



About the R11CC

The Region 11 Comprehensive Center (R11CC) is one of 19 regional centers across the nation that helps state education agencies implement, scale, and sustain evidence-based programs, practices, and interventions that support improved educator and student outcomes.



Using Bright Spots in South Dakota Indian Country to Increase Native American Student Achievement

Need: Educators who serve Native American students are often at the intersection of different requirements, regulations, funding opportunities, and constraints. These factors can inhibit the capacity of educators to pursue evidence-based educational practices and approaches. However, they also present an opportunity to examine the “bright spots,” where educators embrace the intelligence of Native American children and use educational practices that draw from and build on Indigenous knowledge to foster environments in which all children can achieve their potential.

How we’re helping: The R11CC is collaborating with the South Dakota Department of Education, the Office of Indian Education within the South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations, Tribal Education Departments, districts, and schools to identify existing practices associated with positive Native American student outcomes and share them statewide. These include:

- Creating resources to support the implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards.
- Supporting educators in pilot schools as they implement the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards.
- Building an understanding of how to increase the implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards in schools across the state.

What we plan to accomplish: The long-term outcomes associated with this project are:

- Increased kinship, harmony, and cultural empathy between Native American and non-Native American South Dakotans.
- Support more opportunities for tribal education departments to guide decision-making.
- Scaled implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards and other evidence-based practices for teaching content standards using Indigenous knowledge.
- Increased reciprocity and reduced institutional barriers to collaboration among agencies.
- Increased Native American student academic achievement scores.

To learn more, please contact R11CC Co-directors Joe Simpson at jsimpson@mcrel.org (307.222.5261) or Susan Shebby at sshebby@mcrel.org (303.632.5613).

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