



Indian Education for All (IEFA) Updates

SB 181: Generally revise Indian Education for All laws

Senator Jonathan Windy Boy

Chapter: 557

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

SB 181 amends sections 20-1-501, 20-1-502, 20-1-503, 20-7-101, & 20-9-329, MCA.

SB 181 amends section 20-9-329, MCA, clarifying that if school district fails to file the annual financial report, the Office of Public Instruction shall reduce the school district's BASE and maximum budget limits and BASE aid funding by the full amount of the Indian education for all payment. BASE and maximum budget limits and BASE aid funding are to be reduced for a school district that fails to show that all funds received were spent for approved purposes.

Additional amendments to section 20-9-329, MCA, require the OPI to publish an annual report on the agency website listing school districts that fail to report or satisfactorily report. The OPI is also required to list the school districts that fail to report or satisfactorily report, to be noted in the school accreditation status reports established by the Board of Public Education.

Section 20-1-503, MCA, adds the requirement for the OPI to create and maintain an online portal to respond to and address feedback for improvement of the quality of American Indian studies.

Key Take Aways:

- OPI will be launching an online portal for community members to submit feedback on American Indian Studies before the beginning of the school year. OPI will share this feedback with school districts as submitted.
- OPI will annually be publishing a list of schools that do not properly report the use of IEFA funds. This report will be posted publicly and noted in the school's accreditation status.
- The Montana Legislature provides IEFA funding to school districts and requires school districts to report IEFA expenditures to the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Districts must continue to report their IEFA expenditures to ensure the district continues to receive IEFA payments.

Reporting:

There are two ways schools will report the accurate use of their IEFA funds:

1. Integrated School Action Plan (ISAP) Components- in the accreditation platform.
 - a. Schools will submit evidence into the ISAP of IEFA inclusion.

- b. Schools will submit an assurance form.
 - c. The ISAP report is generally due on the last Friday in March.
 - d. Questions on the accreditation reporting process, contact the OPI's accreditation unit, OPIAccred@mt.gov
2. Trustee Financial Summary (TFS), due September 15 (reporting for the prior school year)
- a. Recording funds received: Fund (01) General Fund, Revenue code: 3113
 - b. Recording expenditures: Fund (01) General Fund, Program code: 365
 - c. For questions on school finance coding or the TFS contact opischoolfinance@mt.gov

Allowable Expenses & Planning:

MCA 20-9-329 (4) (a) states, "A public school district that receives an Indian education for all payment may not divert the funds to any purpose other than curriculum development of an American Indian studies program, providing curriculum and materials to students for the program, and providing training to teachers about the program's curriculum and materials."

Districts can determine their annual IEFA amount through the OPI School Finance Website under State School Payments. In addition, OPI's IEFA unit has resources and guidance for districts to implement IEFA successfully. Sample allowable expenses for districts could be:

- Curriculum materials
 - Purchasing quality instructional materials that are tribally specific, culturally authentic, and historically accurate. Curriculum materials on OPI's website meet this requirement. Refer to the OPI's Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources for the Classroom guide when purchasing materials.
 - Expenses associated with consultation and/or training with a qualified IEFA specialist.
- Providing training to teachers
 - Expenses associated with staff professional development opportunities that will enhance their knowledge of the Essential Understandings, include IEFA into their teaching, build background IEFA knowledge, learn about bias and stereotypes in texts and the media, historical inaccuracies, and Indigenous perspectives.
- Curriculum development of American Indian studies program
 - Providing resources that bring tribal presence to the school environment, e.g., tribal flags, art supplies to paint tribal seals, tribally produced artwork or mural, posters.
 - Compensation for a guest lecture, lesson, or learning activity provided by a tribal education specialist, knowledge keeper, elder, or other tribal member.
 - Compensation for staff time specifically devoted to school or district IEFA coordination and planning efforts. i.e., the amount of FTE dedicated to an IEFA coordinator.
- IEFA Questions? Find information on [OPI's IEFA website](#) or contact [the Indian Education specialists](#).

IEFA Accounting: The [OPI Chart of Accounts](#) provides specific information regarding all school income streams and expenditure categories a district might include in their trustees report. The codes and categories outlined below are pulled from the Chart to help you understand how to code and report IEFA specific expenditures that would support effective IEFA implementation and your American Indian Studies program.

Trustees Financial Summary: The Trustee Financial Summary is due to the OPI at the conclusion of each fiscal year. The report form is provided by the OPI with all revenue sources and amounts pre-populated. **The district IEFA ANB amount will be located under code 01-3113.** Allocation information can also be found on the [OPI School Finance Website under State School Payments](#). Please note IEFA expenditures should match ANB revenue to avoid a possible reduction of IEFA funding in a future fiscal year. **IEFA expenditures are coded under program code 365 of fund code 01. The function codes for IEFA expenditures are 1000: Instruction and 2213: Instructional Staff Training.** The general object code categories that would be reported are as follows:

100 Personal Services-Salaries

200 Personal Services-Employee Benefits

300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services

500 Other Purchased Services

600 Supplies and Materials

Further details and specifics regarding the category specific object codes for IEFA expenditures are outlined in tables A and B on the pages below.

