



Dear Partners in Education,

November 2, 2017

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires new levels of meaningful and ongoing consultation between the Office of Public Instruction and Montana's tribal nations AND between those school districts who meet certain population criteria and their local tribe(s). Schools who are required to consult are those that have either A) a 50% or more of a student enrollment made up of American Indian students or B) receive an Indian education formula grant under Title VII that exceeds \$40,000. (A notification letter was sent out in early January of this year to all affected schools. You can contact Mandy Smoker Broaddus to receive a copy of the list at [mbroaddus@mt.gov](mailto:mbroaddus@mt.gov).)

This provision is intended to foster greater collaborative relationships between schools and tribal entities that can hopefully result in greater outcomes for American Indian students. Both tribes and local schools have an important role and an important stake in this work and are both encouraged to reach out and begin this collaboration. Key areas for collaboration include school improvement, family & community engagement, school safety and climate, student well-being and mental health supports and more.

Future efforts from the OPI regarding tribal consultation will include additional information and guidance for school districts/administrators on suggested effective consultation techniques and processes. In addition, a tribal consultation framework is being developed for tribes (including tribal leaders, tribal education staff and others) to assist in building the capacity of our tribal nations for this ongoing work. Training will also be available for school leaders and tribes in using the framework. Both efforts will assist in the long-term, sustainable vision of effective and meaningful consultation.

***Please send questions to [ESSAinput@mt.gov](mailto:ESSAinput@mt.gov)***

***Susie Hedalen***  
***Director of Education Services***