



**The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition**

# 10-Year Strategic Plan

Years 2020-2030



# Leadership Planning Summit – Strategic Plan

Years 2020–2030



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### Introduction

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The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has been incorporated since 2012 under the laws of the Navajo Nation. NABS was tasked with the development and implementation of a national strategy to increase public awareness and cultivate healing for those impacted by the U.S. Boarding School Policy of 1869. Affected people include individuals, families, descendants, and communities of American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives villages.

For the past 7 years, NABS has used strategic planning to guide its efforts and actions. NABS developed their first 3-year strategic plan in 2015, followed by an updated 3-year strategic plan in 2018. Now, for this 10-year strategic plan, NABS sought insight from the organization’s leadership and convened the Board of Directors, Staff, and key stakeholders in March 2018 for a Leadership Planning Summit held at the Ziibiwing Center in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

An American Indian-owned firm nationally recognized for its 28 years of experience in management consulting, Kauffman & Associates, Inc., (KAI) facilitated the strategic planning session and developed this strategic plan document.

This plan manifests the expertise and lived experience of the NABS Board of Directors and Staff through a shared vision, a set of foundational strategic pillars, measurable outcomes, and corresponding action steps. The plan will act as a guide for NABS during the next 10 years as they fulfill their mission *“to lead in the pursuit of understanding and addressing the ongoing trauma created by the U.S. Indian Boarding School policy.”*

### Current Reality

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NABS was created after a symposium of leaders between the United States and Canada in 2011. This meeting ignited a drive to implement a process in the United States similar to that of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) sponsored the organization until NABS achieved financial independence in 2015. Between 2015 and 2018, NABS underwent organizational transitions that included an office relocation, strategic planning, staff hires, and initiative implementation. The following subsections highlight NABS’s current programming, funding, and opportunities, while also offering high-level insight into the state of NABS’s organizational processes and potential as the organization moves into the next phase of growth and development.

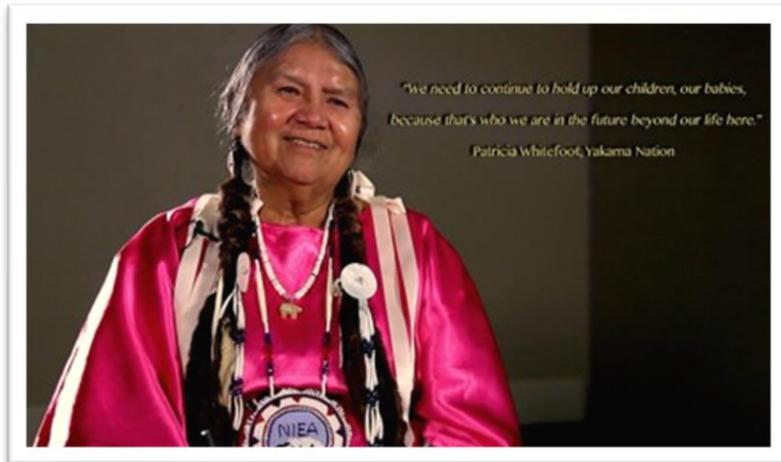


## Current Programs and Initiatives

Currently, NABS is tasked with implementing several programs that address the organization’s mission: education, advocacy, and healing. Program activities include the collection of digital storytelling, development of a resource database, identification and digitization of boarding school records, repatriation support, and development of an education curriculum. The following subsections highlight each program and NABS’s progress.

### Healing Voices Program

NABS launched the Healing Voices story collection titled, “Break the Silence, Begin the Healing,” in 2017. This program focuses on the story collection of boarding school survivors, educational publications, a resource database, webinars, and youth media training. NABS has made the following progress under this program:



Screenshot from *Healing Voices Story Collection* video.

- Conducted Youth Media Training, “Healing Voices Stories,” in Alaska, Turtle Mountain, Wind River, and Minneapolis, which inspired 30 Native youth to use media to amplify their voice
- Filmed the Healing Voices Story Collection, with twenty-five video interviews so far focused on healing, hope, and resiliency
- Premiered three of the Healing Voices videos at NABS’s inaugural conference in Carlisle, PA in 2018
- Issued NABS’s inaugural newsletter, *Healing Voices Volume 1: A Primer on American Indian and Alaska Native Boarding Schools in the U.S.*
- Facilitated a 10-episode webinar series on the history and impacts of U.S. Native American boarding schools

### United Nations Filing

In coordination with NARF, other organizations, and tribes, NABS aims to have the United Nations inquire to the U.S. about children who went missing at boarding schools. NABS filed to the UN with its partners in April 2019. Through independent research, NABS identified a dozen cases for the filing and testified before the UN in Geneva, Switzerland, in May 2019. NABS followed up with an international panel at the UN in July and invited a UN representative to its national conference in Tulalip, Washington, in November 2019.



