Indian Education for All

Montana Museums and Montana Schools as Coeducators

Best Practices in Indian Education for All

An Office of Public Instruction/Montana Historical Society Partnership

Thanks to: Richard Sims, Montana Historical Society

2008

Big Sky. Big Land. Big History.
Montana Historical Society

Indian Education for All Unit
opi.mt.gov Montana Office of Public Instruction

He quit the lodge and went to his mother across the encampment. Watching her, Archilde felt suddenly happy. She was pleased with her duties in the way that only an old art or an old way of life, long disused, can please the hand and the heart returning to it. She took up the folded garments of beaded buckskin and placed them on her grandchild in a kind of devotional act . . .

D'Arcy McNickle, from The Surrounded

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Introduction

During the period mid-March to June 30, 2007, in the spirit of the Indian Education for All law of Montana and in the hopes that future generations will thrive in our state, a unique partnership between two state agencies was formed. The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Montana Historical Society issued a Request for Proposals inviting museums to team with their local school districts and submit applications for a two-fold purpose: improving the preservation and presentation of American Indian artifacts and related documents in their museum collections, and exploring ways for becoming coeducators in the topics of Montana American Indian culture and history, in a museum setting and in the public school classroom. This intensive ten-week program involved co-hosted field trips between participating museums and their education teams, site visits to each museum by the project director, and a three-day conference featuring prominent American Indian scholars, held at the Montana Historical Society, May 30-June 1, 2007.

Titled "Indian Education for All – Museum Educator Best Practices Program: Museums and Schools as Coeducators," the core objective of the project was to increase awareness among museum professionals and school teachers of the educational possibilities inherent in Montana American Indian collections. This was primarily a collections-based endeavor intended to stimulate new approaches and practices of cooperative teaching between museums and schools. The ultimate goal is to promote Indian Education for All (IEFA), a required educational program and constitutional mandate which is unique to the state of Montana, through increased collaboration among Montana's museums, curators, schools, teachers and children.

As noted in the Request for Proposals, this Best Practices Program: Museums and Schools as Coeducators "will create partnerships between museum staff and public school teachers. Participants will gain knowledge about museum education best practices, connecting museums and classroom learning, and strengthening community learning partners.

Ten museums (and MHS) were awarded grants to improve management of American Indian art, artifact and archival collections. Each museum-teacher team was also funded for participation at a three-day conference at the Montana Historical Society, and for attendance at a behind-the-scenes, one-day workshop at another nationally accredited museum in the state.

Presentations conducted by experts from various fields during the three-day event included:

1) an overview of Indian Education for All;
2) a workshop on artifact identification, cultural significance of artifacts, such as secular or sacred, and the guidelines of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act;
3) interpretation of collections, i.e., assisting the public in understanding items and their context;
4) a conservation workshop with hands-on demonstrations of the care of fragile items such as feathers and cloth;
5) discussions from American Indian educators regarding community and school outreach programs; and
6) a presentation by a Smithsonian curator about working with American Indian collections and with American Indian communities.

Some of the notable projects that are underway through these museum-public school partnerships grants are in Red Lodge, Carbon County Historical Society Museum, that is working with the Red Lodge High School to involve students in exhibit development and interpretation. An American Indian consultant will work with the partners and the students to introduce a new level of awareness to the treatment of American Indian materials.

- In Cut Bank, the Glacier County Museum and the county schools are working on making field trips to the museum and to other areas of traditional Blackfeet country more effective and rewarding for the students. This is occurring through intensive explanation of artifacts on display in the museum with living history programs, and through field trips to natural areas led by a Blackfeet teacher of science, who integrates language and culture "on the ground."
- In Fort Benton, the successful Heritage Day for regional schoolchildren will be enlivened with additional involvement of the Blackfeet people, who were the primary American Indian traders with the historic fort. Also, interaction between Blackfeet children and Fort Benton children is beginning, as Blackfeet children visit Fort Benton classrooms, under the auspices of the Piegan Institute, and share their language and culture.
- In Pryor, at Plenty Coups State Park, park personnel are working with Pryor Public Schools and with schools in Edgar, Fromberg, and Columbus, on a summer youth program of arts and culture. Elders from the Apsaalooke Cultural Enrichment Committee are helping with this program.

At the outset, two to four workshops will be offered, including oral history, storytelling and performing.

