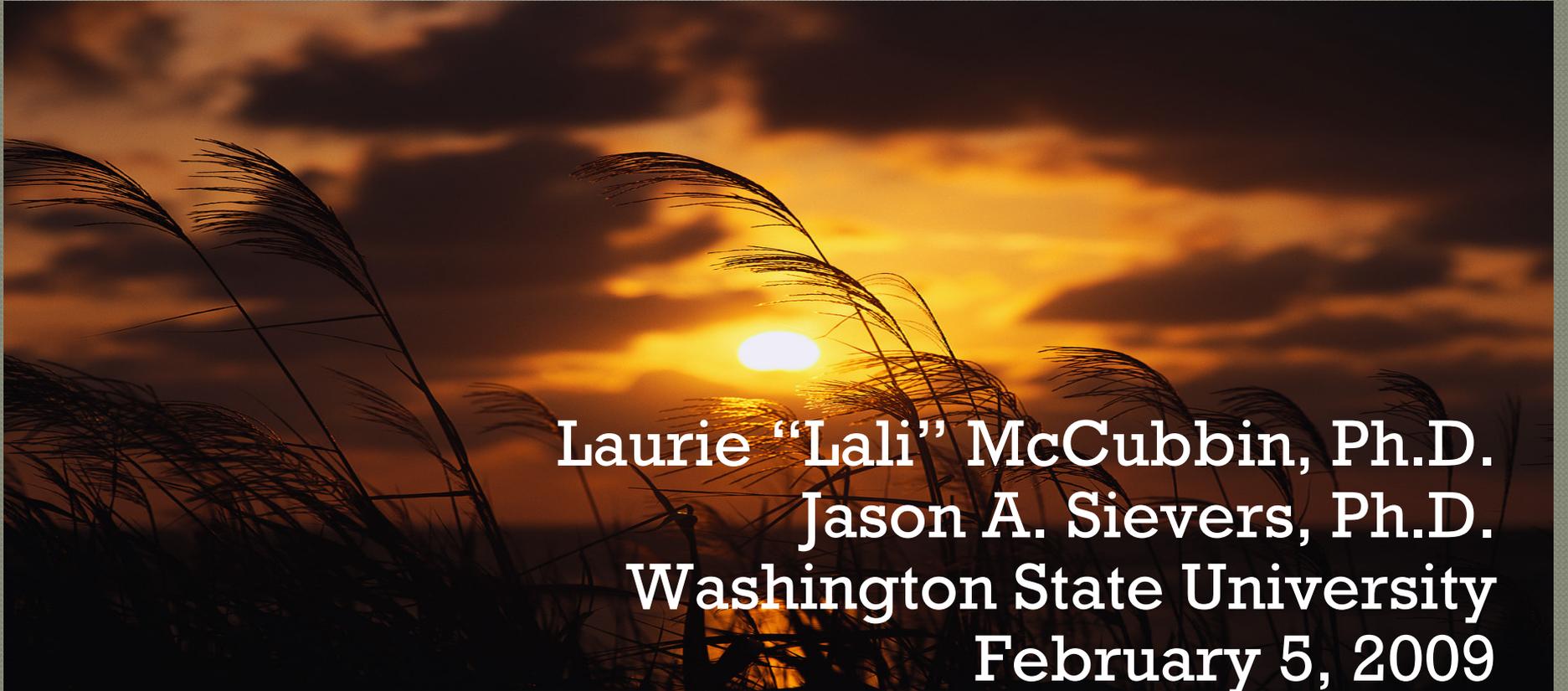


From Where the Sun Rises: Addressing the Educational Achievement of Native Americans in Washington State



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Purpose & Research Questions

- Purpose of this study was to conduct detailed analyses of factors contributing to an educational “achievement gap” for Native American students.
- Research questions we addressed were:
 1. To what extent is the education system in the State of Washington addressing the needs of Native American students?
 2. What data are needed to better understand the achievement gap?
 3. What are the characteristics of exemplary programs and practices serving the needs of Native American students?
 4. What are the recommendations of key stakeholders to close the achievement gap?

