

Montana Indian Education Association



Report to Membership 2007-2008

Thank you from the MIEA Board of Directors to the MIEA Membership.

***It has been an honor serving you in representing the issues of
Indian Education in Montana***

MIEA Board of Directors 2007-08

Carol Juneau, Chairperson

Box 55, Browning, MT 59417

Thomas Brown, Vice Chairperson

Box 214, Brockton, MT 59213

Dulce Whitford, Urban Rep-East, Secretary

4702 Diana Drive, Great Falls, MT 59405

Joe Arrow Top, Treasurer

Box 1, Heart Butte, MT 59448

Joe Anderson, Urban Rep – West

2109 Broadway, Helena, MT 59601

Arlene Augare

Box 152, Heart Butte, MT 59448

Joyce Silverthorne

Box 149, Dixon, MT 59831

Larry Blacksmith

PO Box 707, Lodge Grass, MT 59050

Mariah Friedlander, HS Student Rep

PO Box 876, Pablo, MT. 59855

College Student – Vacant

MIEA Building Partnerships

To strengthen communications and advocacy for Indian Education in Montana it is important for MIEA to create partnerships through participation in other statewide educational organizations and activities to share our priorities and efforts on improving Indian education for Montana. MIEA Board members participated in a number of educational organizations throughout the year. Following is a list of events/organizations that MIEA had representation at in 2007-08:

- MEA-MFT Conference October 2007, Belgrade, Montana
This is one of the largest teacher conferences in Montana. MEA-MFT provides support to MIEA to host a guest speaker and workshop strand. October 2007 MIEA Keynote was Corri Smith. Dulce Whitford and Arlene Augare are the MIEA Reps on MEA Conf. Planning Committee

MEA-MFT 2008 Conference planning is underway with Dulce Whitford is MIEA Rep.
- Board of Regents
The Board of Regents governs the University System in Montana. Montana has one Indian who serves as a regent, Janine Pease. The primary issue this year with the BOR was the admission policies that were passed by the Board on math ACT requirements, which MIEA opposed.
MIEA also presented the 2007 Resolutions to the BOR.
Larry Blacksmith attended meeting in Lame Deer
- Board of Public Education
The Board of Public Education is the policy board for public schools, grades K-12. As 97% of American Indian students in Montana attend Public Schools, this is a key Board for MIEA to maintain communications with in the implementation of Indian Education for All and closing the achievement gap for Indian students. MIEA presents their resolutions to the BPE as well as other pertinent information.
Larry Blacksmith attended meeting in Lame Deer
- Board of Education
The Board of Education is a combined board of the Board of Public Education and the Board of Regents and is chaired by the Governor. MIEA presented a letter outlining its requests for legislative and funding priorities for the 2009 session.
Larry Blacksmith attended meeting in Lame Deer
Joe Anderson, attended BOE in Helena
Lynda Brannon, MIEA Consultant attended meeting in Helena
- Montana Learning First Alliance
Montana Learning First Alliance is a new organization of educational organizations in Montana such as MSBA, SAM, etc. It is in developmental stages. MIEA is participating in the planning process.
Larry Blacksmith, MIEA Rep
Lynda Brannon, MIEA Consultant

- Montana Quality Education Committee (MQEC)
MQEC is the group who has taken the state to court on school funding. MIEA had joined the law suit in 2004 with an Amicus Brief. MQEC has recently returned to court on school funding in January 2008.
Thomas Brown, MIEA Rep
Carol Juneau attended meeting in Helena.
- Governors K-College Work Group, Helena, Jan 31, 2008: This work group is the working committee of the Board of Education that provides feedback to the BOE.
Joyce Silverthorne, MIEA Rep.
Carol Juneau
- Montana Parent Information Resource Center, PIRC (WORD)
Joe Anderson, MIEA Rep to this group
- National Caucus of Native American State Legislature's Educational Summit, Helena, Mt, Sept. 28-29, 2007, on Closing the Achievement Gap for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Students in Grades K-12. Carol Juneau is the Chair of this Committee.
Joyce Silverthorne, MIEA Rep
Joe Anderson, MIEA Rep.
- Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE)
MACIE is the state advisory group that provides recommendations to OPI and to the Board of Public Education. MIEA has a representative on this Advisory Board.
MIEA and MACIE met jointly on January 30, 2008.
- National Indian Education Association Legislative Impact Summit in Washington, D. C. February 2008: Carol Juneau and Joyce Silverthorne (MIEA Board members) did attend this summit. (Both were representing different organizations at this Summit and travel covered by these organizations).