Improved collections management practices are important for all museums, large and small. The basic work in collections management is to know what you have, why you have it, and where it is located in the institution (storage or display). Knowing what you have means having a thorough description of the artifact, artwork, or document, including material of manufacture, identity of artist or craftsperson or author, and understanding the context of that item within the culture. Clarity of ownership or loan status is a component of this description. Knowing why you have it speaks to the mission of the museum, and to the historic themes mandated in the mission statement for education and preservation. (Most museums define their mission by the area they serve. For instance, a museum near Glacier National Park might have difficulty explaining why it curates items from Florida.) Knowing where it is may seem an obvious curatorial responsibility, but collections of any size can become disorganized without constant attention to the security of the artifact and to its placement in a public or nonpublic space.

Conservation, the professional care for the physical object – its repair, its controlled environment of temperature and humidity, its handling – is central to effective curatorship. Museums must maintain their collections in perpetuity, which is quite the challenge. Perpetuity is a long time. Future generations must have artifacts available to them, in the original physical state, so that the knowledge reposing in these items can be gleaned anew. In Montana, the responsibility to adequately care for and curate our American Indian collections is essential to the education of future generations, Indian and non-Indian alike.

The Essential Understandings and the Mission of Museums

The IEFA program has developed seven Essential Understandings that are fundamental to teaching American Indian culture and history. These teaching principles are not called the seven Essential Facts or Essential Guidelines. They are Understandings, a way of knowing that goes beyond surface knowledge; a way of knowing that requires a deeper sense of the complexity of human interaction, American Indian and non-American Indian. All museums have mission statements, and a mission area, a geographical region, in which to abide by and employ that statement. These mission statements, especially for history museums, embrace the panorama of human experience within a defined geographical area. Schools within a museum's mission area should be seen as partners in the carrying-out of that mission; engaging the Essential Understandings is crucial to that effort.

Essential Understanding 1. … *There is great diversity among the 12 Tribal Nations of Montana … each Nation has a distinct cultural heritage. …* A Montana history museum should make the distinction, in its exhibits and public programs, between the tribal groups in its area and the other groups in the state. A museum in southeastern Montana, for instance, should do more than present information on the Crow Nation; it should compare and contrast the Crow culture with that of the Hidatsa or the Sioux. A museum along the Montana Hi-Line should present information on tribes north of the "medicine line" as well as on tribes in the area.

Whenever I pause, whenever I pause, whenever I pause,
The noise of the village
Whenever I pause, whenever I pause
Chippewa song

Essential Understanding 2. … *There is great diversity among individual American Indians … identity ranges from assimilated to traditional. …* Montana museums should be diligent and fair in their communications with individual American Indians, and make no assumptions, engage in no stereotypes, and welcome all degrees of American Indian self-identity in public programs and private consultations. Museums and schools can co-sponsor American Indian advisory councils, the makeup of which reflects the diversity of American Indian individuals. The Montana Historical Society convened an American

Indian advisory council prior to formulating its permanent exhibit, "Neither Empty Nor Unknown – Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark," and retained the council to advise on future projects.

Aunties carry the full pots and pans to the picnic table,
an uncle prays over our food in Assiniboine.
We all want to forget that we don't understand this language,
we spend lots of time trying to forget in different ways.
No one notices that the wild turnips are still simmering in a pot on the stove.
M. L. Smoker, Assiniboine, from "The Feed," Another Attempt at Rescue

Essential Understanding 3. . . . *traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern-day life ... languages are still practiced ... oral histories are as valid as written histories.* ...Through exhibits, museums are particularly qualified to explain the persistence of belief systems, to assist in the maintenance of American Indian languages, and to tell the story of the past from the perspective of tradition. An exhibit about sacred medicine bundles can be as instructive, and certainly more respectful, than an exhibit of sacred medicine bundles, and can make the point that not all bundles are sacred. An exhibit of frontier Catholic religious icons and paraphernalia, a common display in Montana museums, does not blaspheme Catholic beliefs and teachings; rather, the exhibit simply shows the symbols and tools of a new faith introduced in a foreign land.

Essential Understanding 4. … *Reservations are lands that have been reserved by the tribes for their own use through treaties, statutes, and executive orders, and were not "given" to them.* ...There is no more effective visual representation of the diminishment of traditional American Indian territories, and of the relocations of American Indian peoples, than through a chronological series of maps. Museum exhibits have been and can be devoted to this topic, using maps from archival collections and maps commissioned for exhibit purposes. Copies of treaties with the critical text enhanced for the gallery visitor are important accompaniments to the maps. From American Indian sources, ledger books, winter counts on animal hides, and remembered place names comprise an alternative cartography.

My companions told me to make some reply so I said that we were also glad to see him and that we wished to speak with him too. I said that he had asked us to do many things, but that before we could give him our answer, we would like time to talk it over among ourselves. The President gave us two days to consider his requests. Two days later, we returned and again met with him. I said that we agreed to send our children to school and to let the Government build houses for us. I said that as far as stopping the fighting with other tribes, we wanted to fight them for about two more years and then we would reconsider this question. I added that we did not want a railroad built through our country because it was our hunting ground.

