



State of the Future Workforce

**Report prepared for Rosebud Economic
Development Corporation**

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Executive Summary

The State of the Future Workforce report was created by the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO) to shed light on the current state of economics, the current state of education and how they correlate to the future workforce and economic development of the Rosebud Reservation. A strong economy cannot be created without a well-educated workforce and a well-educated workforce is difficult to create without a strong economy.

Rosebud's current unemployment rate is at 83% with 44% of the population living below the poverty level. Drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide rates are among the highest in the nation. The lack of basic infrastructure including transportation and telecommunication has effects on economic development. Proficiency levels across the 3 main school districts that serve the majority of reservation youth, Todd County, White River and St. Francis Indian School, are low. According to the South Dakota Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System (STARS), an average of 5.5% students tested proficient in math and 9% tested proficient in English Language Arts (ELA). An average of only 28% of students graduating high school are enrolling in some form of postsecondary education and a lower percent are actually graduating college.

So what does that mean for the future workforce? There is a high need for basic math, writing and communication skills in the workforce but there is a lack of math and ELA proficiency across reservation schools. There is a need for basic social skills such as reliability, timeliness and dependability but schools average 71% attendance rate. The need for competent, trustworthy, and reliable workers aligns with the lack of Lakota values and traditions within the school systems.

The scope of this report is not intended to provide solutions for improving the overall Sicangu Lakota Oyate education system, but rather to identify solutions in developing a future workforce capable of sustaining a strong economy. REDCO remains focused on concrete actionable steps including short, medium, and long-term action goals including but not limited to:

- A robust career and internship program for youths and adults by providing opportunities to gain the necessary workforce skills.
- Creating strong partnerships with the tribe and other entities to close sustainability gaps such a public transportation and data collection.
- Working to ensure both the education system and economic development match the values of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to assess the state of the future workforce for the Sicangu Lakota Oyate for the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO). The assessment identifies educational trends in correlation to estimated workforce needs over the next seven generations. The information will be incorporated into REDCO's comprehensive economic planning activities, with short, medium, and long term recommendations. While the report sheds light on inconvenient truths about the state of education and workforce needs on the Rosebud Reservation, the purpose is not to offend or incite anger. The goal of this report is to provide an honest assessment to develop and implement actionable solutions in furtherance of a strong, sustainable economy for the Sicangu Lakota Oyate.

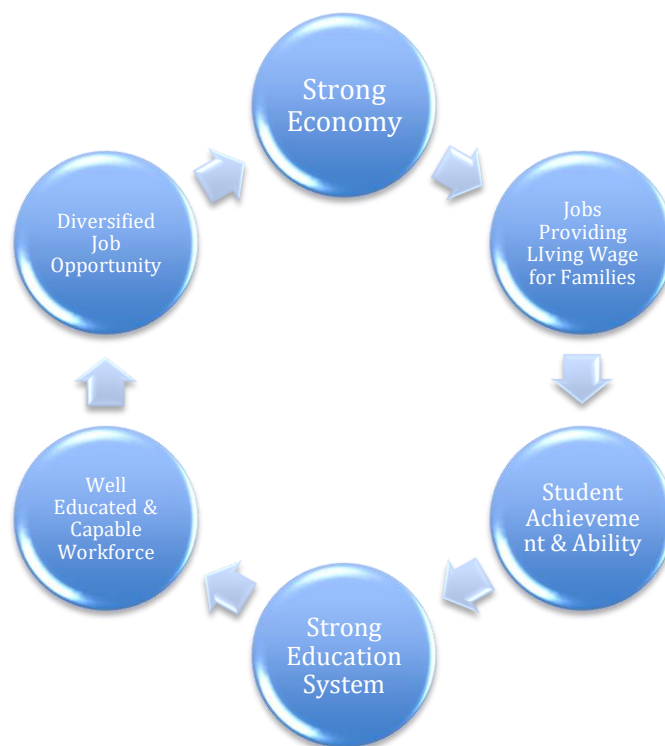
Survey Process and Data Procurement

This report utilizes quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources. Data included for the current state of education on the Rosebud Reservation includes Smarter Balance test scores from the 2015-16 academic year as reported by the STARS (South Dakota Teacher Accountability and Reporting System) report for Todd County and White River School Districts. STARS information does not apply to St. Francis Indian School or Sapa Un Academy. In addition to the STARS reporting made available through the State Department of Education, Todd County, St. Francis, and White River Superintendents were contacted to procure MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) Data for 2015-16 academic year in each district. Qualitative data was procured through meetings with, and surveys of, school board members, school administrators, and community stakeholders. As noted in our bibliography, a variety of previous reports and documents were consulted for additional quantitative and qualitative data referenced throughout the report.

I. Link Between Education, Workforce and the Economy

The linkage between education and economic development is intuitive and well documented. Economic factors impact education. Educational attainment, quality of education, and skill development impact various economic quality of life indicators including lifetime earnings, and overall workforce readiness. Rates of poverty, access to goods and services, availability and types of jobs directly impact families' ability to support student achievement, probability of attending college, and ultimately entering the workforce.

The two systems – the economic and education – are symbiotic. One cannot thrive without the other. A strong economy cannot be created without a well-educated workforce and a well-educated workforce is difficult to create without a strong economy. Jobs cannot be created if there are no workers to fill the jobs and a well-educated workforce cannot be developed without families supported by living wage employment.