Legal:

MIEA has maintained communications with MQEC, the Montana Quality Education Coalition, who are the Plaintiffs on the School Funding Lawsuit. Thomas Brown is MIEA's Representative to MQEC. MQEC recently returned to court on school funding.

MIEA will continue to maintain communications with MQEC to insure that the funding issues of Indian Education for All, Closing the Achievement Gap for Indian Students, and for At Risk Students continue to be part of the discussions.

Corporation Reports as 501 C (3):

IRS Tax Report Returned completed and filed for 2006-07. MIEA is a tax exempt non-profit 501 C (3) organization.

Corporation Annual report completed and filed with Sec. of State. Paid \$15.00 March 5, 2008.

MIEA Other Activities 2007-2008

- Conference Planning for 2008 – Conference planning is an on-going activity for the Board at every meeting. Committees are organized for work that needs to be done.
- Completed Fort Peck Tribal Government Lessons for Tribal Gov. Curriculum – available on website. www.mtiea.org along with the Fast Facts on Tribal Governments
- MIEA website revised and updated - www.mtiea.org
- 2009 Educational Policy Advocacy: (Excerpts from letter presented to Board of Education, Jan. 2008)

“As the Board of Education develops your educational priorities for the Montana Legislature for 2009, please maintain your support for the following programs:”

1. Adequate and sustained funding for the implementation of Indian Education for All for both our K-12 educational system as well as the Montana University System. A lot of good work has been started in the past two years through the funding provided by the State and we need to continue until all schools and our University System has fully implemented Indian Education for All.
2. Continued funding of the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges for the non-beneficiary students.
3. Continued funding for the \$200.00 per Indian Student for Closing the Achievement Gap.*
4. Continued funding for the At Risk Student Funding.*

*Note: The Achievement Gap Funding and the At Risk Funding do not require a report to the Legislature until Sept. 2010 using FY 2006 as baseline data. We are in the 2nd year of implementation of these programs since funding started in 2006-07 and it would be helpful to seek some early progress data to determine the best practices that have been put into place and early results.

(20-9-328 – At Risk Payment and 20-9-330 American Indian Achievement Gap payment

5. Consider support for a Tribal Language Revitalization Grant Program for our schools. There are efforts underway in some of our schools, most made possible by Federal funds and it is time that the State of Montana take steps to help maintain the native languages of Montana.
- MIEA contracts for fiscal record keeping and reporting. The consultant prepares ongoing fiscal reports for the MIEA Board, Annual IRS Reports, and 1099's.
 - MIEA Board completed a review of the Policies and Procedures for Fiscal Management, Records Management, and Communication on March 11, 2008.
 - MIEA supported the National Conference of State Legislature's Project on Closing the Achievement Gap for American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Students.

- Opposed the Board of Regents Math ACT Requirement. This policy was passed by BOR for admission to 4-year units.

MIEA Position: “Montana Indian Education Association would like to go on record in our opposition to Policy No. 301.15 which proposes to increase the requirements for admission to the 4-year units of the University System, particularly the requirement of increasing the math ACT score from its current score of 18 to a score of 21 or above by 2010.”

“Again, as we opposed the writing proficiency assessment a couple of years ago, we stand firm on the efforts to increase access to the Montana University System for Montana’s American Indian students, not create additional barriers, which this policy will do.”

