

Indian Language Immersion Project (ILIP)

Browning School District has been allocated funds in the amount of \$57,850.01. BPS has identified 117 student participants of ILIP, 6 immersion teachers, and 4 Blackfeet Native American Speakers & teachers that incorporate the Blackfeet Language within their classrooms 50% of the time during the day, covering all subjects. They are working on a writing system in the Blackfeet Language. The immersion program spans from K-6th grade. Schools where the immersion program is housed include: KW/Vina, Browning Elementary, Napi Elementary, and Browning Middle School.

Crow Agency School District has been allocated funds in the amount of \$39,119.99 and has identified 101 student participants. There are two dual immersion Pre-School classes and 1 dual immersion class per grade level ranging from K-5. The life of the classroom (such as the teacher visiting with students) is in the Apsaalooke language. All classrooms in the school have a traveling teacher who utilizes a Conversational teaching model along with the Plains Sign Language, and Physical Response Technique. Approximately 50% of the Crow tribe is fluent and bilingual, yet most of this demographic are over the age of 40. They are working to revitalize and wake up their language and have established partnerships with other Crow Reservation Schools, Little Big Horn College and the Crow Tribal Government and the Crow Language Consortium.

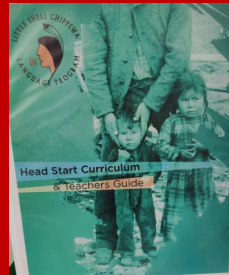
I Ky Pah Ko Chi

Nestseve'tsenehnehetame!



"Our language is the epi-center of our worldview. It is our cultural values and lifeways."

Conrad Fisher, Northern Cheyenne



Dazhiikan!

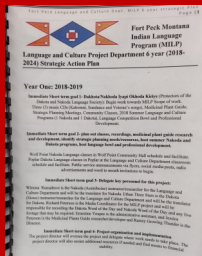
Kyaakibinh!



Diah-Gasha!

Hagikdeš

"Language is the carrier of culture, you can't have one without the other," Ramey Growing Thunder



Timeline and Progress

2021: Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy, D-Crow Agency, Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy, D-Box Elder, and Rep. David Bedey, R-Hamilton, worked together to craft a plan to restore the funding and move the program under the Office of Public Instruction instead of the state Department of Commerce.

2015: Indian Language and Immersion Program (ILIP) is established to support efforts of Montana tribes to preserve and perpetuate Indian languages in the form of spoken, written, sung, or signed language and to assist in the preservation and curricular goals of Indian education for all pursuant to Article X, section 1 of the Montana constitution.

2015: The Cultural Integrity Act (SB 272): Passed into Montana state law. This act strengthens the commitment of Montana's goal to preserving American Indian cultural integrity as stated in Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution.

2013: Montana Indian Language Preservation: On May 6th, MILP was signed into law. The outcome of SB 342 by State Senator Jonathan Windy Boy was established in 2013 and maintained in the Department of Commerce.

1995: Class 7: The tribes testified that only each tribe has the knowledge and resources to address its own language and cultural situation and that diverse language teaching approaches were desirable. With a unanimous vote the Montana Class 7 American Indian Language and Cultural Specialist Certification passed through the Board of Education.

ELDER AND CULTURAL WISDOM COUNCIL

This council was developed in 2021 for traditional consultation. When we embark on a new journey, we consult our Elders and Cultural Wisdom holders. The youth want to run, but the Elders know the path. We seek this direction for Youth by emphasizing self identity, language, and traditional wellness supports as an option. Self-identity is prevention. Elders will help us design an approach for our team and for youth as we include their educational and relational teachings going forward.

"The Language is in our heart, it is up to us to bring it out," The Late Tom Escarcega Sr.

"Today we are at a critical moment with the Seliš & Qlispé languages. Creating new fluent speakers is our highest priority but we can't accomplish this with MILP money. What we can do and why we are thankful for the MILP funds, is we can provide support to ongoing and future programs that will be taking place and create resources, curriculum and support materials that will give a huge benefit to our Seliš & Qlispé Language learners and teachers." Chaney Bell.

TRIBAL COLLEGES

Across the state, our Tribal Colleges are emphasizing language and cultural teachings as their #1 priority. From language webinars hosting 600+ attendees teaching language and telling our stories to Indigenous Graduate programs set to indigenize the educational experience and careers. Some of the most amazing work centered on creating fluent language speakers first to be able to teach later. Practicing and learning the language everyday as coursework.

