



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Education
1849 C Street NW, MIB-3610
Washington, DC 20240

April 29, 2025

Subject: Executive Order 14191 on Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families: Section 7 BIE School Performance Report

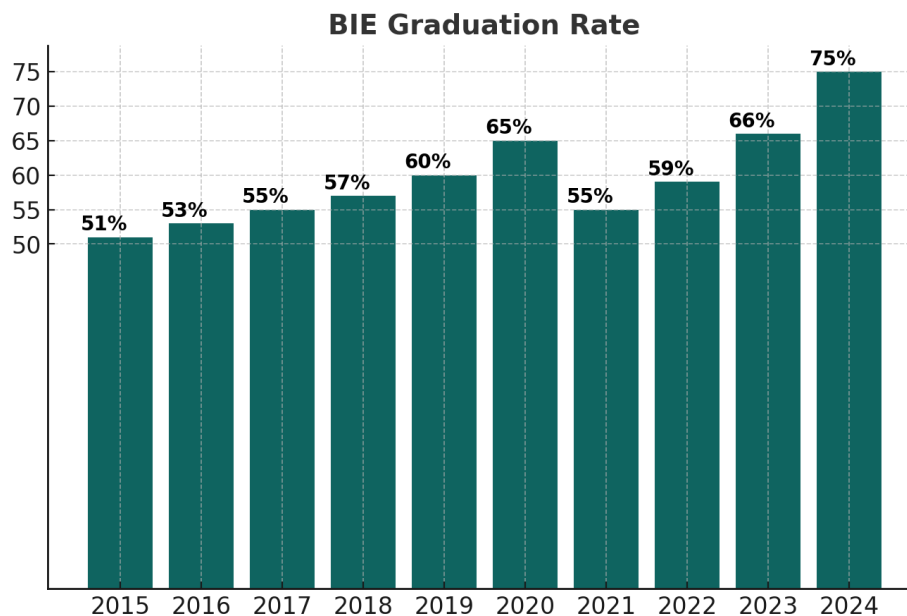
The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) has made notable progress in improving educational outcomes for its approximately 40,000 students representing 226 tribes across its 183 schools in 23 states. These K-12 schools include 128 tribally controlled schools exercising local control of education. The other 55 Bureau-operated schools provide direct education services to tribes who have largely requested it as part of the federal government's trust responsibility. Key improvements include a steady rise in the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), reflecting enhanced student retention and support for their unique educational needs. BIE's ACGR has shown a positive trend over the past decade with BIE improvements initiated under President Trump and staffing efforts providing expanded early intervention and other student services contributing to this growth. BIE efforts have yielded substantial results, with graduation rates rising from just over 51% in 2015 to 75% in 2024. Through work initiated under President Trump's first term, the agency has also improved its data collection processes, allowing for more accurate tracking of student performance and graduation outcomes, providing a more effective return on investment for the public taxpayer.

Postsecondary aspirations among graduates are also becoming more clearly defined. A larger portion of students now plan to pursue higher education than the historical trend. Recent data shows that 20% of BIE graduates plan to attend a four-year college, 11% aim for a two-year college, and an increasing number are pursuing employment or vocational training. These statistics indicate a growing focus on career and postsecondary readiness, reflecting BIE's commitment to guiding students beyond high school. Additionally, BIE has strengthened its technical assistance, ensured more accurate tracking of performance metrics, and kept schools accountable to make sure BIE students can compete upon graduation.