Data to support MIEA’s position includes:

In 2007 there were 286 American Indian students who took ACT with an average score of 18.1. In 2006 there were 269 American Indian students who took ACT with an average score of 17.5.

Also, per results sent from the Commissioner of Higher Education which shows the number of American Indians enrolled in the University System as fall 2007 (these are students who have been accepted and enrolled at MSU Bozeman, MSU Billings, MSU Northern, MSU Great Falls, UM Missoula, US_Tech, UM Western, and UM Helena).

Total enrolled American Indian Students.....	1,474
Total enrolled with ACT Score.....	564
Mean Score.....	18.9
Math score of 22 or higher.....	138 (24% of 564)*

**Based on above only 24% (138 of 564) would have been eligible for admission of those who had an ACT Test Score.*

- Urban Indian Education Forum – December 5-7, 2007, Billings, MT
Dulce Whitford and Joe Anderson, MIEA Urban Reps as well as Larry Blacksmith worked with Overall Fox, Billings Schools in organizing this first-ever Urban Indian Education Forum in Montana.

There were 75 participants. Thank you to Billings Public Schools, OPI, and Great Falls Public Schools for their sponsorship of this event with MIEA.

Excerpts from NIEA News, Winter 2008, Vol 39, Issue 2, Page 23:

“Indian Educators See Signs of Progress: Indian Students in Larger Schools are showing improvement on Standardized Tests”

...About 75 educators from six of Montana’s largest school districts attended the two day conference....When it comes to American Indian student achievement there are different challenges in urban schools, said conference organizers. “We focused on Indian education for so long we’ve put urban Indians off to the side because we didn’t really know how to deal with it,” Fox said. In Billings, there are 1,151 American Indian students spread out across the district in every school, which makes implementing programs to help them difficult. In Great Falls there are more than 1,300 American Indian students in the district, and that number is always changing, said Dulce Whitford, Great Falls School District Indian education specialist. They don’t always do well in large schools. “We have children who fall through the cracks, and we know that in a larger school setting those cracks are getting wider,” Whitford said...

Since it was the first conference on urban Indian education, the goals of the meetings were to provide information specific to urban Indian children, and begin to develop some best practices for boosting student achievement and inclusion. “The sense of urgency is very high among the schools represented here to do the right thing,” Whitford said.

Conference 2009 – Mark your Calendars: In efforts to be more effective in terms of planning, the MIEA Board has identified the conference site and dates for 2009 - Red Lion Colonial Inn in Helena, Montana, April 16-19, 2009. Often sites are unavailable for a conference of this size if we wait until the fall.

Recommendations for 2008-09

In planning for MIEA's goals for 2008-2009 following are areas that will need the Board's attention and action:

1. Conference 2009.
2. Urban Indian Education Forum.
3. Indian Education Policy and Funding in the 2009 Montana Legislative Session:
 - Indian Education For All Funding K-Higher Education
 - Closing the Achievement Gap Funding
 - At Risk Student Funding
 - Native Language Revitalization Grant Funding
4. MIEA will maintain participation at meetings of state educational organizations and state educational boards to insure on-going representation of Indian education issues including:
 - Montana Board of Public Education
 - Montana Board of Regents
 - Montana Board of Education
 - Education Forum
 - MEA-MFT
5. Maintain communications with Montana Quality Education Coalition on the School Funding issue.
6. Advocacy for federal Indian education policy and legislation that would benefit Montana Indian education.
7. Fundraising efforts for MIEA to seek a "home" for the organization as well as staffing for MIEA. This would give the organization much more visibility and a stronger advocacy role.
8. Resolution from 2008 follow up.
9. Strengthen the communications and information to MIEA membership through email newsletters and continue to keep the website updated with current information.

