



MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION
ADVISORY TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**MACIE Position Statement:
On American Indian Regalia Worn in High School Graduation Ceremonies**

It is the goal of the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE) to ensure the education of school Board of Trustees, administrators, teachers, staff, and community members who serve American Indian students and families within the state of Montana of the legal language and protections concerning the wearing and use of regalia during public ceremonies.

Although Montana Senate Bill 319 (signed 2017), MCA 2-1-315, protects and supports American Indian students' right to wear traditional regalia during all public events, including graduation ceremonies, lack of awareness of this law still remains prevalent. MACIE continues to receive reports of students being denied protection provided by the regalia law. This protection includes the wearing of beaded mortarboards, gowns, and associated traditional attire that is inherent among our sovereign Native nations. It is best to reiterate the rights of students provided by the regalia law in order to avoid unnecessary legal situations which may arise when districts are either underinformed or noncompliant with this law.

MACIE recommends and advises the Office of Public Instruction and Board of Public Education address this ongoing lack of awareness by informing and preparing all school affiliated personnel in the area of legal protections of wearing and use of American Indian regalia by:

- affirming Montana Senate Bill 319 to all Trustees, Superintendents, Principals, and personnel
- defending the rights of American Indian students entitled to protection under Montanan Senate Bill 319
- addressing these specific issues in administrator and teacher preparation programs

Thank You,

Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education

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