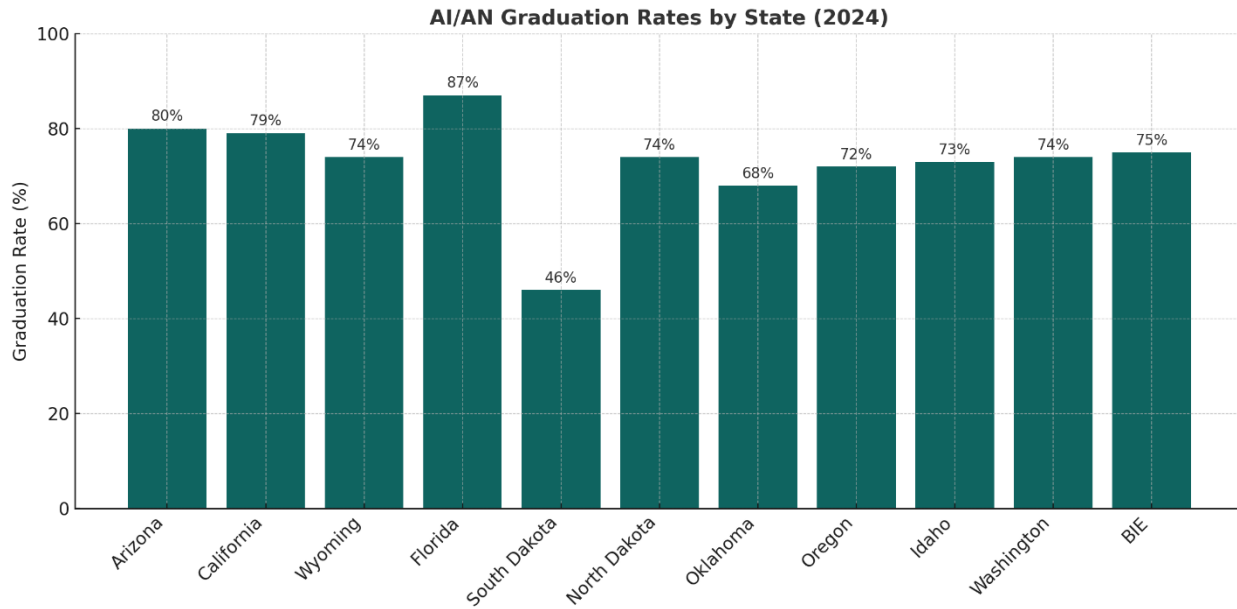
BIE Graduation Rate

BIE prioritization of improving dedicated education support services is working as trends illustrate increased student performance and improved graduation rates over the last decade. Comparative gaps regarding BIE student performance with their peers are closing by implementing targeted student support initiatives, expanding college and career readiness programs, and strengthening school accountability. A key factor in these efforts has been developing a comprehensive data system, which allows BIE to collaborate closely with stakeholders to enhance data quality and track student progress more effectively. These efforts have yielded substantial results, with reliable data illustrating how graduation rates have risen from just over 51% in 2015 to 75% in 2024. This substantial growth includes a rebound from negative growth experienced nationwide during the COVID-19 Pandemic. While BIE's work continues to bridge the gap between BIE and non-BIE students, the trends are positive and

comparable or better than many states with high Indian populations. However, more work is needed to reach the national average graduation rate of 87%.