Developing a strong economy requires developing a strong education system. While REDCO has begun to ramp up workforce training and employee wellness programs, more must be done to ensure a qualified workforce. This means finding ways to improve the overall education system.

II. Current Economic State of the Rosebud Reservation

- Unemployment rate is 83%, among the highest in the country.
- 44% of the population living below the poverty level
- Lack of basic workforce skills

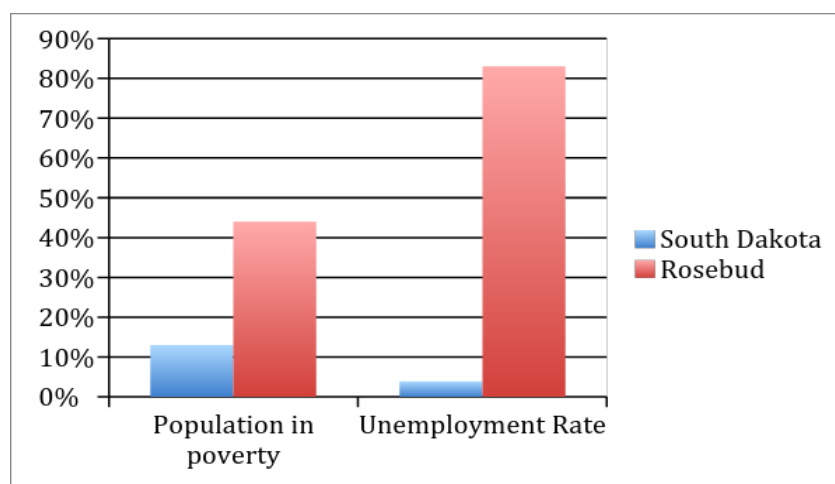
Without diving into an exhibition of the poverty levels faced by reservation communities, we must acknowledge the economic reality at play for the majority of individuals living on the Rosebud Reservation. The unemployment rate for the reservation was approximated at 83% according to data from the 2010 census. This is significantly higher than the rate of 3.9% for the State of South Dakota as a whole. With the majority of the reservation population unemployed or underemployed, many individuals are not able to earn enough income to sustain their livelihoods. Furthermore, Rosebud's median household income of \$23,274, is likely skewed higher due to the small percentage of individuals making above \$50,000. According to the 2010 census, the per capita income of \$10,575 is more indicative of the monetary reality for most individuals on the reservation. The United States Census Bureau 2015 poverty guidelines state the poverty threshold for a family unit of four is \$24,250 and for a single individual it is \$11,770. Under their guidelines, the majority of individuals on the Rosebud Reservation are living in poverty. In comparison with the entire State of South Dakota, Rosebud's level of poverty is higher and the per capita income is lower.

| 2010 US Census | Rosebud | South Dakota |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Median household income | \$23,274 | \$49,904 |
| Per Capita Income | \$10,575 | \$30,154 |
| Population in poverty | 44% | 13% |
| Unemployment rate | 83% | 3.9% |

Key Indicators

Key indicators such as health, safety, trauma,

healthcare, transportation, and telecommunication all factor into the economic state of the reservation.



- Drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide rates are among the highest in the nation, about 10 times higher than the national average.
- According to the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, Natives have the highest rate of teen childbearing at 18% with 56% receiving no prenatal care in the first trimester.
- The life expectancy of the average male on the reservation is 47 years old; that is only 1 year younger than Haiti.
- The lack of basic infrastructure can stem from many different issues, including geography, income, population, etc.
- A 'digital divide' when it comes to telecommunications such as cable, phone, and internet in such a technological world can be very detrimental to economic development (Kalt, 2008).

There are many other factors such as homelessness, hunger, violence, abuse, etc. that contribute to the current state of economics but due to the constraints of this report, the focus is based toward educational indicators. The economic data indicates that a well developed workforce, in tandem with a successful education system, are necessary in order to change the reality facing those on the Rosebud Reservation. Education, economics, and workforce development do not operate in separate spheres but rather are intertwined in ways that will be explored in the following sections of the report.

This report will show that the majority of students across the reservation are not proficient in key subject areas that are essential for academic achievement. Student proficiency is not lacking due

to the ability to achieve but because the effects of trauma on students has not been addressed. All these factors play a huge role in the socio-economic state of the Rosebud community. However, it is the utmost importance that we remember these factors do not define the people.

III. Current State of Education

An overview of the current educational landscape must be examined in order to analyze the current state of education on the Rosebud Reservation, and its subsequent effects and relation to the state of the future workforce. The figures below illustrate a “snapshot” of the current state of education. Information is included for the four main educational institutions that provide services for students on the reservation; the Todd County School District, White River School District, St. Francis Indian School and Sapa Un Academy. It should be acknowledged that other educational institutions provide services to students from the Rosebud Reservation such as the Winner School District, Rapid City Central schools, St. Joseph’s Indian School, etc. These institutions were not included, due to their lack of physical proximity to the reservation community.

The following graph and subsequent tables provide a comparison of Math and English proficiency, attendance, four-year graduation rate, high school completion, and college readiness among the reservation schools as well as a comparison between white and native students statewide. Proficiency is defined as students who are considered on track by demonstrating the knowledge and skills necessary for college and career readiness. The data presented represents students who participated in Smarter Balance and Measures for Academic Progress (MAPS) testing for the 2015/2016 school year. The four schools represented in this report do not participate in the same testing so different charts were created for the different test types.

