

Timeline by Dr Keliiaa

National Policy: Indian Boarding Schools in California



NASMC
Native American
Studies
Model Curriculum

National Policy: Indian Boarding Schools in California

Author:

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Grade Level:

9-12

Subjects:

Ethnic Studies; History–Social Science

Time Frame:

1-2 class sessions

Lesson Slides:

 **Slides: National Policy**

Lesson Script:

Slides 7 – 18 offer an audio lecture by the author.

Materials Needed:

- A/V equipment for playing slides and audio clips

Curriculum Themes

- History
- Law/Government

Lesson Overview

This unit reviews a brief history of national Indian Boarding School policy and its effects locally in California with particular attention to Sherman Indian School in Riverside, CA. Students will engage in a Think – Pair – Share activity, will learn about the creation of the first off-reservation boarding school, and see a timeline of western and California-based schools. Students will hear first-hand accounts from federal officials and learn how boarding schools prioritized gendered labor. At the end of the lesson, students will define key terms and revisit essential questions. Lesson includes references to optional videos and additional materials and resources.



Learning Goals

Students will:

- Evaluate Indian Boarding School policy nationally and locally in California
- Learn what compulsory “education” was like for Native American children in the late 19th and 20th centuries
- Identify key policymakers and officials who created and supported the Indian Boarding School system

Background for Educators

This lesson is a great addition to lessons on education, segregation and Native American history. Indian Boarding schools have affected generations of Native people in the US—in fact most Native families have had an ancestor who attended one or more of these schools. Further, under the leadership of Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative sought to further understand the impact these institutions had on Native children and their families.

Prior to this lesson, teachers will need to establish that Native American communities exist in the United States and that many were affected by Indian boarding school policy. Teachers should not discuss Native American people in the past tense. This lesson is best taught in conjunction with lessons around the history of California especially in the late 19th century and early 20th centuries. It may also be taught alongside broader US history and Native American history. Alternatively, it can be taught with lessons that surround Ethnic Studies curriculum including conversations around education, segregation, Native American issues, and people of color.

Curriculum Standards

Theme for Ethnic Studies: National policies, Native resistance and survival.

History–Social Science:

- HSS-11.1.4: Examine the effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction and of the industrial revolution, including demographic shifts and the emergence in the late nineteenth century of the United States as a world power.
- HSS-11.3.2: Analyze the great religious revivals and the leaders involved in them, including the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, the Civil War revivals, the Social Gospel Movement, the rise of Christian liberal theology in the nineteenth century, the impact of the Second Vatican Council, and the rise of Christian fundamentalism in current times.

Teacher Directions

This lesson plan is designed to be “plug and play.” Slides 7 – 18 (except 8 & 12) offer an audio lecture by the author.

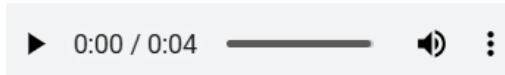
- To listen to the provided audio, click the audio playback icons one at a time.



(image of playback icon)

There may be a slight pause while the audio loads after each click.

Clicking the playback icon will reveal a playback bar that allows you to play, pause, adjust playback speed, or fast-forward the audio.



(example image of playback bar)

You do not need to do anything with the playback bar to listen to the audio file.

In the following order, teachers will:

- 1) Read text on slides 1 – 5
- 2) Think – Pair – Share Activity
 - a. Read the text on slide 6 to initiate the activity
- 3) Begin a lecture that includes details on the creation of the first off-reservation boarding school and a timeline of western and California-based schools. Students will hear first-hand accounts from federal officials and learn how boarding schools prioritized gendered labor.
 - a. Read text on slides 7 – 18
 - b. Option: click on the audio file icon (on each slide) and press play to hear Dr. Keliiaa
- 4) Define Key Terms
 - a. Read text on slide 19 and have your students define each term. This can be done in groups or individually.
- 5) Revisit Essential Questions
 - a. Read slide 20
- 6) The lesson includes references to optional videos and additional materials and resources.

Scaffolding

English language learners may benefit from the following strategies:

Emerging: Students pair up to discuss the meaning of the vocabulary terms.

Expanding: Students brainstorm more details and examples of the terms, drawing pictures.

Bridging: Students incorporate their worksheet notes, with what they learned in the slides/videos, to write a more complex paragraph about the significance of the terms.

Additional Resources for Teachers

See: Slides 21 and 22.

For further details on Indian Boarding schools, visit the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS). This resource includes maps, reports, further curriculum and resources:

- <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/>
- Bonus homework exercise: In October of 2024, President Biden issued a formal apology for the US Indian Boarding School system. Have students watch or read Biden's apology and write a 1-page response to the following prompt: Considering the tens of thousands of Native children who were forced to endure boarding schools, how might Biden's apology be received by Native people?

See also the Heard Museum's "Home Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories," which includes, photos, interviews, curriculum, and more:

- <https://boardingschool.heard.org/>

For more on the Indian Boarding School system and its relation to child removal and mid-20th century adoption policy, see Vox's 13-minute video, *How the US stole thousands of Native American children* (Part 1, 7 minutes, focuses on Indian Boarding Schools, Part 2 on Adoption)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGqWRyBCHhw>

For another video, see *Why One Historic Indian Boarding School is Now...Good?* From PBS Origins featuring First Nations (Canadian) comic, writer and actor, Tai Leclair. This 11-minute video discusses the history of Haskell Indian Nations University, an Indian boarding school that is open to this day. This video comes from the series, *A People's History of Native America*, which includes a number of great mini-history lessons about Native Americans.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6iETRsyPTY>

References

For teacher's further reading, the following references are recommended:

- Adams, David Wallace. *Education for Extinction : American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*. University Press of Kansas, 1995.
- Child, Brenda J., and publisher University of Nebraska Press. *Boarding School Seasons : American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. University of Nebraska Press, 1999.
- Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. *They Called It Prairie Light : The Story of Chilocco Indian School*. University of Nebraska Press, 1994.
- Whalen, Kevin. *Native Students at Work : American Indian Labor and Sherman Institute's Outing Program, 1900-1945*. University of Washington Press, 2016.
- Keliiaa, Caitlin. *Refusing Settler Domesticity : Native Women's Labor and Resistance in the Bay Area Outing Program*. University of Washington Press, 2024.



California Native American Studies Model Curriculum

The California Native American Studies Model Curriculum (NASMC) will support the design and development of open-source lesson plans, primary source documents, planning resources, teaching strategies, and professional development activities to assist California K-12 educators in teaching about California Native American Studies. Per AB 167, the NASMC is defined as lesson plans, primary source documents, planning resources, teaching strategies, and professional development activities to assist educators in teaching about Native American Studies. The traditional cultural knowledge within lessons, including Native language, art, media and stories, are owned by the respective Tribal nations, Native knowledge keepers, artists, producers and authors of the curriculum as indicated in each lesson.

