

MINUTES

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

**WORKING GROUP
INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL MONTANANS
APPOINTED BY MADAM CHAIR EVE FRANKLIN,
JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Call to Order: By **MADAM CHAIR EVE FRANKLIN**, on January 24, 2005
at 12:05 P.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Carol Williams, Chair
Rep. Carol Juneau
Rep. Verdell Jackson

Members Excused:

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mike Burke, OBPP
Jim Standaert, Legislative Branch
Diana Williams, Committee Secretary
Transcribed by Jamie Mickelson

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Tape counter notations refer to material preceding.

Working Group Summary

Meeting #1: -Establish Goals
-Inquiry into Resources Available
-Inquiry into what the Agencies want
-Implementation of the program

Brief History of Why the Working Group was Formed

On January 20, 2005 The Education Appropriations Joint Subcommittee took executive action for the Office of Public Instruction.(OPI). At that meeting DP 4 (Martz Budget - \$495,905 for the biennium) and DP 60 (Schweitzer Budget-\$2,000,000 for the biennium) were on the agenda. Both of these decision packages dealt with Indian Education for All. DP 76 (\$22,221,442 for the biennium), which also dealt with Indian Education for All was listed.

At that executive action meeting **REP. FRANKLIN**, chair of the Education Appropriations Joint Subcommittee, suggested in lieu of taking action on these decision packages, a working group be formed.

MADAM CHAIR FRANKLIN said that this group would be a three-member strategic steering committee. They would have a ten-day window to collect materials from various agencies, and people who have worked on this issue for the past 30 years, in particular from the Indian Education Summit, the curricular work that has been done, and the archived materials. They would then need to supply to the Subcommittee some recommendations as to how to proceed with the funding allocation.

MADAM CHAIR FRANKLIN thought that by having the working group supply the Subcommittee with the materials and funding proposal it would provide a more meaningful appropriation that the Subcommittee could recommend to the larger Appropriations Committee.

The three-member working group will be SEN. WILLIAMS, REP. JACKSON and REP. JUNEAU. Since no person objected to this idea

MADAM CHAIR FRANKLIN said that the working group will move forward and present the proposal to the Subcommittee after the ten-day period is up. The working group provided the report to the Education Appropriations Joint Subcommittee on February 9, 2005.

WORKING GROUP MEETING

A notice, "Working Group on Indian Education for All Montanans, Grades K-12" was posted at various locations. This document is a schedule of the Working Group meeting dates and times, Exhibit 1.

[EXHIBIT \(jeh18e01\)](#)

MADAM CHAIR WILLIAMS called the Working Group to order. She invited the people in the audience to give a brief summary of what issues the Working Group should focus on in the next ten days. She opened the meeting for public comment.

Public Comment

Bud Williams, OPI, commented that OPI needs to have enough financial capability to: 1) deliver model curriculum, 2) hold in-service training, 3) continue professional development, 4) have access to materials, and 5) provide historically correct documents. He stated that OPI is going to ask for three employees in the office to assist with this work. He explained that the budget request is for \$2,000,000 for the biennium.

Sheila Sterms, Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), believed that if OCHE had \$250,000 in higher education for Indian Education for All, then an operational curriculum that dealt with Indian Education for All could be developed.

MADAM CHAIR WILLIAMS asked if there were any questions from the Working Group.

Everall Fox, OPI Indian Education Specialist, stated that OPI needs the time and the resources to make a proficient effort in Indian Education. He said that he knows other schools have been asking for resources, but he thought that funds are needed for additional resources. **Mr. Fox** informed the Working Group that those resources need to be aligned with the Content Standards which honor and respect the information that comes from Montana's tribes.

Mr. Fox gave a brief presentation on the three handouts labeled, "Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians," "Amicus Brief," and "Indian Education for All MCA 20-1-501."

[EXHIBIT\(jeh18e02\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh18e03\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh18e04\)](#)

Jack Cops, Executive Director, Montana Quality Education Coalition, stated that one of the most important qualities that OPI needs to promote is acceptance. He commented that the young people of Montana need to appreciate Indian Education as a valuable part of the history of Montana. He said that OPI needs to make sure that young people of this state understand and appreciate this component of quality education.

Mr. Copps commented that the Working Group should treat the Indian Education Act for All as a mandate in the school. He stated that advocacy, leadership, and resources in the schools are important, but the Working Group needs to have the implementation for Indian Education for All done the right way.

Mr. Copps commented that the Working Group doesn't need to implement Indian Education for All just because it is a mandate, but because it is important to the history and culture of Montana.

REP. BIXBY stressed the importance that the Working Group would look at sufficient appropriation for Indian Education for All.

REP. BIXBY highly recommended that the Working Group appropriate the \$2 million to OPI so that OPI can do the work which is needed to be done in the public school system. **REP. BIXBY** strongly urged that additional financial resources for the local districts be adopted.

Ellen Swaney, Director of AIMA, OCHE, stated that one of the most important efforts that has not been addressed is the collaboration between the Montana University System (MUS) and the K-12 system in implementing this program.