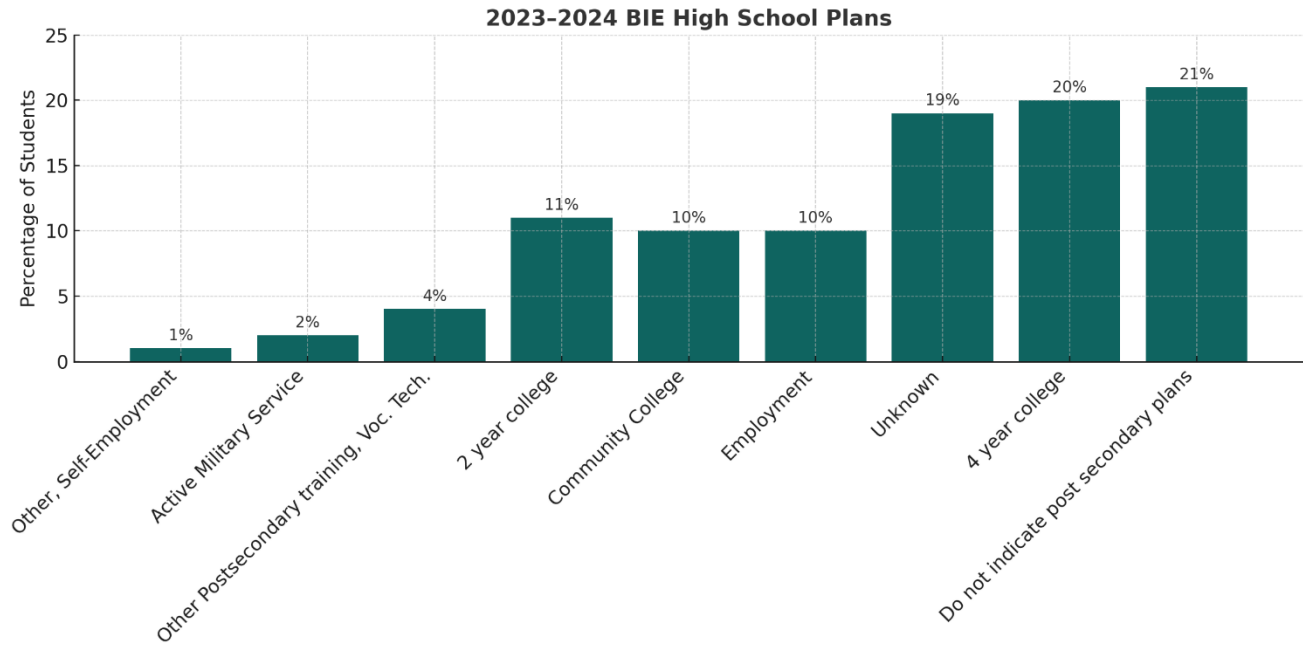


BIE's 2024 graduation rate of 75% demonstrates significant progress and places BIE ahead of several states with a high density of BIE-funded schools and American Indian/Alaska Native students. BIE outperforms South Dakota (46%), Oklahoma (68%), Oregon (72%), Idaho (73%), and three states tied at 74%—Wyoming, North Dakota, and Washington. BIE's steady upward trajectory highlights that its effective college and career readiness interventions are working. By providing student support initiatives, the BIE is positioned to build on these gains as a leader in improving AI/AN student outcomes, outpacing traditional public-school systems in many states.



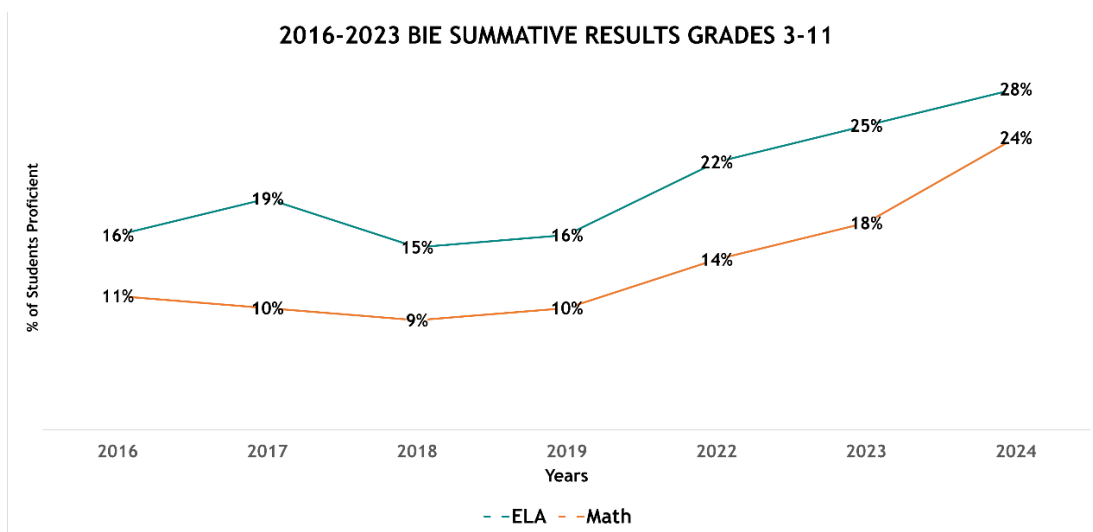
Postsecondary Plans

The post-high school plans of BIE graduates from School Year 2023–24 reflect a continued focus on education and workforce entry, with diverse outcomes. Twenty percent (20%) of student graduates plan to attend a four-year college. Two-year programs remain a common pathway, with 11% choosing two-year colleges and 10% attending community colleges. Another 10% of graduates plan to enter the workforce immediately, while 4% are pursuing vocational or technical training. A small percentage plan to serve in the military (2%) or pursue self-employment or other opportunities (1%). These data highlight the range of postsecondary directions BIE students explore and point to opportunities for continued college and career readiness planning support.



