

Red Cloud Indian School

The mission of Red Cloud Indian School, a Catholic institution administered by the Jesuits and the Lakota people, is to develop and grow as a vibrant Church, through an education of the mind and spirit that promotes Lakota and Catholic values.

Founding

Red Cloud Indian School was founded as Holy Rosary Mission in 1888 by the Jesuits at the request of Chief Red Cloud, a leader of the Oglala Sioux Indians residing on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Chief Red Cloud's continued petitioning of the government to allow the Jesuits to come to the Reservation in order to establish a school brought about the development and existence of the mission by the Jesuits and Franciscan Sisters.

The Schools

Red Cloud Indian School is comprised of three schools: Red Cloud High School, Red Cloud Elementary School and Our Lady of Lourdes Elementary School.

Enrollment

Red Cloud educates approximately 600 Lakota students each year.

Attendance

Red Cloud High School's attendance rates are uniquely high:

- 91.67 percent in 2006/07
- 92.11 percent in 2007/08

Drop-out Rates

The national drop-out rate of Native students in South Dakota is 23.8 percent, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics. During the 2007/08 year, less than 2 percent of Red Cloud High School students transferred without requesting transcripts.

Successes

During the 2008/09 academic year, students reached unprecedented levels of success:

- Forty-one of 43 seniors had plans in place to begin further education or training.
- Seven students received the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship, providing them full tuition and living expenses to the college of their choice. Since the program's inception, 39 Red Cloud students have received the award.
- Four seniors were awarded Horatio Alger Scholarships, including the only one at the national level from the State of South Dakota, which offers a \$20,000 scholarship.
- Two students received scholarships to Creighton University, where four Red Cloud alums graduated from in spring 2009.
- Students took home four of the eight awards at the 30th Annual Shannon County Reservation-wide Student Recognition Awards Banquet for exceptional academic and service achievements throughout the academic year.



Hope. Alive.

- The boys' basketball team and the cheerleading squad were recognized by the state athletic association for academic achievement, maintaining GPAs of 3.0 and above. Students made state tournament appearances in basketball, volleyball, wrestling and golf.
- A student's short film on the history of Lakota war paint was selected by PBS to premiere before a showing of a national documentary, "We Shall Remain."

Programs

Red Cloud builds strong character in the students that attend the institution, with each individual being taught with both Catholic and Lakota values. A number of programs support this approach:

Healthy Meals

One of the hallmarks of a Red Cloud education, the Healthy Meals Program includes three components. Students in the lower and upper elementary schools receive a hot breakfast when they arrive in the morning. At lunchtime, all students are served a hot lunch, consisting of a healthy entrée, a hot vegetable, low-fat milk and a salad bar with fresh fruits and vegetables. As an afternoon snack, fruit is provided. Currently, 78 percent of children who attend Red Cloud are eligible for a free or reduced lunch according to the guidelines of the National School Lunch Program.

Spiritual Formation

By learning and practicing a spirit of service, Catholic and Lakota spiritual values and traditions, and the importance of building community with those around them, Red Cloud

students are able to develop a strong sense of self, rooted in a proud and ethical identity, that launches them on a path toward achieving their own dreams while serving others around them. The Spiritual Formation Program graduates students committed to justice and open to growth. High school students are required to work 60 hours in service to others. Ten Red Cloud teaching staff are dedicated solely to this endeavor.

Lakota Studies

Red Cloud strives to develop the Lakota leaders of tomorrow—women and men who are grounded in their vibrant heritage and who have the competence, confidence and commitment to succeed. Each year, the Lakota Studies Program helps students to develop a healthier sense of identity, rooted in values of respect, service and generosity that are the trademarks of their traditions, through practices such as speaking the Lakota language, drumming, dancing, singing, praying and playing in traditional Lakota ways.

Counseling

For Lakota students, the Counseling Program provides the foundation for students to receive the support and tools they need to overcome the challenges they face, recognize their own giftedness and achieve their dreams after graduation. Red Cloud's program not only goes beyond traditional guidance counseling techniques, but also focuses on the development of and respect for the whole self while educating on conflict resolution techniques, goal setting and achievement, and addiction and suicide prevention, to name a few.

Parishes

The mission is comprised of 16 parishes. There are 17 pastoral staff members, nine of whom are Lakota, who work to ensure that ministries and outreach are available for the areas served by each parish. Outreach includes working with local leaders to help those in need on the reservation with food, clothing or other drives, as well as through various ministries.

The Heritage Center

The Heritage Center at Red Cloud collects, preserves and exhibits the fine and tribal arts of Native Americans. The Center concentrates on the fine arts of all Native Americans, and the tribal arts of the Lakota. The museum houses a permanent collection, estimated to include more than 2,000 paintings, over 300 textiles including Lakota star quilts, 2,300 pieces of tribal art and 800 pieces of pottery and sculpture. The 42nd Annual Art Show was held this summer in the museum, and a new outdoor artist market debuted.

Volunteer Program

Volunteers contribute to the economic sustainability and overall well-being of Red Cloud, supporting the ability to provide hope and a high quality education of both the mind and the heart to Lakota students. Carefully chosen from applicants across the country, approximately 20 volunteers each year commit themselves to a ministry of service, with an average commitment of two years. Volunteers teach and coach daily, drive the school's fleet of buses, chaperone student activities and often spend time visiting with students and their families in their homes and parishes.