



3rd Annual Urban Indian Education Forum

November 19-20, 2009

Great Falls Montana

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(Information below is available upon request to MIEA or can be found on MIEA’s Website)

www.mtiea.org

Appendix A:

Understanding the Data/Making a Plan/Making a Commitment
Notes by group, by School District

Appendix B:

Powerpoint Presentation by Mandy Smoker Broaddus on Urban Indian Education Data

Introduction

The Great Falls Public Schools Indian Education Department (Sandra Boham, Director) hosted the third annual “Montana Urban Indian Education Forum” on November 19-20, 2009.

The Urban Indian Education Forum is an opportunity for a targeted focus on American Indian students who are attending schools in Montana’s urban communities. 96% of American Indian students in Montana are enrolled in the state’s public schools, and about one-half of these are in our urban schools. The intent of the Forum was to bring together school personnel, especially teachers, from Montana urban school districts to further develop the understanding of the role that culture plays in both teaching and learning. There were 130 participants as well as 8 public school districts that participated which included Great Falls, Missoula, Helena, Havre, Billings, Kalispell, Simms and Froid. The focus of this forum was:

“We have seen the data; we gathered some tools; now, what do we do? How will we apply what we know in process/processes that will influence a narrowing of the Native American academic achievement gap in urban school districts in Montana?”

The 3 main presenters were Dr. Iris Heavy Runner-Pretty Paint who spoke on cultural resilience, Mandy Smoker-Broadus who spoke on the achievement gap and Bill Hayne who spoke on cultural resilience. (Summaries of these presentations are included). In addition participants were organized by school district in breakout sessions to develop implementation strategies and to develop commitment to closing the Native American academic achievement gap. Participants were given opportunity to evaluate and to incorporate each presentation into potential processes for a better understanding and improvement of classroom instruction and environment. At the end of the gathering participants were asked:

- to examine the spirit and intent of the Montana Constitution: Article X, Sections 1, (2) and to apply their understanding of this in conjunction with their experiences over the last 2 days and to make a commitment to apply such to their own efforts to lower the Native American student achievement gap.

Data on Montana Urban Indian Education

There are a total of 16,293 American Indian students enrolled in Montana's K-12 Public Schools with close to half - 39% or 6,403 enrolled in schools off reservation, most in our urban communities. Following is enrollment of American Indians in following urban areas in Montana.

Billings (1,237)	Missoula (389)	Helena (379)
Great Falls (1,302)	Havre (387)	

The data below taken from presentation at last Urban Indian Education Forum, reflects the achievement gap, low graduation rates, high rates of suspension and expulsion from some urban schools, as some of the identified issues facing American Indian students in our urban areas, and

High School Completion Rate for Indian Students in Montana's Urban Centers-OPI Data: 2007-2008

Note: For comparison the High School Completion Rate for White Students is 87%

AI Statewide	66%	Helena High	29%	Senior	67%
Havre	70%	Capitol	79%	West	52%
Hellgate	50%	CMR	75%	Skyview	65%
Sentinel	71%	Great Falls	39%		
Big Sky	70%				

It is important to note that other states are experiencing similar completion rates. Per Diplomas Count 2009, see Page 28 www.edweek.org/go/dc09, "Graduation in the United States, Recent Gains at Risk of Eroding:" Graduation Rates for Class of 2006

	American Indian	White
US (all)	50.0%	76.1%
Montana	48.3%	79.5%
North Dakota	39.9%	83.7%
South Dakota	33.5%	81.7%
Wyoming	25.8%	76.7%

Montana Urban 2007-08 CRT Science – Percent Proficient and Advanced – All grades Combined

Urban Area	American Indian	White	Urban Area	American Indian	White
Missoula	33%	57%	Havre	35%	55%
Billings	29%	56%	Great Falls	35%	63%
Helena	39%	57%			

Discipline (Suspension/Expulsion) American Indian Students: 2007-2008 , unduplicated count

	% of High School Enrollment	% of Suspension & Expulsion	% of Elementary School Enrollment	% of Suspension & Expulsion
Helena	5%	11%	5%	15%
Missoula	3%	3%	6%	6%
Billings	7%	17%	9%	26%
Great Falls	12%	18%	13%	39%
Havre	15%	27%	23%	51%

Summary of Recommendations

The State of Montana, The Office of Public Instruction, The Montana Urban School Districts and the Montana Indian Education Association plus the countless teachers, parents, students, staff administrators and individuals that recognize and honor the spirit and intent of the Montana Constitution: Article X, Sections 1, (2) have been the driving force that compelled over 100 people to gather in Great Falls and to commit their efforts to lowering the Native American student achievement gap. Excellent keynote presentations and discussions helped to provide guidance to the participants in the Forum goals. There was anguish and reward as participants wrangled with what they and their schools could do to make a difference. In the end, beginnings of plans were made and all were in agreement that there remains much to do.