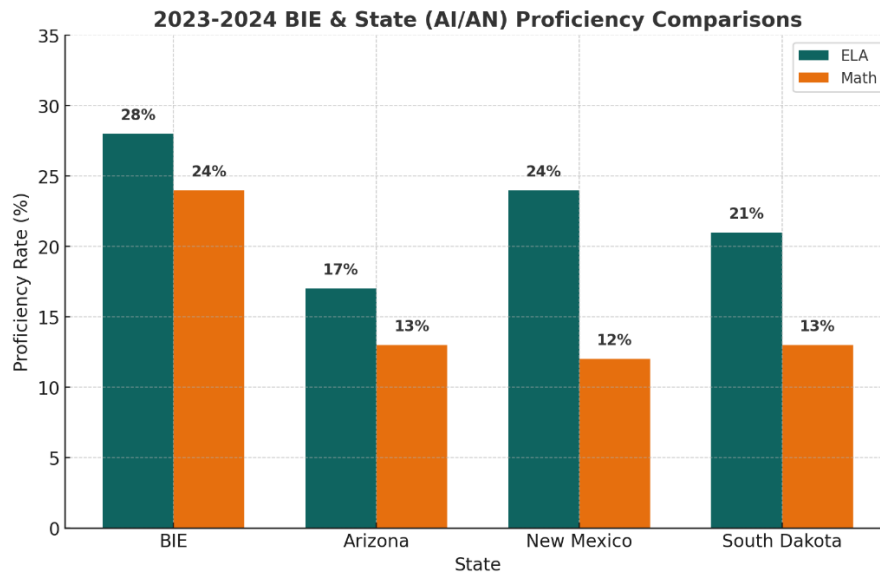
BIE Academic Progress

Academic proficiency has shown meaningful gains, particularly in math and English Language Arts (ELA). Since 2016, BIE students have experienced a 13% increase in math proficiency—a significant achievement given the national landscape. Between 2019 and 2022, math proficiency declined in 43 states, with no state reporting an increase, yet BIE students continued to improve. Since 2016, BIE students have also experienced a 12% increase in ELA proficiency.

