



American Indian Heritage Day – September 25, 2020

In 1997, the Montana Legislature passed into law MCA 20-1-306, designating the fourth Friday in September as American Indian Heritage Day. Under this law, schools are to conduct “appropriate exercises during the school day.” In 2009, the last Friday in September was established as, American Indian Heritage Day for the state of Montana for all Montanans to “(1) reflect on American Indian culture and heritage; and (2) celebrate American Indians and their culture and heritage...”

Activities that celebrate American Indian Heritage Day can create sustained interest in learning about the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians, setting the tone and creating connections for a year of integrating Indian Education for All.

American Indian Heritage Day [Message from Zach Hawkins](#) – Indian Education for All Director

American Indian Heritage Day [Message from Donnie Wetzel, Jr.](#) - Tribal, Family, Community Liaison -Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit Director

Due to the challenging and unique health challenges we are facing, here are some ideas for creative and safe ways to celebrate this day.



New video series! We are One initiative – Indigenous perspectives regarding relationships and traditional values - [We are One clip from Pat Armstrong](#)



Looking for remote learning ideas then check out our new [IEFA learning at home lessons](#) for students.



Virtual Guest Speakers. Utilize websites like [Montanatribes.org](#) to hear from cultural resource experts from Montana’s tribal nations. Watch [Greetings from Montana American Indian students](#) (2009 Video)



Bring in a virtual guest speaker from the [Speakers in the Schools program](#) from Humanities Montana. Check out the Indian Education for All presenters.



View IEFA online video resources that highlight Art, [Music](#), [Poetry](#) and [History](#). Highlight [Montana tribal histories](#).



Other suggested activities:

Learn the names of all Montana reservations, tribes that live on them and languages spoken there. Research the names the tribes have for themselves, which often differ from English translations. Visit Montanatribes.org to hear the names.

Display information about Montana tribes – tribally specific posters, maps, and books. Highlight the Making Montana Proud Poster series.

Create an exhibit of samples of your school's past IEFA classroom work, aligned with the Essential Understandings. Include student work from any content area – (photos of special projects, essays, poetry, primary source documents studied, school trips, special guests, etc.)

We would like to congratulate the Little Shell Chippewa on receiving a long awaited federal recognition in December of 2019. Check out these resources where you can learn about Little Shell culture and history. For a great perspective on this historic moment read this story from the [Char-Koosta News](#). Watch the [Indian Nations: Little Shell Chippewa](#) video. For a more in-depth look at their unique history read the [Little Shell Study Guide and Timeline](#).

Sign up for free IEFA on-line activities from the Big Sky Film Institute:

Check out the [Native Filmmaker Initiative](#) Film Club. A virtual youth education outreach program that screens a curated selection of Indigenous-made documentary films in classrooms across the state of Montana. Want to learn more about filmmaking and documentary storytelling? Take a deeper dive with the NFI Film Club program through the [Stories Found](#) online workshop, offering in-depth discussion activities and filmmaking techniques alongside the films in the 2020 film club program!

Through the study of Montana Indian cultures and peoples, all students become more self-aware of their own cultures and develop a reference point to support greater understanding of others.

Visit our updated [Indian Education homepage](#) to access model lessons and resources for various content areas and grade levels. Check back often for upcoming events, conferences, and new curriculum resources.

Happy American Indian Heritage Day! Anpetu Waste Yuha (Dakota for - Have a great day)