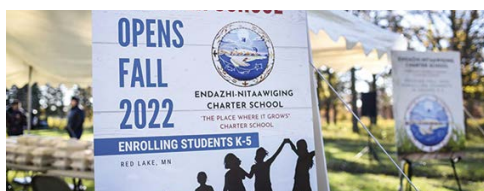


Minnesota



Endazhi-Nitaawiging “The Place Where it Grows” Charter School

Red Lake, MN (2023)

FINANCING

NMTC Financing: Civic Builders, Inc.: \$13 million

Equity Investor: U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation

Total Project Cost: \$14.6 million

In August 2023, Civic Builders allocated \$13 million of New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) to support the construction of a 30,000 sq. ft. facility for Endazhi-Nitaawiging Charter School, located in Red Lake, Minnesota.

This project addressed the critical need for improved educational outcomes in the Red Lake Nation, where only 10 percent of students are proficient in reading, and just 20 percent in math, starkly lower than the statewide averages of 50% and 46 percent, respectively. With an unacceptably low graduation rate of 23% and high absenteeism, the community faced severe educational challenges that demanded immediate attention.

IMPACT

- 82 construction jobs
- 16 permanent jobs
- 150 students each year

First charter school in a new facility on indigenous land expands educational opportunities for K-8 students

COMMUNITY

- Poverty Rate: 40.1%
- Unemployment Rate: 25.8%
- Median Income: 41.1% of the AMI
- Federal Native Area

“This funding allowed our community to provide our students with a safe and inspiring learning environment that focuses on strengthening our identity, language, and culture. The new building will enhance their educational experience and create a space where they can thrive and grow for years. We are humbled and honored to have Civic Builders’ support in our mission to provide quality education. Miigwech (thank you)!”

-Nathaniel Taylor, Executive Director, Endazhi-Nitaawiging Charter School

The financing provided by Civic Builders, covering the majority of the \$14.6 million total project cost, was essential in bringing this initiative to life. U.S. Bank served as an equity investor. Without the NMTC allocation, the project would not have been feasible in this severely distressed community, where a poverty rate of 40.1% and an unemployment rate of 25.8% are compounded by a median family income of just 41.1%.

The funds ensured the construction of a new charter school, the first of its kind on indigenous land, addressing both educational inequities and community revitalization. Since opening for the 2022-2023 school year, Endazhi-Nitaawiging Charter School in Red Lake, Minnesota, has steadily expanded its enrollment. Initially serving students in grades K-5, the school will add a grade each year until reaching full K-8 capacity by the 2025-2026 school year. It includes seats for 150 students, all of whom are low-income and students of color. The school has already created 16 full-time equivalent jobs and 82 construction jobs, contributing to the local economy.

In partnership with the Native American Community Academy Inspired Schools Network, the curriculum indigenizes western subjects, ensuring that American History is taught from a Native nations’ perspective. The new facility includes 12 classrooms, specialized art and music rooms, a STEM room, a full kitchen, two SPED rooms, and an elders’ room for tribal elders. This project not only addresses educational disparities but also strengthens the cultural and economic fabric of the Red Lake Nation, positioning it as a vital resource for future generations.