

Members Present

Joe Arrowtop	Montana Indian Education Association
Dawn Bishop Moore	Indian Impact Schools of Montana
Norma Bixby	Northern Cheyenne Tribe
Marcy Cobell	Urban – Great Falls
Jason Cummins	Class 7
Myrna Dumontier	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Georgie Gourneau	MEA-MFT
Jacie Jeffers (alternate)	Urban – Billings
Michelle Mitchell	Office of Public Instruction
Kaci Walette	Fort Peck Tribe

Office of Public Instruction

Joan Franke	Zach Hawkins
Susie Hedalen	
Stephanie Iron Shooter	
Christine Jackson	Mike Jetty
Linda Peterson	Annette Young

Members Absent

Mary Jo Bremner	Board of Public Education
Marcy Cobell-Gilbert	Urban – Great Falls
Harold Dusty Bull	Blackfeet Tribe
Charmel Gillin	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Gerald Gray	Little Shell Tribe
Melissa Hammett	Urban - Missoula
Richard Little Bear	Montana Tribal College Presidents
Angela Mclean	Montana University System
Teresa McMakin	Bureau of Indian Education
Voyd St. Pierre	Chippewa Cree Tribe
John Salois	School Admins. of Montana
Jennifer Smith	Urban – Billings
Viola Wood	Tribal Head Start

Guests

Carly Hosford-Israel	Ft. Peck Community College
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Chairperson Georgie Gourneau called the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE) meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. Everyone introduced him/herself.

Review of [Minutes](#) of November 8, 2018, meeting

Time was taken to review the minutes. Kaci Walette motioned to accept the minutes and Marcy Cobell seconded the motion. A vote was taken by voice. Approved by all.

Ex-officio Reports

◇ [Superintendent Office Report](#) – Susie Hedalen

A packet on the proposed budget was distributed. The budgets from the Governor's Office and the Superintendent's Office are similar. The Superintendent's main priority is to get the funding streams that were reduced during the last legislative session back to previous levels. Other priorities revolve around student safety and having school payments made when the funding is there.

John Perkins will be the OPI liaison person for the 2019 session. For information on status of education bills go to <http://opi.mt.gov/> and click on OPI's Legislative Updates (under picture of capitol). If you have any questions do not hesitate to call.

The Education caucus is Tuesdays at 7:00 a.m. There is also a Tribal Education caucus on Thursdays at 4:00 p.m. This is for tribal legislators and anyone else who is interested.

Norma Bixby asked about why the report card was put on hold. Susie indicated that new guidance was received on December 6 and the timeline for releasing data went away. OPI is working with the company developing Montana's report card and hopes to have a draft in couple of weeks. OPI hopes to have the 2017-2018 report card out around March, but there is no exact date. The data on the report card for the first year will be what is required by the law. There may be more information on it in the future.

Norma asked regarding the preschool funding, which is really needed on reservations. Susie indicated the Superintendent's goal is to get funding levels restored and then talk about preschool. The state has put in for a grant which, if funded, will be administered by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the Governor's Office, and the Department of Health and Human Services. This would be for infrastructure. OPI is also anticipating another Montana Preschool Development Grant application as the current one is wrapping up. There will also be an early learning unit position at OPI.

Jason Cummins indicated he is concerned regarding revitalization of indigenous languages, homelessness, and suspensions/expulsions. He said educators need to take Indian Education for All (IEFA) seriously.

Susie indicated data from the two language immersion schools is being reviewed. Next year the students in those programs will be taking the statewide assessment. The data needs to be shown so can go to the legislature and others to get funding continuation. The state Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan does talk a little about languages. Montana was required by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to include more information regarding Hispanics. There will be an amendment to the plan in the future. Exit criteria for English Learners is changing and OPI will request MACIE review that.

Susie indicated the Michelle Mitchell and the Indian Student Achievement Unit is providing training to schools in Indian country and elsewhere on restorative practices. There is a signed contract to teach restorative practices. Mathew Johnson from Buffalo Hide Academy (Browning Public Schools) trained the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) grant employees. Each place would have its own way of doing this and not one size fits all. Other

divisions/units of OPI are also doing this, including the Student Support Services Division training implementation specialist.

Susie discussed the American Indian task force that people from all divisions/units are attending. They do a study or professional development, such as reading a book or article, to become more culturally responsive. The task force looks at data and what can be done at OPI to support students. It would be possible to have them review discipline data.

The OPI will still report regarding special education students being suspended as per law.

Michelle gave an overview on the tribal consultation workshop that will happen at Polson on February 7-8. This will be taped and put on the OPI Web site. The unit hopes to have a best practices guide developed afterwards that is a solution-based approach.

Zach Hawkins talked about Rotunda Day to raise the awareness of legislators and others regarding what is happening with IEFA.

