

The Dropout Crisis in Montana

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The Dropout Crisis in the Northwest Conference
Seattle – May 30, 2008

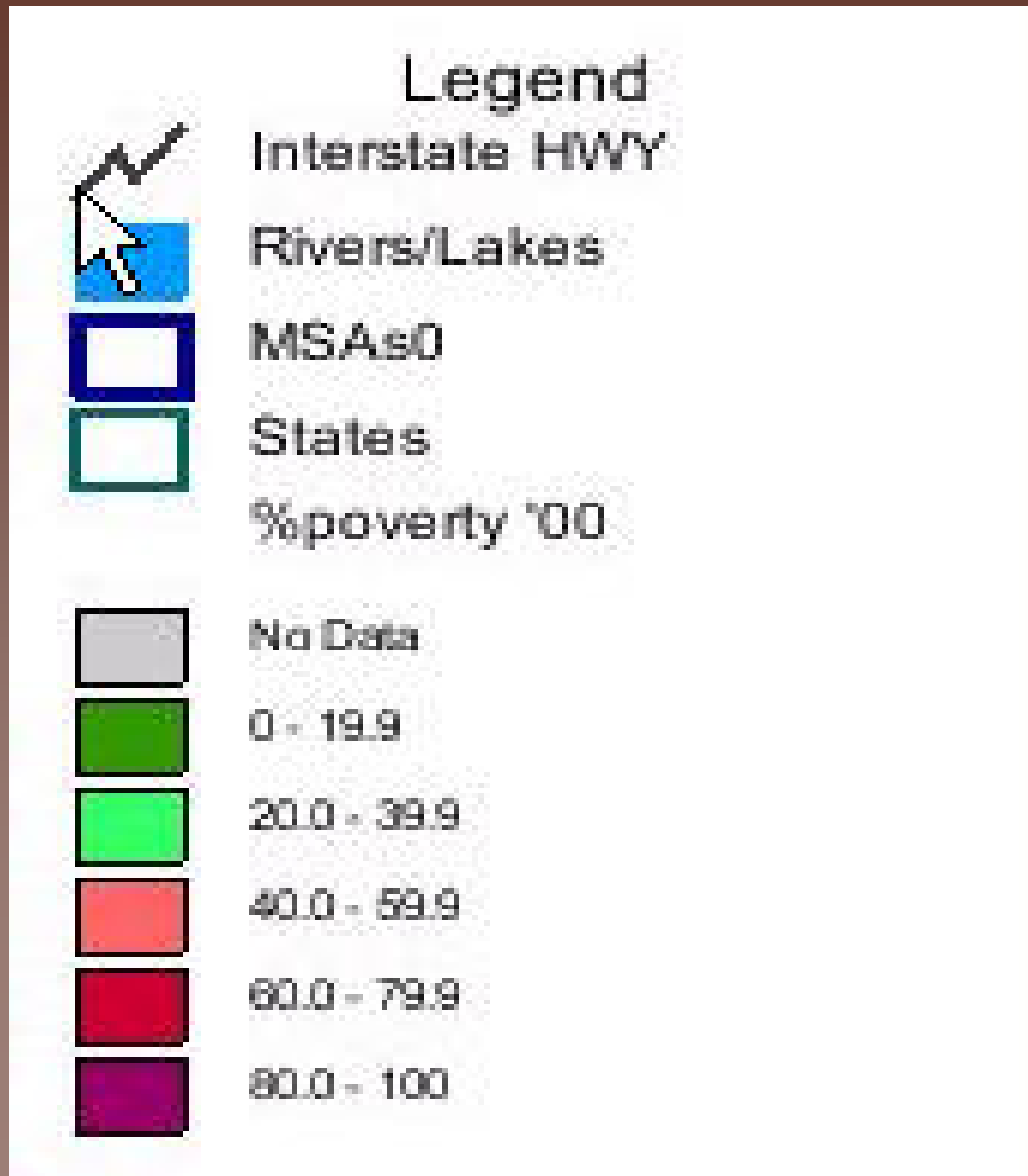


Response to the Report by Faircloth & Tippeconnic

- ◆ Need for new research (mobility), but validity of many points brought up in the research review
- ◆ “Recognizing our role”
- ◆ Montana’s Indian Education for All and Indian Student Achievement efforts
- ◆ The power and necessity of accurate & usable data
- ◆ The need for strong, sustained leadership and teaching forces who have an understanding of American Indian communities
- ◆ Success stories and best practices – focus on strengths
- ◆ The role of poverty – examples in Montana & Oklahoma

