

NATIVE YOUTH COMMUNITY PROJECT

Q3 Progress Toward Meeting Project Goals

April 2026

The Nevada Department of Education’s (NDE’s) Native Youth Community Project (NYCP) seeks to prepare American Indian (AI) students in Grades 7–12 for college and careers using a three-fold plan that includes (a) the support of College and Career Coaches and School Community Liaisons; (b) activities designed to improve student academic performance; and (c) community collaborative events that foster student connections and opportunities for development. Students and community members from three tribal groups in three geographic locations receive support in these efforts. Members of the Walker River Paiute Tribe (WRPT) and Yerington Paiute Tribe (YPT) attend school in the Yerington and Hawthorne, NV, areas. Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone tribal members attend McDermitt Combined School in the McDermitt, NV, area (see Exhibit 1). Across the two regional sites, students in Grades 7–12 participated in the third year of the project’s implementation.

RMC Research submitted an Annual Performance Report update in April 2026, covering work from October 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. This quarterly report covers work completed in that period and highlights the ways in which NYCP project staff led and supported activities. These include hosting community collaborative events, discussing efficient ways to collect program data, conducting research and facilitating discussions on how to support students’ mental health and academic needs, training school administrators and staff on NYCP requirements and the role of expectations on student achievement, and strengthening community ties to increase their knowledge and support of the NYCP.

Exhibit 1. Participant Characteristics

Number of American Indian (AI) and Number (Percent) of NYCP Students, 2025-26 School Year

Grade	McDermitt NYCP Students Enrolled	Walker River NYCP Students Enrolled	Total NYCP Students – All Sites
7	5	11	16
8	9	10	19
9	11	8	19
10	11	12	23
11	9	4	13
12	11	7	18
Total	56	52	108



Goal 1: Implement a successful NYCP that promotes and prepares AI students for college or careers, with an emphasis on careers in the teaching profession.

College Visits, Camps, and Related Activities

In total, there were three college visits, camps, fairs, or similar activities for NYCP students that took place from October 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. Overall, students found these activities informative and useful in considering and preparing for their options after high school.

- Students from McDermitt Combined School participated in Career Trades Day on January 21, 2026. They were able to interact with and receive information from representatives of seven building and construction trades.
- On February 4 and 11, the Walker River Education Department delivered two College/Career workshops, one focusing on Scholarship Writing and Essays, and the other on Resume Building and Interview Skills. Ten student participants received an American Indian College Fund “Native Pathways to College Guidebook.”

Community Collaborative Events

For the McDermitt site, there were 4 community collaborative events, with 242 attendees, held during the reporting period (October 2025 to March 2026, see Exhibit 2). These included Native American Heritage Week, a Native American conference, and tutoring. For the WRPT site, there were 19 events with 294 attendees. These included outreach events, a variety of Dicutta UNITY Youth Council events, and a Native American club meeting.

Exhibit 2. Community Collaborative Events by Site

McDermitt (Total Events = 4, Total Number of Attendees = 242)

Event Name	Date	College Connection Activity	Number of Attendees
Native American Heritage Week	11/17-21/25	4 adults, 12 youth Duck Valley Native Club	168
Close Up Native American Conference	3/26/26 4/1/26	Close Up Organization	12
Presentation by Dr. Emm	3/13/26	UNR	47
Tutoring	11/19/2025, 11/20/2025, 12/1/2025, 12/3/2025, 12/8/2025, 12/10/2025,		15



Event Name	Date	College Connection Activity	Number of Attendees
	12/11/2025, 12/17/2025, 12/18/2025, 1/7/2026, 1/8/2026, 1/14/2026, 1/15/2026, 1/21/2026, 1/22/2026, 1/26/2026, 1/28/2026		

WRPT (Total Events = 19, Total Number of Attendees = 294)

