation attend the Career Fair annually.

(3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives

The Fort Peck Community Demonstration project utilizes evidence-based strategies that show promise toward improving outcomes for Native American and high poverty students. The strategies proposed in this project are undergirded by theoretical frameworks related to the use of protective factors to counteract risk factors, developing noncognitive skills to support academic achievement, and college and career exploration to support goal-setting and college readiness.

Protective Factors

Native American children on the Fort Peck Reservation have several risk factors to success and academic achievement as described previously in this proposal. The literature supports this and suggests that risk factors likely experienced by students on the reservation include community disorganization, family conflict, low perceived risks for drug use,

rebelliousness, and peer rewards for antisocial behavior.¹² Protective factors are conditions or variables that can foster healthy behaviors even when risk factors are present. The literature for protective factors with American Indian students is sparse due to small population samples for American Indian students and limited numbers of studies that include with Native American children in this area. Henson, et.al. conducted an analysis of literature analyzing eight relevant studies conducted between 1997 and 2015. These authors summarized the research identifying protective factors found to be statistically significant (quantitative) or salient (qualitative) associated with positive outcomes for Native American adolescents, including academic success, low use of substance and tobacco use, absence of suicide or suicide ideation, emotional health, and resilience. Cultural connectedness through ceremony, spirituality, and involvement in traditional activities was identified in four of the eight studies. School level protective factors associated with several positive outcomes included feeling cared about by adults, having mentors and role models in whom they could confide, availability of extracurricular and after school activities, school connectedness, involvement with traditional activities, and feeling valued. Individual level protective factors associated with positive outcomes for Native American adolescents included high self-esteem, self-efficacy, awareness of life goals, spirituality, ethnic identity, and college aspirations.¹³ Emerging conceptual development surrounding development of resilience suggests the importance of community, family, and traditional cultural values and

¹² Guttmanova, K., Wheeter, M., Catalano, R., & al., e. (2017, April). Assessment of Risk and Protection in Native American Youth: Steps toward Conducting Culturally Relevant, Sustainable Prevention in Indian Country. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 45(3), 346-362.

¹³ Henson, M., Sabo, S., Trujillo, A., & Teufel-Shone, N. (2017). Identifying Protective Factors to Promote Health in American Indian and Alaska Native Adolescents: A Literature Review. *The journal of primary prevention*, 38(1-2), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-016-0455-2>.

that there is a direct relationship between culture-based education and academic performance.¹⁴ McKinley and Figley conducted a systematic review of the growing research on culturally specific risk and protective factors related to Native American youth wellness. This review corroborated findings from Henson et.al. but recommend that interventions highlight personal connections and relational contexts.¹⁵ This project employs an asset-based, relational approach to create environments rich in protective factors by utilizing existing community resources. The project will offer social-emotional support through mentoring and professional counseling, as well as culturally relevant, after school, summer, and other activities designed to counteract risk factors to student well-being and achievement.

Tutoring and Professional Tutoring

A meta-analysis of experimental studies of tutoring effects with over 80% of the studies reporting statistically significant effects.¹⁶ Access to evidence-based professional tutoring can help children who are performing significantly below expected levels in math or reading make gains more quickly while building confidence, developing academic mindset, and increasing enjoyment in school. Effects are stronger when the tutoring occurs during the school day. Peer tutoring can be a cost-effective alternative educational support can help both the tutor and the tutee. The tutor builds confidence and deeper learning of the subject matter. The tutee can learn with someone who can relate to them. While there can be logistical challenges to setting up peer

¹⁴ Demmer, W., McCardle, P., Mele-McCarthy, J., & Leos, K. (2006). Preparing Native American children for academic success: a blueprint for success. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 45(3).

¹⁵ McKinley, Catherine & Figley, Cr. (2016). Risk and protective factors related to the wellness of American Indian and Alaska Native youth: A systematic review. 8. 137-154

¹⁶ Nickow, A., Oreopoulos, P., and Quan, V. (July 2020) The Impressive Effects of Tutoring on PreK-12 Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence. Working Paper 27476. NBER

and cross-age tutoring programs to ensure high quality tutoring from children, there is evidence that this can be a viable option when paired with coaching from a paraprofessional or teacher.