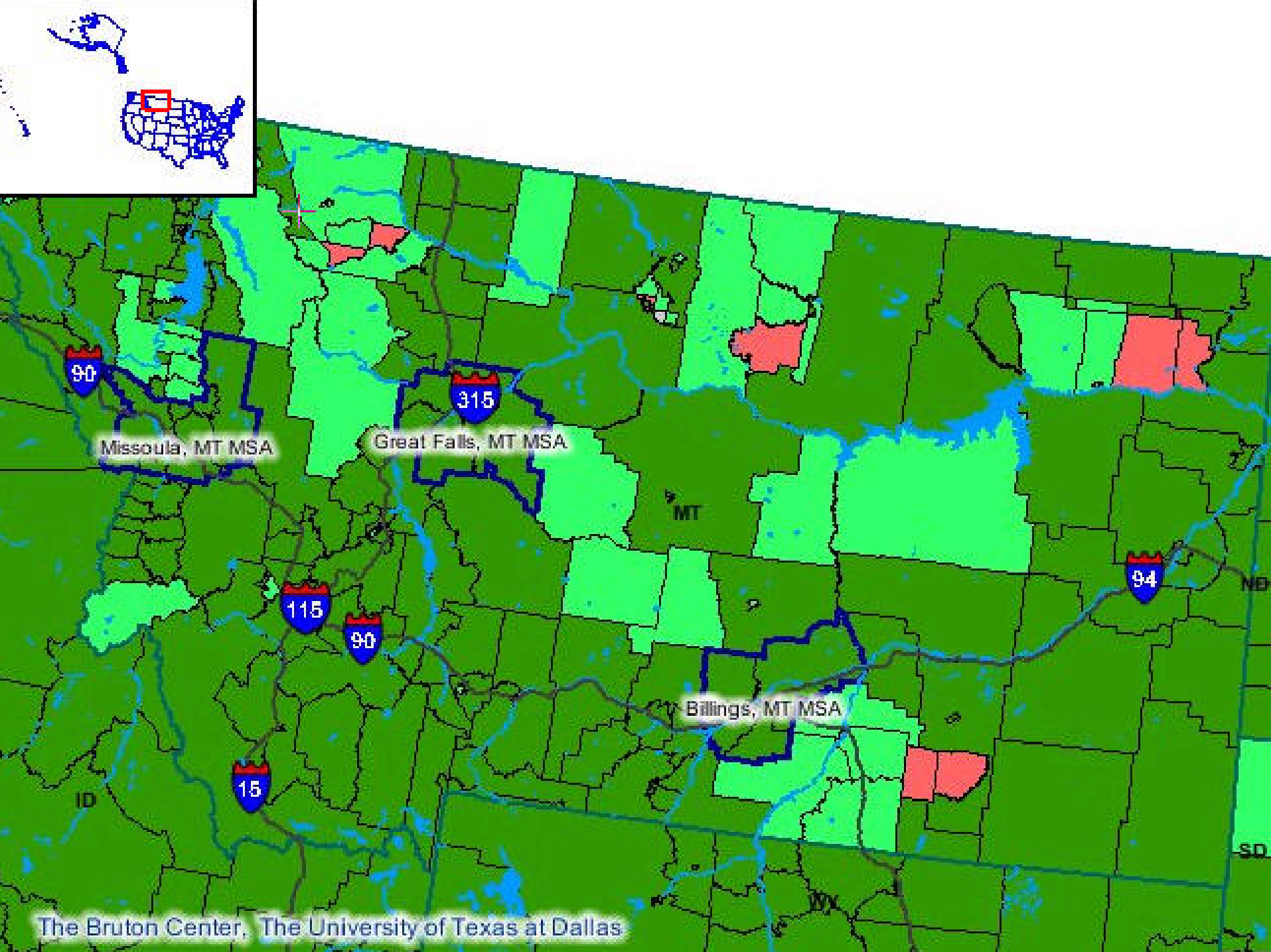


US Census Legend - Poverty

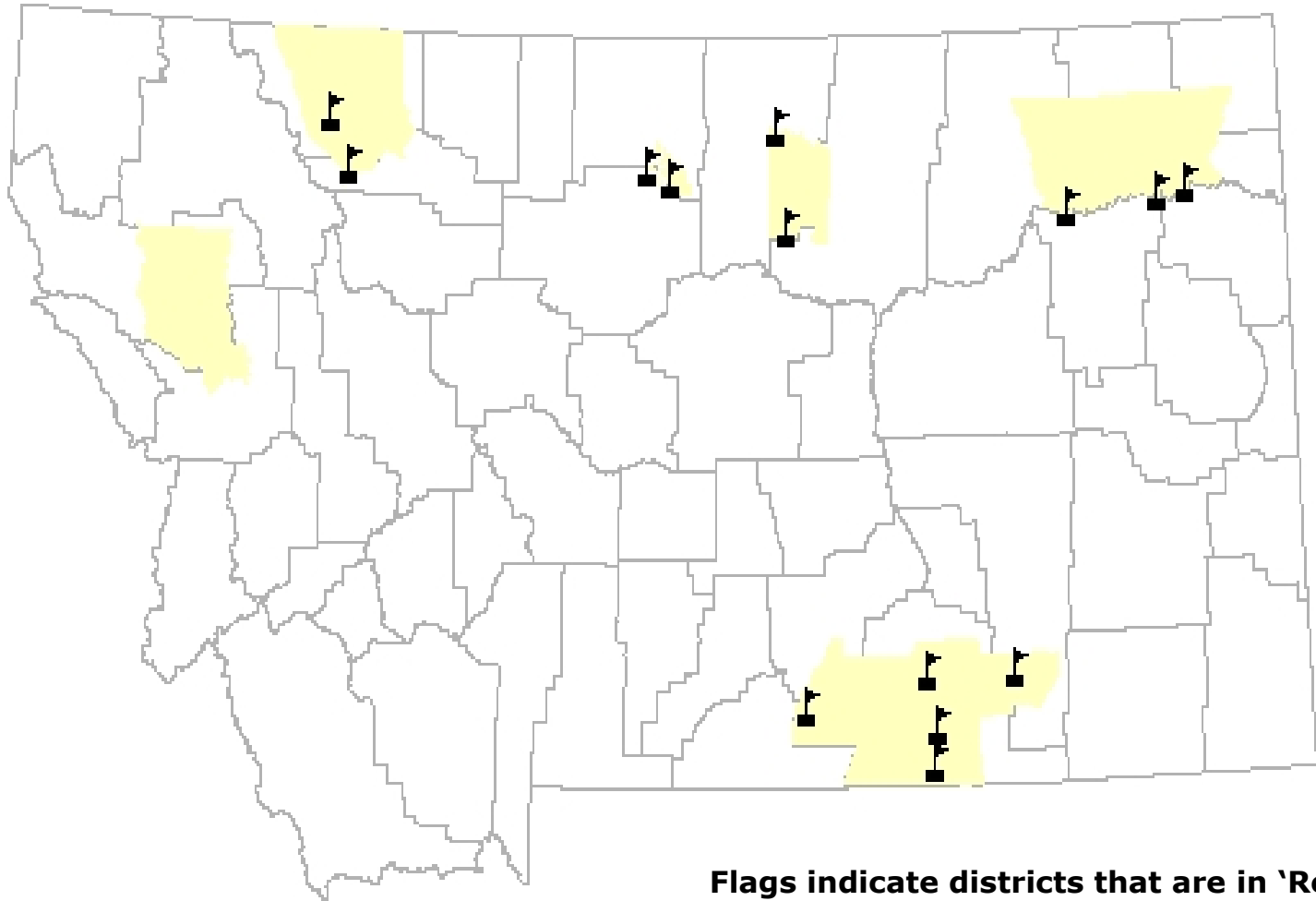


Montana



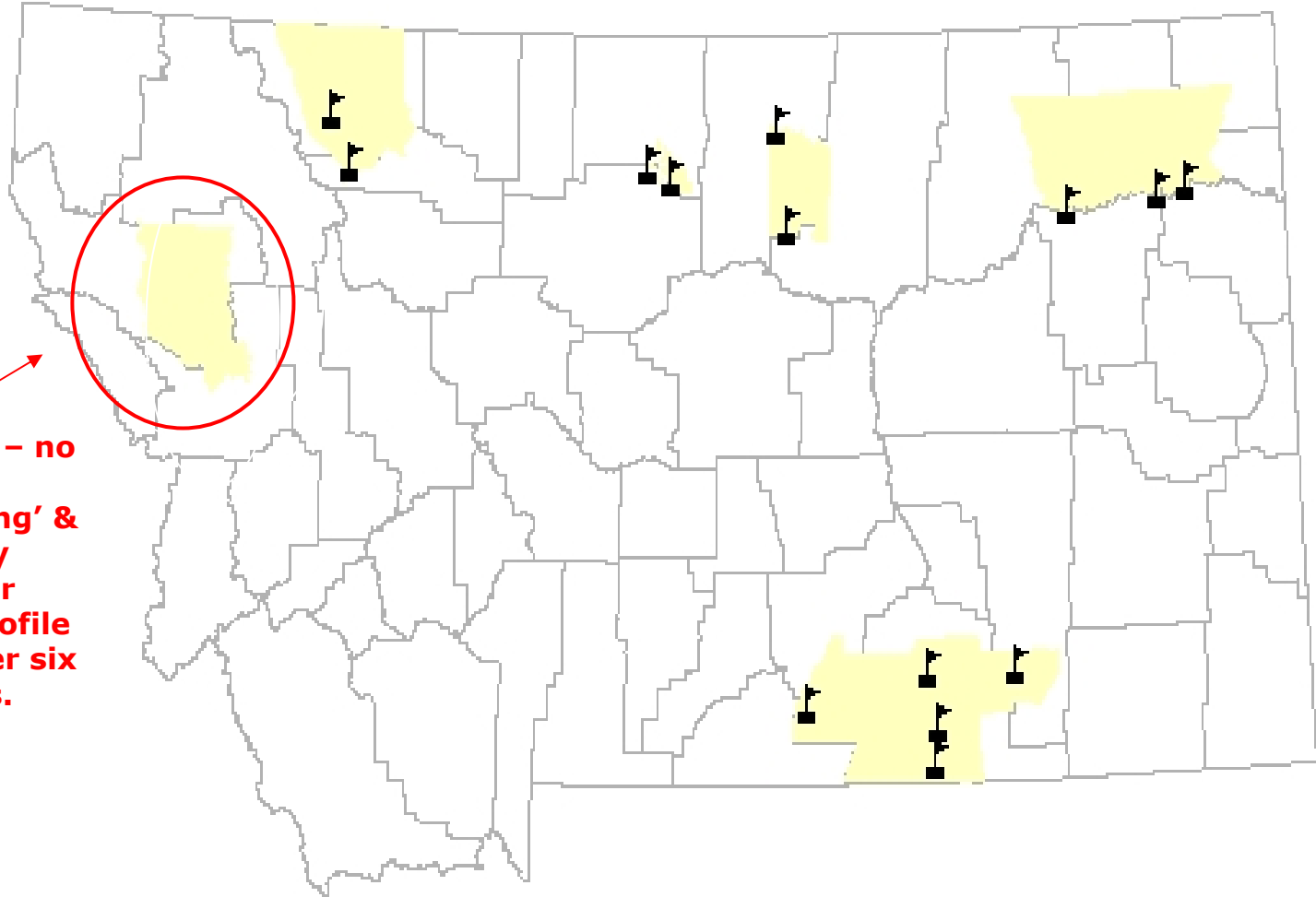


Adequate Yearly Progress Status in Montana



Flags indicate districts that are in 'Restructuring'

Adequate Yearly Progress Status in Montana



**Flathead
Reservation - no
schools in
'Restructuring' &
a community
with a higher
economic profile
than all other six
reservations.**