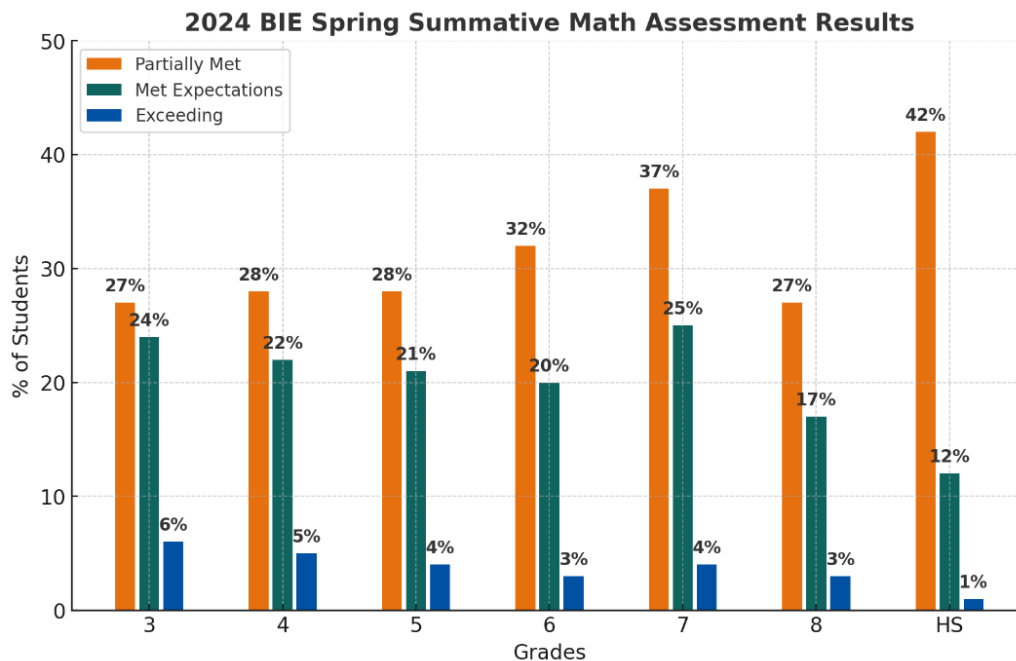
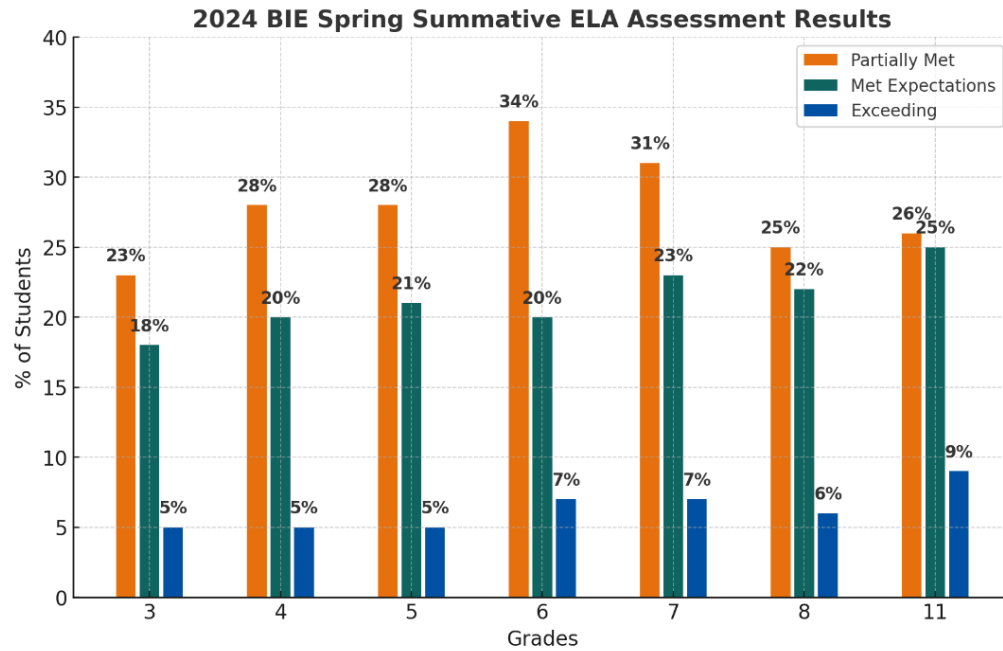


While much work remains, in 2023, BIE's math proficiency reached 18%, surpassing New Mexico (13%) and Arizona (13%). Similarly, ELA reached 25% in 2023, which exceeded Arizona's 17% and New Mexico's 23%. These results show that BIE students are making greater gains in ELA and Math

proficiency than Native students in public schools within these states. These improvements also underscore BIE's success in closing performance gaps and ensuring students receive a stronger academic foundation.



