

Boulder Preparatory High School American Indian Outreach and Education Program

Boulder Preparatory High School is a small, alternative school serving 160 students each year. Over 15% of the students at Boulder Prep are Native American. One of our goals is to provide a learning environment that is welcoming to all cultures. One component of our school is an American Indian Focus Program. Students can take classes in Native American History, American Indian Art, Current Issues in Native America, and Lakota Language and Culture.

Boulder Prep faculty work to incorporate as many culturally relevant topics across disciplines as appropriate. Classes are taught with an emphasis on critical and investigative thinking in student-centered rather than teacher-centered classrooms. Some examples of culturally competent teaching that is done at Boulder Prep includes using literature and films from American Indian writers and directors, incorporating peer teaching practices, group work rather than individual assignments, and teaching math in the context of beading, weaving or other cultural traditions. Boulder Prep works to create an inviting environment where students will see posters of prominent American Indian figures, maps of Native American culture areas, authentic books written by native people, and other symbolic items from their culture.

The school also provides counseling, advisement, and intervention for managing academic and personal progress. Part of ensuring success for Indian youth is continued parent engagement. The teachers will stay in regular contact with Native families on the students' progress to maintain a tighter circle of care.

Boulder Prep is a year-round, accelerated, college prep-program. Students are able to complete all the requirements in as little as 2 years. However, each student will work at their own pace depending on their individual needs and circumstances. The American Indian Focus Program will provide all of the necessary resources to help American Indian youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary programs. Academic classes are held Monday through Thursday and a Life Skills program is delivered on Fridays. Classes begin at 8:30 and end at 2:30.

Every Friday the entire school community gathers for a life skills program. For the first two Fridays of the school year, students do a variety of community building activities. This will help Native students meet each other and the other students. As part of the life skills program, we address diversity issues. Students are introduced to various cultures and are taught to find unity in diversity. Boulder Prep has always been a mixed community with no group in a majority. This type of environment will help the Native youth feel more comfortable and less isolated. By having more than 15% of the total school population of American Indian ethnic backgrounds, students can develop a positive peer group to support each other. This type of multi ethnic environment offers a healthy balance for students because they are not completely isolated at regular public schools. The Life Skills Program will help students develop social skills needed for daily life and for making the transition to college.

We have found that transportation can be an obstacle for students getting to school. Boulder Prep provides bus passes to ensure that students are able to attend regularly and the school is located on a major bus route.

Boulder Preparatory High School is a college preparatory program. All students are held to high standards. Student must pass with a C- or better to earn credit; D work is not acceptable. Our program will give American Indian youth the opportunity to take rigorous classes to help increase competency and skills in Language Arts, Math, and Science. Over the years, Boulder

Prep has found that college acceptance is the best way to validate the success of the program, so a requirement for graduation is acceptance to college.

For more information, please contact Ruth Cameron at 303-545-6186, ext 101 or RuthCameron@BoulderPrep.org