

MINUTES

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION FUNDING

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN MONICA LINDEEN**, on January 21, 2005
at 3:12 P.M., in Room 137 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Monica Lindeen, Chairman (D)
Rep. Tim Dowell (D)
Rep. Dave Gallik (D)
Rep. Verdell Jackson (R)
Rep. Bob Lake (R)
Rep. Holly Raser (D)
Rep. Jon Sonju (R)
Rep. Pat Wagman (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: Rep. Bill E. Glaser, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Norma Bixby (D)

Staff Present: Connie Erickson, Legislative Branch
Kim Leighton, Committee Secretary
Eddy McClure, Legislative Branch
Jim Standaert, Legislative Branch

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted:
Executive Action:

DISCUSSION:

CHAIRMAN MONICA LINDEEN brought the meeting to order and took care of general housekeeping issues.

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 2}

Dennis Parman, Assistant Superintendent, Havre Public Schools, provided written testimony to support the Indian Education For All Act (IEFAA). He spoke of the implementation of IEFAA in the Havre schools. **Mr. Parman** emphasized that all schools need a policy surrounding IEFAA. He mentioned activities that the Havre schools participate in such as Heritage Week. Also, communication within the faculty is important to successfully implement the program. **Mr. Parman** introduced the idea of training classes for these programs, and reiterated that every district should have a plan when implementing the IEFAA studies.

[EXHIBIT \(esh16a01\)](#)

[EXHIBIT \(esh16a02\)](#)

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 2.5}

Tammy Elser, Arlee Public Schools, discussed the history of the K-12 Indian Studies Program in the Arlee Public Schools. She stated what she believes to be the three most important aspects of IEFAA. The three aspects are content, process, and context. **Ms. Elser** then discussed the American Indian Program. She stated that Grades K-6 it is mandatory to participate, then Grades 7-12 it is considered an elective. One of the requirements is to study the Salish language. **Ms. Elser** argued that the school system needs professional development, or native experts. She also emphasized the need to be critically discerning. There is also the possibility of providing materials for preschool through college (P-20), instead of K-12. She thanked the committee for allowing her to speak.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 2.5 - 25.2}

Julie Cajune, Ronan Public Schools, emphasized the need for cross-culture understanding across Montana. She asked, "What do Montanans' need to know to be literate?" There are universal things that we should agree on. She continued to talk about the progressions in Ronan. She stated that they now have teacher training days at the Tribal College. **Ms. Cajune** stressed that there are not enough Indian teachers in Montana. The state must be able to provide teachers with materials to teach. She also attested that some of the content standards could be revised. It is important to periodically review the literature. It is also

important to train school boards so they can successfully implement and fulfill the policy requirements.

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 12.3}

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE:

REP. JON SONJU approached Julie Cajune about the implementation of Indian Studies. She had stated that she didn't want it to be a separate class, but rather all integrated into one. He asked her to expand on this.

Ms. Cajune replied that many of the Indian Studies currently being used relegate to the 1800's and don't really move on from there. The classes are more focused on Tribal Indians.

REP. SONJU asked Ms. Cajune about Title VII. She stated that that gives her district approximately \$160,000. He was wondering how much money that approximates to each student.

Ms. Cajune stated that it is approximately \$200 per student.

REP. SONJU inquired if the school district has to apply for this money every year.

Ms. Cajune claimed that there is a process to go through. They have to have a form on record, as well as a variety of data.

REP. SONJU asked about other programs and grants that offer assistance.

Ms. Cajune stated that they utilize the Johnson-O'Malley Program. This is a per-student funding program that offers approximately \$70 per student. Another program is Title I, which offers a larger amount of money.

REP. SONJU commissioned some statistics regarding the dropout rate.

Ms. Cajune described the dropout rate as fluctuating between 10%-35%. She also differentiated between graduation rate versus dropout rate.

REP. SONJU asked Ms. Cajune to comment on the dropout rate in the Ronan/Arlee region versus that of the eastern schools in Montana.

Ms. Cajune stated that it is very difficult to say. There is never one single reason. It could be pregnancy; they need to work to help the family, etc.

REP. TIM DOWELL mentioned that there are many schools who do not have access to Title VII funds. He asked what kind of training there is for districts that don't have much funding.

Tammy Elser stated that they have been working on a training seminar. Last year it was one-day, this year they are working on a three-day seminar. She passed out a document in regard to this institute.

EXHIBIT (esh16a03)

Ms. Cajune added that there was also a seminar by the State Library Association that she felt very strongly about.

Dennis Palmer stated that the professional development of the range of knowledge in Montana is pretty diverse. However, there isn't that much; they need more.

REP. BOB LAKE asked how to create a curriculum that blends in educational acceptance and still maintains tribal identity.