Plenty Coups, Crow, telling of his meeting with President Hayes

Essential Understanding 5. … *Federal American Indian policies … have affected American Indian people and still shape who they are today.* Each of the major federal policy periods - Colonization, Treaty, Allotment, Boarding School, Tribal Reorganization, Termination, and Self-determination - can serve as themes for museum exhibits or for traveling education trunks or "suitcase museums." These policy periods could form the basis for a series of lectures and publications, with panelists, including American Indian and non-American Indian scholars.

Essential Understanding 6. … *History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. …History told from an American Indian perspective frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.* Storytelling, in a museum setting or in a schoolroom, is truth telling. The power of words, when delivered by an American Indian man or woman, whether in the form of traditional oratory and narrative, or as modern literature and poetry, can be transforming, especially when spoken in the context of a relevant exhibit. A museum and school could co-host a storyteller or writer-in-residence, to add an emotive dimension to the "stories on the wall." Just as the term, parfleche refers to toughened leather that repels or is "against the arrow," so could American Indian religious leaders serve as guest curators and present an exhibit of creation stories that go against the piercing certainties of archaeologists.

Then the women moved in with the men. They brought all their things,
all their skills to the men's village.
Then the women quilled and tanned for the men.
Then the men hunted for the women. Then there was love.
Then there was happiness.
Then there was marriage. Then there were children.
How Men and Women Got Together, Blood-Piegan tale

Essential Understanding 7. … *American Indian tribes have sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments.* For museum officials, this Understanding speaks to the art of diplomacy, especially when negotiating with a tribal council or a representative of tribal government. This requires knowledge of the particular tribal government, and of its elected representatives. In a museum setting, a panel discussion on the theme of sovereignty, featuring tribal and state representatives, can be an enlightening program. A mock trial, exploring an historic issue of tribal sovereignty versus state or federal authority, can also be provocative.

The Curator/Teacher Dynamic: Current Practices, Proposed Collaborations

Since receiving its first biennial funding in 2005, the OPI and school districts around Montana have initiated many instructional programs and projects. The variety of services and educational products of the OPI, including publications and Ready –To-Go grants, have allowed Montana schools to begin a meaningful engagement with the subject matter of American Indian culture, American Indian history, and the contributions of today's individual American Indians and American Indian communities. American Indian instructional materials are being developed, including several video productions, and classroom activities are being conducted. Many teachers are already using their nearby museums as a resource base, making field trips to museum and consulting with museum curators on IEFA projects. Expanding this access and interaction was a natural progression to furthering the intent of IEFA. Current coeducator practices between Montana museums and schools include:

a. traveling trunks containing replica artifacts and other items relating to the prehistory and history of Montana tribes (some trunks are divided into Ancient, Traditional, and Contemporary);
b. employing seasonal rounds as a way of structuring third grade classroom content and classroom calendars;
c. tepee raising ceremonies involving high school students;
d. video productions featuring traditional life ways and languages;
e. special previews of new museum exhibits for teachers;
f. museum-hosted heritage days, where students can take part in hands-on activities such as preparation of American Indian foods and hide painting;
g. presentations on the "other" American Indian group, the Métis, and their role in the history of North American Indians;
h. language classes;
i. drum making and dancing; and
j. family-themed museum visits, where students compare their family's lives to those of American Indian families.

As an extension of these efforts the following practices are proposed for all Montana museums and

schools and were generated by the ten museum-school teams:

a. professional instruction day for teachers at the museum, including a tour of the collections and follow-up discussion of ways to incorporate specific artifacts in a learning environment;
b. language visits, where American Indian children speak, or learn to speak their languages, are guest "peer instructors" in a mainly non-American Indian classroom, utilizing items from the museum's collections to demonstrate vocabulary (American Indian elders who are fluent in native languages could also serve as guest instructors);
c. intensive hands-on instruction on craft making (parfleche, dolls, beadwork), guided by a guest American Indian artisan with authentic materials;
d. museum-hosted visits for students to traditional-use areas, where ethnobotany, rock art, pishkuns, and other topics of American Indian interaction with the natural world are explored;
e. the development of an American Indian Artists Bureau, modeled on the state humanities committee's Speakers Bureau, that is a roster of artists, craftspeople, performers of music and dance, and other demonstrators, with appearances in the school during the day, and at the museum in the evening;
f. an essay contest for high school students, wherein they give accurate historical and cultural context to one or more objects in the museum's collections, and the winners are awarded with an item from the museum store, a book on an American Indian subject, and a gift membership to the museum;
g. offer in-service credits or teacher renewal units to attend museum programs, lectures, and staff seminars;
h. an "American Indian humor" day, with a guest American Indian comedian whose presentation of traditional humor and light-hearted teasing of modern issues is supported by coyote stories and other tales;
i. each of Montana's 56 counties develop an IEFA coeducators committee, to continue the collaborations and, sparked by this inaugural project, expand collection/program offerings;
j. conduct a simulated Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) exercise regarding the secular and the sacred, utilizing objects or photos of objects from the local museum, and assigning students to roles of either curator or culture-keeper;