- According to the South Dakota Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System (STARS) 2015-2016 Report Card:
 - **Native Students statewide** have **15%** math proficiency and **22%** reading proficiency in comparison to over 50% proficiency of their white peers according to Smarter Balance Testing.

- **Math proficiency** is led by White River School District at **12%**, followed by Todd County at **6%** with St. Francis Indian School at **.006%** .
- **English language arts proficiency** is also led by White River School District at **17%**, followed by Todd County at **9%** with St. Francis Indian School at **4%**.
- St. Francis has the highest attendance rate at 95% followed by White River at 81% and Todd County at 37%.
- Statewide **high school completion rate** is at 94% in comparison to an average of **54%** for Todd County and White River School Districts.

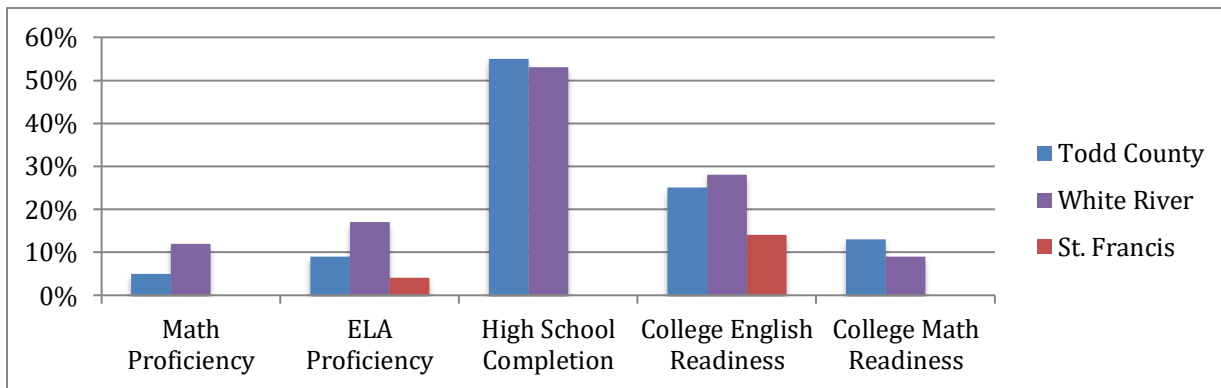


Rosebud State of Education Snapshot according to South Dakota Teacher Accountability and Reporting System (STARS) 2015-2016 Report Card

| | Todd County: | | White River: | | *St. Francis | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--|
| | <u>Native Students:</u> | <u>Percent:</u> | <u>Native Students:</u> | <u>Percent:</u> | <u>Native Students:</u> | <u>Percent:</u> |
| Math proficiency | 1,081 | 6% | 189 | 12% | 321 | .006% |
| ELA proficiency | 1,081 | 9% | 189 | 17% | 303 | 4% |
| Attendance | 1,767 | 37% | 296 | 81% | 711 | 95% |
| Four-year graduation rate | 87 | 51% | 21 | 76% | N/A | *69% (or 48%) |
| High School Completion | 94 | 55% | 31 | 53% | N/A | *16% (high school dropout rate average) |

| STARS Report State Wide | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | <u>White Students:</u> | <u>Percent:</u> | <u>Native Students:</u> | <u>Percent:</u> |
| Math proficiency | 52,662 | 50% | 8,252 | 15% |
| ELA proficiency | 52,662 | 58% | 8,252 | 22% |
| Attendance | 72,721 | 86% | 13,786 | 53% |
| Four-year graduation rate | 7,160 | 89% | 941 | 51% |
| High School Completion | 7,155 | 94% | 900 | 66% |
| College English Readiness | 5349 | 76% | 334 | 39% |
| College Math Readiness | 5,248 | 69% | 312 | 28% |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|
| College English Readiness | 32 | 25% | 11 | 28% | 23 | 14% |
| College Math Readiness | 30 | 13% | 11 | 9% | 23 | 0 |



*St. Francis Indian School (SFIS) data is compiled from their annual report to the Tribal Education Department

*SFIS reported 2 different number in the same report for 4-year graduation rates based on freshman cohorts.

*High school completion for SFIS was not available, it was replaced with the high school dropout rate average.

*Data from Sapa Un Academy is included in a different graph as their data is representative of the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Test.