2007 Criterion Referenced Test (CRT)

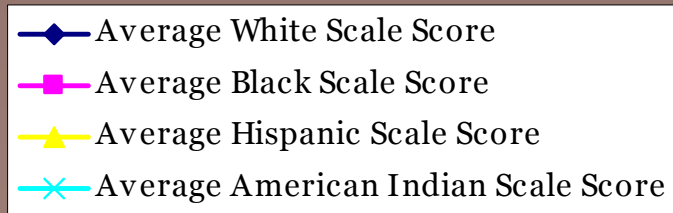
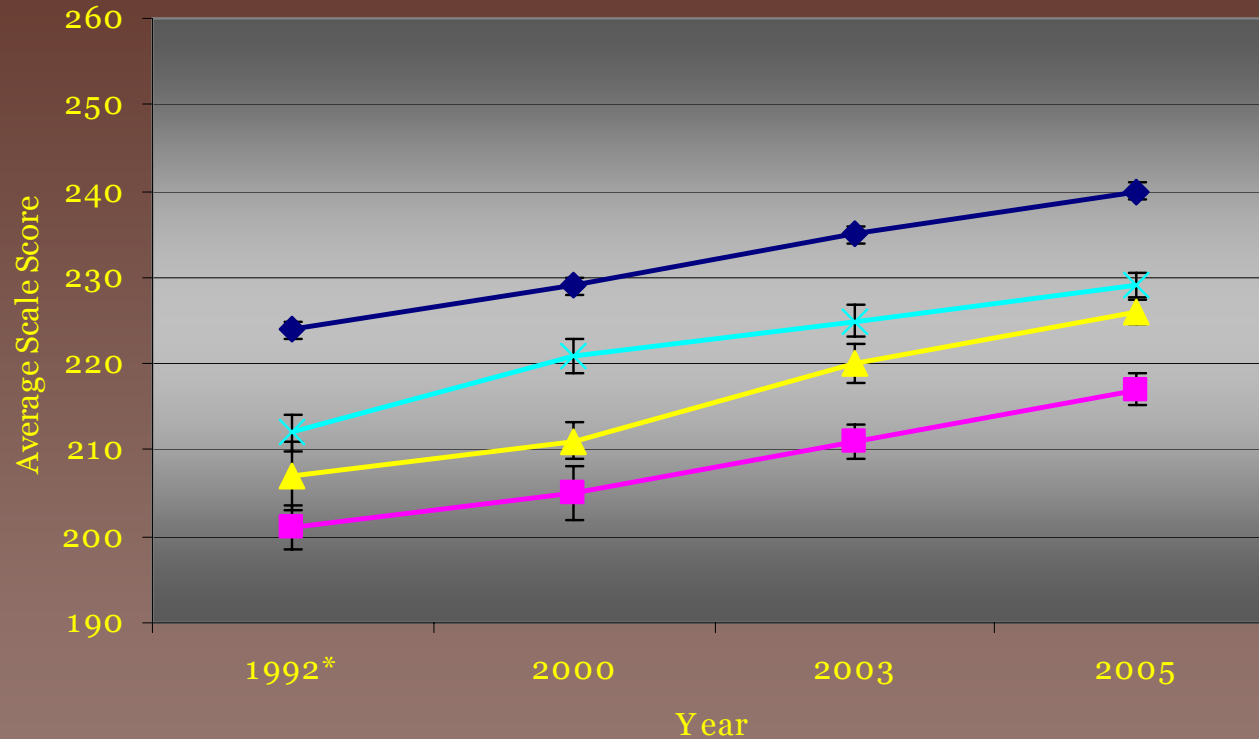
By reservation and urban districts

Average proficiency rates of American Indian student scores Grades 3-8 & 10 combined

	Reading	Math
Northern Cheyenne (Lame Deer)	34	6
Crow (Pryor/Plenty Coups, Lodge Grass, Wyola, Hardin)	37	18
Fort Peck (Poplar, Brockton, Wolf Point, Frazer, Frontier)	43	24
Blackfeet (Browning, Heart Butte)	44	21
Fort Belknap (Harlem, Hays-Lodge Pole)	45	25
Rocky Boy (Box Elder, Rocky Boy)	59	31
Flathead (Arlee, Ronan, St. Ignatius, Polson, Dixon, Hot Springs, Charlo)	68	45
Havre	64	41
Missoula	65	44
Great Falls	67	53
Billings	67	44
Helena	69	48
Butte	69	48
American Indian student state average	58	37
White student state average	84	67