Event Name	Date	College Connection Activity	Number of Attendees
After-school tutoring and transportation begins	10/1/25	LCSD	
Dicutta UNITY Youth Council Meeting	11/4/25	Youth Council/YPT Education	11
YHS Girls Volleyball State Sendoff	11/6/25	Next Evolution Coffee Shop, Yerington High School Volleyball Team	17
NYCP Coach transports students to ACE Ribbon Class	11/7/25	YPT ACE Program	4
NYCP Outreach Event (YIS Students/YHS Staff)	11/14/25	YIS/YHS/YPT Education	14
YHS NA Club Assembly	11/25/25	YHS NA Club	YES/YIS/YHS Students and invited guests
Dicutta UNITY Youth Council – Election Event	12/5/25	YPT Education	22
WRPT Xmas Gift Distribution – School Supply Restock	12/16/25	WRPT Boys & Girls Club	57
New Year's Eve Event – NYCP	12/31/25	WRPT Boys & Girls Club/Wellness Assistant	55



Event Name	Date	College Connection Activity	Number of Attendees
Dicutta UNITY Youth Council Meeting	1/9/26	YPT Education	6
YHS NA Club Meeting	1/13/26	YHS NA Club	25
UNITY Mid-Year Event	1/15-20/26	UNITY Inc., Dicutta UNITY Youth Council	8
DUYC – Breakfast Burrito Fundraiser	1/30/26	DUYC, YPT Education	7
DUYC – Regular Meeting	2/2/26		7
Scholarship Writing & Research Workshop	2/4/26		6
YHS ACT Testing – Transport	2/24/26	YHS	1
Budgeting Skills Workshop	3/4/26		14
Youth Overnight Travel Policy – Parents/Guardians Presentation	3/5/26		18
Cultural History & Exploring the Stars event	3/6-7/26	Stewart Indian Museum, WNC Observatory, NV State Museum	12
Learn the Basics of Driving Skills to Obtain Permit/License	3/11/26	Walker River Tribal Library	11

Project-Wide (Total Events = 23, Total Number of Attendees = 536)



Indian Education Summit and Gathering of Native Americans (GONA)

Both NYCP sites participated in the Indian Education Summit on March 26 and 27, 2026. Dawna Jackson and Belinda Hooper, along with three students, conducted a breakout session about the NYCP program. **Sara Twiss**, Education Director at Walker River, was awarded the **Pesa Namanedu Award**. Established in 2010, the Pesa Namanedu Award honors individuals who have made significant contributions to Indian Education in Nevada. The first recipients were the educators who authored the Celebrating Nevada Indians Curriculum.

Pesa Namanedu is loosely translated as “Something that has been done well”.

Figure 1. Sara Twiss receiving the Pesa Namanedu Award at Indian Education Summit.



Figure 2. Students participating in art activity at GONA.

Students from WRPT participated in GONA on March 28, 2026, engaging in games and activities centered on the principles of **belonging and generosity**.

Staff Changes or Updates

Darla Camas and Marcy Northrup stepped down from their NYCP College and Career Coach roles at McDermitt Combined School. Work to find replacements for them is ongoing.

Communications with Schools/Professional Development

NDE met with College and Career Coaches/School and Community Liaisons regularly to discuss issues and answer questions related to the grant. RMC participated in these meetings to review recommendations for improving the support and services for NYCP students in the upcoming school year and to discuss ongoing evaluation activities.

Parent Outreach

There were no NYCP parent outreach activities identified during this period.

Goal 2: Increase student academic performance by including opportunities in the local community to support students.

Academic Learning Plans

The College and Career Coaches work with students and their families to complete **academic learning plans (ALPs)**. These plans are used to develop academic goals with students, target any supports needed, and monitor student progress in meeting these goals. As reported in Exhibit 3, all 56 NYCP students in McDermitt and all 52 NYCP students in WRPT have ALPs at the end of the reporting period, bringing the current total across both sites to 108 students, or **100% of all students**.