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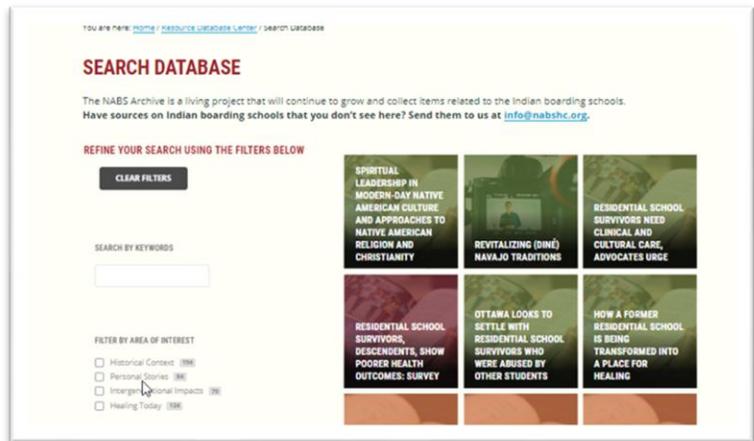
## Research & Records

Under the Research & Records program, NABS is working to identify and obtain records of Native American boarding schools, including records about the individual schools and the students. NABS uses a cross-discipline approach to research, accessing government and church records, gathering personal stories from boarding school students, assessing inter-generational trauma, and assessing approaches to healing from trauma. So far, for this program, NABS has consulted with Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada, and the Society of American Archivists. NABS has also increased outreach to church denominations to secure records.

## Digital Archive Planning

Through grants from the Minnesota Humanities Center and the Council on Libraries and Information Services (CLIR)

NABS has begun to build a National Indian Boarding School Digital Archive (NIBSDA) of records and resources related to Native American boarding schools in the U.S. NABS currently manages an online database of resources. So far, under this program, NABS has added an additional 300+ resources to an online database of boarding school information. NABS has also established a Research Advisory Council to support best practices, such as data sovereignty and tribal consultation, and the discovery of information.



Screenshot of NABS's online database of boarding school records and information

## Support for Repatriation

NABS advocates for tribes and communities' repatriation efforts from boarding school cemeteries through information sharing and networking. Under this program, NABS has:

- Petitioned the U.S. Army War College to repatriate the remains of Native American students buried at Carlisle Indian Industrial School Cemetery in 2016
- Hosted a Tribal Round Table in 2017
- Expanded the scope of national repatriation support for boarding school cemeteries
- Supported research into identifying unmarked boarding school graves and cemeteries

## Curriculum

NABS is partnering with the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), to develop a curriculum geared toward schools and classrooms. Additionally, NABS is working to



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develop a curriculum and resources based on the *Healing Voices* Digital Story Collection about boarding school survivors' healing journeys. So far, under this program, NABS has:

- Hosted a Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) at Klamath and Umatilla in 2016
- Researched community-led models for healing historical trauma
- Launched a professional development curriculum with NIEA
- Begun to develop a boarding school curriculum for high school students in 2019

### Conferences, Consultations, and Presentations

NABS hosts an annual national conference to provide a space for boarding school survivors, descendants, educators, tribal leaders, and anyone interested in understanding and addressing the impacts of boarding school trauma. Additionally, NABS facilitates gatherings in communities interested in promoting boarding school healing, including training, workshops, and GONA facilitation.

NABS has been invited to present for tribal nations, institutions, and organizations such as the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, Upper Sioux Community, Turtle Mountain Chippewa, University of Minnesota, University of Notre Dame, University of North Dakota, Catholic Indian Boarding School Network, Society of American Archivists, Newberry Library, Association on American Indian Affairs, and Casey Family Programs.

