



# *Polson School District #23*

Polson School District Press Release:

May 24, 2019

We recently became aware of a significant amount of misinformation circulating on social media regarding the Polson High School graduation ceremonies. The Indian Education Committee, representatives of Tribal Education, and representatives from the Polson School meet regularly to collaborate on a variety of student-related issues, and to ensure collaboration between these important entities. On May 20, 2019, we met to discuss the upcoming Polson High School graduation ceremonies and the annual issue of monitoring what students wear to graduation. All of the parties to the discussion are familiar with Montana Code Annotated Section 2-1-315, which permits students to wear tribal regalia and objects of cultural significance. A school district representative asked that the representatives of the Indian Education Committee provide guidance on the respectful and appropriate use of culturally significant materials with their graduation attire, as opposed to school staff trying to make that determination.

At no time did any member of the group state that students would be prevented from exercising their rights under Section 2-1-315, MCA. Every attempt to explain this to the individual who has presented the misinformation was rebuffed, and efforts continue on social media to disrupt what should be a joyous event for our families and community.

The Polson School District, the Indian Education Committee and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Education Department remain committed to working together to provide the best educational opportunities to our children, and will continue to do so. Additionally, the school has requested guidance from the Salish-Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai Culture Committees. We welcome any questions or concerns.

Rex Weltz  
Superintendent