

**OCHE Response to the**  
**MONTANA INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**  
**SUMMARY OF 2008 RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION 2008-08: Support Funding for Non-Beneficiary Students at Montana's Tribal Colleges:** MIEA supports the State of Montana funding the seven Tribally Controlled Community College's non-beneficiary students at a level of equity with other state community colleges per FTE funding (\$3,024) as allowed in HB 16 and requests the Board of Regents to include this amount in their budget.

***OCHE RESPONSE***

*In the course of discussions with personnel in the Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning, we have requested, for the 2011 biennium, a base level of funding of \$950,000/yr for Non-Beneficiary students. The \$950,000 should be sufficient to cover the maximum per student FTE funding level of \$3,024, currently allowed in state statute.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-12: Support training for more Indian teachers and administrators:** MIEA requests that the teacher training programs within the Montana University System as well as the Tribal Colleges actively recruit and train American Indian teacher education program candidates as well as American Indian administrative candidates.

***OCHE RESPONSE***

*The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education will request information from the Deans of the Colleges of Education on their current practices on recruiting and training American Indian teacher education program candidates. We will also request information on how they recruit and train American Indian administrative candidates. This information will be shared with the MIEA membership at the MIEA 2009 conference.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-13: Annual report on Indian Education by MBPE and BOR:**

MIEA requests that the Montana Board of Public Education and the Montana Board of Regents request an annual report, by OPI and OCHE, to provide data on the current status of American Indian education in the state's educational institutions including, but not limited to American Indian student enrollment, achievement data, testing, special education data, graduation rate data, dropout rates, discipline reports including suspension and expulsion, staffing (by ethnic levels for teachers as well as support personnel), with data separated by schools on and near reservations and off reservation, as well as recommendations for strengthening services to American Indian students K-20; and with OCHE data to include enrollments, graduation rates, faculty (by ethnic status), and other data to show the achievement levels of American Indian students in the University System.

***OCHE RESPONSE***

*The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education will compile a report for the MIEA membership that will provide data on the current status of American Indian education in the Montana University System. It will include the data requested and other information that will be of interest to the membership. This report will be completed and presented to the MIEA membership at the MIEA 2009 conference.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-17: Essential Understandings to serve as guide for Indian Education for All:**

MIEA recognizes the "Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians" as developed by the Office of Public Instruction's Indian Education Office in collaboration with Indian education experts from the tribal nations of Montana, as the guide for the state's educational institutions for implementation of Indian Education for All Montanans.

***OCHE RESPONSE***

*The Commissioner of Higher Education will provide copies of the document "Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians" to each Provost of the campuses of the Montana University System. A cover letter from the Commissioner will emphasize its use as the guide for implementation of Indian Education for All Montanans.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-22: Funding for Indian Education for All in the Units of the University System:**

MIEA urges the Montana Legislature, Governor Schweitzer, and Board of Regents to support adequate funding for the Montana University System for implementation of Indian Education for All in all Units of the University System.

**OCHE RESPONSE**

*In recent legislative sessions, the Board of Regents has adopted as a high priority new funding proposals for Indian Education for All. These funding proposals were not incorporated into the Executive budget, nor were they successful in the Legislative funding deliberations. With the emphasis placed on Indian Education for All at the K-12 level, there appears to be a reluctance, on the part of the legislature, to add another level of funding at this point in time.*

*Absent specific funding, the Montana University System has emphasized integrating the Essential Understandings into course work in many programs of study, especially the general education transfer core. In addition, seminars and workshops for faculty, staff, and students on Indian Education for All have been scheduled on the campuses during the current biennium, and these will continue.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-26: Preservation and revitalization of Montana Tribal Language:** The Montana Indian Education Association will advocate for tribal language immersion programs for the preservation and revitalization of Montana Tribal Language and asks Montana’s Governor, state legislature, state educational leadership, tribal leadership, other educational organizations and help through policy development, advocacy within their leadership roles and supporting adequate funding at all levels.

**OCHE RESPONSE**

*The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education will assist in the development of policy, advocate for the preservation and revitalization of Montana’s American Indian languages and support adequate funding for this effort.*

**RESOLUTION 2008-28: MIEA supports the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators Report “Striving to Achieve: Helping Native American Indian Students Succeed”:** MIEA supports this report with its Policy Recommendations on Closing the Achievement Gap for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students and asks the Montana Governor, State Legislature, State Educational leadership, Tribal Government leadership, School Districts, and our Montana Congressional Delegation to take action to implement these policy recommendations to help All Indian students find success in our Montana schools.

**OCHE RESPONSE**

*The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education will review the recommendations of the National Caucus of Native American Legislators report “Striving to Achieve: Helping Native American Indian Students Succeed” and report on our specific support at the MIEA 2009 Conference.*