Norma stated MACIE needs to be making more recommendations. Joe Arrowtop said he was glad members can bring topics up for discussion.

ACTION: Jason Cummins made a motion to support an amendment to Montana's ESSA plan to include revitalization of indigenous languages and add details on Montana tribal languages. Norma Bixby seconded. Passed by all on voice vote.

Jason asked about discipline data for the next MACIE meeting. OPI will bring this discipline data for AI students to the next meeting so MACIE may then do an action plan.

Susie looks forward to efforts going forward.

Joan Franke gave reports from Tribal Head Start (new Northern Cheyenne tribal head start director), Board of Public Education (BPE) (concern regarding no Native Americans on the Rule Making Committee on Assessment), and Michael LaValley, Senator Tester's office (if need any assistance from Senator Tester to contact him).

Norma expressed concern about finding a person who knows assessment to be on the rulemaking committee. There needs to be people on committees who knows the areas and can speak to it. Michelle said she can attend the Rulemaking Committee on Assessment and bring back information.

ACTION: Dawn Bishop-Moore made a motion for Michelle Mitchell to step in with the rulemaking committee and Norma Bixby seconded. Passed by all.

[SAMHSA Wraparound Grant – Stephanie Iron Shooter](#)

[handout](#)

The OPI is funded for this through 2021. The program is now in Rocky Boy Schools, so the program is on all reservations except the Flathead.

There needs to be an advisory committee for the state's Systems of Care grant and Stephanie asked if MACIE would be willing to do that. If so, a Memorandum of Understanding would be done regarding reporting and advisory. The OPI program is considered a tribal grantee so they attend tribal grantee meetings.

Originally the program was done in the Schools of Promise schools (lowest five percent) but it has been expanded. The challenge in some schools is to get participation. It is up to the school and community to step up to help children. They need to be empowered to come up with what they will do. The program is to help the severely emotionally disturbed to navigate systems of help so they may achieve. The program hires people from the community as best it can so the staff cares for the community. There is a limit of eight to ten students who can be helped at one time because of the intensity of the program.

Stephanie asked MACIE for suggestions on what they can do as team for OPI to serve reservations better.

Michelle Mitchell believes this will play an important part of Indian student achievement and it would be good to have programs in urban schools.

Georgie Gourneau suggested new OPI team members be introduced to school staff and the school staff be given information on the referral process.

Marcy Cobell asked about help before have to have to respond to an emergency and Stephanie indicated there is prevention, intervention, post-vention activities.

A notice will be sent out to MACIE when there is a position opening so if MACIE people know someone who would be good fit, the member can let that person know about the position.

The Native American Training Institute is having a training for wraparound in Billings and everyone is welcome to attend.

Norma Bixby indicated legislators need to know regarding wraparound programs in their schools. Michelle said this can be brought up at the Indian Caucus meeting.

Stephanie said she will send the parameters that are in grant for advisory.

ACTION: Kaci Walette motioned for MACIE to be advisory for the wraparound grant and Dawn Bishop-Moore seconded. Passed on voice vote by all.

Moved to the Capitol Rotunda for IEFA Rotunda Day

The meeting resumed at 1:03 p.m.

Special Education Data – Annette Young

Report

The School Support Services Division is now the name for the Special Education Division.

Federal special education reporting mandates a student may not have multiple race identifications. Annette believes that if a student has identified in two or more categories that it would default to the race with the largest census group. This means the data report is those students identified as Native American only by parents. It is not based on having a 506 form on file.

The enrollment data is determined by the student count days.

Asterisks indicate masked data per OPI data reporting policy.

Students in poverty are labeled as special education at a higher rate than those not in poverty.

There is over-identification of students as needing special education (SPED) services and in places there is an under-identification due to staffing issues.

For many SPED-identified students, their disabilities are such that the right supports would exit them from special education prior to graduation (i.e., speech issues, some literacy difficulties). Title I cannot replace special education funding but can supplement it.

A student is identified in multiple disabilities if he/she is eligible in two or more categories as long as it is not deaf/blind. There are only eight students identified as deaf/blind statewide.

Speech-language impairment includes cleft palate. Unfortunately, some students who are bilingual get identified as this. Jacie Jeffers indicates Billings has a grant to train teachers regarding bilingualism so students are not being pushed toward special education services.

There has been an increase of students in the emotional disturbance category.

Parents need to have guidance on how to advocate for their children so they are not mis-identified as needing special education services.

Gifted and talented is on the special education spectrum. There has been an under-identification of Native American students for this.

If a student is identified as needing special education services, then that student needs an Individual Learning Plan (IEP). There was concern regarding how services are provided if there are many students identified as speech-language impairment.