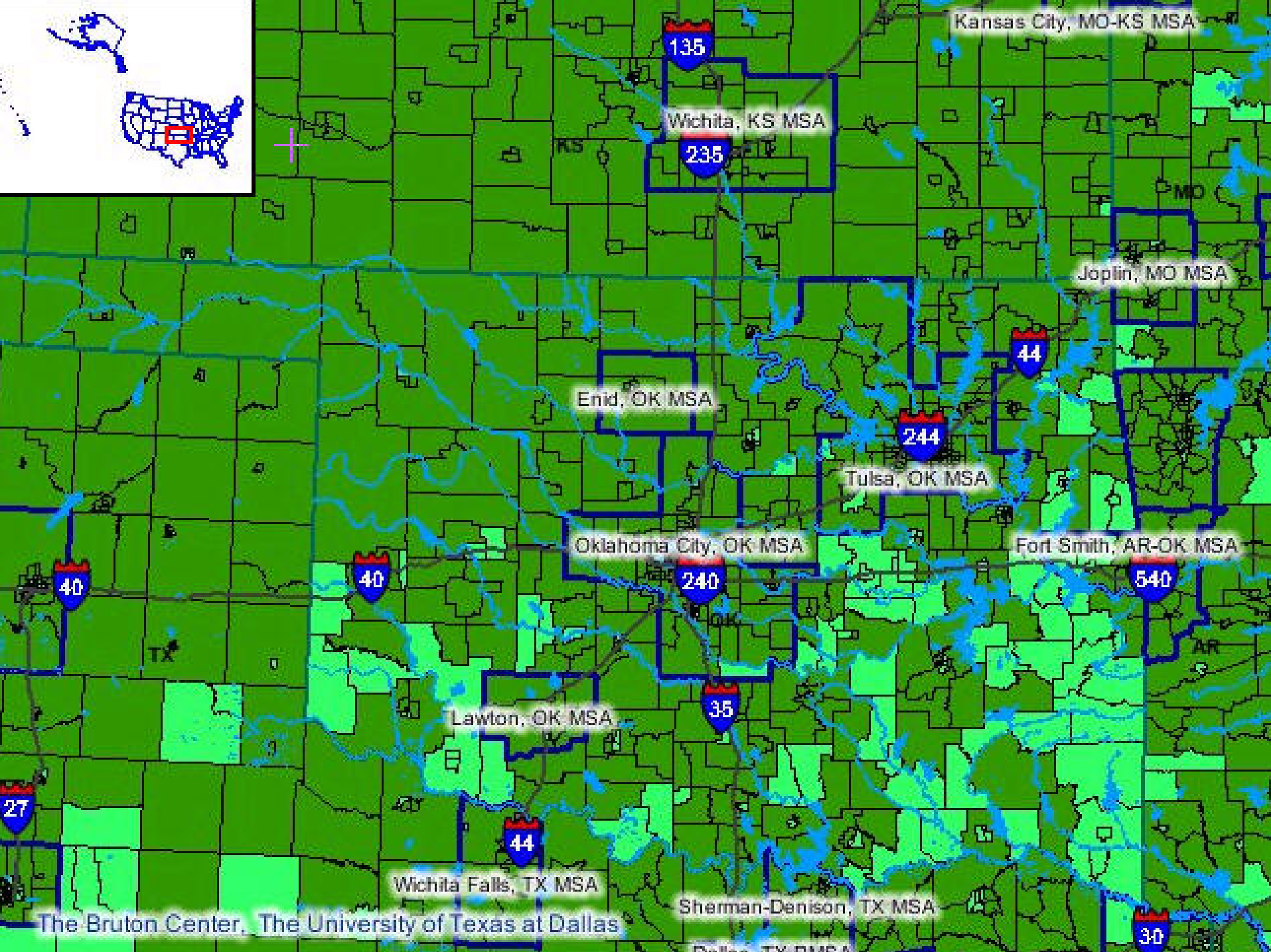


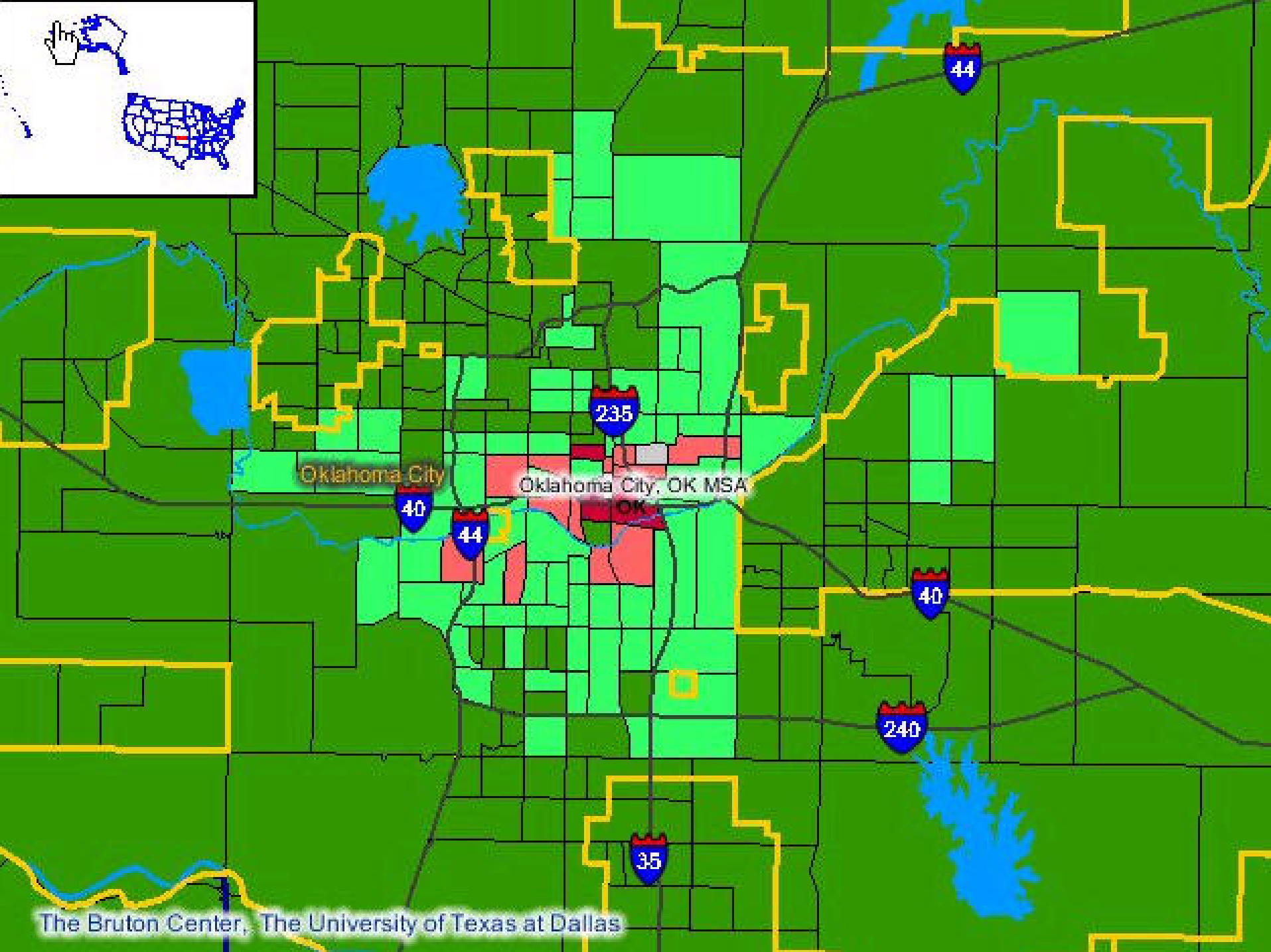
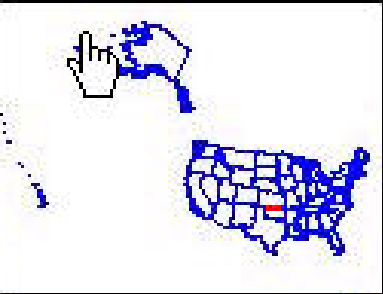
Oklahoma Average Scale Score Grade 4 Mathematics, NAEP



Oklahoma

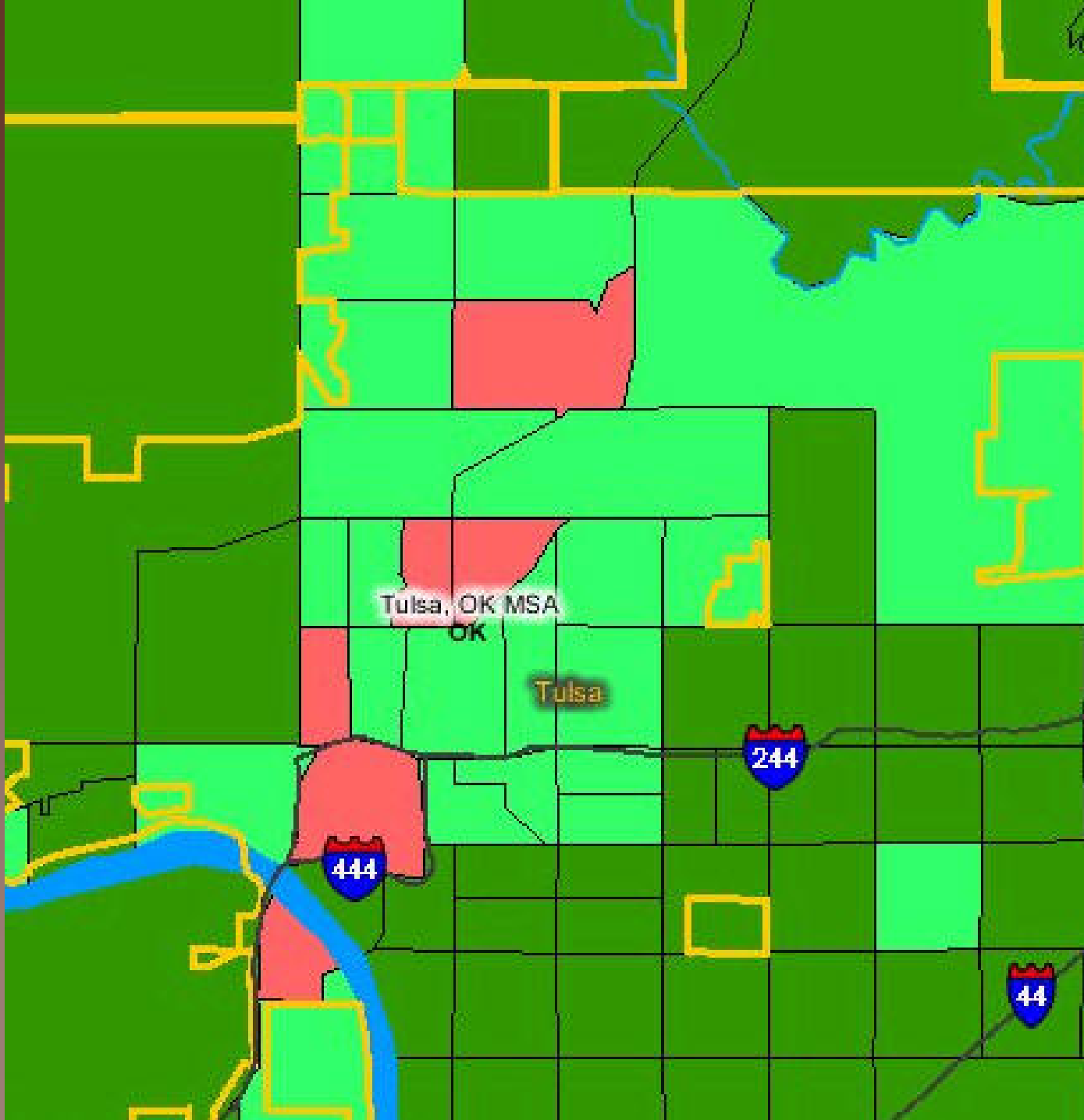






Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City, OK MSA



Tulsa, OK MSA

OK

Tulsa



More about Montana & dropouts ...



Montana Constitution Article X, Section 1

- 1) It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.
- 2) The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.