k. begin a Harvesting Stories program with American Indian elder and high school students, a cross-cultural conversation centered on artifacts and their meanings and uses;

l. launch a photography project with American Indian students, providing them with disposable cameras so that they might record daily life in their world, on or off-reservation, culminating in an exhibition curated by an American Indian photographer, an exhibition that includes archival photos of American Indians as photographic subjects;

m. present a class on "Points of View – American Indians on Both Sides of the Camera," exploring image capture versus image manufacture;

n. develop a Festival of Dance, featuring traditional and modern interpretive dances of several American Indian and non-American Indian cultures, with performances in the school auditorium and on the grounds of the museum;

o. promote American Indian Clubs or honors classes in high schools to work with teachers and curators on student-produced exhibits, films and publications;

p. send personal invitations from the museum to the individual teachers and administrators in the area, to attend a special viewing of art and artifacts in the museum collections and build awareness of objects that can augment lesson plans in an effort to increase dialogue and collaborative spirit;

q. institute a museum-to-school loan program, allowing schools to borrow art and/or artifacts to display in a central location, under appropriate security and properly labeled and credited, with students learning curatorial and interpretive practices and with museums generating related lesson plans;

r. promote an "in my shoes" day, or half-day, in which a curator and a teacher trade roles, with the curator using selected objects from the collections in the classroom, and the teacher spending "white gloves" time in the museum storage areas;

s. hold cultural sensitivity training for all museum staff, volunteers, and board members, and for all teachers and administrators, and base that training on the Essential Understandings and the principle of diversity;

t. complete an accurate inventory, employing American Indian consultants, of the teaching materials and collections found in museums and in schools, to improve stewardship and

accessibility;

u. convene key American Indian stakeholders whenever a school or museum begins to create a new curriculum or a new exhibit or new educational products, to assure clear communications and mutual respect; and

v. use reliable web sites to enhance effectiveness in the classroom or museum, and to supplement experiences gained on field trips.

Even after the whites were numerous, Lone White Man showed no desire to leave our people. One day he met one of the steamboats and did some trading. Among other things, he brought home some bacon and a frying pan. He told my granduncle that he had wanted fried liver and bacon so long that he was going to satisfy that desire. He prepared a large stack of fried liver and bacon on which he feasted all alone. With so many different kinds of meat to be had at that time, our people never ate liver, which they used only for tanning hides.

Story told by First Boy, Assiniboine

Museum Collections as Classroom Teaching Tools

It is a curatorial imperative that only qualified people handle museum artifacts and documents. Sometimes the qualifications are very simple: wear white cotton gloves, and be careful. Obviously, curators would never permit objects of material fragility, or of cultural sensitivity, or of momentous historical importance, to be passed around in a classroom of fourth graders or high school seniors. Such objects are frequently on display in museums, but in a look/don't touch mode. Many museums maintain a parallel collection of objects that are redundant to the principal collection; this is often called the community collection, and can include reproductions as well. The community collection is a "please touch" assemblage that allows the tactile experience so central to learning, and to retaining that learning.

A useful IEFA exercise among educators, in the museums and in the schools of Montana, would be to gather as a team and examine the museum's "don't touch" collection and its "please touch" collection. There may be objects in the formal collection that a school teacher wishes to be replicated; and there may be items in the community collection of which more replicas are needed. Most replicas do not require the white glove treatment; still, it may be instructive to have students don the gloves, to instill the feeling that they are handling something special, and to promote the first stages of stewardship of a culture or of a time not their own. For many students, the younger ones in particular, community collections contain artifacts that excite stereotypical responses. Bows and arrows, for instance, stimulate war whoops in the fourth-grade classroom, which allows for some corrective instruction on the patience and skill it takes to manufacture these hunting tools.

As curators study every physical characteristic of an artifact, and strive to give it context, so can classroom teachers impress upon their students the need to "read" the artifact, and not see it as a stand-alone object with little connection to the patterns of past daily life.