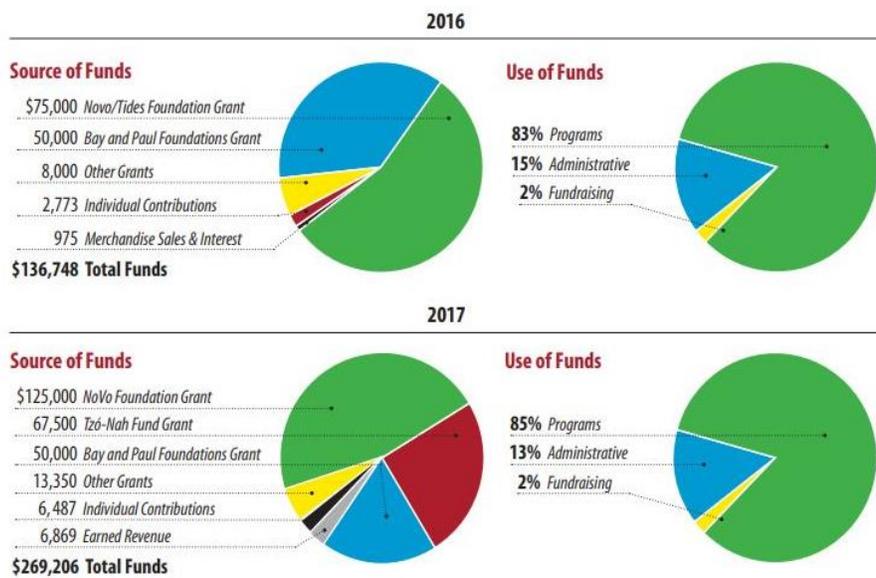
NABS held the inaugural national conference in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, on October 2–3, 2018, to coincide with and honor the 100-year anniversary of the Carlisle Industrial Indian School closing. The event hosted over 200 people, representative of tribes from across the country. Several tribes and organizations sponsored the 2-day event. The theme was, “The Spirit Survives: A National Movement Toward Healing.” NABS’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Boarding School Healing Conference: Honoring Native Survivance was held in November 2019 in Tulalip, Washington. The conference theme was, “Honoring Native Survivance,” and co-hosted by the Tulalip Tribes. Over 250 participants gathered from all over Turtle Island and boarding school survivors were honored in a blanket ceremony. Planning for the 2020 national conference has begun, dates and location to be determined.



### Organizational Growth

NABS has seen considerable programmatic and financial organizational growth since its inception in 2012. The following subsections review NABS’s growth by the numbers through operating budgets and membership. This section also reviews NABS’s 2019 projections. *Figure 1* displays the financial breakdown for NABS’s operating years 2016 through 2018, including funding sources and the use of funds.

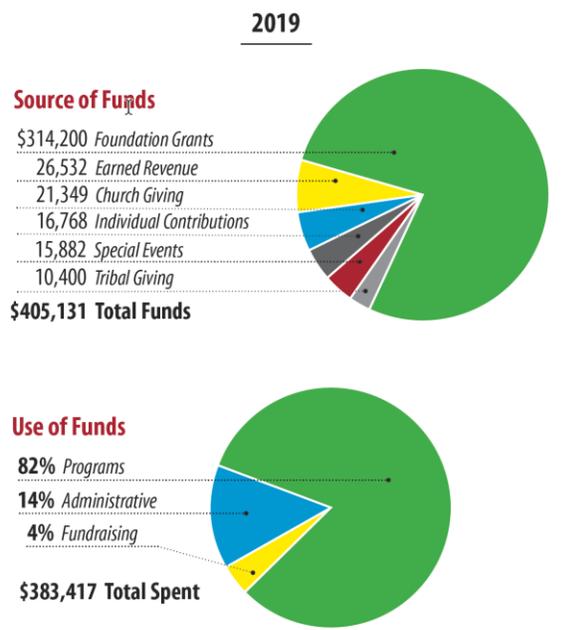
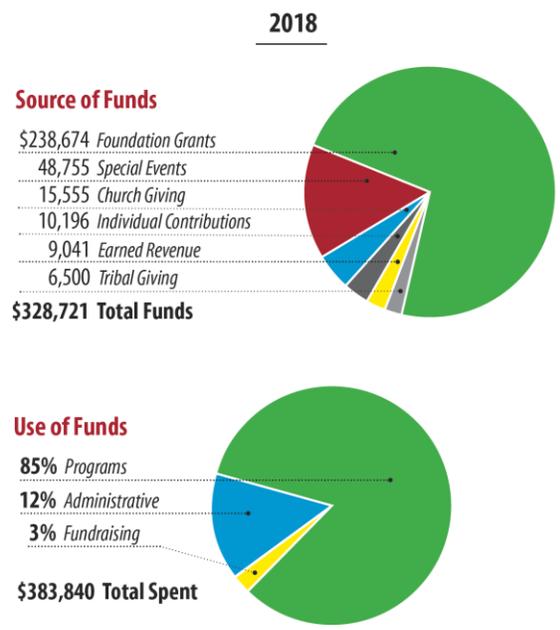
Figure 1. NABS Operating Budget for Years 2016, 2017, and 2018, financial as of September 30, 2018





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### Funding Streams

NABS’s organizational growth, in dollars, has increased by nearly 300% since gaining financial independence from NARF in 2015. Grants are the bulk of NABS’s operating budget, and NABS has seen consistent support from a few foundations, including NoVo Foundation, Tzó-Nah Fund, and the Bay and Paul Foundations, This funding support indicates that these foundations have an established buy-in to NABS’s mission and programs, have developed a relationship with NABS, and trust in NABS’s competency to implement effective programming.