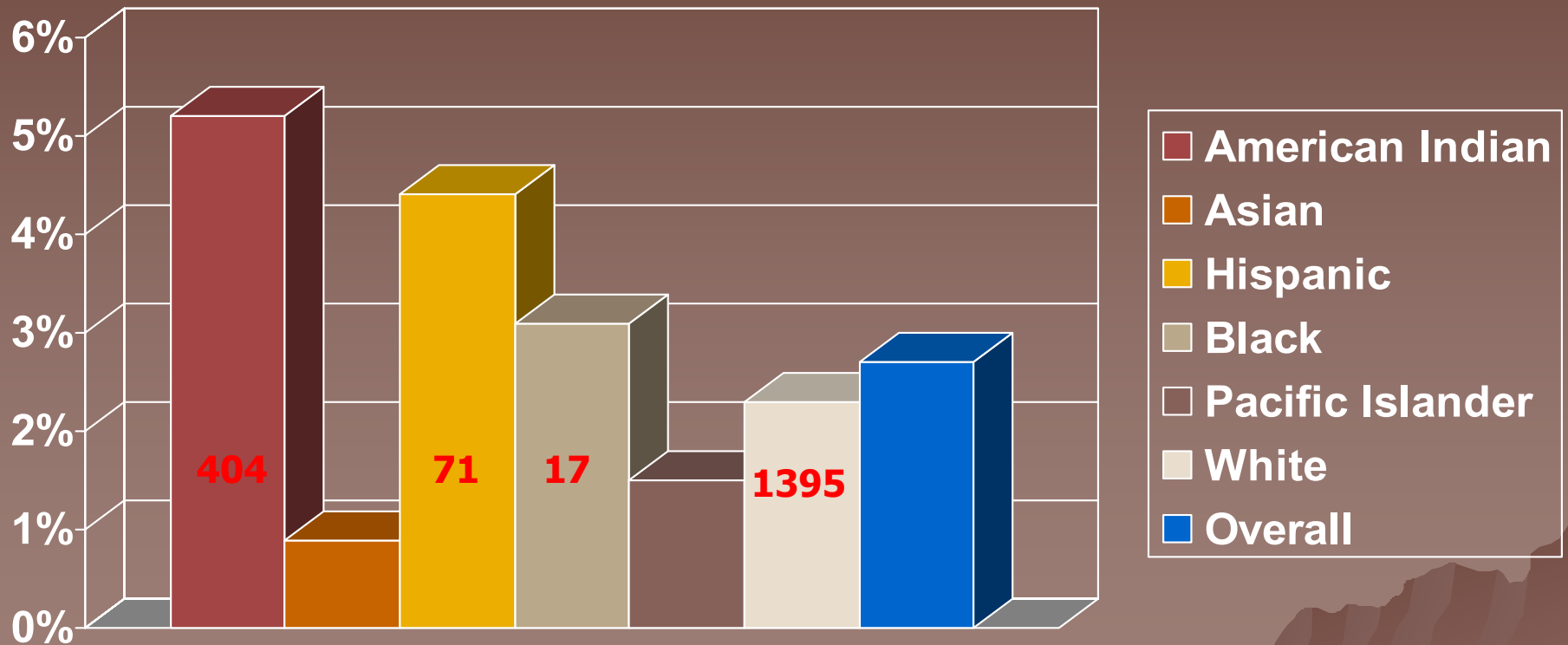


The Dropout Reality

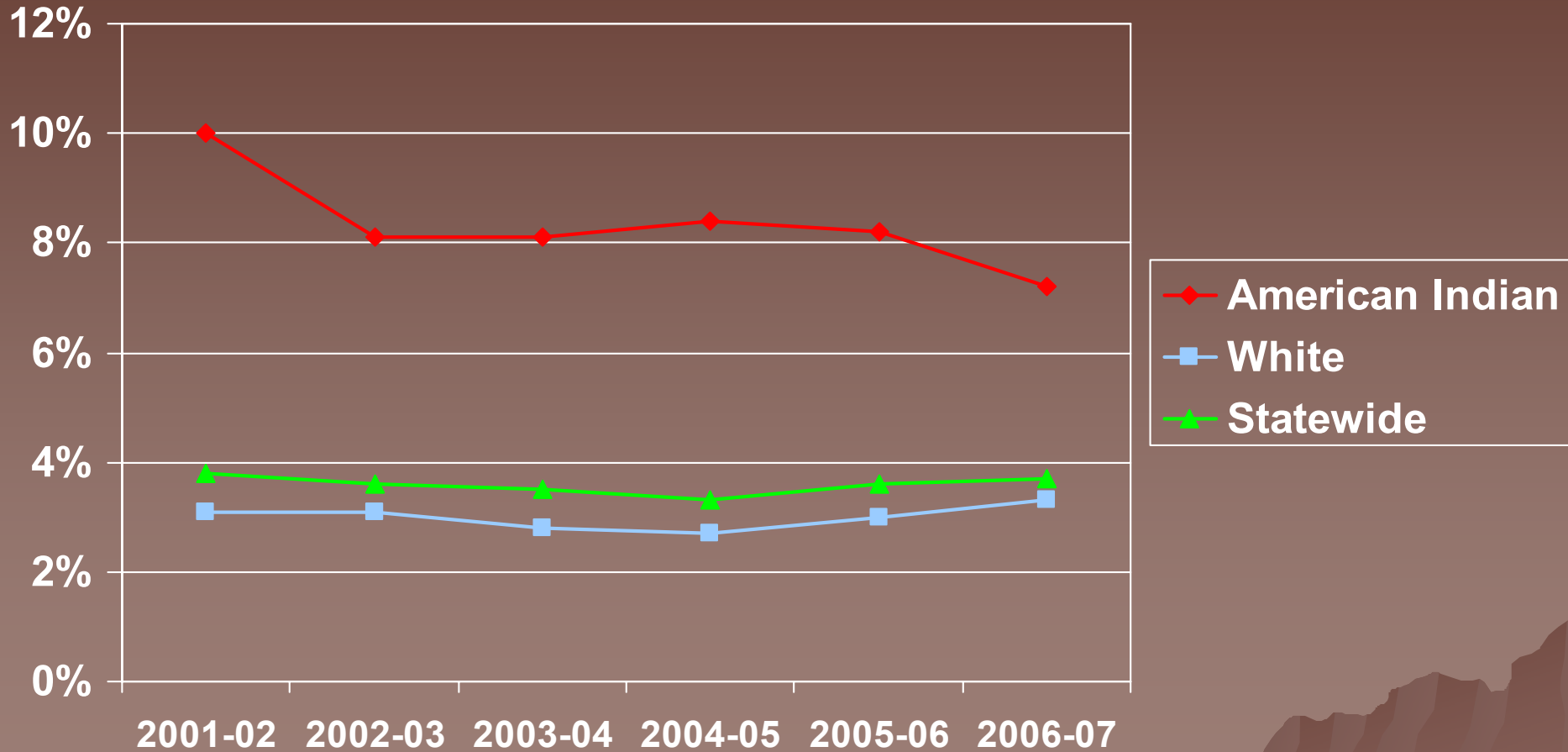
- ◆ On average, American Indian students dropout of grades 7/8 at a rate more than 9 times that of white students and out of high school at a rate of 2.5 times that of white students.
- ◆ In the past five years, American Indians represented only 11.5% of the total school enrollment for grades 7/8, but accounted for 70% of the dropouts. For high school, American Indians represented 10% of the total school enrollment and 23% of the dropouts.

2006-07 Montana Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity Categories