Teachers as Curators

In the museum profession, a curator of education is the title given to an institution's lead teacher or education outreach coordinator. Curators of education work closely with the librarians and archivists in their organization or their community, and with the curators of material culture (works of art, furniture, decorative objects, taxidermy, clothing, and archaeological collections, American Indian items often

donated by pioneer families who received them in trade or as gifts). Together, this curatorial team develops and distributes the collections-based information, the "stories behind the stuff," that bring objects to life. When artifacts are animated in this way, a portal to understanding is opened. This entry point for schoolchildren is perfectly situated to fulfill the ideals of IEFA – sharing with our students the historic and modern contributions, and lives, of American Indians. Storytelling is not a casual pastime for tribal traditionalists or for museum and public school educators; stories are woven from the fabric of the actual, and inform the world of the possible. And stories always have more impact when they are embellished with three-dimensional items rich with authenticity, the "stuff accentuating the stories."

Object-based learning is fundamental in the mainstream educational system, especially in the early grades, where playtime with toys is as important as reciting the alphabet. As the student moves through the educational system, object-based learning slowly gives way to the more intellectual exercises of reading, writing, analyzing, and synthesizing – braiding streams of information into personal rivers of knowledge.

Complex issues of American Indian identity, tribal sovereignty, cultural patrimony, and the difficulties in maintaining and transmitting tradition – these topics can be addressed by using primary source material, and nothing is more primary than an ancient artifact or narrative that speaks for the past and that connects to the present, such as a tepee, a drum, ledger drawings, or even a coyote story.

School teachers can adopt the methods of museum curators and educators, and adhere to the goals of IEFA's Essential Understandings, by bringing objects of American Indian history and culture into the classroom at every opportunity. The stories that reside in textbooks are then given texture that students can handle. Many teachers are already curators of sorts, maintaining their personal collections of objects that serve as teaching aids. Teachers and classrooms could maintain and evolve their own appropriate collections, and even invite students to be co-curators. Seeing a historic photo of a pile of buffalo hides is one thing; handling a heavy buffalo robe is quite another.

As it drew nearer, they could see that it was a man coming, and that he was on some strange animal. The Piegans wanted their chief to go toward him and speak to him. The chief did not wish to do this; he was afraid, but at last he stated to go to meet the Kutenai, who was coming. When he got near to him, the Kutenai made

signs that he was friendly, and patted his horse on his neck and made signs to the chief. "I give you this animal." The chief made signs that he was friendly, and the Kutenai rode into the camp and were received as friends, and food was given them and they ate, and their hunger was satisfied.

Story told by Wolf Calf, Piegan

Montana Indians as Coeducators

The most important partner in the Indian Education for All program is not the classroom teacher or the museum educator; it is the American Indian living in today's Montana. As the museum-school teams involved in the "Best Practices" project reported again and again, it is the involvement of tribal peoples that must occur, at all levels of curriculum development or of museum presentation, if the Essential Understandings are truly to sink in, to be understood. Many American Indian teachers, instructors, and professors are already in the classrooms of Montana, from kindergarten to graduate school, providing valuable first-person insights for their American Indian and non-Indian students. A prevailing notion in this project is that more American Indians need to be involved in museum-school partnerships and not just American Indians with a formal, mainstream education. In all American Indian communities, culture-bearers and respected elders and tribal leaders might lack advanced degrees from educational institutions. However, these venerated individuals have been advancing the knowledge of their cultures and their lands for many generations.

The Montana American Indian population is about 65,000 tribal citizens, mostly located on seven reservations (and one landless tribe*) around the state and belonging to 12 tribal nations.

Reservations	Tribal Nations
Fort Peck	Assiniboine and Sioux
Fort Belknap	Assiniboine and Gros Ventre or White Clay
Rocky Boy's	Chippewa, Cree
Blackfeet	Blackfeet
Flathead	Salish, Kootenai and Pend d'Orielle
Crow	Crow
Northern Cheyenne	Northern Cheyenne

* Little Shell Band of Chippewa Indians

Within this population is the entire continuum of "Indianness" (as put forth in Essential Understanding 2) from the traditional, minimally assimilated devoted to maintaining their language and their religion, to the fully assimilated who are not fluent in the tribal language or have limited access to ancient teachings but who nevertheless, and proudly, consider themselves American Indians.