The Process

Working Session Break-out by School District: Understanding the Data/Making a Plan/Making a Commitment

Participants were asked to group by school district, discuss the data presented about their school district, integrate the information presented by the Keynote speakers and begin to try to answer the following seven questions:

1. Do you see any patterns in the data by racial/ethnic groups? By Gender?
2. What groups are doing well? What groups are behind? On target? Ahead?
3. What access & equity issues are raised?
4. Do the data surprise you? Or confirm your perceptions?
5. How might some school classroom practices contribute to success and failures? For which group of students?
6. How do we continue doing what's working and address what's not working for students?
7. Find at least one issue that you will make a commitment to address in your school this year that will help to close the academic achievement gap.

Participants were asked to designate a note taker to record their discussion and ideas. Then they were asked to write their responses to these questions on large post-it notes and then post their responses on the wall. School districts were then asked to view each other's responses and provide input or ask questions in order to provide assistance to each other in making sure that the commitments were realistic and achievable. Participants were asked to support each other's learning as they work toward implementing their plans. School District plans and notes are included as an attachment to this report. Following is a summary of the recommendations that were developed by

participants as to what can be done to help urban Indian students find success in their classrooms. A more detailed description of the work completed by individual school districts will be available as an appendix on MIEA's website, www.mtiea.org.

Great Falls:

- Infuse cultural material into the curriculum
- Make American Indian students feel welcome- identify teacher in core area for students to access for support during school hours
- Build relationships- reach out to one child everyday

Billings:

- Share data across the school district
- Provide IEFA training to faculty and staff
- Celebrate American Indian student successes

Missoula:

- Create support networks for students
- Teacher education
- Focus on school climate

Havre:

- Address the issues of disparity in the discipline rates
- Re-evaluate district policy
- Examine alternative discipline
- Proactive programming
- Teacher-student relationships

Helena:

- High School dropout rate, grades 6-12.
- Student focus groups
- Student engagement
- Have data discussions across the district

Keynotes – Summary



“Cultural Resilience and Student Success” Dr. Iris Heavy Runner- Pretty Paint

Iris Heavy Runner-Pretty Paint is an enrolled member of the Blackfeet Tribe. She is an accomplished educator and researcher, who has focused her career on issues of retention and resilience of native students. Dr. Heavy Runner-Pretty Paint’s presentation described the Indian student in today’s classroom as the “Miracle Survivor.” Given the history of the intersection of dominant society and Naïve culture, the intergenerational trauma, the acculturation, the denial of history, the psychological violence, the lack of appropriate Native role models, etc., it is a miracle when Native students survive until graduation.

A question we need to ask ourselves is: “How do we teach children that come from different world views?” Cultural resilience is an ancient principle in our philosophy of life. This principle teaches us to stand strong and always be hopeful. Our worldview is the lens through which we learn how to nurture, protect and dream for the future. It is important to recognize and respect that we all bring our worldview into the classroom.

In order to understand the Native worldview, one must be able to place Native people (and therefore, the native person) into context. Such context requires a basic understanding of American history as it pertains to Native people. It is beyond the scope of this report/presentation to provide appropriate context. However, the Montana Office of Public Instruction’s Indian Education Division has “The Seven Essential Understandings regarding Montana Indians,” which provides an excellent springboard for further learning.

While it is critical that educators understand context, it is also important that they understand that there are non-cognitive variables that are predictors of student success:

Non-Cognitive Variables - Sedlacek*

Positive Self Concept	Successful Leadership Experience
Realistic Self Appraisal	Demonstrated Community Service
Understands and Deals with Racism	Non-traditional Knowledge Acquired
Prefers Long Range Goals	Availability of a Strong Support Person

*Tracey, T.J. Sedlacek, W. E. (1984). *Non-cognitive variables in predicting academic success by race*. *Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance*, 16, 171-178.

Dr. Heavy Runner-Pretty Paint Keynote summary continued:

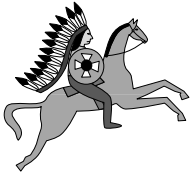
What helps Native students succeed is a combination of things, including a positive school environment fostered by educator understanding of appropriate context, fostering and developing the non-cognitive variables that lead to academic success and educators realizing that Relationship is the key to all of it.