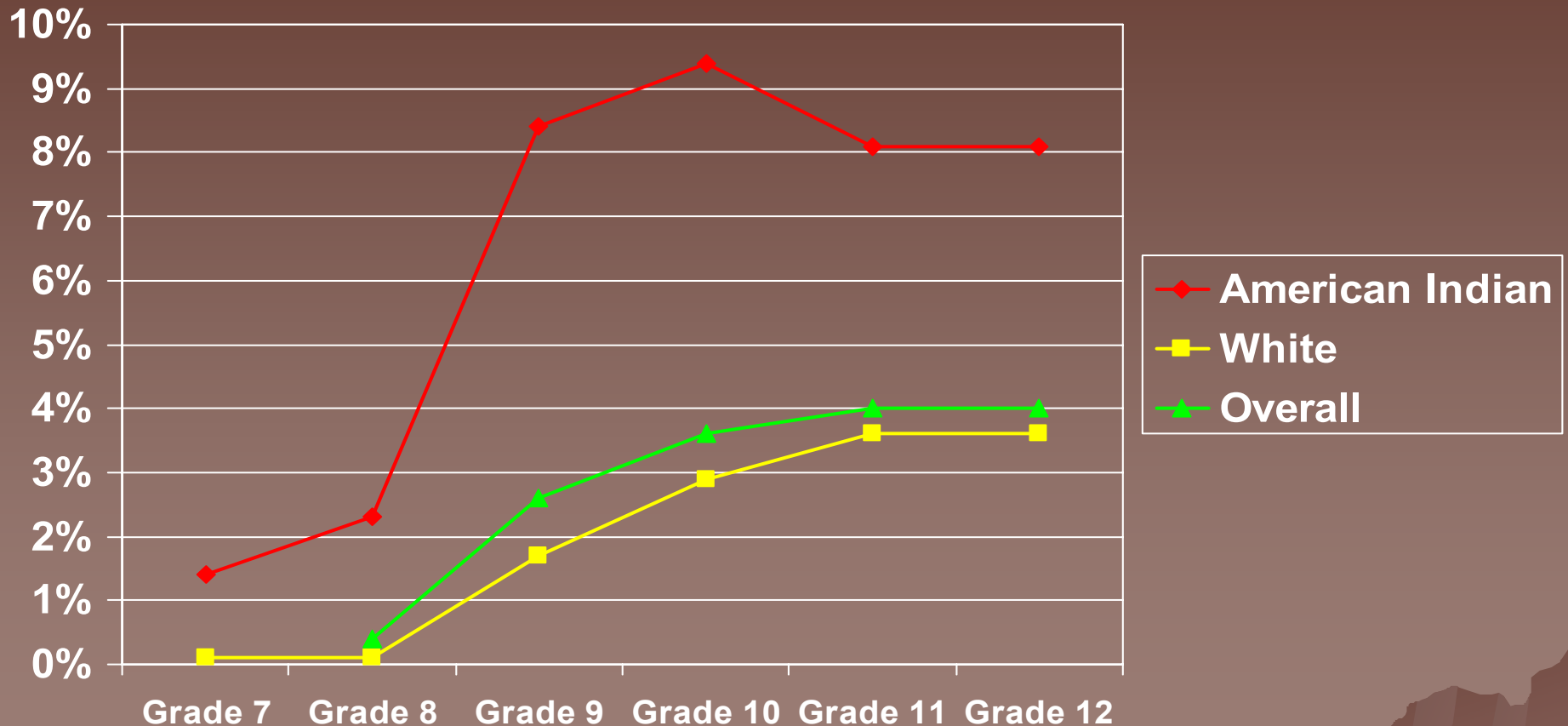
Total Dropout % Grades 7-12



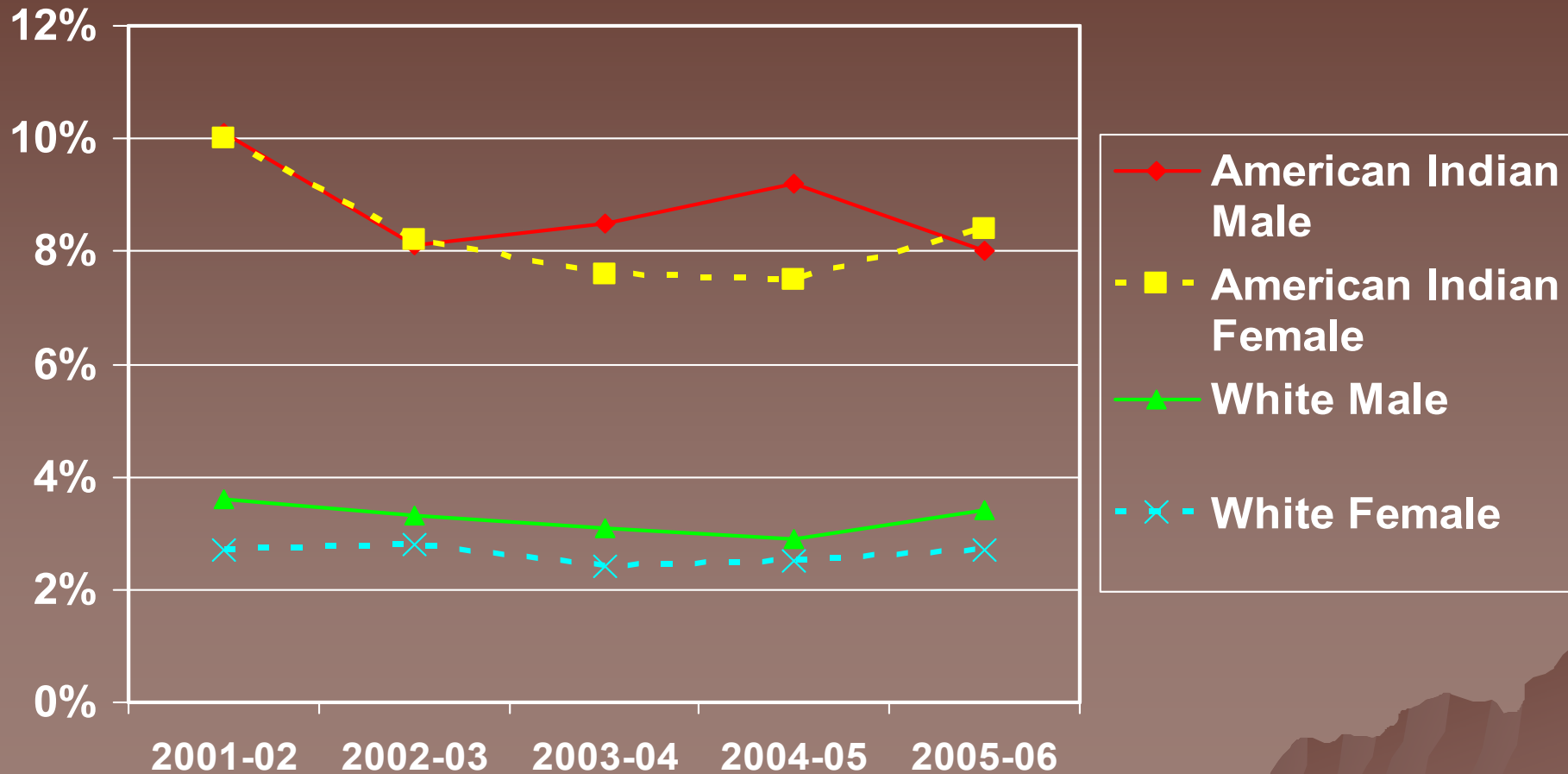
Five Year Montana High School Dropout Rate Trends by Race/Ethnicity Categories



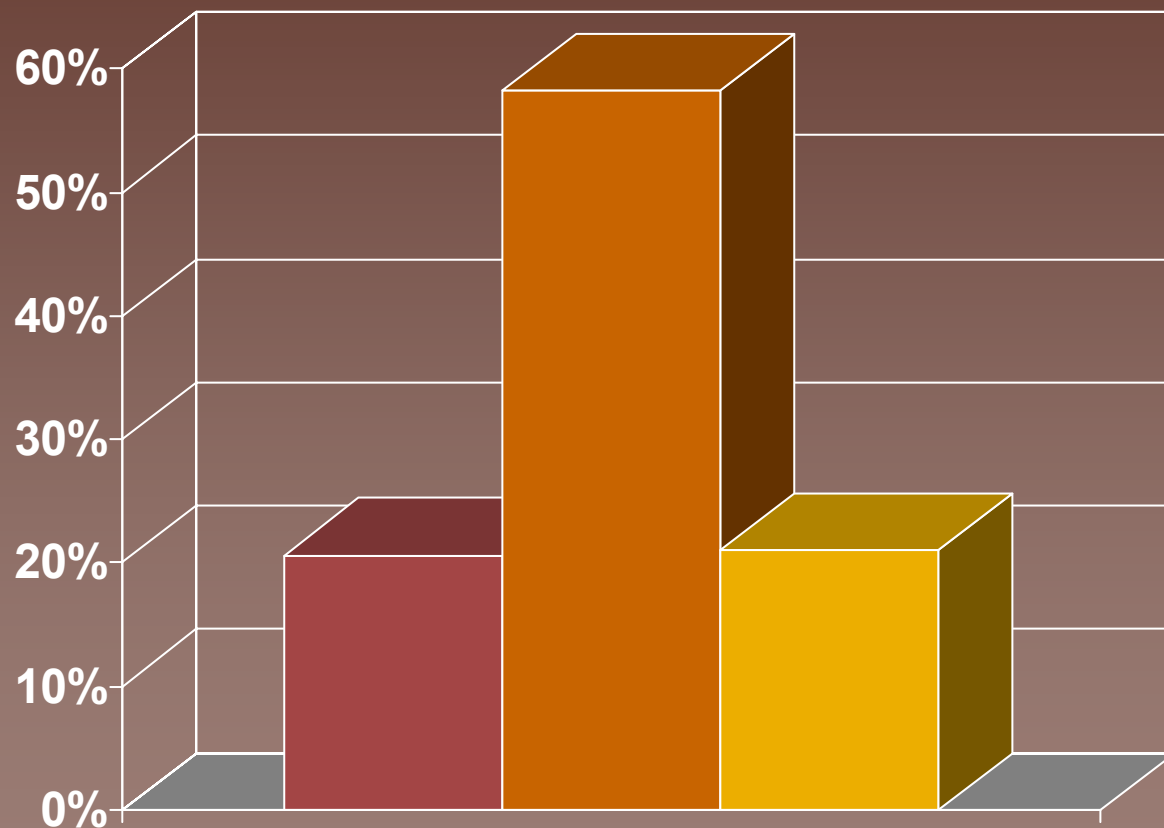
Five Year Dropout Rates (2001-2006) for Race/Ethnicity Categories and by Grade Level