MAPS

2015-2016 Data

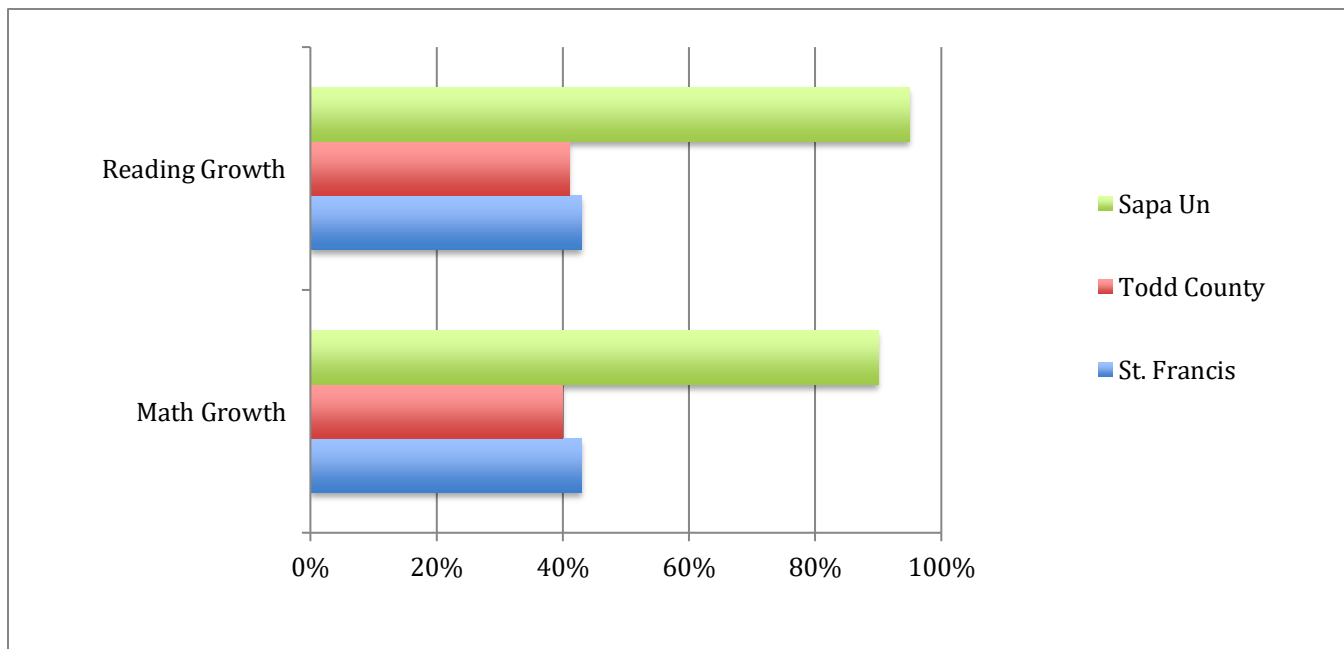
Average percent of students meeting growth goals

* Sapa Un's data is reflective of the 2016/2017 school year as 2015/2016 data was not available

*White River School district does not use MAPS testing

Proficiency

When looking at the totality of the students represented in the data above, of the 1591 Native



students who participated in the Smarter Balance testing across Todd County, White River and St. Francis Indian School, 89 students (5.5%) tested advance or proficient in math. That is 1502 student who did not met proficiency standards. In English language arts, of the 1573 total students, 141 (9%) tested advance or proficient in ELA. That is 1432 student who did not met proficiency

standards. This data does not include those students who did not participate in testing or account for those students not enrolled due to a variety of reasons including drop outs, transfers, or youths detained in the juvenile detention center.

According to the data provided by Sapa Un Catholic Academy for the 2016-2017 school year; their students made an average of 2 years of growth in both reading and math in just 1 school year measured by MAPS testing. Every single student made growth. Of their 21 students, 19 met their growth goals in math and 20 students met their reading growth goals. Many of them went up over 2 years or more in reading.

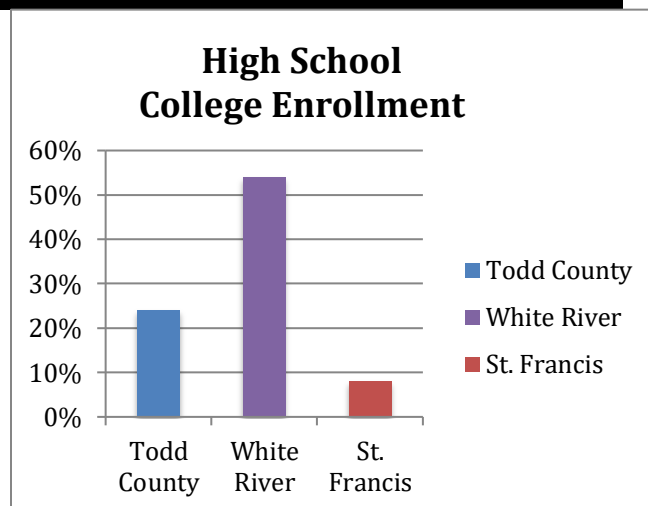
Students across all grade levels are not meeting proficiency standards in the core content areas of Math and English Language Arts. This has implications on student performance, completion of schooling, college readiness and a well educated workforce on the Rosebud Reservation. Data for the number or percentage of those students who have completed college or who are on track to complete is not available. Other outlining factors, to be address more in depth later on, such as lower district standards, high administrator turnover rates, and lack of qualified teachers also have huge impacts on students performances.

College Readiness

According to the same document, a small percentage of students at Todd County High School who took the ACT Exam were considered “College Ready” during the 2015-16 academic year. Thirty students in the Todd County School District took the ACT with 4 students (13%) considered college ready in math and 8 students (25%) were considered college ready in ELA. Of the students who graduated from the Todd County School District in the 2011-2014 classes, only 24 became enrolled in college. This illustrates the fact that a narrow percentage of the 32 students who completed the ACT will ultimately enroll in college. We must also consider that some of those 24 students will choose to leave Todd County and the Rosebud Reservation to live and work elsewhere, making the number of degree holding members in the workforce decrease.