Culturally Responsive Curriculum, Teaching & Assessment

- Culturally responsive curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment practices have been identified as factors impacting Native student success within the literature.
- Culturally responsive curriculum has been defined as curriculum that is developed using local cultural knowledge (often in combination with language) throughout instruction.
- The integration of language and culture within place-based education models enables elders, Native community members, family members, parents, along with their children, teachers, and administrators to work together to develop, implement, and evaluate authentic learning experiences that actively engage Native and non-Native students.

Improving Our Health and State of Being cont...

- There are benefits to be enjoyed by Native and non-Native students alike.

Benefits for Native students:
Teaching Native history, language and culture in schools

- increase comfortability for Native students in school
- assist in keeping Native culture alive
- promote positive Native identity and sense of pride
- increase Native American youth and families' awareness about themselves and their culture
- protect Native American Rights

Benefits for Others: Teaching Native history, language and culture in schools

- increase respect, understanding and awareness for Native people and culture and the hardships they have faced
- reduce/eliminate stereotypes and ignorance about Native Americans
- demonstrates that schools value Native culture
- increase communication and understanding between Native American youth, families and school community

Improving Our Health and State of Being

- ◉ Intersection between health, wellbeing & academic achievement
- ◉ It is important that all Native youth have positive adaptation and well-being across the following dimensions: social, emotional, psychological and cultural (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Dimensions of Wellbeing among Native American Youth

- connections with peers, family, school, community and their culture

- the ability to cope and deal with the effects of colonization, historical trauma, loss, discrimination & racism



- positive sense of self,
- absence of alcohol and substance abuse, depression, suicidality, juvenile delinquency and maladaptive attachment and adjustment patterns

- (a) living in two worlds;
- (b) cultural knowledge and awareness including language, history, cultural practices & customs;
- (c) a positive Native identity and
- (d) a connection to one's cultural community

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story

- Three sources of public data were used:
 - a) the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) from the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES)
 - b) the Common Core Data (CCD) from the NCES; and
 - c) data provided by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- Out of 296 districts in Washington, only 215 districts have a significant number of Native students in their district. Using this number, we have some data for approximately 37.7% of the districts. Examining the average number of districts that provided data for WASL scores by subject (n=55), the percentage of districts reporting the status of Native American students is only 25.6%. Therefore, 74.4% of the districts in Washington are missing data on the performance of their Native students on WASL test scores from the OSPI dataset.

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- Table 1: Demographic Factors Associated with WASL Test Scores

Factors Associated with Lower Scores on WASL	Factors Associated with Higher Scores on WASL
Higher percentage of Native students	Higher percentage of White students
Having Native students placed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Career technical education -Gifted programs -Disability programs 	Number of students per classroom
Number of Native students (both male and female) in district	Size of the cohort
Dropout rates for Native American students	Individualized education plans
	Advanced placement programs

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- Table 2: Economic Factors Associated with WASL Test Scores

Factors Associated with <u>Lower</u> Scores on WASL	Factors Associated with <u>Higher</u> Scores on WASL
The higher the number of free or reduced price meals	Higher median family income
	Households occupied by 1-2 persons, 3-4 persons and 5+ persons
	Total Population above poverty (ages 5 to 17 years old; males; females; males ages 5-17 years old and females ages 5 to 17 years old)

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- Table 3: School Personnel Factors Associated with Higher WASL Test Scores

School Personnel Factors Associated with <u>Higher</u> WASL Scores	
Average years of educational experience	LEA Administrators
Percentage of teachers with at least a Masters degree	LEA Administrative support
Total number of staff in district	Librarians/media specialists
Pupil/Teacher ratio by district	Library media support staff
FTE teachers	Other support staff
Instructional aides	School administrators
Instructional coordinator	School administrative support
Elementary guidance Counselors	Secondary guidance counselors
Elementary teachers	Secondary teachers
Student support services staff	Total guidance counselors
Ungraded teachers	

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- Across almost all the grades in elementary, middle and high school, the following factors significantly predicted the variance on the WASL test scores across subjects:
 - *Demographic factor:* Percentage of Native American students was found to account for 7.9% to 26.5% of the variance explained depending on the grade and subject; the higher the percentage of Native students, the lower the score on the WASL
 - *Economic factor:* Free and reduced lunches was not a significant predictor of WASL scores when controlling for percentage of Native American students in the district
 - *School personnel factors:* The school personnel factors significantly predicted higher WASL scores for elementary, middle and high school Native students accounting for 13.8 to 29.7% of the variance depending on the grade and subject.