MIEA Meetings 2007-08

- May 7, 2007 – Conference Call – Planning a meeting date, Special Session Lobbyist contracted, Conference sites 2008 discussed including Billings, Missoula, Great Falls, Helena, update on Grantsmanship for MIEA
Members in Attendance: Dulce Whitford, Carol Juneau, Mariah Friedlander, Joe Anderson, Arlene Augare, Joe Arrowtop, Joyce Silverthorne
- May 22, 2007 Heritage Inn, Great Falls, MT – Organizational Meeting for 2007-08, Officers elected, setting board travel expenses, financial reports, minutes, MIEA Conference 2008 planning, Grantsmanship efforts, MEA-MFT planning, Indian Ed. for All Update
Members in attendance: Carol Juneau, Thomas Brown, Joe Arrowtop, Larry Blacksmith, Joe Anderson, Dulce Whitford, Joyce Silverthorne
- June 12, 2007 – Conference Call – Conference 2008 Planning
Members in attendance: Carol Juneau, Dulce Whitford, Thomas Brown, Joyce Silverthorne, Larry Blacksmith.
- July 9-10, 2007 – Kwa Tuk Nuk, Polson, MT. Financial reports, MIEA Conference 2007 Reports, OPI Indian Ed. Update, MIEA Conf. 2008 Planning (visit to Hilton),
Members in attendance: Carol Juneau, Joe Arrowtop, Joyce Silverthorne, Arlene Augare, Dulce Whitford, Thomas Brown, and Larry Blacksmith
- August 1, 2007 – Conference Call – MIEA Conference – Hilton Hotel Contract for 2008.
Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Larry Blacksmith, Arlene Augare, Joe Anderson, Joyce Silverthorne, and Mariah Friedlander. Excused: Joe Arrowtop and Thomas Brown.
- Sept. 10, 2007 – Conference Call – Scheduling next meeting, MEA-MFT, Website, Conference 2008 planning, Urban Indian Ed. Forum.
Members in Attendance: Joe Anderson, Dulce Whitford, Carol Juneau, Arlene Augare, Thomas Brown, Joyce Silverthorne
- October 20, 2007 – Meeting Hampton Inn, Bozeman: MIEA Conference 2008, Urban Indian Ed. Forum Planning, Reports from Board Members on meetings attended.
Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Thomas Brown, Dulce Whitford, Joe Arrowtop, Jo Anderson, Dulce Whitford, Maria Friedlander
- December 6, 2007- Billings, Montana, Billings Hotel and Convention Center (in conjunction with the Urban Indian Education Forum)
Members in Attendance: Thomas Brown, Larry Blacksmith, Joe Anderson, Dulce Whitford
- January 15, 2008 – Conference Call – Report by Lynda Brannon on Board of Ed, MIEA Conf. 2008 Update, MACIE meeting, MQEC meeting.
Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Dulce Whitford, Thomas Brown, Joe Anderson, Joe Arrowtop, Arlene Augare, Joyce Silverthorne, Mariah Friedlander and Lynda Brannon.
- January 30, 2008 – Joint Meeting with MACIE, Wingate Inn, Montana
Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Thomas Brown, Joyce Silverthorne,

Larry Blacksmith, Joe Arrowtop and Lynda Brannon

January 31, 2008 - MIEA Board Meeting, Wingate Inn, Helena. Discussion on Indian Education Funding priorities for 2009 Legislative Session, Conference 2008 planning. Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Thomas Brown, Joyce Silverthorne, Larry Blacksmith, Joe Arrowtop

March 9, 2008 - MIEA Board Meeting, Holiday Inn, Great Falls: Finalizing Conference 2008 workshops, forums, speakers, and other activities, Fiscal Reports, MEA-MFT Conf. 2009 update, MQEC Remedy Committee on school funding discussion. Members in Attendance: Carol Juneau, Thomas Brown, Dulce Whitford, Joe Arrowtop, Joyce Silverthorne, Larry Blacksmith, Arlene Augare, Joe Anderson

Note: MIEA Board Members serve on a volunteer basis. There is no salary paid to MIEA Board members. Travel expenses are paid for meetings.