

INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL

Missoula County Public Schools is committed to developing for all students an understanding of American and Montana Indian people and their histories, fostering respect for their cultures. In view of the unique role of the American Indian peoples in the development of the United States and the experience of Montana tribes in particular, their history and culture will be integrated wherever appropriate in the instruction of MCPS students, in accordance with the state constitution, statutes, and curriculum standards.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS REGARDING MONTANA INDIANS

1. There is great diversity among the 12 tribal Nations of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each Nation has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.
2. There is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by many entities, organizations, and people. There is a continuum of Indian identity ranging from assimilated to traditional and this is unique to each individual. There is no generic American Indian.
3. The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has their own oral history beginning with their genesis that is a valid as written histories. These histories pre-date the “discovery” of North America.
4. Reservations are land that have been reserved by the tribes for their own use through treaties and was not “given” to them. The principle that land should be acquired from the Indians only through their consent with treaties involved three assumptions:
 - a. That both parties to treaties were sovereign powers.
 - b. Those Indian tribes had some form of transferable title to the land.
 - c. That acquisition of Indian lands was solely a government matter not to be left to individual colonists.
5. There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have impacted Indian people and shape who they are today. Much of Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods.
6. History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. Histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from an Indian perspective conflicts with what most of mainstream history tells us.
7. Under the American legal system, Indian tribes have sovereign powers separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, the extent and breadth of tribal sovereignty is not the same for each tribe.

Missoula County Public Schools

INSTRUCTION

2450

Recognition of American Indian Peoples' Culture and Heritage in the Curriculum Process

The Board fully supports Article X of the Montana Constitution and is actively committed to develop for all students an understanding of American and Montana Indian people and their histories, as well as foster respect for their respective cultures.

Because of the unique position and place in American history, the American Indian peoples' role in the development of the United States, with emphasis on the experience of the Montana Tribes, shall be included wherever appropriate in the instruction of Missoula County Public School students, in accordance with the state Constitution and state standards. Instructions concerning the historic and current roles of Indian people shall be delivered in a respectful, informative, and sensitive manner. When the social studies curriculum and other curricula are updated according to the District's curriculum cycle, the written curriculum shall reflect this policy. Staff development will be provided pertinent to curriculum implementation.

NOTE: The District has nondiscriminatory policies in effect, which may be referenced.

Legal Reference: Art. X, Sec. 1(2), Montana Constitution §§ 20-1-501, et seq.,
MCA Recognition of American Indian cultural heritage - legislative intent

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| 10.55.603 ARM | Curriculum Development and Assessment |
| 10.55.701 ARM | Board of Trustees |
| 10.55.803 ARM | Learner Access |

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