Dropout Rates for Race/Ethnicity Categories by Gender for Grades 9-12



Where American Indians Are Enrolled

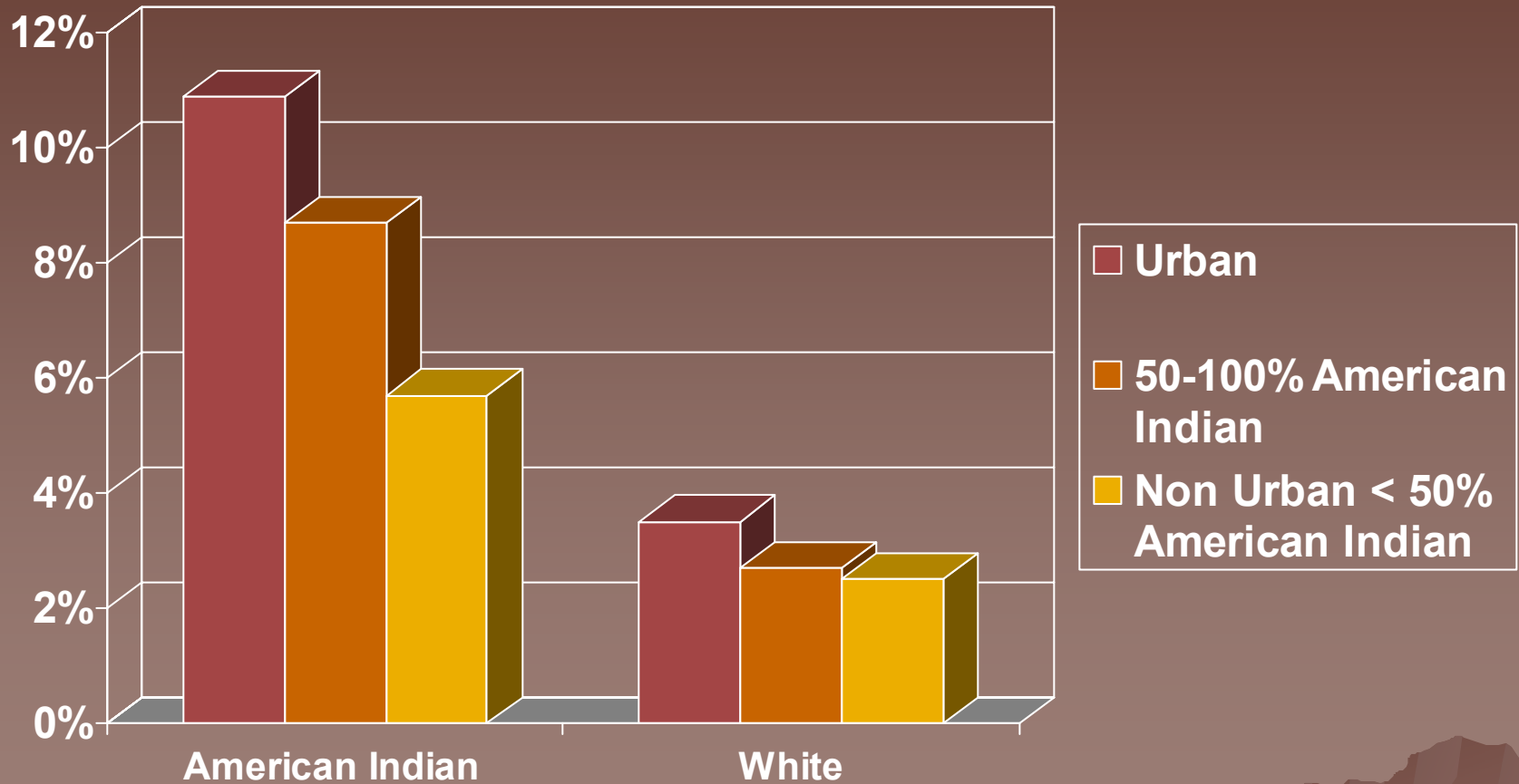


Urban districts in MT are defined as belonging to one of the state's largest school systems: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell & Missoula

- Urban
- 50-100% American Indian
- Non-urban < 50% American Indian

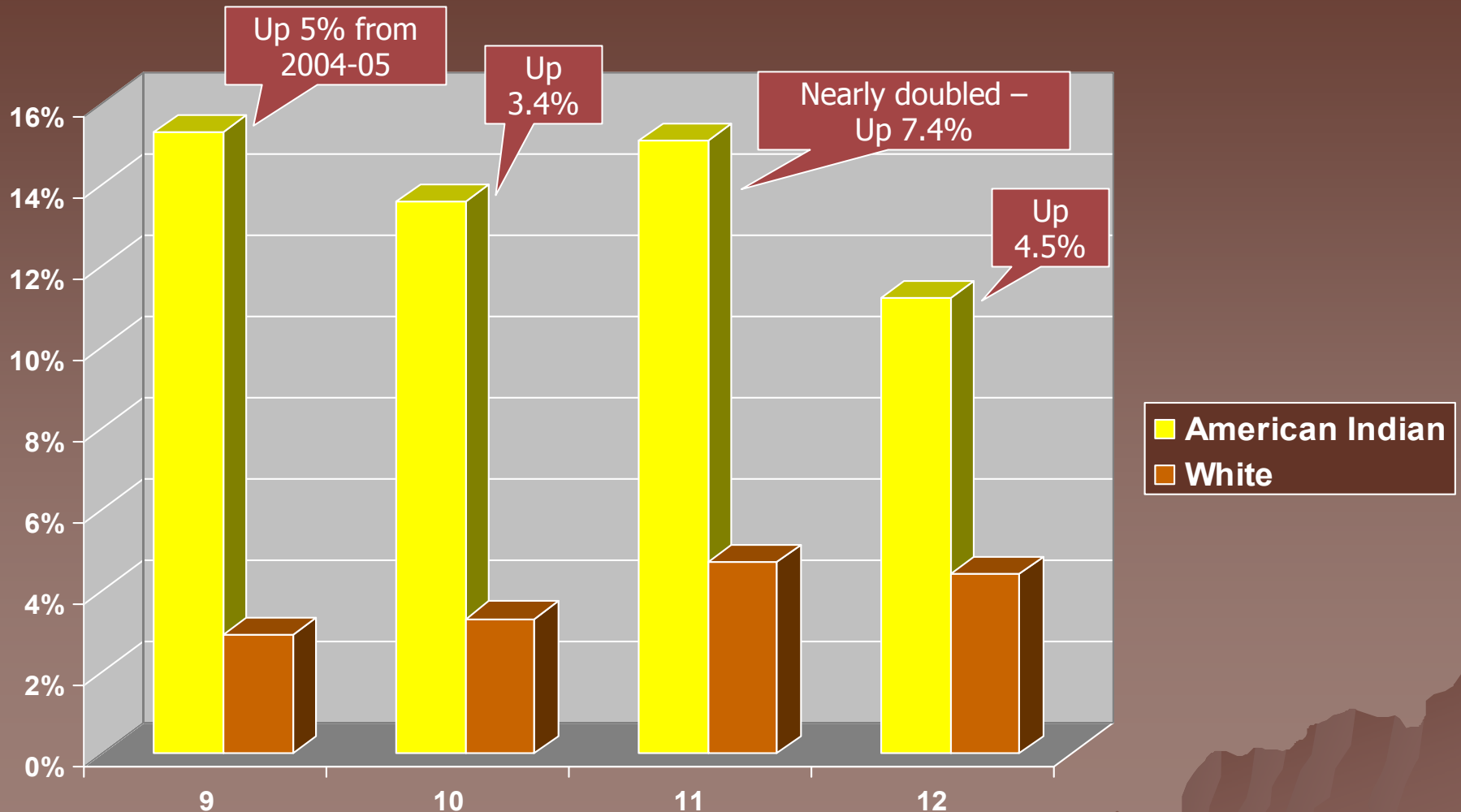
Five Year Dropout Rates (2001-2006)

by Race/Ethnicity Categories & by School Location for Grades 9-12



2005-06 MT Dropout Rates

1H Districts and Race/Ethnicity



Why are American Indian Students Dropping out in Montana?



Issues & Factors to Consider

Complex Historic & Cultural Issues
and a General Lack of Awareness & Understanding