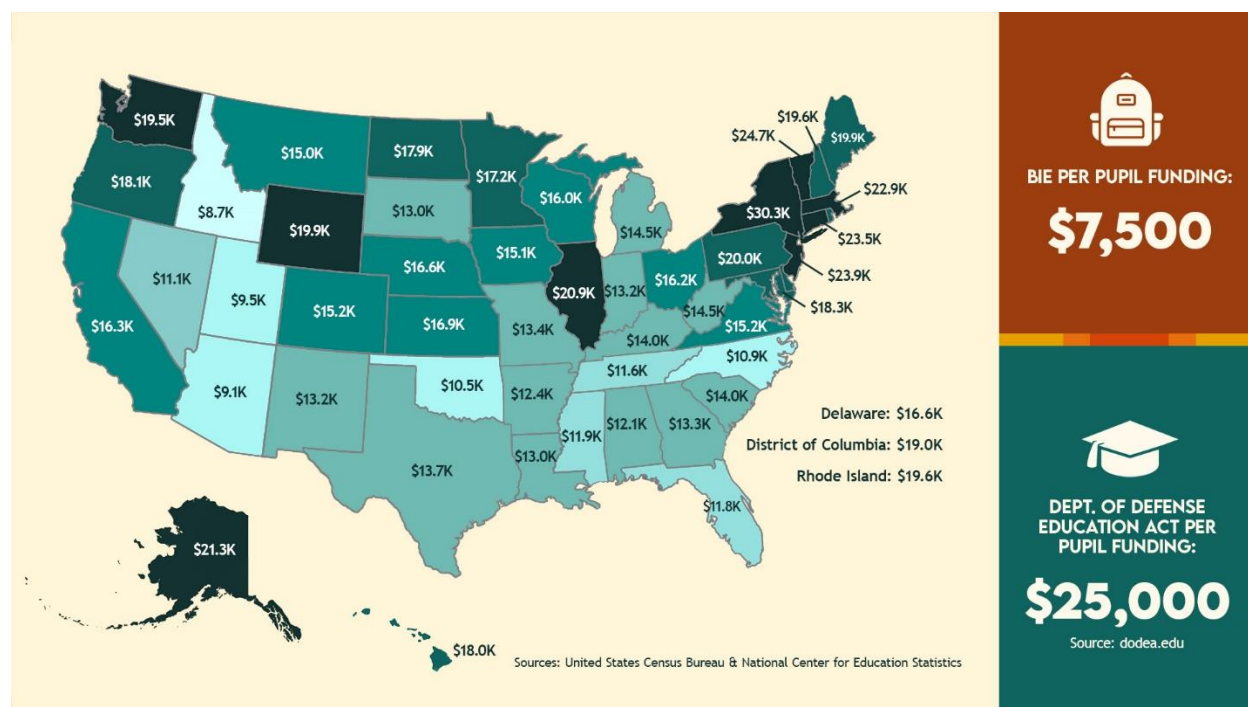
Last year's 2024 BIE Spring Summative Assessment results illustrate steady academic growth, with an increasing percentage of students "partially meeting," "meeting," or "exceeding expectations" in both ELA and Math. In ELA, higher grades show stronger proficiency, with 25% of 11th-grade students meeting expectations and 9% exceeding them. Math results highlight significant improvement in high school performance, where 42% of students partially met expectations, and 12% met or exceeded expectations. Compared to state and national AI/AN proficiency rates, BIE students are improving faster, reflecting improving instructional strategies, data-driven interventions, and the value of BIE providing or supporting school choice for a local, tribal, culturally relevant education.



BIE Student Funding

Even though Congress funds BIE students at a lower dollar amount per pupil than students in many states, BIE student academic growth and school improvement continue. Tribes often advocate for additional funds in BIE classroom spending to bridge the gap. The per-pupil spending data below highlights disparities in education funding. BIE per-pupil funding is \$7,500 on average, significantly lower than the national average state spending, which ranges from approximately \$8,700 to \$30,300 per student. Most states allocate between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per student, with the highest funding in the

Northeast (e.g., New York: \$30,300, Connecticut: \$24,700). BIE's federal counterpart, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools, provides \$25,000 per pupil, more than three times BIE's funding.



Looking Ahead

BIE's commitment to academic excellence and improving student success is evident in the sustained progress across multiple key areas, including rising graduation rates, improved proficiency in ELA and Math, and increased postsecondary readiness. However, more must be done. BIE staff are determined to bridge the gap between BIE and non-BIE students. BIE has made year-over-year improvements (excluding the pandemic) in student achievement, with a steady increase in students meeting and exceeding proficiency expectations and a graduation rate that now surpasses AI/AN rates in many states. These improvements reflect the impact of data-driven instruction informing targeted student support.

BIE will build on this momentum by further enhancing instructional quality through effective oversight and accountability, expanding school choice and access to rigorous coursework, and strengthening college and career pathways at the local level. Continued investments in educator training, student engagement, and community partnerships will also provide BIE students with more opportunities for academic growth, high school graduation, and success in college and careers.

Through this work, BIE is poised to drive higher student achievement, increase locally driven education, and improve long-term educational success for Indian students.