Noncognitive Skills Development

Noncognitive factors can be as important as cognitive factors in educational achievement. “Multiple studies identifying the interdependence between cognitive and noncognitive skills indicate that we may fail to boost cognitive skills unless we pay closer attention to noncognitive skills. In other words, focusing on noncognitive skills may actually further improve reading, writing, and mathematics performance.”¹⁷ While different fields of study define noncognitive skills differently, for the purpose of this project, the focus will be on affective and behavioral skills most associated with academic success: a) academic behaviors (going to class and doing homework), b) academic perseverance (grit and self-determination), c) social skills (cooperation, responsibility, and empathy), d) learning strategies (self-regulation and mnemonic devices), and e) academic mindset (belongingness, growth potential, self-efficacy). Research findings support the importance of noncognitive factors in academic achievement but are unclear about which strategies are the most effective. However, culture and contextualized identity factors, may be important to take into account when considering for whom these relationships among noncognitive factors and academic performance matter.¹⁸ This project proposes to help students develop noncognitive skills through Restorative Justice Circles where students can develop

¹⁷ Garcia, E. (2014, December 2). The Need to Address Noncognitive Skills in the Education Policy Agenda. EPI. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute

¹⁸ Wanzer, D., Postlewaite, E., & Zargarpour, N. (2019). Relationships Among Noncognitive Factors and Academic Performance: Testing the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research Model. AERA Open. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858419897275>

academic mindset and social skills. Learning strategies and academic perseverance are developed in concert with academic skills development in professional tutoring and peer tutoring sessions. It is clear that teachers play an important role but that different strategies are required for noncognitive than for content-related learning. Therefore, noncognitive skills development will also be intentionally fostered in after school and summer activities. Evidence exists that developing academic mindset and learning strategies can improve academic perseverance and academic behaviors, which are important when transitioning from high school to college.¹⁹

College Exploration Activities and College Readiness

College students whose parents have not earned a bachelor's degree are considered *first generation* college students. Many of the students served by the project would fit this definition when they enter college. Only 18.7% of adults age 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or higher in Roosevelt County compared to 33.1% statewide. First generation college students lack knowledge about the college experience, are at higher risk of dropping out, tend to struggle with managing finances and social pressures, and experience challenges with navigating college systems.²⁰ Low income students face other challenges, including leaving college without a degree, it is important to provide support even prior to graduating from high school. The Pell Institute recommends strategies for easing the transition to college for low-income, first generation students. College and career assessment tools should be used in high school to inspire interest and goal-setting. Early socialization to the expectations of the academic environment can

¹⁹ Nagaoka, J., et. al. (2013) Readiness for College: The Role of Noncognitive Factors and Context. Voices in Urban Education. Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University

²⁰ Greenthal, S. (January 2022) 5 Big Challenges for First Generation College Students. <https://www.verywellfamily.com/big-challenges-for-first-generation-college-students-4121641>

