

Working Group

EXHIBIT 3  
DATE 1/31/2005  
HB \_\_\_\_\_

**10.58.307 DIVERSITY**

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse and exceptional students in P-12 schools.

**Supporting explanation:**

**1. America's Diversity:** America's classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse; over one-third of the students in P-12 classrooms are from minority groups. An increasing number of students are classified as having a disability. At the same time, minority teachers are less than 15 percent of the teaching force. As a result, most students do not have the opportunity to benefit from a diverse teaching force. Teacher candidates need to develop competencies for working with students from diverse backgrounds and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn. Regardless of whether they live in areas with great diversity, candidates must develop knowledge about the diversity in Montana, the United States and the world, dispositions that respect and value differences, and skills for working in diverse settings.

**2. Montana's Diversity:** Montana's diversity is illustrated by classrooms becoming increasingly diverse. Of Montana's Fall 1999 classrooms, over 13.6% are from minority groups. The major population of minority students are American Indian, making up 10.4% of the total state-wide public school population. At the same time, less than 2% of Montana's teaching force is American Indian. Without insights into teaching American Indian students, comprehension of the distinctions in learning styles, emotional and intellectual response to method and materials, and a shared knowledge of the Indian culture, connections between a teacher and minority students will continue to be difficult, if not non-existent. Retention of American Indian students in our schools and recruitment of Indian students into the education profession hinges on positive connections being made.

Article X of the Montana Constitution, reaffirmed in HB 528 (1999), and in policy adopted by the Montana Board of Education on March 22, 2000, each provide compelling urgency to action. The Board of Education "enjoins the Board of Regents, Board of Public Education, and Office of Public Instruction to be actively committed in its educational goals to create understanding about American Indian people and their histories, respect for their respective cultures and world views, and an appreciation for one another." To this end, teacher education units will ensure that coursework and experiences will be included in their programs "that serve to educate all prospective teachers in teaching American Indian students and enhance their awareness of American Indian culture, language, history and contemporary issues, including tribal sovereignty." (Board of Education, Report and Recommendations, HB 528/Montana History Committee, 3-22-00)

**3. Student Learning:** One of the goals of this standard is the development of educators who can help all students learn and who can teach from a multicultural and global perspective. Therefore, the unit provides opportunities for candidates to understand the role of diversity and equity in the teaching and learning process. Coursework, field experiences, and clinical practice are designed to help candidates understand the influence of culture on education and be able to develop meaningful learning experiences for all students. Candidates learn about exceptionalities and inclusion as well as gender differences and their impact on learning. Competencies, including dispositions, related to

diversity are drawn from the standards of the profession, state, and institution; they are clear to candidates and are assessed as part of the unit's performance assessment system.

**4. Diverse Field and Clinical Experiences:** Field experiences and/or clinical practice support the development of educators who can apply their knowledge on exceptionalities and diversity to work in schools with all students. They provide opportunities for candidates to reflect on their observations and practices in schools and communities. Supervisors of field experiences and clinical practices develop learning experiences for candidates to help them process diversity concepts and provide feedback to candidates about their performance.

**5. Candidate and Faculty Recruitment and Retention:** A cohort of candidates and faculty from diverse groups inform the unit's curriculum, pedagogy and format in culturally meaningful ways. Diversity in education programs assists candidates in addressing teaching and learning from multiple perspectives and different life experiences. It provides for different voices in the professional development and work of the education profession. It allows a greater range of background and experiences among faculty and candidates to enhance the understanding and interaction with colleagues from a different background than one's own. In this regard, the unit recruits, admits/hires, and retains candidates and faculty from diverse backgrounds. A plan, which is monitored and revised regularly, may provide guidance in ensuring and maintaining diverse representation.

**6. Diverse Population Interaction:** Ideally candidates have the opportunity to interact with adults, children, and youth from their own and other backgrounds throughout their college career, and particularly in their professional preparation programs. Candidates, higher education faculty, school faculty, and P-12 students with whom candidates work are male and female and have different ethnic, racial, language, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds and histories and come from different regions of the country and world. Candidates also have opportunities to work with adults and students with exceptionalities.

