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House JOINT RESOLUTION NO. *HJR*
INTRODUCED BY *Pearse, Heavy Runner, Kitzberger and King*
Scott Whitehead

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO ADOPT RULES REQUIRING PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO INTEGRATE MONTANA INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE INTO THE EXISTING CURRICULA FOR ACCREDITATION PURPOSES AND REQUIRING COMPLETION OF A NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES CLASS, WITH EMPHASIS ON MONTANA INDIAN EDUCATION, BY APPLICANTS FOR A MONTANA TEACHING CERTIFICATE OR FOR RENEWAL OF A TEACHING CERTIFICATE.

WHEREAS, prior to 1924, most American Indians did not receive state-supported education because they were not citizens and most states were reluctant to provide educational services to them without direct federal assistance; and

WHEREAS, along with legislation ending the Allotment Period, in 1934 Congress enacted the Johnson-O'Malley Act, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to contract with states for the education, medical attention, agricultural assistance, and social welfare of American Indians in the state and provided funds designed to reduce the boarding school enrollment by enrolling and educating Indian students in local public schools; and

WHEREAS, as part of the state's educational guarantees, the people of Montana in 1972 included Article X, section 1, subsection (2), in the state constitution, recognizing the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and expressing the state's commitment to preserve that cultural integrity through education; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that Article X, section 9, subsection (3), of the Montana Constitution provides the Board of Public Education with general supervision over the public school system; and

WHEREAS, the 1973 Legislature enacted House Bill No. 343, which required Indian studies to be a part of the educational background of public school teaching personnel employed in public schools located on or near Indian reservations and encouraged Indian studies as part of the educational background of all school personnel in the state; and

WHEREAS, the 1974 Legislature enacted House Joint Resolution No. 60, which clarified House Bill

1 No. 343 and directed the Board of Public Education and the Board of Regents to devise a statewide master
2 plan for enriching the background of all public school teachers in American Indian culture; and

3 WHEREAS, in response to lobbying efforts and controversy related to the Indian studies
4 requirement, the 1979 Legislature amended House Bill No. 343 to allow individual school districts the option
5 of requiring Indian studies; and

6 WHEREAS, the 1995 Legislature enacted Senate Joint Resolution No. 11, which requested that the
7 Committee on Indian Affairs study and report to the 1997 Legislature the degree to which Montana's public
8 schools are in compliance with Article X, section 1, subsection (2), of the Montana Constitution; and

9 WHEREAS, as part of that study, the Committee on Indian Affairs conducted a random survey of
10 153 public school districts and 363 elementary, middle, and high schools in Montana requesting specific
11 information relating to district policy and descriptions of existing classroom curricula related to American
12 Indian history, culture, or language; and

13 WHEREAS, in response to the survey, many school districts and schools, including those adjacent
14 to Montana's seven Indian reservations, reported that neither district policy nor school curricula reflected
15 the inclusion of American Indian studies; and

16 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that the history of Montana and the current problems of the
17 state cannot be adequately understood and addressed unless both Indians and non-Indians have an
18 understanding of the history, culture, and contributions of Montana's Indians; and

19 WHEREAS, the Legislature commends the Board of Public Education for its efforts to support Article
20 X, section 1, subsection (2), of the Montana Constitution by adopting an administrative rule establishing
21 the Class 7 American Indian language and culture specialist.

22
23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
24 STATE OF MONTANA:

25 (1) That the Board of Public Education be strongly urged to adopt rules requiring Montana's public
26 schools to integrate Montana Indian history and culture into the existing curricula for accreditation
27 purposes.

28 (2) That the Board of Public Education be further urged to adopt rules requiring completion of a
29 Native American studies class, with particular emphasis on Montana Indian education, by applicants for a
30 Montana teaching certificate or teachers seeking renewal of an existing teaching certificate.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the Board
2 of Public Education, to the Board of Regents, to the Office of Public Instruction, to the tribal governments
3 of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, the Blackfeet Nation, the
4 Northern Cheyenne Tribe, the Crow Tribe, the Chippewa-Cree Tribe, the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine
5 Tribes, the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, and the Little Shell Band of Chippewa, and to the tribal colleges
6 located on each reservation.

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