Table A: Codes for Salaries & Benefits, Purchased Services, and Supplies and Materials

Fund and Program Codes: 01-365 (General Fund-Indian Education for All)	
Function Code: 1000 (Instruction)	
Object Codes	Examples of Expenditures
100: Personal Services-Salaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 112 Professional-Educational (Certified Staff) ➤ 113 Professional-Other Certified Staff (Librarians) ➤ 118 Bus Drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Administrative and staff time dedicated to planning, development, and implementation of IEFA lessons or other curricular resources. (112) ➤ Staff time dedicated to IEFA specific field trips, special events, or initiatives. (112, 118) ➤ FTE dedicated to IEFA planning and coordination. (112, 113) ➤ Staff time dedicated to review, curation, or research of existing or desired IEFA materials. (112, 113)
200: Personal Services-Employee Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Any benefits which would be a part of the employee's normal benefit plan. (Sub-codes 210-260-61,62) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Benefits costs associated with the portion of staff time dedicated to IEFA planning, coordination, lesson or curriculum development, and implementation. Must be prorated to match the percentage of time dedicated to IEFA specific tasks and duties, e.g., if a district IEFA coordinator is .2 FTE, 20% of benefits could be charged to IEFA General Fund.

300: Purchased Professional and Technical Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 320 Professional/Educational Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Payment to a tribal expert or presenter who does an assembly, guest lecture, traditional games demonstration, or other learning activity with students.
500: Other Purchased Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 516 Instructional Field Trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contracted services for student transportation during an IEFA specific field trip. e.g., visiting a buffalo jump or doing a tribal/non-tribal school event or exchange. This code should ONLY be used when the district contracts for student busing services.
600: Supplies and Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 640 Books ➤ 650 Periodicals ➤ 660 Minor Equipment-New 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tribally specific, culturally authentic, and historically accurate texts, curricula, or other IEFA specific materials used for classroom instruction or general IEFA use. It is recommended districts consult the OPI IEFA Resource Evaluation Guide before purchasing texts or curricular materials. (640,650) ➤ Tribal flags, posters, photos, or other materials that provide a tribal presence/awareness in the school environment. (660) ➤ Teepees, traditional games materials, or other items associated with IEFA specific events/initiatives that IEFA awareness and understanding. (660) ➤ Materials utilized for IEFA specific class projects in elective subjects, e.g., supplies for an IEFA specific art or ceramics project. (660)

Table B: Codes for IEFA Specific Professional Development Events

Fund and Program Codes: 01-365 (General Fund-Indian Education for All)	
Function Code: 2213 (Instructional Staff Training)	
Object Codes	Examples of Expenditures
500: Other Purchased Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 582 Travel Out of District/In-Service Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transportation, per diem, lodging, and registration costs associated with staff attendance at an IEFA specific PD event, e.g., IEFA Best Practices Conference, Regional IEFA Training, National Indian Education Association conference. ➤ Payment to a tribal expert or IEFA specialist who provides professional development, consultation, or other training to instructional staff or administration. This could include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stipends ○ Fees ○ Honorariums ○ Other travel costs associated with their attendance and service(s) provided

General Tips and Advice: It is hoped the above guidance will aid districts in clear, accurate reporting of their IEFA ANB funding. However, here are a few other suggestions that might help ensure adherence and fidelity to the appropriate usage and intention of the allocated dollars:

- Develop and utilize a tool for tracking staff time dedicated to IEFA at the start of each month, quarter, semester, or other interval determined by the district. This will allow for clear, accurate documentation in real time and not rely on after the fact accounting. This will also be of value in the event of an IEFA ANB related audit.
- Remember auditors are the final arbiter of appropriate IEFA ANB expenditures. Having clear, detailed policies, processes, and procedures will help them clearly understand your usage and reporting of the funding.
- Utilize the OPI IEFA resources, tools, and support. These are designed to aid districts and teachers in effective IEFA implementation that meets the spirit of the law the broader goals of IEFA.
- Provide, or request OPI staff to provide training and support for new administrators and clerks who may be unfamiliar with or have limited knowledge of IEFA.
- Reach out if you have questions. The OPI IEFA and School Finance teams are available for consultation and support should you have IEFA expenditure or reporting questions.

Questions:

Programmatic questions specific to IEFA should be directed to the OPI Indian Education Specialists or to the OPI Director of Indian Education, Brooke Gondara – 406-422-6958

School finance specific questions should be directed to in the OPI School Finance Department School Finance Manager, Paul Taylor - 406-444-3249