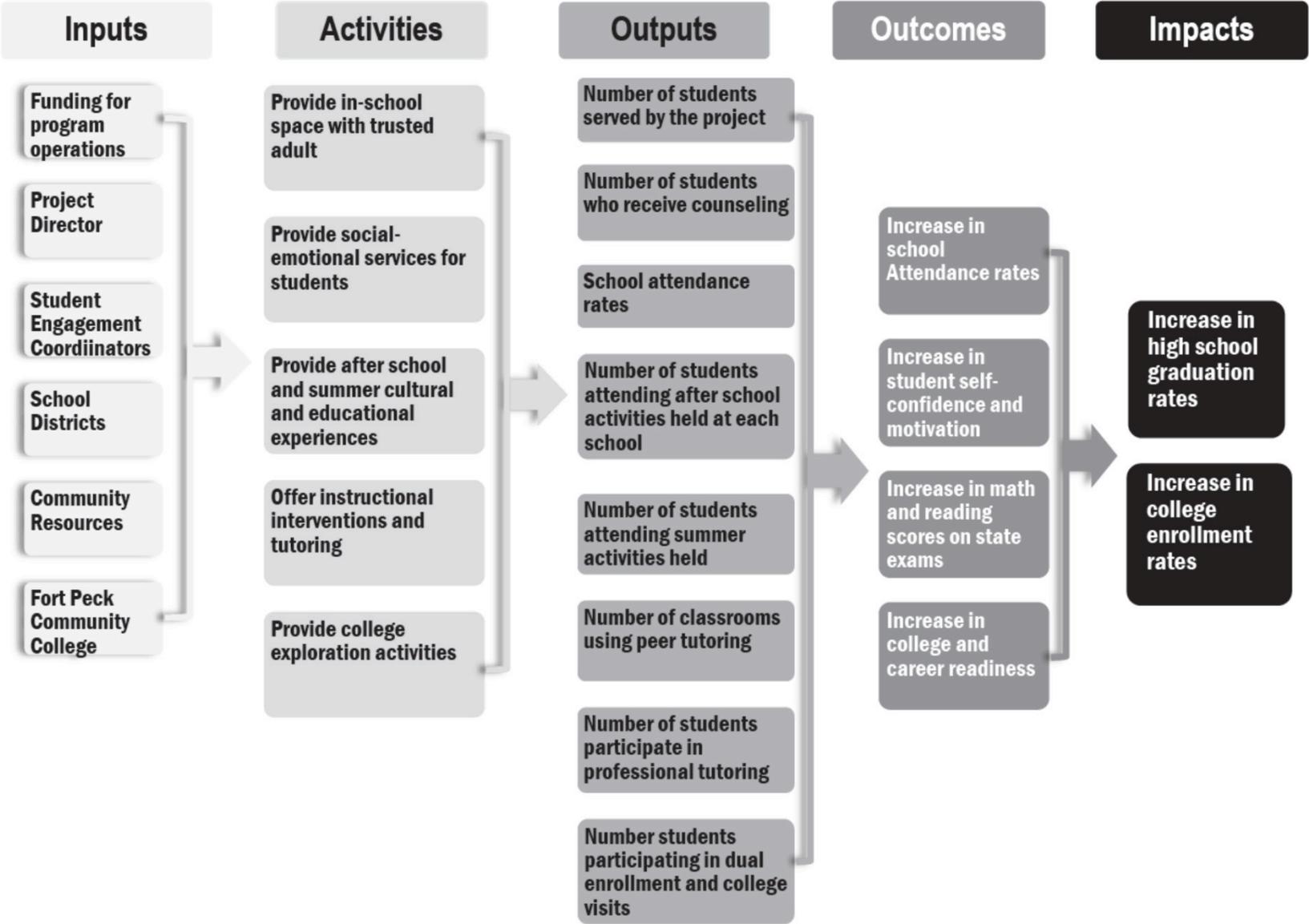
be achieved through college and career fairs.²¹ College and career fairs coordinated through FPCC will help students consider various college and career options. Recruiters from various types and sizes of colleges as well as from military branches will be included in the fairs. The project will coordinate with FPCC to help students with college applications, completion of FAFSA forms, and provide financial literacy for college. College tours will be provided for identified project participants. The college tours will include orientations to college services and any Native American support services. Options will be explored for accessing FPCC as a cost-effective option for either career training or completing a 2+2 program toward a baccalaureate program. Dual enrollment will be expanded to the districts to provide early socialization to the expectations of the higher education environment. The High School Career Advisors at each site will work closely with the FPCC Career Advisor for seamless transition and to ensure policies and practices align with needs of students.

(4) Extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in this notice)

Project inputs include funding, personnel, the school districts, and community resources. Evidence based activities lead to outputs that include participation rates in the services as well as achievement scores and school attendance rates. The outputs provide leading indicators for anticipate outcomes of increased attendance rates, increase in self-esteem and motivation, improved achievement scores, and increased college readiness. These outcomes serve as indicators toward long term impacts regarding improved high school graduation and college enrollment. A logic model identifying key ingredients of this proposal are provided below:

²¹ The Pell Institute (<http://www.pellinstitute.org/publications.shtml>)