Generational, Concentrated,
Isolated and Deep Poverty

Lack of Academic Challenge,
Rigor & High Expectations

Lack of Mental & Emotional
Health Supports

Urban vs. Rural
Schools Issues

Need for greater
Parent/Family/Community
Outreach & Involvement

High Student Mobility Rates &
Retention Issues

A Need to Focus Efforts on
Key Transition Points

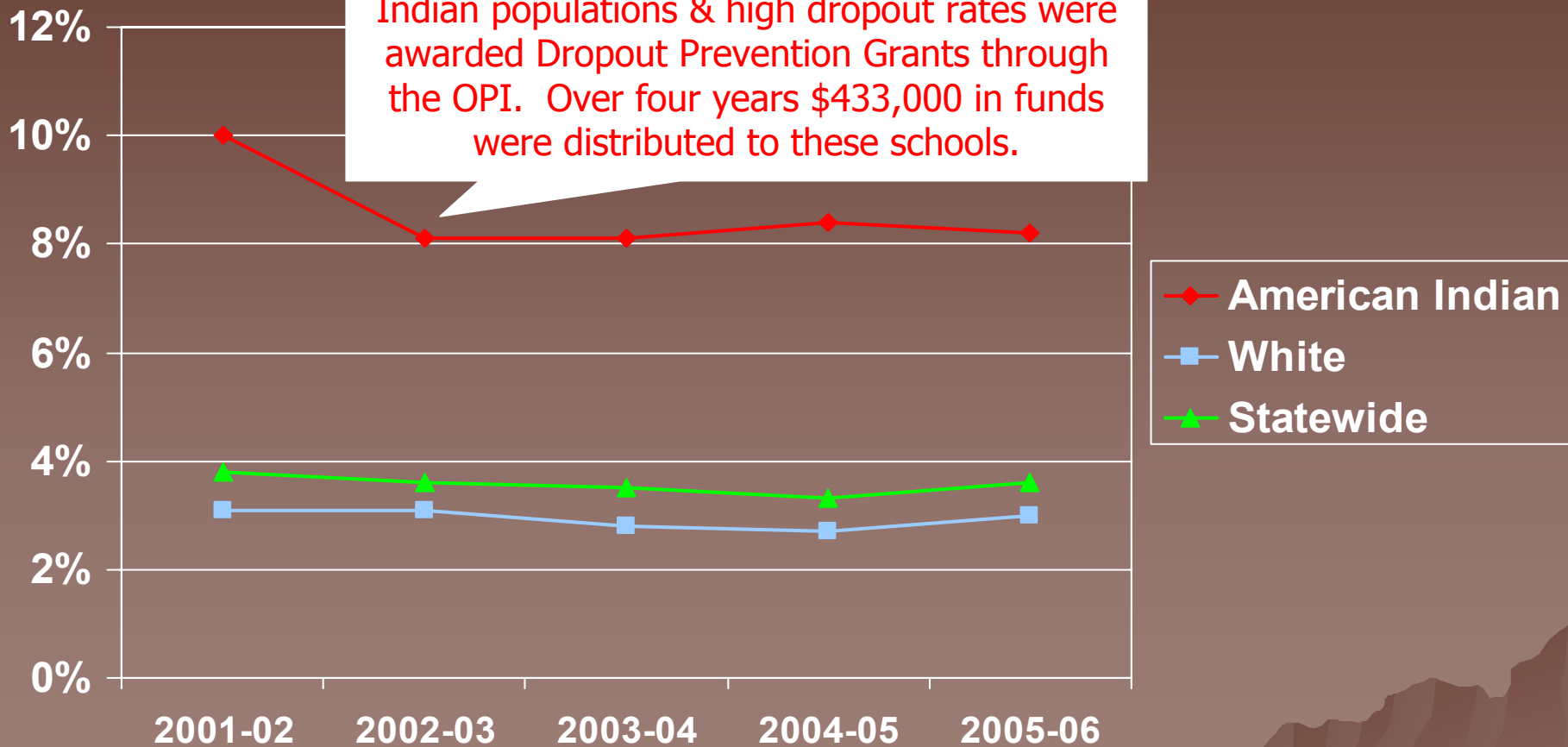


*Focusing our Efforts &
Providing Support –
Montana’s Dropout Prevention
Grant Program*

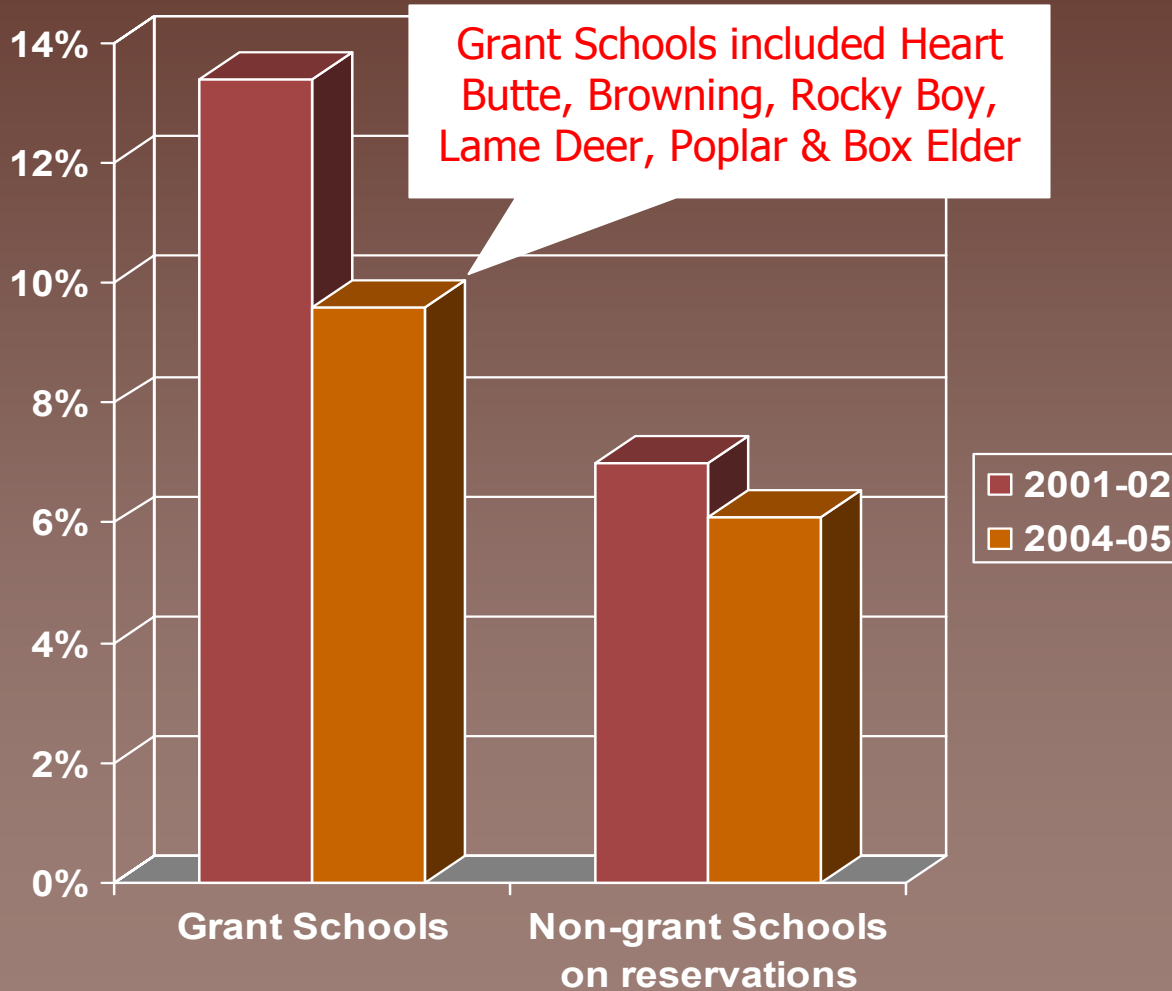


2005-06 Montana Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity Categories for Five Years

In 2002-03 six districts with high American Indian populations & high dropout rates were awarded Dropout Prevention Grants through the OPI. Over four years \$433,000 in funds were distributed to these schools.



American Indian Dropout Prevention Grant 2001-02 & 2004-05 Comparison Data



The average total school dropout rate change from 2001 2004 for schools participating in the grant was a decrease of 4%

A Promising Program – The Blackfeet Learning Academy



“A Culture of Respect”

- ◆ The Blackfeet Learning Academy is an alternative high school for Browning Public Schools with a 69% retention/success rate in its fourth year of operation
- ◆ Six dedicated staff members served 52 students in the 2007-08 school year
- ◆ Teaching methods meet students' individual learning styles: independent study, project-based learning, small group instruction, work study and experiential learning
- ◆ Student are eligible for dual enrollment at Blackfeet Community College
- ◆ Blackfeet culture is emphasized and integrated into every curricular area and into expectations for personal growth

How the Academy supports more than just academic growth ...

- ◆ On-site student support services ranging from transportation and childcare to mental health and drug & alcohol concerns
- ◆ Students serve as mentors for middle school students under the summer “Blackfeet Academy Wilderness Adventure Program” – lead 14 summer expeditions which teach survival skills, which develops stewardship, self-sufficiency and self-confidence
- ◆ Attribute success to committed staff members, networking for services/resources, and high expectation held for each student to grow personally and academically.

Other Promising Practices & Prevention Strategies



Dropout Prevention Strategies

SCHOOL & ACADEMIC SUPPORTS –

- ◆ Extend learning time, especially in Language Arts, Math and Writing
- ◆ Have high expectations - provide academic challenge for all
- ◆ Focus on transition into 7/8 & high school
- ◆ Support students to stay on track & graduate on time
- ◆ Increase after school, summer school & mentoring opportunities (also monitor equity in participation)
- ◆ Support early childhood services
- ◆ Support differentiated & culturally relevant instruction (Indian Education For All)

More Dropout Prevention Strategies

STUDENT & COMMUNITY SUPPORTS –

- ◆ Increase awareness of and support for social & mental/emotional health issues in American Indian communities
- ◆ Include ALL community stakeholders (Health care providers, law enforcement and judicial entities, business community, etc.) in dropout prevention discussions and strategies
- ◆ Understand the school climate –survey students
- ◆ Increase parent and community outreach efforts
- ◆ Establish advocate systems that serve as conduits from school to community and who support families

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Visit our website at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/IndianEd/Index.html>

Chris Lohse's preliminary report on "American Indian Student Achievement in Western States ..."

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/indianed2/ISADData.html>