This diversity of Indianness contains a range of self-expression and identity-shaping experience that can be brought into the classroom and into the museum, particularly through guest appearances by individual American Indians willing to relate their personal, often deeply moving life-narratives. An urban American Indian living in Missoula may in fact be more traditional than an isolated tribal member living outside Poplar. There is no predictability; there is no generic American Indian. By involving American Indian individuals in advisory councils and in education programs, it is important that museums and schools respect and indeed seek out many willing individuals as coeducators, and to not always bias the search toward the "traditional" or the "elder." The breadth of American Indian experience should be included. (If we were launching a program on ranching culture, we would not only seek out the fourth-generation Anglo families who migrated from Missouri or Norway, but also the new ranch owner who flew in on his private jet yesterday.)

We continued farming. The agent told my father to tell the people they would receive wheat and oat seed. He got more plows and harness. Everyone helped everyone else in the harvest. We didn't have any threshing machines. We put the grain on buffalo hides that the women had sewed together. Then we led horses over the grain to separate it. Several of the men would lift the robes and shake them to let the wind blow the chaff out.

Martin Charlot, Flathead-Salish.

Telling the Sacred and Secular Stories: A Narrative-based Curriculum

But not all is as it should be. Books and instruction materials occasionally come under siege in some schools for being "too American Indian" or "not American Indian enough." Oratory, speech making, and formal discourse are traditional rhetorical methods among many American Indian groups. Informal storytelling, such as the enjoyment of coyote tales during winter, continues to be a narrative custom in American Indian communities. Verbal delivery of traditional or contemporary information, to students from Montana American Indians in a formal or informal fashion, can be a more integral component of IEFA instruction. Guest speakers from American Indian communities cannot always be conveniently scheduled. Non-American Indian classroom teachers should be prepared to personally represent native voices by seeking out American Indian-authored books, stories, poems, and speeches, and saying/performing the words to the students.

Non-American Indians giving voice to American Indian-created narratives can be problematic. However, such a verbal delivery can also create classroom discussion of the "stolen voice" of native peoples, of the misinterpretation, deliberate or not, that has occurred over the centuries. It has been suggested that the first theft of language occurred when Christopher Columbus captured two Taino men, and forced them to be his interpreters. Stories that relate to spiritual beliefs, and stories that relate to the ways of the secular world, must be approached with sensitivity and respect. Some stories cannot be told to the uninitiated. Some stories were never given from the indigenous person to the anthropologist or folklorist, for a reason. There is a wonderful story of a non-story: A Tewa, Indian when questioned rather relentlessly by the anthropologist, said "Yes, there is a corn song my mother sings and my sisters sing and my grandmothers sing. It is a beautiful song, of such beauty that I cannot tell it to you."

Next was the long hair, the pride of all the Indians. The boys, one by one, would break down and cry when they saw their braids thrown on the floor. All the buckskin clothes had to go and we had to put on the clothes of the White Man. If we thought the days were bad, the nights were much worse.
This was the time when real loneliness set in,
for it was then we knew that we were all alone.
Lone Wolf, Blackfoot

The New Classroom

An important result of this "Best Practices" program has been the emerging concept of the New Classroom. This is not a new physical space; it is a new intellectual space, a new knowledge-transmission space. It is the idea that the teaching of IEFA curricula need not be confined to one facility, to one teacher, or to one organization. The New Classroom being explored, directly or not, by the partnerships in this project, is a space, a place, where diversity is celebrated, where diversity is explained, and where diversity is respected as an essential contributor to the continuity of the human experience. Along that porous boundary where the museum gallery connects to the classroom, where the teacher connects with the curator, where the student connects with another culture's ways of being, there is the New Classroom. This is the institution within which future generations will cherish the past and build for the future.

