

# ML/ EL ADVOCATE/EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

## Billings District

EL Instructional Coach and Educator-Audra Waite

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## BEST PRACTICES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS AS MLS/ELS BILLINGS DISTRICT

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Putting Montana Students First **A+**





№A2001200128

# Montana

- State Capital
- County Seat
- City or Town
- 🌲 National Park

Kilometers

0 50 100

Miles

0 20 40 60

**Billings**

# Current ML/EL numbers in the state

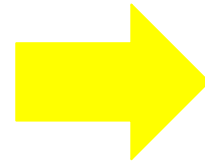
In Montana there are  
**3605** English  
Learner(EL)/Multilingual  
Learner(ML) students  
(*ACCESS 2021*)

**1981** are American  
Indian(AI) students.

**55% of our  
ML/English Learners  
in the state are  
American Indian  
students**

# TOP 5 DISTRICTS WITH HIGHEST ML/EL POPULATIONS IN THE STATE

Billings has **251** ELs and **72** of them identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, i.e. **29%**



<b>Browning Public Schools</b>	612
American Indian/Alaskan Native	594
<b>Great Falls Public Schools</b>	449
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
<b>Lodge Grass Public Schools</b>	297
American Indian/Alaskan Native	288
<b>Billings Public Schools</b>	251
American Indian/Alaskan Native	72
<b>Hardin Public Schools</b>	242
American Indian/Alaskan Native	233

# How We Met



# Identification of AIs as MLs

Montana observes the following federal definition to describe ELs, as an individual:

- (A) who is aged 3 through 21;
- (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school; AND
- (C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language

(ii) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native of the outlying areas; and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or

who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; AND

(D) Whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual

- (i) the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards
- (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
- (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society (see ESEA Section 8101(20)).

# Identification of AIs as MLs

- Ensure EL/ML identification procedures are in place according to the [OPI EL Guidance for School Districts](#)
  - Are you using the updated [Home Language Survey](#)?

Does the child have significant exposure to another ancestral language other than English spoken by their family, friends or other community members?

- Are you using a pre-screening process, if appropriate?

In communities where there is a community-wide language of impact, care should be taken to assess the academic English language proficiency (foundational skills in reading and writing, listening, and speaking) of kindergarten students upon enrollment in school.

# Working Together

- **School staff and administrators that oversee**
  - **Indian Education for All**
  - **Indian Achievement**
  - **Multilingual Learners**

**Can work together to train teachers, serve students, and meet other needs**

**View them as not separate, but as two sides of the same coin.**

## **EXAMPLES**

- **Combine trainings about IEFA and MLs**
- **Include discussions about academic language when discussing the needs of American Indian students**
- **Have any ML staff and IEFA or Indian Achievement staff attend each other's meetings to coordinate services for students**



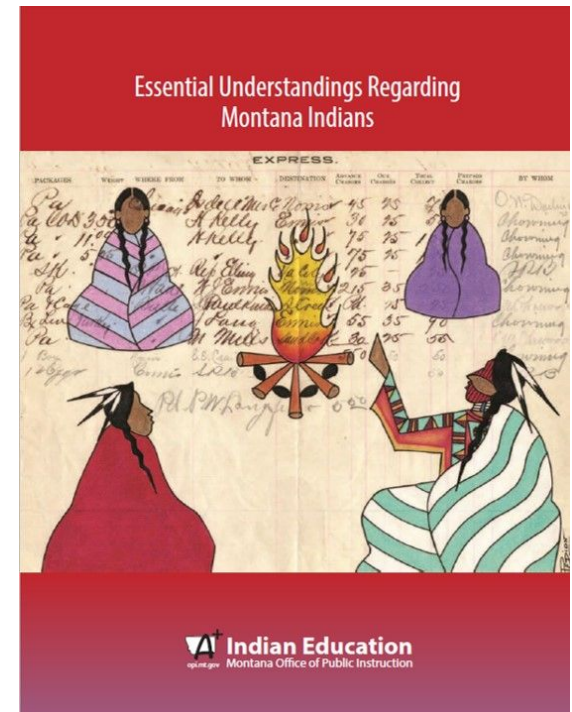
# Shifting the Conversation

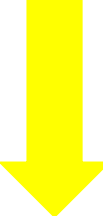
- Use more inclusive and asset-based terms such as Multilingual Learner and Academic Language Learner
  - Teach your leaders and teachers to do the same
  - Take opportunities to explain those terms to adults that support the children at home

# IEFA as a Pathway

- Use IEFA Essential Understandings as a pathway to talk about all cultures, diversity, languages, etc.

As Montana educators, we are required to integrate IEFA in all of our content. IEFA is familiar, it is known. Use what teachers know are continuing to learn about IEFA and build upon it to include greater diversity.





Click here for  
content

# Building Your Cultural Literacy

- What is cultural literacy and where does it come from?
- What are the Essential Understandings(EU) and how do I connect with them?
- How do I use the EU in multicultural/multilingual education?
- Additional Resources

# More Tips and Ideas

- Find out who oversees your IEFA and Indian Achievement Funds
  - All schools get state IEFA funds
  - School with over a certain number of students get AI achievement Funds
    - State
    - Federal
- Be visible at Indian Education/AI functions
  - Family nights
  - IPAC
- Provide combined IEFA/ML teacher trainings

# THANK YOU!

Thank you for watching this ML/EL educator spotlight!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get a hold of me:

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