Monitoring of programs includes verification of compliance with state and federal regulations on IEP policies and how they are written, meeting with families, signatures are in place, if IEPs

needed to be adjusted prior to the end date. All schools are monitored on five-year cycle but may be re-monitored based on flags regarding meeting requirements of the law. Over-identification is not a flag for monitoring. The division needs to tactfully say that schools may have an issue with over-identification.

There is a shortage of speech-language pathologists. The division is providing funding for people who want to get the training to be provided with full tuition and books and once they graduate they must go into a K-12 public school in Montana. If they go somewhere else, then they would need to repay the funds as a noninterest-bearing loan back to the OPI.

The dropout rates for those identified as special education are more than non-identified peers. High drop-out percentages are due to low numbers of students identified. If there are three identified and one drops out, then that is a 33% dropout rate.

There is no additional training required of special education teachers who teach American Indians. There is no wiggle room with what the Board of Regents requires for qualification for licensure.

Indian Student Achievement Unit Updates – Michelle Mitchell

MACIE members are invited to the Tribal Education Summit at Polson on February 7-8. After this first one, there will be other regional ones. The agenda for the first day is reviewing data in the morning and then culturally responsive practices in the afternoon. On Friday the discussion will be around tribal consultation and developing plans. The school, tribe, and OPI will have a copy of the implemented plan. The federal law says the tribe consulted with must be federally recognized; Great Falls, however, would be able to invite the Little Shell to the table.

The unit is working on creating a professional development network which would be helpful as guidance for what a particular school is determined to need training in. MACIE should decide what schools need to know for serving American Indian students.

Jacie Jeffers suggested saying what training a specific school is doing and then other schools can be invited, which is a possibility.

Marcy Cobell suggested pre-requisites of what is needed before particular trainings.

Michelle Mitchell said there needs to be a discussion of what are components of Indian student achievement and what is not being met, what can be done to facilitate achievement, and who can get to support.

There may need to be a sign off for the professional development network to say a person has been in classroom and are effective.

The next MACIE meeting is a retreat on March 28. There will be time to review constitution and bylaws. Norma believes half the day would be good for this part. Send suggestions to Joan and then she will send it out.

ACTION: Dawn Bishop-Moore motioned to have a working meeting to cover bylaws and determining factors of American Indian student achievement. Jason Cummins seconded the motion. Passed on voice vote by all.

Indian Education for All Unit – Zach Hawkins

Zach Hawkins introduced himself. His priorities are to elevate Indian Education for All (IEFA) awareness and resources. He wants to look at what is working in different types of schools and be intentional about what schools need and create and diversify deliverables.

The [Best Practices Conference](#) will be March 2-3 at Carroll College in Helena.

The Teacher HUB course on the framework for IEFA implementation is being finalized.

Norma Bixby inquired regarding how the per-student funding is being used and accountability regarding the spending of this. Linda Peterson indicated it would be possible to talk to the School Finance Division at OPI to have the auditors focus on getting that information.

The unit needs feedback and input within the week on the updates for the *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* sent out earlier in the week. The unit hopes to have this completed by Best Practices.

The Montana Federation of Public Employees wants a bigger IEFA presence at the conference in October. Mike Jetty will be going to the planning meetings.

Praxis Test Data – Linda Peterson

[Praxis resource list](#)

[Praxis data](#)

The data regarding the Praxis test has not yet been disaggregated but when done will be by student groups and campuses. Linda was wondering what MACIE is asking for. Norma Bixby indicated that on the previous test American Indians and rural students were not able to pass and she wants to know if these groups are passing or not on the Praxis. She is concerned the Praxis is keeping Native American students out of teacher education programs.

Linda indicated the more students take the test the worse they do because of the mindset of failure. She suggested only taking it one to three times. Although test takers are able to find out what part(s) they failed on, when taking it again, they have to take the entire test. There are practice test materials students may use to study for the test.

There are three parts to completing a teacher education program - course content which need a 3.0 grade point average, ability to apply content, and the Praxis. Montana does not have a cut score but a range for the test.

There are on-site visits to the teacher education programs and training for those who do those. It would be good for MACIE members to be on those visits. Recommendations for licensure do not come from OPI but from teacher education programs. Taking the test does not give them the license.

Twenty-one Native Americans took the elementary Praxis test and 40% made the cut score.

Norma says if a person does not pass the Praxis he/she cannot enter a teacher education program. Linda indicated each teacher program has different requirements. The teacher education programs can be asked what they are doing for American Indian students.

Linda is meeting with Council of Deans and will find out what each school of education is doing regarding students entering the school to become a teacher.

The School of Education makes the recommendation that someone is eligible for licensure and then OPI does it part regarding background check.

Norma Bixby motioned to adjourn the meeting and Marcy seconded. Passed by all.

Approved __signed/Dawn Bishop Moore_____

May 8, 2019