Linked Category: Circles of Relationship

The three interconnected layers of culture, people and activities, which provides a seamless web of family, cultural and academic support for tribal college students to persist in college.

“Persistence is really all about relationships, it’s that simple.”

Dr. Heavy Runner-Pretty Paint’s final word on the subject is: “We need to work together to close the achievement gap.”



**“Montana Urban School District American Indian Achievement Data: What the Data Tells Us.”
Mandy Smoker-Broaddus**

Mandy Smoker-Broaddus is an enrolled member of the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Fort Peck and is the Director of Indian Education for the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). She presented data that OPI has gathered regarding American Indian student performance in urban school districts in Montana. Participants were presented with data outlining the current and historic Native American achievement gap both from a statewide perspective and from an individual urban school district perspective. Attendance and Discipline rate data were also presented. While there was fluctuation among and within school districts, however, the overall trend demonstrates significant gaps in all measures of school life regarding Native American students and any other group.

The data presented by Ms. Smoker-Broaddus was simply to expose participants to the information that data represents, as reported to OPI by the individual school districts. The power point with the charts and graphs can be found on the Montana Office of Public Instruction website under Indian Education, under Indian student achievement and under Data, Research & Reports . The school districts should explore these types of data as well. Together with the OPI data they can get a better picture of where they stand regarding the Indian student achievement gap.

OPI Collected Data, Sources to Explore:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Population Data | 6. Special Education Data |
| 2) Criterion Referenced Test (CRT) | 7. Suspension/Expulsion Data |
| 3) NAEP data | 8. Advanced Placement Data |
| 4) Dropout Data | 9. SAT/ACT Data |
| 5) Completion Data | 10. Youth Risk Behavior |
| Survey Data | |

Equally as important is the local data school collected:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| School climate—safety | Discipline Data |
| Class size | Attendance, Tardiness |
| Family and parent interactions | Community Wellbeing |
| Equal participation of extracurricular activities | |

There has been a consistent academic achievement gap between American Indian students and White Students and it is typically illustrated by the 2008-09 Criterion Reference Test (CRT) scores:

	<u>Reading Scores</u>	<u>Math Scores</u>
American Indian	60%	37%
White	85%	68%



“Developing Cultural Responsiveness in Education”

Bill Hayne

Bill is an enrolled member of the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Fort Peck and the Director of American Indian Student Leadership at Lewis and Clark State College in Lewiston Idaho. Bill Hayne’s presentation was about educators, particularly teachers, accepting, celebrating and encouraging cultural diversity in the classroom. In this way, a safe and productive learning environment can be fostered. Mr. Hayne stressed that such effort is not easy and developing the types of relationships that create an effective learning environment require the teacher to become a change agent. Such effort will require commitment, effort and collaboration much the same as developing and sustaining any good relationship does. When we celebrate difference for a brief period of time—this is not how to celebrate diversity. When we just celebrate heroes and holidays we miss the true experience of diversity. Establishing respect and dignity in the classroom requires a conscious effort, both personal and professional. It may be helpful if one were to start the day by asking “How do I affect others with my attitude?”

What challenges students learning?

Inconsistent memory	Cultural/social impact-teaching/learning
Random reinforcement—spotty learning	Communication/social skills

If we ignore the needs of the students then it leads to:

Cycles of “I’m bad/wrong”	Fractured relationships
Cultural imbalance	Task orientation
Hopelessness	Unpredictable World
My way of learning is not important or tapped into	

Cultural Diversity: the thought is often “aren’t we done with this yet?” Several developmental steps occur when we talk about cultural diversity: fear, humility, honesty, respect, and action.

What does someone else bring to the table that I can learn from—that is cultural proficiency?

Characteristics of cultural proficiency

- Self examination and discovery—informs and transforms (Who am I what my weaknesses/strengths are?)
- What limitations and biases do I have
- When we take off our masks of “let’s just get along” it can get ugly
- Acknowledge role as a protector
- Promote an atmosphere of honoring relationships
- Willing to be the learner (Discover others background and issues. Participate in cultural events, put self into their cultural environment)
- Willing to engage in continual reflection/growth.

“Developing Cultural Responsiveness in Education,” Bill Hayne, continued

Groups discussed these questions:

What learning differences and behavior challenges do we face in our schools?

What cultural/instructional diversity is needed?

What is the attitude towards trying something new to help diverse students?

How will the utilization of multiple intelligence/instruction build diverse students success?

