



Indian Education for All Update – March 2023

The OPI [Indian Education for All Unit](#) continues to work hard to ensure we are moving forward in our mission and that all Montana students have an opportunity to learn who Montana Indians were and are today. Here are some highlights of the work we have done recently as well as some of the planned activities going forward:

✓ Professional Development

- Three webinar series offered for teacher background knowledge. These were coordinated with School Services of Montana and Indigenous presenters. These are also recorded and put on the IEFA website for asynchronous professional development opportunities.
 - *Tribal Sovereignty*. Presenters were Walter Fleming, Lea Whitford, Wes Martel, Shane Morigeau, Mike Jetty, Casey Lozar, and Donnie Wetzel, Jr. One hundred twenty-four participants attended at least one session.
 - *Indian Boarding Schools: From History to Healing*. Presenters were Jordann Lankford Forster, Kevin Kicking Woman, Carrie Gopher and Morgan Smith, Selena Coburn, Julie Cajune, and Sara Young. Forty-three participants attended at least one session.
- *Building your IEFA Mindset: Culturally Responsive and Informed Teaching for All*. A facilitated Hub course on the OPI Teacher Learning Hub facilitated by Jacie Jeffers (Billings Public Schools), Jordann Lankford Forster and Miranda Murray (Great Falls Public Schools), and Jennifer Stadum (OPI IEFA). Currently in session with 48 enrolled students.
- Creation of a new online Hub course titled *Teaching and Learning About Contemporary Issues in Indian Country*. Continued maintenance of four other self-paced IEFA courses on the Learning Hub including *An Introduction to Indian Education for All in Montana*, which is required for certification and is the most frequently completed course on the Learning Hub.
- Twenty-nine in-person and 16 virtual presentations provided to 3,065 school staff, educator prep program students, and other stakeholders. Key topics included IEFA integration, culturally responsive practices, and content area specific IEFA resources.
- IEFA presentations for Montana Historical Society programming.
- IEFA presentations for the Montana University System.

✓ Special Events and Initiatives

- Purchased and disseminated copies of *Elk Morning At the Battle of Arrow Creek* by A.J. Otjen and Sabrena Half to Montana elementary school libraries. Associated lesson plan developed and available on IEFA website.
- Book release event at Arrow Creek battle site with Hardin Public Schools on American Indian Heritage Day.
- American Indian Heritage Day event at Myrna Loy. Brought in Native American comedians Casey Nicholson and Donovan (Beef) Archambault for an evening event and a second event at Helena Middle School on American Indian Heritage Day.
- Release of another version of the *Making Montana Proud Poster Series*, featuring 13 Montana Indigenous scholars and educators, artists, and cultural leaders from tribes across the state. These are currently being shipped out to all middle and high schools.
- Rotunda Day event for Montana legislators on February 13, 2023.

✓ Classroom Resource Development

- Sixty social studies lessons developed to align with 2020 standards. (See standards examples below).
 - (4) The history content standards for third grade are that each student will: (a) identify tribes in Montana by their original and current names.
 - (1) The civics and government content standards for sixth through eighth grade are that each student will: (c) explain how global and American Indian civilizations and governments have contributed to foundational documents of the United States.
 - (1) The civics and government content standards for ninth through twelfth grade are that each student will: (g) explain the foundations and complexity of sovereignty for federally recognized tribes in Montana.
- Twenty English Language Arts companion lessons for books.
 - e.g., *Brothers on Three – A True Story of Family, Resistance, and Hope on a Reservation in Montana* by Abe Strep. Unit developed by Anna East, 2014 Montana Teacher of the Year.
- Nineteen math lessons developed.
- Twenty-five science lessons developed.
- Forty-five videos developed.
- Ongoing creation of new IEFA lesson plans in collaboration with teachers and tribes.

✓ Upcoming Events and Initiatives

- In person IEFA Best Practices Conference at Helena College and Bryant Elementary School March 17 and 18. Over 220 registrants.
- Virtual IEFA Best Practices Conference on April 22.
- Revamp of IEFA Website.
- Video Project: The Essential Understandings as Explained by Native American Youth.
- Providing grant funding to schools and professional learning providers.
 - School grants will emphasize student exchanges. School exchange guide is in development.

“Cultural respect and appreciation come through hearing the stories of the Native Montanans and learning about their communities. Allowing them to share their cultural values with our students and embracing cultural diversity in the classroom is a solid step towards appreciating the rich history that Native American tribes have to offer our communities. Our students have the opportunity to learn respect for nature, the land, Native American history, and cultural diversity.”

- Introduction to Indian Education for All in Montana hub course participant.

Questions / Comments

Call the OPI Indian Education for All office at 406-444-3694 or [visit our website](#).

Thanks for your leadership and support!



Map created by Carroll College education students.