Ms. Swaney informed the Working Group that there are already many excellent Native American courses offered at the MUS level. She stated that one of the challenges is, how to deliver a basic Native American study course out to rural communities, on-line, for a teacher who cannot leave the community.

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 10}

Discussion by Working Group

REP. FRANKLIN asked if the document labeled, "Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians," came from OPI. **Mike Jetty, Dropout Specialist, OPI**, explained that the document was fabricated a few years ago by a committee of educators and historians appointed through OPI.

REP. FRANKLIN stated that when she was a nursing instructor her best instructing tool were resources. She commented that she does not see many resources in the document. **Mr. Jetty** stated that the work of identifying resources is in progress. He explained that part of the bigger picture is to identify current resources that already exist, that tie into essential understandings of the Native American culture.

REP. JUNEAU stated that it would be good for the Working Group to look at the resources that are currently available. She agrees with Mr. Jetty, that there are great resources in the schools such as ROOTS AND BRANCHES.

REP. JUNEAU thought that there is a lot of curriculum work currently available and resources that the schools can have access to right away. She stated that it may be good for the Working Group to have a show-and-tell of all of the resources that are available.

Mr. Jetty explained that part of the problem is that educators are unaware that there are resources available, and many educators do not know how to access those resources, especially on-line.

REP. JACKSON stated that he worked for the Alaska Department of Education for 18 years and was the Small School Specialist. He explained that he was involved in Indian Education. He said that Indian Education was not a mandate, but it was the right thing to do.

REP. JACKSON asked Mr. Fox to think about the Montana content standards for teachers and stated that they are broad and conceptual, which makes it difficult to implement Indian Education.

REP. JACKSON stated that the Working Group is discussing money, and he would like to talk about time.

REP. JACKSON explained that his largest difficulty in making curriculum change is in the acceptance of the change and then implementing the curriculum for everyone.

REP. JACKSON explained that in Alaska there were some villages that he had to use an interpreter to communicate with the students. He cited that the students stayed in the village through the request of the tribe. He worked with this village to develop a program that would reach those people's particular learning goals.

REP. JACKSON said that Montana is much different, because there are many different reservations. He stated that there would be a high possibility that each reservation would have different traditions. He suggested that the Working Group needs a strategy that utilizes the student's time. He commented that the Working Group should try to get education into the curriculum that is important to American Indian culture.

REP. JACKSON asked Mr. Fox if it is important to implement things that are important to Indian American culture, or if the Working Group should have a broader perspective to cover historical perspectives for everyone.

Mr. Fox commented that OPI is interested in using an infusion model. He explained that an infusion model is using the existing curriculum and teachable moments to implement Indian Education.

Mr. Fox stated that the infusion model has to be well planned and thought out. He said that there would be a teacher's guide that the educator could use to look up any themes that could be tied into their current curriculum.

REP. JACKSON asked if the materials would be the same from one reservation to another. **Mr. Fox** stated that there are some materials out there, but OPI needs to align a teaching guide so that it meets the content standards and also has the correct information. He explained that OPI would also develop a web-link on Native American reservations.

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 10 - 26}

Mr. Fox stated that it is important that teachers in the classroom have Native American materials to access while teaching in a classroom. He commented that he would like to set aside a unit on Native American Studies to the elementary students.

REP. JACKSON asked Mr. Fox if there are communities in Montana where a teacher can come in and be paid to teach. He stated this was a way to get many of the resources that are needed into the classroom.

Mr. Fox said that OPI explored many ideas, and one idea is to implement language teachers which are class seven. He explained that these teachers are certified by the State of Montana to teach Native Language. He also wanted to develop a speaker's bureau using individuals from different tribes to inform students about the culture of the seven different tribes in the State.

MADAM CHAIR WILLIAMS informed the Working group that she wants to list the goals that have been discussed today.

- Resources
- Money that is earmarked for Indian Education
- Grant money for the University system
- Implementation of the Indian Education for All program

MADAM CHAIR WILLIAMS stated that the Working Group is going to meet again on 1/26/05 at 6:00 P.M.

REP. JUNEAU commented that most of the issues that were discussed were what the Working Group needed to be informed about.

REP. JUNEAU stated that she appreciates **REP. JACKSON'S** input, on the basis of his experience in Alaska.

REP. JUNEAU requested a list of the Indian Education for All website from OPI.

REP. JUNEAU questioned whether or not the legislature wants to respond to the Supreme Court order of a quality education. She explained that the legislature has not funded the constitutional mandate of Indian Education for All. She stated that the Supreme Court recognizes Montana as having a special burden, because of the low achievement levels of Native American students.

REP. JUNEAU thanked everyone who attended the meeting

There was an exhibit that was handed out and never discussed labeled, "The Working Group."

EXHIBIT (jeh18e05)

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 17.7}

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 12:55 P.M.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS, Chairman

DIANA WILLIAMS, Secretary
Transcribed by Jamie Mickelson

EF/dw

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([jeh18ead0.PDF](#))