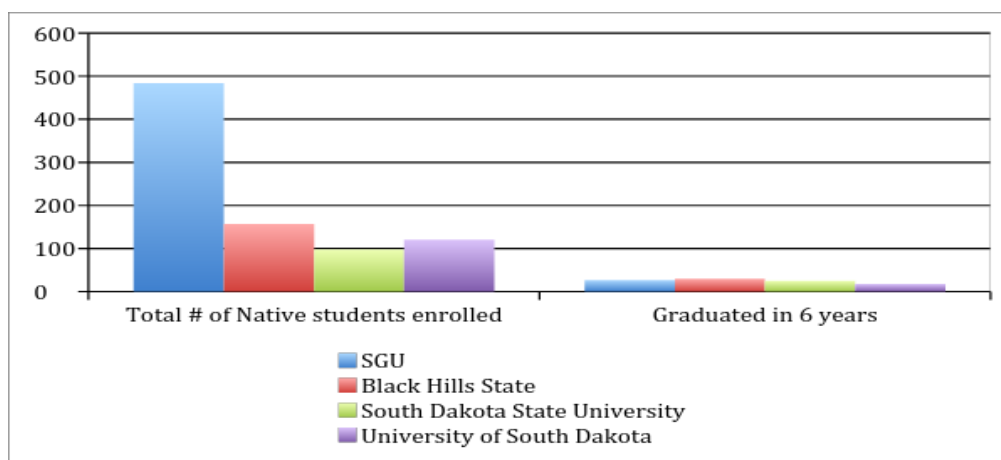
College Enrollment

The state of education on the Rosebud Reservation also includes postsecondary enrollment and graduation rates of students. While students who enroll in some form of postsecondary education attend a variety of institutions, ranging from Mitchell Technical Institute to Fort Lewis College in Colorado, data is more readily available for comparison between state and tribal post secondary



institutions in South Dakota. Considering a cohort of students from 2011-2014, 24% of Todd County students, 8% of students at St. Francis Indian School and 54% of White River students enrolled in some form of postsecondary education. The reality is that 76% of students in the Todd County School District and 92% of students at St. Francis Indian School did not enrolled in some form of postsecondary education. These figures do not include students who did not complete their high school education.

Data from the 2015-16 academic year indicates that an even smaller percentage of those students who enroll in postsecondary education graduate with some form of credential or degree. Locally, at Sinte Gleska University, 37 Native students (8%) enrolled graduate within 6 years. Data indicates that there were no Native American students graduating within the traditional four-year time frame for a postsecondary degree. To compare we looked at Native American enrollment and graduation rates from the three in-state postsecondary academic institutions: Black Hills State University, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota. The following table displays the 2015-2016 tribal and state college enrollment and graduation rates.



| 2015-2016 Tribal and State College Enrollment and Graduation Rates | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Total # students enrolled | Total # Native Students enrolled | % Graduate in 6 years | # Graduate in 6 years |
| SGU | 575 | 484 | 8% | 37 |
| Black Hills State | 4,020 | 157 | 19% | 30 |
| SD State University | 10,937 | 98 | 25% | 25 |
| University of SD | 7,541 | 121 | 15% | 18 |

Graduation Rates. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2017, from <http://www.collegeresults.org>

SDBOR College Matriculation Dashboard. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2017, from <https://www.sdbor.edu/dashboards/Pages/College-Matriculation.aspx>

What does this mean for the future workforce?

The data points to the larger issue of sustainability facing the Rosebud Reservation. School districts are producing a small percentage of students who continue on to postsecondary education. Of those students who do enroll in postsecondary education, small percentages graduate within the traditional time frame of four to six years. It is taking a large amount of time to produce a smaller percentage of postsecondary degree holding individuals. It should be noted that the graduation data for SGU potentially reflects its higher population of non-traditional students, such as full or part-time employees and single parents, taking fewer courses at a time. The reservation needs qualified employees in the short and long term.

It is noted in the STARS report that only 66% of Native American students in the state of South Dakota are completing high school. Taking this data in totality illustrates the challenging landscape on the reservation when it comes to the future workforce. Fewer Native Americans are completing high school and postsecondary credentials in South Dakota and the local education institutions are not producing students proficient in skills necessary to enter the workforce directly after completion of their schooling.



IV.

*Photo from: <http://e3alliance.org>

What is Possible & What is

Currently Working

REDCO's purpose to create a sustainable economy for the Sicangu Lakota Oyate requires entrepreneurial spirit, critical thinking and action based problem solving. Solutions must be based on a larger vision followed by honest assessments of resources and challenges- essentially this means determining what is currently working and what is not.

Using impact design principals to develop solutions, community stakeholders were surveyed. Stakeholders included school board members, school administrators, teachers, students and parents from across the reservation. Each questionnaire was geared toward their specific role in education but the general questions were:

1. Do you think your school district has prepared you/your students to be successful?
2. In what ways would you have improved your educational experience?
3. Do you believe Lakota culture and language are important to your success/the success of your students?
4. Do you believe financial literacy and college preparation skills including resume building, application assistance and mentoring are important for your success/the success of your students?
5. What do you see for the future of Rosebud?
6. What is possible for the future of Rosebud?

Major themes included a lack of college preparation, low academic standards and subpar integration of Lakota culture. Students from across districts shared a feeling of inadequacy in regards to their education. Higher standards and academic rigor are needed. Students who left the reservation for postsecondary education struggled academically to keep up with their peers who went to non-reservation high schools.

