

American Civil Liberties Union - Montana (ACLU-MT)

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://www.aclumontana.org/en/press-releases/report-released-horrific-practices-federal-indian-boarding-schools>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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MISSOULA, MT - The U.S. Department of Interior released its investigative report on the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. This comes nearly a year after the department, under the leadership of Secretary Deb Haaland (Pueblo of Laguna, and the first Native American woman to hold the position, which oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, among other agencies), announced a comprehensive review of the inter-generational impact of Indian boarding schools to shed light on the unspoken traumas of the past, no matter how hard it will be.

The following statement was issued by ACLU of Montana Indigenous Justice Program Manager Sharen Kickingwoman in response to the report:

The report released by the Department of the Interior is a historic step of the United States affirming what our communities have always known to be true that Federal Indian boarding schools used deeply troubling practices to assimilate and subjugate Indigenous children.

It is impossible to separate the impact of boarding schools from the contemporary violence Indigenous communities face. As we engage in our Indigenous Justice work today, we see the legacy of boarding schools in our communities and work in the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Girls/Two Spirit individuals, discrimination against Native American students in schools, disparities in police violence and incarceration rates.

This truly horrific history needs accountability and healing and this report is the first step in the federal government acknowledging its role. We commit to the long road ahead to truly bring justice and healing to Indigenous communities who have long been impacted by this violence.

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