Ms. Cajune argued that OPI plays a role, and the Tribal Colleges play a critical role as well.

REP. LAKE commented on the needs of teaching culture.

Ms. Cajune stated that she does have some books that are also helpful with this.

Ms. Elser mentioned some topics of teachers being interested in these training seminars.

Mr. Parmer discussed the controversy surrounding technology. Eventually the school systems learned it, and dealt with it. He strongly advised to do the same thing with IEFAA. It's been an issue for awhile now. It is time to deal with it.

REP. GALLIK spoke of the policy, planning, and materials involved in the IEFAA, and asked if it was a good idea to direct the statewide policy to have uniform studies.

Ms. Cajune agreed somewhat. However, she stated that many kids will want to learn about aspects of their own community, and in this way it will vary.

Ms. Elser stated that she agrees with Ms. Cajune.

REP. GALLIK asked that they extrapolate how much this will cost the state.

Ms. Cajune stated that a per student amount would be great. However, the schools will do the best with what they have.

Ms. Elser talked a little bit about grants and funding.

REP. LINDEEN asked Ms. Cajune if she could leave her resources here for a week.

Ms. Cajune responded by saying that she was gifting these in part to Salish tradition.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 24.5}

Paul Rowland, School of Education, University of Montana, spoke of the standards and what should be involved in an education. He questioned as to how we implement teacher provisions for No Child Left Behind(NCLB). He discussed the requirement at the University of Montana(U of M) to take three credits of Native American Studies(NAS). The U of M also works with the Blackfoot Community College to implement this.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 0.2}

George White, School of Education, Montana State University-Billings, discussed the improvements in Indian Education at Montana State University-Billings. He spoke of communication with Tribal Colleges and reservations to implement NAS in the college institutions. He described a process to do this. First he stated that they need to bring awareness, and get people thinking about it. Next they need to make sure the content and standards are correct. Last they need to implement the policy.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0.2 - 11.6}

Robert Carson, Montana State University, put an emphasis on diversity. He also named specific courses that they have geared towards Native American Studies. He stated that the students are required to take one of the three mentioned. MSU also looks at educational psychology, that includes the different learning styles involved. He spoke of the local efforts on curriculum development, and also that there are venues available to help with this process when researching.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 11.6 - 22.9}

Sherry Gemino, Montana State University-Northern, discussed Northern's partnership with tribes and reservations in the northern area. She spoke of the programs in place, as well as a

process that should be considered. The first thing is awareness. The second is content, and the third is grade-appropriateness.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 22.9 - 27.6}

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE:

REP. LAKE addressed the panel by stating that it seems like they are trying to train those individuals who are working towards being a teacher, rather than teaching the children.

Mr. Carson replied by saying that they want all beginning teachers to have a background in NAS. They feel that they are educating both future teachers, as well as the children.

Mr. White stated that every course is appropriate for NAS.

Mr. Rowland believes that there is a lot of work to be done to provide more Indian Studies.

REP. DOWELL stated that there seems to be a strong quality of education to the students. He wondered how to access materials for these courses.

Mr. Rowland emphasized the need to move from K-12 to P-20. He also stated that the education system needs to be more creative on how to deliver the resource.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON asked Mr. Carson to expand on the issue of testing.

Mr. Carson stated that he is not an expert on testing. He said that there has been a lot of development in this area. They tend to examine content knowledge. Federal requirements insist on a standardized test. However, this presupposes a familiarity with background information.

REP. GALLIK declared that the studies involved here looks like it is intended for future teachers. Unfortunately, the research shows that we are losing teachers. He asked that they give the best advice on how the legislature should retain teachers.

Mr. Carson urged the committee and legislature to examine the needs in Montana, and address them.

Mr. Rowland stated that he agrees with Mr. Carson. Many people want to stay in Montana; unfortunately going out of state is more financially appealing for college graduates.

Mr. Carson mentioned that OPI had put a cost of living index calendar on the internet.

Ms. Gemino agreed that approximately 30% of Montana graduates go out of state to look for work because the salary difference is more attractive.

Mr. White claimed that that approximation is true. However, at MSU-B, the profile is a little different. The average student there is 28 years old. Nevertheless, the circumstances are much the same in that they have debt.

REP. LINDEEN directed a statement to David Gibson, and Commissioner Stearns who were seated in the back. She wanted to address the issue of the curriculum, and the fact that it has not been integrated enough. She said, "Indian Education is applied to everything we do, learn, and teach. It is very important to assess how we implement this." **REP. LINDEEN** offered the suggestion of bringing in expert individuals to implement the IEFAA.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 6:10 P.M.

REP. MONICA LINDEEN, Chairman

KIM LEIGHTON, Secretary

ML/KL

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([esh16aad0.PDF](#))