Project Logic Model



(5) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible

Objective performance measures are indicated above and illustrated as outputs and outcomes in the logic model. Quantitative data includes the number of students served by the project overall but are broken down by the number of students who receive professional services, who participate in after school and summer activities, and who participate in dual enrollment, college fairs, and college visits. Other quantitative data includes school attendance rates and state assessment scores. Qualitative data (not shown in the logic model) includes stakeholder perspectives of project impact collected through interviews and focus groups. The project evaluation will culminate in a ripple effect mapping exercise at each district which can elicit information about primary impacts as well as secondary and tertiary impacts of the project.

c. Quality of Project Personnel

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability

Fort Peck Community College (FPCC) values diversity and encourages applicants for employment from diverse backgrounds. The FPCC Human Resource Policy manual specifically states, “FPCC shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, marital status, age, genetics, sexual orientation, transgender or political beliefs. This agreement shall be applied equally in all cases with respect to salaries, hours, and terms and conditions of employment.” However, Indian preference is exercised as allowed by the Indian preference provision of the civil rights act of 1964, as amended. The project will actively seek out and encourage applications from Tribal members to serve as Student Engagement Coordinators for the project who can serve as role models for students and cultural brokers for teachers who are not familiar with local Tribal values and customs.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director

Olivia Headdress will serve as the Project Director. Olivia is a 2015 graduate of FPCC and has worked with youth since 2012. Olivia holds a MS in Education in Instruction and Learning and has and Montana Elementary Education (K-8) Class 2 teaching license. She currently serves as the Vice President of Special Projects and Programs at FPCC. In that role, she supervises personnel in various programs helping to oversee the day-to-day operations, including the Wellness Centers, Library, and Agriculture Department. She ensures that all documentation and reporting are properly done and submitted on time and reports are posted where needed. Olivia is currently working on her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership through the University of Montana. She is highly qualified to lead this project.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

The project will employ four Student Engagement Coordinators, one to be assigned at each school district. Minimum qualifications for the Student Engagement Coordinators will include excellent organizational and communication skills and at least three years of direct work with students. It is important that the Student Engagement Coordinators are able to develop trusting relationships with students at the schools. The Student Engagement Coordinator will also need to be familiar with Native cultural practices of the Tribes. A Bachelor's degree is preferred, however, significant experience or working toward a Bachelor's degree will be considered. Training in restorative justice circles will be preferred, though the project will provide training. District administrators will be involved in hiring selections to ensure that the Student Engagement Coordinator is a good fit for the culture of the schools.

d. Quality of Project Services

(1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services

Community and partner collaborations are central to the success of the project. The school districts will provide space and time for project activities and will be involved in helping the project design activities that meet the needs and interests of its students. Community services that will be central resources to offering after school and summer activities include the Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP) program, the Mental Health Center, the Cultural Center, Extension services, and the Tribal Education Department. The project will collaborate with stakeholders in the project evaluation process to ensure a diversity of perspectives provide input regarding ongoing project direction and decisions.

(2) The extent to which the services to be offered would meet the needs of the local population, as demonstrated by an analysis of community-level data, including direct input from parents and families of Indian children and youth

The project will provide services and activities that address the needs of students on the Fort Peck Reservation based on data collected in a community needs assessment in the last year. Information was collected from parents, students, school teachers, and school administrators through surveys, interviews, and a ripple effect mapping activity. Students on the Fort Peck Reservation indicated that they feel safe at school and believe that their teachers genuinely care about them.²² Parents have indicated that after school and summer activities provide their children with an outlet in which they can have fun and build relationships with other students. Teachers indicated that small group and individual tutoring sessions help improve student behavior while promoting skills development and help children develop a sense of self-efficacy and confidence. One middle school student interviewed who experienced in-school tutoring

²² Woodke, L. (2021) Chanté Project Student Survey Results, Chanté Project Evaluation Report

stated, “It awakened my love for math and now I can’t believe I’m doing algebra!”²³ Community members identified gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities they believe could be improved to better support students. The school districts provided information about the services they believed would best supplement what they currently offer their students. These data formed the basis for project design.

e. Quality of the Management Plan

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks

FPCC has modeled its management plan on past successful projects. Established policies, procedures, and practices will be employed to ensure timely and effective project management. The person primarily responsible for ensuring the project’s success is Olivia Headdress, who will serve as Project Director. A Student Engagement Coordinator who will be responsible for planning and carrying out project activities will be allocated to each district. Olivia will be responsible for engaging all partners and ensuring activities are coordinated across the school districts and with FPCC and that school leaders in each district are kept informed and involved.