Appendix A - Roster of Project Participants and Consultants

Participants

1. C. M. Russell Museum Team

   Lynne Spriggs, Special Projects Curator

   Kim Kapalka

   Lisa Easton, Art Teacher, Great Falls High School

2. Carbon County Historical Society & Museum Team

   Penny Redli, Executive Director

   Steve Robbins

   Jennifer Collins, Red Lodge High School

3. Chief Plenty Coups State Park and Museum Team

   Susan Stewart, Park Manager

   Philip Baumberger, Whitefish Middle School

4. Glacier County Historical Society Museum & Archives

   Dennis J. Seglem, Director

   Sandy Murphy, Cut Bank Elementary School

5. Hockaday Museum of Art

   Linda Engh-Grady, Director

   Kathy Martin, Education Director

   Patti Braunberger, Whitefish Middle School

6. Museum of the Rockies

   Jamie Cornish, Director of Marketing & Public Programs

   Mike Deming, Belgrade High School

   Nikki Dixon, Education Specialist

   Michael Fox, History Curator

7. Phillips County Museum Team

   Sharon Emond, Curator

   Lori Taylor

Jeri Underwood

Lynette Ereaux, Malta Grade School

8. River and Plains Society Team

Bob Doerk

Larry Cook, Fort Benton High School

Dave Parchen, Fort Benton Middle School

9. Upper Musselshell Historical Society Team

Bill Jones

Judy Bradbury

Gary Olsen, Harlowton High School

10. Valley County Historical Society

Mary Helland, President

Corinne Daley

Dorothy Kolstad, Glasgow High School

Consultants

1. Ms. Mary Jane Charlo – Bitterroot Salish

The People's Center

2. Mr. Shane M. Doyle – Crow

ABD at Montana State University

3. Walter Fleming - Kickapoo

MSU Native American Studies Program

4. Mr. Everall Fox – Gros Ventre

Indian Education Coordinator, Billings Public Schools

5. Emma Hansen – Pawnee

Plains Indian Museum

Buffalo Bill Historical Center

6. Emil Her Many Horses – Oglala Lakota

National Museum of the American Indian

7. George Horse Capture – Gros Ventre
8. KayKarol Horse Capture – Fort Belknap
9. Ms. DeeAnna Leader

   International Traditional Games
10. Steve Lozar – Salish
11. Susan Stewart

    Chief Plenty Coups State Park
12. Ken Woody – Crow

    Little Bighorn Battlefield NPS

State of Montana:

1. Jennifer Bottomly-O'looney

   Montana Historical Society

   Registrar
2. George Oberst

   Montana Historical Society

   Curator of Historical Collections
3. Richard Sims

   Montana Historical Society

   Director
1. Mike Jetty

   Office of Public Instruction

   Indian Education Specialist
2. Denise Juneau

   Office of Public Instruction

   Indian Education Director
3. Mandy Smoker Broaddus

   Office of Public Instruction

   Indian Education Specialist

Appendix B ~ Museum Uses of Grant Funds in Collections Management

- Phillips County Museum, Malta: purchase resource books and materials; host American Indian traditionalists for enrichment activities; improve conservation of fragile artifacts on display; improve exhibit furniture and labeling
- Chief Plenty Coups State Park and Museum, Pryor: create suitcase museums to travel to regional schools; expand summer programming; host American Indian traditionalists for enrichment activities; increase and improve storage space for archaeological objects
- Valley County Museum, Glasgow: create a central Assiniboine archival file of documents and photographs related to the American Indian collections, to be copied in whole or part for teachers and libraries; stabilize the Assiniboine collection of unique beaded buckskin clothing
- Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell: further develop and improve (through American Indian consultation and commissioned works) the popular Traveling Medicine Show collection, which is a replica, hands-on assortment of native materials contained in three educational trunks – Ancient, Traditional and Contemporary
- Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman: recruit several American Indian consultants to advise staff and partner teachers on educational components of American Indian cultures to be part of teaching trunks; gather consultants and materials for assistance in the conservation and care of American Indian collections; re-house artifacts from storage to display, or from display to storage
- Upper Musselshell Historical Society, Harlowton: recruit archaeological consultant to assess and better identify prehistoric projectile point collection, and to design new display; construct and install new display; purchase additional books for research library
- C. M. Russell Museum, Great Falls: acquire exhibit and educational materials that enhance the installation and public programming of the major new permanent exhibit "The Bison, American Icon, Heart of Plains Indian Culture"
- Glacier County Historical Society Museum, Cut Bank: acquire presentation equipment for public programs; acquire several books related to the Blackfeet culture; acquire conservation storage materials such as acid-free boxes; and conserve and microfilm a rare and fragile legal file

related to American Indian-Anglo relations

- River and Plains Society Museum (Old Fort Benton), Fort Benton: commission a new inventory of replica trade items for display in Trade Room at the reconstructed old fort, including an entire bison robe and beadwork; improve exhibit's lighting system in galleries; conserve and stabilize artifacts on display, such as a traditional headdress
- Carbon County Historical Society Museum, Red Lodge: retain an American Indian consultant to assist with artifact identification and interpretation; create new exhibits such as an interactive map of traditional and reservation Crow boundaries; acquire storage units for artifacts

Appendix C ~ Gleanings from the Best Practices Conference

The three-day conference featured many professionals from the regional community of American Indian scholars, educators and curators. Each person is fully identified in Appendix A. Following are the paraphrased comments of many of these speakers:

Walter Fleming suggested combining/comparing the story lines of creation stories, Anglo and American Indian. This approach may be uncomfortable for some, but is effective. He emphasized the teaching of perspective when engaging creation stories, the view from the storyteller.

Emma Hansen urged that museums need to be careful of the artifacts they accept; and attempt to gather a full description of the object, its history of ownership, and its cultural context. Her term "reinterpretation" is applied to the ongoing work of better understanding objects of vague provenance.