Exhibit 3. Academic Learning Plans

Grade	McDermitt NYCP Students Enrolled	McDermitt NYCP Students with ALPs	Walker River NYCP Students Enrolled	Walker River NYCP Students with ALPs	Total NYCP Students – All Sites	NYCP Students with ALPs – All Sites
7	5	5	11	11	16	16
8	9	9	10	10	19	19
9	11	11	8	8	19	19

Grade	McDermitt NYCP Students Enrolled	McDermitt NYCP Students with ALPs	Walker River NYCP Students Enrolled	Walker River NYCP Students with ALPs	Total NYCP Students – All Sites	NYCP Students with ALPs – All Sites
10	11	11	12	12	23	23
11	9	9	4	4	13	13
12	11	11	7	7	18	18
Total	56	56	52	52	108	108

Academic Tutoring and Credit Recovery

McDermitt Combined School offered **17 tutoring sessions** this reporting period. In total, 15 NYCP students took part in at least one tutoring session. Walker River also provided tutoring and transportation services to students; however, the exact number of sessions and participants was not reported.

Twenty Walker River students are currently enrolled in **Dual Enrollment** programs for this period.

Goal 3: Increase student motivation and readiness to attend college or vocational training.

Help with Career Inventories/College or Trade School Applications/Financial Aid

NYCP students had several opportunities to learn about college and trade schools in the region during this quarter, including admissions requirements, application procedures, and financial aid. In McDermitt, 11 out of 11 Grade 12 students (100%) have applied to one or more colleges or trade schools. In WRPT, 5 out of 7 Grade 12 students (71%) have applied to one or more colleges or trade schools. Collectively, 16 out of 18 Grade 12 students (88%) applied to colleges or trade schools at the end of the reporting period.

Motivation/Readiness to Attend College or Trade School

Although preliminary, feedback data from the college visits, camps, and fairs during this quarter show that NYCP students found these activities informative and useful in their planning for life after high school. This suggests such activities help improve their motivation/readiness to attend college or trade school. Nonetheless, we note that for some of these surveys, the number of responses was very small, and results should be interpreted with caution.

Dropouts

There were no NYCP student dropouts identified during this quarter, though this may be revised in the upcoming APR.

Project Achievements

			
108	100%	23	4
<i>NYCP Students</i>	<i>Students with ALPs</i>	<i>Community Activities</i>	<i>College Visits/Activities</i>

Project Challenges

Several noteworthy changes and challenges arose during quarter three. Staff changes at McDermitt Combined School presented workload challenges. While the open positions are expected to be filled, there will be a learning curve when new staff are brought on.

A challenge in NYCP project coordination is establishing and maintaining consistent communication among internal stakeholders. This includes the NDE team, College and Career Coaches/School and Community Liaisons, and the RMC team. Ms. Drye-Romero and Mr. Martinez have done an excellent job in facilitating this communication.

An additional challenge is to consistently obtain useful, applicable student feedback on program activities and events. The development and implementation of increasingly effective program activities hinges on student feedback. This challenge—an ongoing one for student-focused programs—requires the continued refinement of the ways in which student feedback is solicited. This includes considerations for implementing both surveys and focus groups.

Recommendations

1. The first recommendation relates to fostering and maintaining continued communication among internal stakeholders (the NDE team, College and Career Coaches/School and Community Liaisons, and the RMC team). The NDE team (Ms. Drye-Romero and Mr. Martinez) and the RMC team have re-established regular monthly check-in meetings to stay informed of upcoming events, address potential challenges, and maintain consistent communication. We recommend the continuation of these meetings. Mr. Martinez has also established regular meetings to stay in continual communication with the College and Career Coaches/School and Community Liaisons.
2. The second recommendation is to continually explore ways to effectively solicit participant feedback, especially from students. This includes fostering conversations and identifying ways to increase survey response rates for the purpose of refining program events and features to meet program objectives. Since student feedback drives a significant part of program offerings, RMC suggests considering ways to incentivize student feedback to increase participation.
3. Ensure students have multiple opportunities to engage with colleges, trade schools, careers, and other such entities so they can explore more traditional and non-traditional pathways for post-secondary success.

The contents of this report were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.