FPCC has in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in the Code of Federal Regulations should the college receive funding under this competition. Olivia will supervise the Student Engagement Coordinators, ensure stakeholder voice representation, work with the districts to coordinate project engagement, and manage expenditures. She will work with Rose Atkinson, FPCC Business Manager, to ensure financial

²³ Ripple Effect Mapping (Spring 2022)

compliance with federal regulations regarding the project. FPCC policies and procedures for hiring, procurement, personnel and reporting will be followed for all aspects of the project.

Project activities, milestones, timelines, and responsibilities are provided below.

Objectives:	Timeline	Responsible:
Hire qualified School Engagement Coordinator (SEC) for each district will be hired.	By 1 st quarter of project	Project Director; School Leaders
SECs work with students with higher rates of absence to develop plan for improved attendance.	By third quarter of project and ongoing	SECs
The project will offer professional social-emotional counseling for at least 5 students in each district annually.	Professional counseling contract set by end of 2 nd quarter of project; students receive counseling beginning year one and ongoing	SECs; Project Director
Coordinate peer tutoring in at least 1 classrooms at each district each year of the project.	Begin by 3 rd quarter; add 1 classroom per district annually.	SEC; School Leaders
Provide in-school professional tutoring for identified willing students who score at novice in language arts and math.	Professional tutoring contract in place by 2 nd quarter of project; students receive tutoring beginning year one and ongoing	Project Director; School Leaders
The project will offer 2 after school activities in each district monthly serving an average of 10 students each during the school year each year of the project.	Begin year 1 and ongoing	SECs; School Leaders
The project will offer one cultural activity in each district monthly serving an average of 10 students	Begin 2 nd quarter of project; continue monthly ongoing	SECs

each during the school year each year project.		
The project will offer 8 summer camp activities annually serving an average of 10 each camp students each summer of the project.	Begin summer of year one and annually	SECs; Project Director
FPCC will offer dual enrollment at all four high schools on the Fort Peck Reservation by year 2 of the project.	Begin year 2 of project and ongoing	Project Director; FPCC VP Academics
The project will coordinate 4 college visit trips with at least 10 students each annually during the project.	Begin 3 rd quarter of project and ongoing	SECs; Project Director
FPCC will hold a Career Fair for high school students annually.	Begin year one; annually	Project Director; FPCC VP Student Services

(2) How applicant will ensure a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others,

The FPCC Project was conceived using data collected from a diversity of perspectives, and those voices will continue to be considered as the project is carried out. This project will utilize a participatory empowerment approach to evaluation facilitated by an external evaluator. This culturally-responsive approach is rooted in stakeholder engagement and emphasizes the process of sharing information for the purposes of ensuring stakeholder voice while empowering those who are being evaluated. Oftentimes, it is difficult to engage parents and students in project evaluation. However, this approach utilizes strategies that have proven to build trust among community members impacted by the project for them to share their perspectives and experiences with the project. The participatory empowerment approach honors community voice

to understand the local context and culture in project decisions while building evaluation capacity within the community.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance

The project is designed to build capacity within the school districts and yield academic achievement results that will help to put students on a trajectory toward college and career success. The project strategies are intended to help build student confidence and motivation by providing protective factors and teaching noncognitive skills through community and culturally responsive activities. Lessons learned through the project evaluation will drive resources decision-making at the school and tribal levels that can provide ongoing support for strategies that promote stronger student outcomes.

f. Quality of the Project Evaluation

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes

Using a participatory empowerment approach to evaluation, the evaluation will utilize qualitative and quantitative data to measure how well implementation is serving project participants. The formative evaluation will occur quarterly during the duration of the project with onsite visits occurring more frequently in the first three years. Formative questions tied to project goals and objectives are:

1. How well is the project being implemented? What challenges occur in implementation?
2. What challenges and intended and unintended benefits do students and families perceive?
3. What benefits and challenges are perceived by teachers and administrators in the project?
4. What are the participation rates of the project? Are they progressing as expected?
5. How well is the project making progress toward anticipated goals and outcomes? What facilitators or barriers exist to making progress on these goals and outcomes?