Numbers Do Tell a Story and the Untold Story cont...

- The results were found comparing Native American students' WASL test scores across four regional types (urban, suburban, small town or rural):
 - *Elementary school:* For 3rd grade there are no differences among the four geographical locations; for 4th and 5th grade, Native American students living in rural or small town areas have significantly lower scores when compared to those living in urban and suburban areas for math and science; however no differences were found for reading
 - *Middle school:* For 6th grade, no differences for reading and math scores; for 7th grade, no difference for reading, writing and math scores; and for 8th grade, no difference for reading, math and science
 - *High school:* For 10th grade, differences were found for math and science with Native American students residing in small town or rural settings scoring significantly lower than urban and suburban Native Americans.

A Call to Action

Comprehensive Education Plan to Increase Native American Educational Achievement

- 1. Teachers, Administrators, School Boards, and Tribes.** A sustainable relationship will depend on a shared understanding of the cultural protocols and policies. An ultimate indicator for the Native community to know whether or not a relationship evolves is the incorporation of Native language, culture, and history in the public school curriculum.
- 2. Health and Well-Being.** Establishing measurements to monitor the health and well-being of Native American children, youth, adults and families that are reliable, valid and standardized based on a sample of Native Americans in Washington State. We also need culture-based prevention and intervention programs to provide important transition services and reduce risk factors.

Comprehensive Education Plan to Increase Native American Educational Achievement

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- 3. Academic Achievement and Educational Attainment.** Increasing the number of students passing all their classes in junior and senior high school and reducing truancy and dropout rates. This needs to be complemented by increasing Native student exposure to college preparation opportunities.
- 4. Assessment of Learning.** Provide more intervention and direction to students and families to improve student learning. Several other primary outcomes will be an assessment that includes indicators endorsed by Native communities and a determination of whether all students can demonstrate mastery pertaining to the ancestral and contemporary history of tribes and urban Indian communities in Washington. The evidence of true progress will be whether or not public school districts and OSPI embrace indicators of achievement and success that are relevant to Native students and are equally applicable to non-Native students.

Comprehensive Education Plan to Increase Native American Educational Achievement

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5. Shift the Paradigm through Relationship Building (fuller description, pp. 107-131).

- a plan that represents the concerted efforts of community and political leaders
- stakeholders representing the public's interests feel that Native children are important.
- stakeholders that recognize tribal sovereignty strengthens community ethos rather than weakens political agendas.
- Acknowledgement that Native people have a language, culture, and history.

6. Funding

- support efforts to develop relationships between public school districts and tribes as well as help urban Indian education programs to integrate Native teaching and learning that benefits Native and non-Native children.
- support the integration of curriculum by well-trained stakeholders agreeable to the spirit of this report.

Comprehensive Education Plan to Increase Native American Educational Achievement

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7. Provide resources for pre- and in-service educators and stakeholders (fuller description, pp. 132-141).
8. Improve data collection and reporting (fuller description, pp. 141-147).
9. Develop a partnership with the National Education Association (fuller description, pp. 147-149).
10. Increase state support and collaboration (fuller description, pp. 149-151).

What We Need to Know and Do to Facilitate Native Student Success

All professionals will:

- demonstrate an understanding of tribal sovereignty, history of Indian education, and current policies and best practices in Indian education
- take part in a rigorous curriculum that incorporates indigenous knowledge, values, and practices so that it is culturally based and responsive to the education of Native children

What We Need to Know and Do to Facilitate Native Student Success cont...

All professionals will...

- understand the importance of creating a community of learners. Professionals should be a part of their local communities and gather with the people by sharing meals, dance, community-based environmental science projects, cultural arts, etc.
- participate in collaborative learning experiences that are designed to be responsive to the education of Native children.
- learn how to establish consortium agreements with their local area tribes and/or tribal organizations that will address the issues of Native student performance, curriculum development, and other long-standing tribal concerns.