MCPS Native American Student Services

Indigenous Insighter

September 2025

MCPS Staff Shareouts



Okii, September was an exciting month, we did our annual Glacier Trip the 2nd week of school. One of my highlights of the trip was going around The Going to the Sun Road, for most of our students it was their first time seeing this beautiful country. We made sure to stop at all the popular sites so the kids could snap a few pictures and see the land most Montana tribes called home.

The International Club at Big Sky asked if the RISE Students cloud share some of their culture with the Japanese Exchange students. We had students from different schools come together and demonstrate different dances and ended with a round dance.

This month we also went to CSKT Tribal PIR Day, which was very beneficial for me as I selected different Native craft workshops that I will be able to bring into the classroom and share with my students.

The NAS department gifted each Middle School and High School a Tipi. We scheduled times after hours to teach staff at each school how to set up their new Tipi. This year looks a little different from last year as I have two more schools on my schedule. The past couple weeks I been introducing myself to the new 6th and 9th graders, and meeting the staff and students at my new schools.





MCPS Native American Student Services
909 South Ave W.
Building B, Rm 120
Missoula, MT 59802

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Hello everyone,

It has been a great start to the year so far. Seeing all of the students and staff again has been wonderful! I am the Native American Student Support Specialist for Lowell, Paxson, Russell, Hawthorne, and Chief Charlo this school year. So far, we have started working on making paint out of berries. My students have seemed to really enjoy that. We have also been discussing other materials tribal people have used to make paint. Additionally, I had the opportunity to attend the Tribal PIR day in Ronan. I was able to learn some new skills that I plan on implementing into my lunch group lessons throughout the year.

I look forward to the coming months with my students and co-workers!

Lemlmtš - Thank you

Ali North







Student grinding up berries to make paint.





Okii!! Welcome back to the new school year! I'm excited to be back! I will be at the same schools this year. The only change is that I will be seeing Lewis and Clark students weekly. We started the year off with our camping trip to Glacier National Park. It was a good time with our students. The students got to visit the Buffalo Hide Academy and Browning High School. It was nice for our students to interact with the students of Browning schools. Most got to see family, friends, and their parents senior pictures.

I helped my co-worker Leigh and his RISE students at Big Sky High School with activities for the visiting Japanese students. The students did a good job introducing themselves and explaining our culture.

As a department we attended a lecture with Dr Laney Real Bird and the CSKT PIR day up in Ronan. I enjoyed the lecture, Dr Real Bird talked with us about teaching language in the classroom. At the CSKT PIR day I got to attend some beading classes that helped me with skills that I can bring back to my students.

Towards the end of the month I was able to get into my schools to meet with students. At Sentinel we had our first RISE meeting. It was good to see my returning students and meet the new ones. Our group will be running the next RISE meeting. I'm excited to see what they come up with. Our department and a couple of RISE students taught a few Sentinel staff member how to set up a tipi.



Washington MS has a new principal this year and he's been working with me to get a room secured for when I meet with students. Last Spring we purchased some games to help teach the Blackfeet language. Powwow highway was the first game that they played.. They enjoyed it. We were also able to set up a tipi here as well.

I'm excited that I was able to get a classroom at Hellgate High School. I will be meeting in classroom 351. I have been working with the Assist Principal Hanford to get some beading supplies ordered for a beading group. Many of the student have asked about beading.

Lewis and Clark: My all time favorite school, this is where I first started as a para and started the All Nations club. They always have a warm welcome for me. I have a room to meet with my students one on one and a place where we meet as a group. I will be doing some classroom reading as well as some beading projects with my Lynx Learners.

Willard: I met with a student and got to get her started on beading a lanyard. She is off to a good start.

I also got to make it the Freshman showcases at both Sentinel and Hellgate HS. Our department put on the American Heritage Day Round dance this past Friday. It was a nice turn out.







GREETINGS~

It's hard to believe that we are starting our 6th week of school - it's been busy (good busy). Charlie Struna & Keila Cross continue to be the IEFA instructional coaches. We are busy connecting with & presenting to all the MCPS schools and making meaningful plans for this academicFall Beginnings 2025 year. Teachers are eager and that makes our jobs really fun!

Our Department took Native high school students (& a few middle schoolers) camping in Glacier National Park. Kelly Egen from Meadow Hill & Matt Keenan from Big Sky High School were able to join. This was an incredible - majestic experience. We started our trip by touring the Nine Pipes Museum, traveling The Going to the Sun Road, setting up camp, having a cook out, telling stories, & sharing laughter. We woke early the following day and began preparations for a glorious day of hiking St Mary's Falls & Virginia Falls. Park Rangers hiked with us, sharing stories / ecology/ geography / history. Highlight was watching the kids jump in the freezing St Mary's lake after a 7mile hike! Elders, Larry & Lee Ground, met with us around the campfire that evening to share their wisdom & personal stories with students. Elk bugled & coyotes sang in the background. We woke early to a frigid morning and traveled to Browning where we toured Buffalo Academy, Browning High School, & the Plains Indian Museum. We capped off our adventure by pausing at Looking Glass with reverence & respect.