School board members and school administrators alike agreed Lakota culture should be more integrated and implemented into curriculum. Integration of Lakota values align with workforce needs such as competency, trustworthiness, and reliability. More qualified staff are required to

help lower the teacher turnover rate and raise student standards. Schools are making sustainable steps toward progress by informally tracking students after they graduate. However a formalized data-base would allow far more accurate and efficient analysis. By tracking students movements after graduation, whether into postsecondary study, military, vocational trainings or the workforce, school districts will be able to tailor the curriculum toward student needs.

When posed the question, “What is possible for the future of Rosebud?” the response received was hopeful. For years, the story of Rosebud has been described by mainstream media as “poverty porn”. Journalism such as Diane Sawyer’s “Children of the Plains”, which cast a singular image of “the poor sad Indian”, offer little to zero context on why these systemic problems exist. Even though problems of extreme poverty, alcoholism and drug abuse do exist on the reservation, these problems exist everywhere and do not define the people. It is important to highlight their resiliency to overcome insurmountable circumstances. A group of Todd County high school students took it upon themselves to tell the world that they are more than the circumstances placed upon them. They created a rebuttal video named [“More Than That...”](#), using their voices to share their real life experiences beyond the poverty, drugs and violence the media portrays. These students are resilient, hopeful, brave, determined, humble, passionate, motivated, intelligent and the list goes on. The sheer perseverance of those students to share their stories tells to their capabilities to be successful.

Students, parents, school administrators, and school board members alike alluded to misconceptions of having to leave the reservation to attain success. Instead of focusing on all the negative, we must shift our thinking to the positive. You can build a life here on the reservation and be successful. There are opportunities to flourish and grow, they just have to be nurtured. Some students expressed a desire to leave the reservation to attend school with the intention of returning after graduation to improve their communities.

Examples of Excellence

A number of examples of excellence were examined to assist in framing achievable solutions. The term “excellence” is subjective but it is used in this case to describe schools or school systems with a track record of proven results for students of lower socioeconomic status. Schools used for this illustration include public, private, and charter schools with the highest percentages of students of lower socioeconomic status as well as the highest rates of college acceptance and enrollment. While each community is unique, we believe that adapting elements from schools with proven track records can be beneficial.

Native American Community Academy (NACA)

The Native American Community Academy (NACA), is a private school located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Founded in 2004, NACA's student body numbers 385, with 94% being Native American representing over sixty tribes. 100% of seniors at NACA are accepted to college and 83% of those seniors attend college immediately following their senior year. Additionally NACA stresses a focus on culturally relevant curriculum and learning.

Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP)

An example of excellence for a public charter school network would be the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP). KIPP schools number approximately 183 nationwide serving students of lower socioeconomic status. 82% of KIPP students nationwide enroll in college and 44% of KIPP students nationwide complete a 4 year college program.

Public Schools

- Brooklyn Technical High School located in Brooklyn, New York serves a students body in which 64.9% live in poverty. 94.8% of students are college bound upon graduation with 64.2% of students participating in dual enrollment courses.
- Harbor Teacher Preparation Academy in Wilmington, California serves a student body in which 72.2% live in poverty. 100% of students are college bound upon graduation and 100% of the student body participate in dual enrollment courses.
- Irma L. Rangel Young Women's Leadership School in Dallas, Texas serves a student body in which 87.4% of the students live in poverty. 100% of those students are college bound upon graduation and 23.2% of the student body participate in dual enrollment courses.

Economic Excellence

Examples of economic excellence in Indian country have been well documented by over two decades of research from the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development and the Native Nations Institute at the University of Arizona. According to Stephen Cornell and Joseph Kalt's *Two Approaches to Economic Development on American Indian Reservations: One Works, the Other Doesn't* study; there are two types of economic approaches found throughout tribal nations, the "standard" approach and the "nation-building" approach. The nation-building approach has five main characteristics (Cornell, 2006):

-
1. Practical Sovereignty
 2. Effective governing institutions
 3. Cultural match
 4. Strategic orientation
 5. Nation-building leadership

The following tribes have found sustainable success due to building their economy being based upon the “nation-building” approach (Cornell, 2003).

- The Mississippi Choctaws are one of the largest employers in the state of Mississippi, employing several thousand non-Native Americans to work in the Choctaws’ manufacturing, service, and public sector enterprises. They have created more jobs than Choctaw people to fill them, making their unemployment drop significantly.
- The White Mountain Apaches’ thrive on their forest products, skiing, recreation, and other enterprises. Their timber operation is one of the most productive in the western United States.
- Tourism, agriculture, and retail services have lowered unemployment rates on the Salish and Kootenai tribes of the Flathead Reservation in Montana. Non-Indians travel to the tribal college to receive the type of education that the Flatheads provide.
- The Cochiti Pueblo in New Mexico have effectively closed the unemployment gap due to tribally owned enterprises creating and filling on-reservation jobs with their own people.

The five characteristics of the standard approach are as followed (Cornell, 2006):

1. Short-term, non-strategic goals
2. Development agenda set by outsiders
3. Economic development is seen as an economic problem
4. Views traditional cultures as an obstacle
5. Elected leadership becomes a distributor of resources

When examining the current state of economic development for Rosebud, it has characteristics of the standard approach. There aren’t enough jobs; there isn’t enough income; too much poverty; too many people dependent on federal services so the quick solution is to create more jobs and income to fix the problem. While that might help in the short term, it is not the environment to create a sustainable economy. A transition to a nation-building approach must occur in order to build a nation where both businesses and human beings can grown and develop (Cornell, 2003).

