Montana has been on the forefront of Indian Education starting at the 1972 Constitutional Convention. The Montana state constitution states: “The state recognizes the unique and distinct cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural heritage” (McCulloch, 2000). It is constitutionally mandated to recognize the “distinct and unique culture heritage” of Native Americans. Then in 1999, Indian Education became a law. It states:

“(1) It is the constitutionally declared policy of this state to recognize the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and to be committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural heritage.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature that in accordance with Article X, section 1(2), of the Montana constitution:

(a) Every Montanan, whether Indian or non-Indian, be encouraged to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner; and

(b) Every educational agency and all educational personnel will work cooperatively with Montana tribes or those tribes that are in close proximity, when providing instruction or when implementing an educational goal or adopting a rule related to the education of each Montana citizen, to include information specific to the cultural heritage and contemporary contributions of American Indians, with particular emphasis on Montana Indian tribal groups and governments.

(3) It is also the intent of this part, predicated on the belief that all school personnel should have an understanding and awareness of Indian tribes to help them relate effectively with Indian students and parents, that educational personnel provide means by which school personnel will gain an understanding of and appreciation for the American Indian people.

But, implementation of Indian Education for All is not only a legal obligation but it is also a moral and instructional obligation. For too long, Native American history, culture, and perspectives have been invisible in K-12 school curriculum. Native Americans deserve to have a cultural heritage and an identity in the school. Implementing IEFA into the school benefits all students, Indian and non-Indian alike. Students understand each other and understand the world better when other perspectives are present in their learning. It is our moral obligation to create a learning environment that fosters self-identity, self-worth and growth to all students, not just the majority students. Banks argues “Identifying with an ethnic group is extremely important to the socialization of the individual within a highly modernized world” (1974). In order for students from various ethnic backgrounds, such as Native Americans, students need to identify with the perspectives present in their schools.