Since 2016, NABS has increased its funding sources to include individual, tribal, and organization donations, earned revenue, and revenue from special events, indicating consistent growth for NABS. For fiscal year 2019-2020, NABS has received continued funding from the NoVo Foundation and the Tzó-Nah Fund with additional funding from the Kendeda Fund, the Better Way Foundation, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, the Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Council on Libraries and Information Services.



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## Membership Growth

Since 2015, NABS has also seen significant growth in membership, growing from 50 members in 2015 to over 150 members in 2019. The membership consists of individuals from numerous tribes across the United States, including boarding school survivors and their descendants, and non-Native allies and advocates. NABS anticipates that membership will continue to grow as awareness of the U.S. boarding school era continues to grow and as NABS continues to engage the public in educational activities and events.

## Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 displays NABS’s conceptual framework. Each component represents a driving force behind the organization: education, advocacy, healing and organizational growth. Since NABS’s inception, education, advocacy, and healing have been the cornerstone tenets linking the influence of the organization to its mission. Programs have been established to fulfill activities that embody these core beliefs in acknowledgement of the Native American boarding school legacy, including its survivors, their descendants, tribal communities, and the public.

Over the past 7 years, NABS has been unwavering in these concepts. The March 2019 strategic planning workshop reaffirmed NABS’s commitment to healing, education, and advocacy. NABS fourth concept, organizational growth, represents NABS’s need to grow its scope of work and its organization to continue to manage the work.

NABS’s strong organization is supported by four full-time staff, a Board of Directors, and a coalition of 150-plus members. The NABS staff and Board of Directors successfully secured funding to support the organization’s programs. NABS plans to hire additional staff to complete the day-to-day operations and program project management and engage its membership base to increase its organizational reach.

For the last several years, NABS has made strides in developing distinct programs that promote education, advocacy, and healing for boarding school survivors, their descendants,

Figure 2. NABS conceptual framework for boarding school legacy





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tribal communities, and the public. NABS’s strong research arm drives the content for other programs. NABS will continue supporting its research initiatives to increase its rich educational content. This support will include increasing engagement efforts with church denominations and coalition members and strengthen its relationships with international organizations who are committed to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) work.

For NABS’s programmatic efforts overall, NABS will continue to acknowledge the limited awareness of the boarding school era and its negative impacts on tribal communities among the public, tribes, and villages.

## Strategic Plan for Years 2020–2030

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NABS developed this strategic plan to prepare the organization for growth to increase education, awareness, and healing for boarding school survivors, their descendants, their communities, and non-Native allies and advocates. As a foundation for the strategic plan, NABS developed the following vision, strategic pillars, and outcomes to guide these efforts.

### Shared Vision

The NABS team expressed the following vision for the next 10 years.

#### Indigenous Cultural Sovereignty

Restore our way of life, centered in our children, families, and communities, transforming our spirits and our future by strengthening our pathways to truth, education, acknowledgment, and healing.

The shared vision offers a driving force behind the work and the commitment of NABS, partners, and stakeholders to address the boarding school legacy.

### Strategic Pillars

The NABS team established the following strategic pillars to support the shared vision.

1. Initiate a global advocacy campaign
2. Embody indigenous healing practices and values
3. Expand the organizational infrastructure and network
4. Develop an accessible national education platform

Each pillar reflects NABS’s efforts to grow the organization over the next 10 years while meeting the needs of boarding school survivors and supporting the boarding school legacy through education, advocacy, healing, and organizational infrastructure growth, advocacy.



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### Strategic Outcomes

Table 1 lists NABS’s strategic pillars with corresponding outcomes for the next 10 years. The outcomes demonstrate efforts that focus on NABS’s priority areas, as expressed in the shared vision: education, advocacy, healing, and organizational growth.