Evaluation

The Urban Indian Education Forum received generally overall high praise from the participants with the vast majority of areas rated four or five with only a seven participants rating any area with a three or below rating. The presentation of the American Indian Achievement Gap data generated seven scores of three or below out of fifty-nine evaluations. The other two topics, Cultural Resilience and Developing Cultural Responsiveness in Education received no score below a 4 out of a possible 5.

Technical difficulties with the computer contributed to the American Indian Achievement Gap data receiving some of the lower scores. However, in listening to discussions regarding the presentation, it appears that cognitive dissonance was a larger contributing factor. Participants faced with such dismal statistics tend to react in several predictable ways: reject the data; reject the messenger; become depressed and become reactionary. Understanding the problem is the second step in correcting the problem; understanding and accepting the data that reveals the problem is the first step.

Participant List: Urban Indian Education Forum

Great Falls

Amos, Rose
Anderson, Fred
Arcand, Carla
Arnott, Carla
Barringer, Brad
Begay, Merle
Blackbird-Hubbard,
Candace
Bollich, Shirley
Brinka, Ande
Brooks, Brenda
Brown, Mariah
Brown, Tony
Carlson, Jackie
Chenowith, Avis
Cosgrove, Mary Ann
Cutler, Rachel
Dart, Gregg
DeHerrera, James
Donisthorpe, Vicki
Dyke, Dannelle
Edwards, Ryan
Fish, Georgianne
Fisher, Beth
Fox, Sharon
Galvin-Halcro,
Kathleen
Gascon, Kelcie

Gerhart, Beth
Gilbert, Cal
Gordillo, Teri
Graham, Megan
Gregoire, Jane
Guile, Cassy
Houle, Sandy
Howard, Kathleen
Hurd, Richard
Irwin, Kathy
Jensen, Aaron
Jensen, Bonnie
Kelly, Debbie
Kelly, Michelle
Kuntz, Lara
Lacey, Tammy
Landsiedel, Brenda
Lindstrom, Sharon
Mathers, Sally
McClure, Tristin
McCluskey, Murt Dr.
McGaugh, Rhonda
McGowen, Jessica
McLean, Kathy
Meredith, Michelle
Moore, Tom
Moore, Rhonda
Mora, Jana
Murray, Matt

Nadeau, Michelle
Noble, Carol
Northey, Paul
Olszweski, Chris
O'Rourke, Mike
Pasek, Scott
Pickering, Pam
Provance, Chris
Red Dog, Shyleena
Rohrback, JaAnne
Scott, Sue
Sears, Dwan
Smith, Corri
Sprague, Teresa
Sturtevant, Stephanie
Thomas, Sherri
Tramelli, Julie
Uecker, Ruth
Valladolid, Curtis
Valenzuela, Alvina
Volger, Elaine
Vukasin, Laura
Walters, Maggie
Warren, Brenda
Wavra, April
Winter, Katrina
Yates, Steven

Helena

Brown, Kathleen
Furshong, Joe

Hawkins, Ronnie
Hunter, Peg

Havre

Bullman, Annie
Carlson, Andy
Champagne, Emory
Granell, Marilyn

Lenhardt, Renee
Suek, Marge
Vandersloot, Jerry
Wilson, Sandy

Missoula

Allen, Karen
 Dickinson, Tanya
 Forrest, Gisele
 Henry, Brandi
 Jensen, Klarissa
 Larum, Nancy
 Sharbono, Kathy
 Weasel, Glenda
 Wilson, DyAnna

Billings

Charette, Robert
 McCarthy, Glenda
 Neiter, Dee
 Peterson, Mary
 Siquah, Savannah
 Smith, Jennifer
 Whitford, Dulce

Name

Britton, Roger E.
 Boyd, Jason
 Grey, Arie

School District/Organization

Froid Public School District
 Simms Public School District
 Kalispell Public School District

Name

Augare, Arlene

 Baker, Robin
 Boham, Russell
 Brown, Thomas
 Juneau, Carol
 Juneau, Stan
 Kicking Woman, Luanne
 Myers, Patty
 Merdinger, Sandy
 Boggess, Bart
 Kaler, Collier
 Stolle, Darrell

 Pretty Paint, Iris Dr.
 Smoker Broadus, Mandy
 Hayne, Bill Dr.
 Munson-Lenz, Michael

Organizations

MIEA (Montana Indian Education Association)
 MIEA
 MIEA
 MIEA
 MIEA
 MIEA
 MIEA
 MT Board of Public Education
 Gear – Up Director
 Mt. Talent Search
 U of M Montana Virtual Academy
 U of M Department Curriculum and Instruction
 Keynote Speaker
 Keynote Speaker
 Keynote Speaker
 MT OPI Indian Education Division