

NCLB Making a Difference in Montana

- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available), the Native American-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points. (*Montana Report Card*)
- “Two Fort Belknap-area schools received achievement awards Thursday from state School Superintendent Linda McCulloch. The Lodge Pole Elementary School on the southern end of the reservation and the Harlem Junior High School just outside the reservation’s northern boundary each received a Certificate of Academic Achievement Reward for Title I Schools. The schools, among six districts to be recognized statewide, were rewarded for working themselves off the state’s below-standards list. ‘These schools have diligently reviewed and revised their plans and efforts to incorporate the most effective, scientifically research-based methods into their teaching,’ McCulloch said as she announced the awards at the Title I Conference at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls. ‘I’d say they have put 110 percent of their hearts, minds and souls into making the improvement they have.’ The schools each will receive an award of \$10,000 to \$25,000, funded by the federal No Child Left Behind program. The exact amounts will be based on the schools’ enrollments.” (*Great Falls Tribune*, 02/25/05)
- “District calculations show Great Falls students scored well above the state average on the NCLB tests. In fourth grade reading, 77 percent of Great Falls students scored proficient or better, compared to a state average of 65 percent. In fourth grade math, 62 percent of Great Falls students scored proficient or better, compared to 45 percent statewide. ... Superintendent Bryan Dunn said he’s proud of the effort and improved success by district students, teachers, and principals. But he noted that the federal law keeps ‘raising the bar higher and higher’ until 100 percent of students at each grade level and demographic subcategory can read and do math at their grade level by 2014.” (*Great Falls Tribune*, 3/15/05)
- “In response to the law, Havre schools have spent a lot of time revamping reading classes. Havre test scores in math have been consistently high, while doing less well in reading. The elementary and middle schools have each implemented a new reading program that targets students at the lowest reading level and that gives all students more semesters of reading class over time. The schools also use the same company’s reading materials in all grades through middle school, so that there is more consistency in teaching methods. Jacki Kannberg, an English and social studies teacher at the middle school, said all the Havre schools are getting back to basics with reading as a result of the law. She’s seen that reflected in the students’ skills, both as they enter and leave the middle school. ... Havre administrators and teachers have reason to be satisfied with the school’s response to No Child Left Behind. Each of the three Havre grades evaluated last year satisfied the law’s three components – attendance, test participation and test performance.” (*Havre Daily News*, 1/21/05)