George Horse Capture gave several cautionary instructions. Never show human bones. Never trust accession records. Method of manufacture is more important than materials of manufacture when attempting to assign a tribal affiliation. Never guess about identification of an item; rather, admit sometimes that you just don't know. Emphasize quality over quantity when installing exhibits, and be spare with your words on labels.

Susan Stewart spoke about the spiritual creation of sacred bundles, of the need to see these bundles as alive, as having power, as demanding caution and respect. Sacred bundles in museums are still in use as religious articles; they are prayed over.

Steve Lozar spoke of his own personal diversity of heritage, of the need to avoid the easy stereotyping or profiling of any people based on their physical appearance. He noted that even with his cultural area, the three groups are in close proximity yet vigilant about their separate identities.

Ken Woody stated that in a public setting you should tell the story, the history, as it is told on both sides, and let the listener decide. Go ahead and be provocative, he said, and use thought-probing questions and facts to unsettle common misbeliefs.

Shane Doyle had one central idea to impart, that when teaching about American Indian culture, it is all about family, family, family.

Everall Fox also warned against stereotyping within and among American Indian tribes and cultures. He said American Indians are individuals, and each has his or her story, experiences, and beliefs.

Emil Her Many Horses explained how tribal cultures on other continents are also intent on preserving their traditions and their stories, and stated that ritual care of objects is important to the Native American person, no matter how uncomfortable the museum curator is with that ritual practice.

Appendix D – Full Citation of the Essential Understandings

Essential Understanding 1. There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

Essential Understanding 2. . . . there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.

Essential Understanding 3. The ideologies of Native American traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories pre-date the "discovery" of North America.

Essential Understanding 4. . . . reservations are lands that have been reserved by or for the tribes for their exclusive use as homelands. Some where created through treaties, while others were created by statutes and executive orders. The principle that land should be acquired from the American Indians only through their consent with treaties involved three assumptions:

I. both parties to treaties were sovereign powers;

II. american Indian tribes had some form of transferable title to the land; and

III. acquisition of American Indian lands was solely a government matter not to be left to individual colonists or states.

Essential Understanding 5. . . . Federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected American Indian people and continue to shape who they are today. . . . Much of American Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods:

Colonization/Colonial	*1492-1800s*
Treaty-Making and Removal	*1778-1871*
Reservation - Allotment and Assimilation	*1887-1934*

Tribal Reorganization	*1934-1953*
Termination and Relocation	*1953-1968*
Self-Determination	*1975-present*

Essential Understanding 6. History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from an American Indian perspective frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.

Essential Understanding 7. American Indian tribal nations are inherent sovereign nations and they possess sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, under the American legal system, the extent and breadth of self-governing powers are not the same for each tribe.

Appendix E– Bibliography from Best Practices Conference Suggested Reading List

"CCI Notes," available from the Canadian Conservation Institute at https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/conservation-preservation-publications/canadian-conservation-institute-notes.html

- N3/1 ***Preventing Infestations: Control Strategies and Detection Methods,*** 1996.
- N3/2 ***Detecting Infestations: Facility Inspection Procedure and Checklist,*** 1996.
- N3/3 ***Controlling Inspect Pests with Low Temperature,*** 1997
- N6/5 ***Care of Quillwork,*** 1991.
- N8/2 ***Care of Alum, Vegetable, and Mineral Tanned Leather,*** 1992.
- N8/4 ***Care of Rawhide and Semi-Tanned Leather,*** 1992.

Good Show!: A Practical Guide for Temporary Exhibitions,
Lothar Witteborg; Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Service, 1991.

Caring for American Indian Objects: A Practical and Cultural Guide,
ed. Sherelyn Ogden, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2004.

Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display,
ed. Ivan Karp & Steven D. Lavine, Smithsonian Institution Press,

Stewards of the Sacred, ed. Lawrence Sullivan & Allison Edwards, AAM
& the Center for the Study of World Religions, 2004. $35.

The New Museum Registration Methods, ed. Rebecca A. Buck &
Jean Allman Gilmore, American Association of Museums, 1998. $55.

First Peoples of Canada, Alan M. McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn.
Douglas & McIntye 2004.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Native American History, Walter C. Fleming.
Alpha Books, 2003.

Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences, edited by
Margaret L. Archuleta, Brenda J. Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. Heard
Museum, 2000.

The Changing Presentation of the American Indian, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution. University of Washington Press, 2000.

American Indian Nations: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, edited by George Horse Capture, Duane Champagne and Chandler C. Jackson. AltaMira Press, 2007.

Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992, edited by Peter Nabokov. Viking, 1991.

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