Sovereignty, nation-building and economic development all go hand in hand with many intertwined factors. There is no magically fix for the many issues faced in the economic development of a tribe. Simply having access to resources –natural, human or financial- does not equate to a successful economy. However, building a sustainable nation that incorporates local and foreign investment can create a successful economy. The nation-building approach changes

the mindset of development from reactive to proactive and shifts short-term solutions to long term planning. The success of a tribe is no longer measured by its economy alone, but by its social, cultural, political and economical impacts as a whole.

Possibilities

Given the entirety of the data provided, including employment and educational statistics, the community's aspirations, and examples of excellence in economic development and education, the possibility exists for a strong Sicangu Lakota Oyate economy. However, economic systems and education systems must be improved simultaneously. The students of Rosebud are capable of achieving 100% graduation rates but they must be equipped with the tools to succeed. There are approximately 2000+ jobs from the four main entities on the reservation including tribal employment, Indian Health Services, St. Francis Indian School and Todd County School District. How do we ensure that seven generations from now, tribal members fill all those positions?

Through collaboration with other programs across Rosebud, there can be change. REDCO is currently partnering with Teach for America and the Rosebud Boys and Girls Club on a youth empowerment initiative, Igniting the Entrepreneurial Spirit. The goal is to provide Sicangu youth with opportunities to develop academic, professional and social-emotional skills that will enable them to pursue and achieve their college and career goals. It will provide them with the necessary tools to overcome the long list of adversities they face daily, while honoring and incorporating traditional Lakota cultural values. Through mentorships, the hope is to inspire, encourage and instill the confidence they need to become our future leaders and break the cycle of poverty and trauma that has been ingrained over generations.

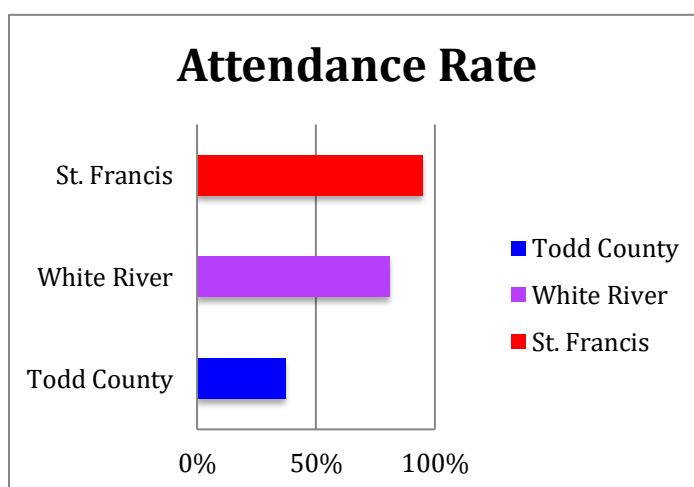
V. State of the Future Local Workforce

When thinking of the future local workforce, we must first look at the needs required to build that workforce. According to the Todd County School district's *Job Market Analysis and Private Business Needs Assessment*, small and private business owners identified a future need for basic social, computer, and math skills. Competent, trustworthy, reliable, consistent and friendly can be used to describe the traits necessary for new employees in existing reservation businesses. Many businesses across categories were receptive to hosting interns. A robust internship framework and plan could open the door to potential partnerships with local businesses. There are employment opportunities requiring only a high school or GED credentials as well as

opportunities requiring a 2-4 year degree or higher. Regardless of education background requirements, communication and interpersonal skills are crucial to employee success.

Many of the trends identified as needs for the future workforce correlate with the faults of the current education system. There is a high need for basic math skills in the workforce but there is a lack of math proficiency across reservation schools. The average math proficiency of Todd County, White River and St. Francis schools is only 5.5%. That means 95% of Rosebud youth are lacking those basic math skills needed to enter and improve the local workforce. Writing and communication skills were also identified in high need. With an average of only 9% proficiency in English language arts across schools, 91% of students are lacking those foundational skills.

The need for basic social skills such as reliability, timeliness and dependability can stem from school attendance issues. Lack of implementation of existing attendance policies, as well as other factors including location and transportation can affect attendance goals.



VI. Gaps in Data and Resources

It is important to acknowledge the gaps in data and resources in order to progress forward. The 2016 to 2017 data is not yet readily available across all school systems for analysis so the report relies heavily on data from the 2015-16 year as well as reaching back to the 2010 census and high school college enrollment rates between 2011-2014. This data is extremely useful, however, going forward the most up to date and reflective data will be the most useful for determining the state of education and the implications for the future workforce on the Rosebud Reservation.

Many of the schools report similar pieces of data using either the same or similar assessments. The issue is that one school might record the percent of students that “met or exceeded projected growth” while another might record “percent with one year + growth,” for the same year. This is exacerbated by the fact that some schools record the same pieces of data but for different years which limits the ability to compare how students are performing. There is no one cohesive reporting systems for school to report the same types of data for comparison purposes.

Tribal web pages are often lacking in up to date or robust information that can be readily consumed by individuals looking for data or resources. This can be contributed to the lack of basic technology infrastructure.