Additional Highlights (just a few):

- Working alongside Dr. Lanny Real Bird for two days. Dr. Lanny travelled from Crow Agency to work with 4th & 5th graders from Hawthorne Elementary and Lowell Elementary on *Plains Sign Language.*
- Teachers participated in PD focusing on MMIP of Montana by visiting the Missoula Art Museum's exhibit *OUTRAGE: Missing Murdered Indigenous People in Montana* by Artist Brian Maguire.
- Attending CSKT PD offerings. Our Department along with two MCPS teachers (Isabella Clinch & Toni Braig) enjoyed a full day of connection & culture. Keila enjoyed attending a variety of traditional weaving & beading courses. Charlie spent time connecting with educators on policies & approaches to IEFA.
- Charlie will continue as the RISE advisor for Seeley Swan. Charlie & Keila will share RISE at Hellgate. So much FUN! We love our students!
- Busy-busy setting up tipis (high school & middle school) with building staff at schools around the district.
- Seeing attendance increase at the Round Dance from last year's dance.

October is full of awesome experiences. A *few* highlighted upcoming events:

- ➔ Beartrack's Powwow
- ➔ MCPS second annual Bison Harvest
- ➔ First book club of the year "Brothers on Three" by Abe Streep
- ➔ Supaman
- ➔ NASS Halloween Carnival
- ➔ Indigenous Narratives through Art MAM & MMAC Museum Tour : IEFA

Be well.
With Gratitude,
Charlie Struna & Keila Cross
IEFA Instructional Coaches




PRIDE













MCPS NASS Parent Advisory Committee

All parents and guardians of Native American MCPS students are encouraged to attend PAC meetings on the first of each month.

2025-26 PAC

Parent Representatives:

- ★ Matt Bell
- ★ Julie Cahoon
- ★ KaylaBeth Charlo
- ★ Lyman Ferguson
- ★ Chad Villegas

Student Representative

- ★

Teacher Representative

- ★ Alyssa Johnson



MCPS Admin B 909 South Ave W
Questions: bjuneau@mcpsmt.org (406) 728-2400 ext. 1063

PAC meeting
10/1/2025
6 pm
MCPS Admin B
909 South Ave
West

Chicken noodle soup will be served. Bring a dish to share!



NASS HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL

A family friendly Halloween event for kids and adults!
Carnival games, costumes, music and prizes!

28 OCTOBER

FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY
1910 S 11th St W Missoula, MT 59801
6-8 pm

Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services

Connect
Contribute
Cultivate
MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FORWARD THINKING, HIGH ACHIEVING.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY 2025

Beartracks Celebration

POWWOW

Sx^{w}uytis Smx̣e Esyapqeyni



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

FREE ADMISSION

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION

DANCERS

VENDORS

FOOD TRUCKS

SINGERS & DRUMS

OCTOBER 13TH

GRAND ENTRY AT 2PM

CARAS PARK MISSOULA

Vendors contact Martin Charlo: 406.274.6892 Martin.charlo@cskt.org

The CSKT Tribe is not responsible for lost or stolen items. This is a drug and alcohol free event.


SUPAMAN
IN CONCERT
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23RD
SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL'S
MARGARET JOHNSON THEATER
7 PM
FREE!
MISSOULA COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving.
SPARK!
ARTS IGNITE LEARNING
Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

> > 2025-2026 NASS School Assignments and Contact Info< <

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	ASSIGNED SCHOOL
KEILA CROSS	1049	KCROSS@MCPSMT.ORG	ALL ELEMENTARY
CHARLIE STRUNA	1068	CSTRUNA@MCPSMT.ORG	MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS Seeley Lake High School
LEIGH MALATARE	1047	LMALATARE@MCPSMT.ORG	Franklin Elementary School, Big Sky High School Jeanette Rankin Elementary Rattlesnake Elementary Meadowhill Middle School CS Porter Middle School
ALI NORTH	1050	ANORTH@MCPSMT.ORG	Paxson Elementary Lowell Elementary Chief Charlo Hawthorne Elementary Russell Elementary
TRENA OLD PERSON	1028	TOLDPERSON@MCPSMT.ORG	Willard Alternative School Hellgate High School Sentinel High School Washington Middle School Lewis and Clark Elementary
BILLIE JO JUNEAU	1063	BJUNEAU@MCPSMT.ORG	

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

> > 2025-2026 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR < <

EVENT NAME	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Back to School BBQ	Monday, Aug. 25	5-6:30 pm	MCPS Admin B
American Indian Heritage Day Round Dance	Friday, Sept. 26	6 - 9 pm	C.S. Porter Middle School
SEPTEMBER 26: AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE DAY (MONTANA)			
SEPTEMBER 30: ORANGE SHIRT DAY - NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE (US/CANADA)			
OCTOBER 13 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY (US)			
Halloween Carnival	Tuesday, Oct. 28	6 - 8 pm	Franklin Elementary School
NOVEMBER: NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH			
Moccasin Making Workshop	Monday, Nov. 3 Monday, Nov. 10	5:30-8 pm	MCPS Admin B
Earring Making Workshop	Monday, Dec 8 Monday, Dec 15	5:30 -7:30 pm	MCPS Admin B
Bingo	Wednesday, Jan. 14	5:30-7:30 pm	MCPS Admin B
YaYa Dolls Workshop	Monday, Feb.12	5:30 - 7:30 pm	MCPS Admin B
Pouch making Workshop	March 19	5:30 - 7:30 pm	MCPS Admin B
Native Youth Powwow	April 25	12 - 10 pm	Sentinel High School
MAY 5: NATIONAL MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS PERSONS' AWARENESS DAY (US)			
Native Graduates Senior Dinner	Tuesday, May 19	6 - 8 pm	TBA
End of Year Celebration	Tuesday, June 2	5 - 6:30 pm	Sentinel High School