Table 1. NABS strategic outcomes

Strategic Pillar	Strategic Outcomes
<b>1. Initiate a global advocacy campaign (GAC)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a 5-part documentary series</li> <li>2. Develop a boarding school education curriculum for K-12, secondary education, and the public</li> <li>3. Advocate for a federal law mandating the inclusion of the boarding school era and legacy in the K-12 education curriculum</li> <li>4. Hold Deep Listening sessions for NABS, stakeholders, and the public</li> <li>5. Hold an annual international gathering of boarding school survivors, educators, healers, and descendants</li> </ol>
<b>2. Embody indigenous healing values and practices (IHV)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record boarding school students’ stories about experiences and healing journeys</li> <li>2. Create an online library of healing journey resources</li> <li>3. Create and implement an elder-in-residence boarding school survivors’ program</li> </ol>
<b>3. Expand the organizational infrastructure and network (OIN)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hire 10 full-time employees by 2030</li> <li>2. Acquire a \$10 million operating budget for NABS by 2030</li> <li>3. Establish a second regional office by 2030</li> </ol>
<b>4. Develop an accessible national education platform (NEP)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consult with 20 tribes per year to make information available in support of educational programs that fit their priorities</li> <li>2. Develop a comprehensive, searchable database of boarding school records</li> <li>3. Develop an interactive online map of Indian boarding schools with a repository of historical and current information about operations, buildings, and cemeteries</li> </ol>



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Strategic Pillar	Strategic Outcomes
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Develop and implement a NABS orientation training program for members</li> <li>5. Establish the Center for Boarding School Truth and Healing</li> <li>6. Partner with language revitalization programs</li> <li>7. Issue policy statements in support of tribes, states, organizations, or agencies related to boarding schools</li> </ol>

### Launch of Plan

NABS will launch the strategic plan for implementation beginning in January 2020 and monitor progress toward achieving the plan’s intended outcomes. Updates on programmatic activities and progress on the 10-year strategic plan will be published periodically on NABS’s social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn) NABS’s E-News (subscribe at [boardingschoolhealing.org](http://boardingschoolhealing.org)) and in Annual Reports.

The NABS Executive Director and staff will work to implement the NABS Strategic Plan, Years 2020–2030, in close collaboration with the NABS Board of Directors, key partners, and stakeholders. These efforts honor the Native American boarding school legacy, its survivors, and their descendants through truth, healing, and reconciliation by creating pathways to education, advocacy, and healing.

For more information about the NABS strategic planning efforts, please contact:

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## Acknowledgements

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition is thankful for the participants of the Leadership Planning Summit, held March 7–8, 2019, in Mt. Pleasant, MI, and for the support of the Kendeda Fund for the planning grant to hold the summit.



Leadership Planning Summit attendees in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, on March 7–8, 2019.

## Strategic Plan Workshop Participants

The following experts and stakeholders participated in the NABS Leadership Planning Summit, held March 7–8, 2019, at the Ziibiwing Center in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan:

- **Christine Diindiisi McCleave**, Executive Director, NABS (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe)
- **Rose Miron**, Program Manager, NABS
- **Vance Blackfox**, Board President, NABS/Communications Director, Native Americans in Philanthropy (Cherokee)
- **Sandy White Hawk**, Board 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, NABS/Executive Director, First Nations Repatriation Institute (Sicangu Lakota)



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- **James W. LaBelle, Sr.**, Board 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, NABS/retired professor/Boarding School Survivor (Inupiaq)
- **Joannie Suina Romero**, Board Secretary, NABS/Corn Pollen Consulting, LLC (Pueblo of Cochiti)
- **Anna Clock**, Policy & Truth Racial Healing & Transformation, First Alaskans Institute (Koyukon Athabascan)
- **Theresa Halsey**, Radio Producer/Boarding School Survivor (Hunkpapa Lakota)
- **Shannon Keller O’ Loughlin**, Executive Director, Association on American Indian Affairs (Choctaw)
- **Freddie Lane**, Lummi Tribal Council/Boarding School Survivor (Lummi Nation)
- **Shannon Martin**, Executive Director, Ziibiwing Center (Ojibwe & Potawatomi)
- **George McCauley**, Boarding School Survivor (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska)
- **Liz Medicine Crow**, Executive Director, First Alaskans Institute (Tlingit & Haida)
- **Susie Silversmith**, Boarding School Survivor (Diné/Navajo)
- **Don Wharton**, Senior Attorney, Native American Rights Fund
- **Dr. Marie Wilson**, Commissioner, Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission



Kauffman & Associates, Inc. (KAI), is an American Indian-owned management firm dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable populations and enhancing the reach and effectiveness of caring organizations. At KAI, we do work that matters. KAI prepared this document for the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.  
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