VII. Goals and Recommendations

The scope of this report is not intended to provide solutions for improving the overall Sicangu Lakota Oyate education system, but rather to identify solutions in developing a future workforce capable of sustaining a strong economy. While themes have emerged for larger school reform and improvement, REDCO remains focused on concrete actionable steps. It is to be acknowledged that further deliberation is required to address systemic issues. However, the need for further discussion and inquiry does not negate the need for immediate solution based action.

Short Term/Immediate Action

1. REDCO can assist with a robust career and internship program for youth and adults.
 - Previous reports have indicated an apprehension, on the part of local business owners and entrepreneurs, to host interns or provide career training. Concerns include confidentiality, age restrictions, and liability. REDCO can immediately work with existing programs as well as promote new programs through the development of the necessary infrastructure to build and sustain these programs. REDCO's involvement in a sustained infrastructure will help to alleviate concerns from the business community and provide opportunities for a well developed, and prepared, future workforce.
2. REDCO can assist with providing opportunities within the education system, and outside of it, for students and adults to gain necessary financial literacy.
 - Business leaders and stakeholders alike mentioned the need for more financial literacy among the population of the Rosebud Reservation as necessary for the future economic well being of the tribe. Lack of financial literacy often contributes to poor credit. In turn, poor credit makes it increasingly difficult to obtain loans and other financial services. REDCO can assist by providing sustainable education and consultation on financial literacy items. Student investment in postsecondary

education, and planning for this investment, is also necessary for a well-developed workforce. Successful student matriculation to, and completion of, postsecondary education is impacted by a student's ability and confidence to address the financial burden of a postsecondary credential. REDCO can assist by partnering with the local education institutions to provide financial literacy skills to youth and adults in Rosebud.

3. REDCO can continue to develop its youth leadership program to provide necessary skills for the youth population of the tribe.
 - REDCO is in the process of developing, and piloting, a youth leadership program. This program is a short-term solution to better prepare and equip the future workforce.

Medium Term Action

4. REDCO can partner with the tribe to create a sustainable form of public transit.
 - Access to quality transportation to and from work, job training, and education are necessary for a well-developed and sustainable workforce. Current and potential members of the workforce face a lack of quality transportation to and from their employment locations.
5. REDCO can partner with the tribe and other stakeholders to create and sustain a Reservation wide system to bring together various partners, information, and data.
 - According to the "Collaborative Principle," "If you bring the appropriate people together in constructive ways with good information, they will create authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of the organization or community." Gaps in policy, data, and programming have been a result of the lack of collaboration and communication between various entities on the reservation that are currently engaged in the betterment and development of the Rosebud Reservation and the workforce. If a streamlined infrastructure was in place for these various entities, data would be more readily available and easily accessible. The wheel would not need reinventing when it comes to various policy initiatives or programs due to the increased communication and collaboration. REDCO can take the lead from a policy standpoint, and partner with the tribe, and education institutions, to create a system that tracks this data and compiles current resources.
6. REDCO can take the lead in creating a Tribal "Employment Trends" Reporting System

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- Previous research and reports have noted the lack of an official reporting system in place for tribal employment trends. This requires that state and national employment data be used to determine employment trends. This is not always reflective of the realities on the Rosebud Reservation. In order to have a more accurate reflection of the job market and trends locally, a reporting system should be formalized and implemented. In order for economic development to be effective and sustainable, a method of tracking and storing these local employment trends and needs is necessary. REDCO can take the next five years to gather current data and work with the tribe to create a system for tracking future data and trends with employment and the job market.

Long Term Action

7. REDCO can work with the tribe and local education institutions to ensure that there is a cultural match between schools and the population they serve.
 - Schools must meet students where they are at culturally and spiritually. Progress towards this is currently being made in the form of a potential language immersion school as a part of the Keya Wakpala Development. Additionally, Todd County School District is working as a part of the NACA inspired schools network to better ensure this match. More work is necessary to ensure this cultural match is seen across the education institutions on the reservation. REDCO can take the lead on this over the long term with the Keya Wakpala development as well as partnering with the tribe and local education institutions to promote inclusion of language and culture at all educational levels.
8. REDCO will continue to study and inquiry in to solutions, and how REDCO's needs fit in to those solutions.
 - REDCO's future workforce support systems will need to include a daycare. Achievement gaps are evident as early as 3rd grade so a greater emphasis needs to be placed on early childhood education.
 - How can REDCO and the tribe retain talent? Is there a way to incentivize Rosebud students to go to college, to complete college, and those who graduate college to return to the reservation to help build a strong workforce?

VIII. Summary of Findings

Both economic development and educational institutions must improve in order to produce and secure a sustainable future workforce. Data collected for this report indicates that students attending schools across the reservation are not meeting proficiency levels necessary for college and career readiness. Additionally, many of those students who are graduating and attending a postsecondary education institution are not graduating within four years, if at all. Business and potential employers on the reservation noted a need for increased social and communication skills in current and future members of the workforce. Professionalism and attendance issues are demanded in high need by potential employers.

As indicated by the educational data compiled, skills necessary for the future workforce, including basic computer and math abilities, are currently lacking. Schools are not preparing students with the skills necessary to meet the demands of the future workforce on the Rosebud Reservation. REDCO can assist with these education and workforce challenges through short, medium, and long-term actions. These actions range from preparing students and workforce members with essential financial literacy skills to working long-term with schools and the tribe to ensure that schools culturally match students.

This report was built as a foundational groundwork for REDCO to build upon. It is our hope it will continue to grow and flourish as actions toward educational equity and sustainable economic development are met.

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