6. What policies or procedures have been developed or modified to facilitate the program?
7. How has community collaboration increased to promote college and career readiness of Indian children?

The formative evaluation questions are tied to project goals and objectives will help to inform ongoing decision-making for key project personnel and administrators regarding resource allocation and other support. Quantitative measures will include participation patterns, student attendance at activities, and math and English language proficiency rates. Qualitative measures used in the formative evaluation will include interviews with key personnel and teachers, focus groups or surveys with students, and interviews with project partners. The data will be shared with the project personnel as well as school administrators. The findings from the formative evaluation will be documented and shared in a way that can be used to inform project decision-making toward continual improvement.

The summative evaluation will occur in the final year of the project period and is designed to measure overall project impact. Both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis will be employed. The summative evaluation will include interviews with project personnel, participants, parents, and school personnel utilizing *Ripple Effect Mapping*. Ripple Effect Mapping is a qualitative means for collecting data through storytelling, which is a culturally responsive means for data collection and analysis. This method helps members of the community feel more comfortable sharing their experiences with the project. The data collected provides a rich description of not only direct impact, but potentially secondary and tertiary impacts, as well. Quantitative measures will include project participation rates, school attendance data, and state test scores. Summative evaluation questions include:

1. How many students benefited?

2. What was the change in student achievement rates?
3. How did the project impact students socially, culturally, emotionally, and their college and career readiness?
4. How did the project impact the schools?
5. How did the project impact families and/or the communities?
6. To what extent were the project goals achieved?
7. What aspects of the project should be sustained? Scaled?

The evaluation strategy is tied directly to the outcomes stated in the goals and objectives and includes formative and summative evaluation processes using internal and external assessment and evaluation mechanisms to increase confidence in the findings.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings

Fort Peck Tribes experiences challenges to student achievement and success similar to other rural Tribal reservation communities in the United States. This project combines strategies historically used by GEAR UP and other evidence-based programs while integrating local context, cultural values, and local contribution. Although local resources and cultural values may vary across locales, much of what is learned through this experience may be valuable in other settings. The evaluation process will provide formative information that can provide guidance to others in implementation if they were interested in replicating aspects of the project. The summative evaluation data will provide information regarding impacts of the project strategies. Of particular interest will be perceived impacts by students, parents, and families of the noncognitive and protective factors uncovered through the Ripple Effect Mapping process. Personal story impact data can be the most compelling.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008
Expiration Date: 09/30/2023

Name of Institution/Organization

Fort Peck Community College

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel	220,000.00	226,600.00	233,398.00	240,400.00	247,612.00			1,168,010.00
2. Fringe Benefits	88,000.00	90,640.00	93,359.00	96,160.00	99,045.00			467,204.00
3. Travel	20,560.00	17,200.00	17,200.00	17,200.00	13,840.00			86,000.00
4. Equipment								
5. Supplies	32,500.00	26,500.00	21,750.00	16,500.00	9,900.00			107,150.00
6. Contractual	110,000.00	110,000.00	105,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00			525,000.00
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	471,060.00	470,940.00	470,707.00	470,260.00	470,397.00			2,353,364.00
10. Indirect Costs*	28,885.00	2,875.00	29,257.00	29,621.00	29,602.00			120,240.00
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	499,945.00	473,815.00	499,964.00	499,881.00	499,999.00			2,473,604.00

***Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):** If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No
- (2) If yes, please provide the following information:
 Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: To: (mm/dd/yyyy)
 Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify):
 The Indirect Cost Rate is %.
- (3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC? Yes No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).
- (4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?
 Yes No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.
- (5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) – Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:
 Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is %.
- (6) For Training Rate Programs (check one) – Are you using a rate that:
 Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?, Or Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, because it is lower than the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?

PR/Award # S299A200047

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