MCPS Native American Student Services

Indigenous Insighter

December 2025

MCPS Staff Shareouts



Okii, during December in my Elementary schools we played board games and finished up their chokers. At Rattlesnake we started drumming and working on the Black Lodge Kids pow wow songs. My middle schools are doing stick game, and we had a frybread xmas party at each school. At Big Sky we do our Rise meetings and will be starting our drum group soon.







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

Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Xest Sxlxalt
(Good Day)



Hello everyone! I am excited to talk about the events that took place in December. The first week of the month was wonderful. Students had the opportunity to try Dry Meat during lunch groups. Most of the students enjoyed the flavor of it. We also talked about the different methods of drying meat during that time. The second week of December was important as students listened to me tell a Salish Coyote story. Our students were very interested in listening to the story and the importance of following Salish customs surrounding Coyote Stories. The last week of school was a great way to end the year. We ordered wooden ornaments and provided students with examples of Native American designs they could use for their ornaments. I look forward to 2026 with our students, families, and staff.
Xest Nwel (Merry Christmas)











This month of December went by fast, with a lot going on in our department. I helped with the earring classes, it was fun to be around staff and the community.
In all my schools I'm working with the community liaisons to get some Kyssmass cards out to students.
Willard: We are still doing a beading project. I have been in contact with the school social worker helping her and our students through legal situations.

Sentinel: We've been doing the regular RISE meetings. I had Michele H from OPI reach out to me to have one of the Sentinel students join a panel.

Washington: The girls are finishing up their ribbon skirts, all are or about ready to sew. Was hoping to get them done before break.

Hellgate: The Indigenous Student Union had their month of December planned out. The first week, they all met in the classroom and started on beading projects. This past Thursday they had their first frybread sale. It was a hit! This last day before the break they are going to treat themselves to Chick-fil-a.

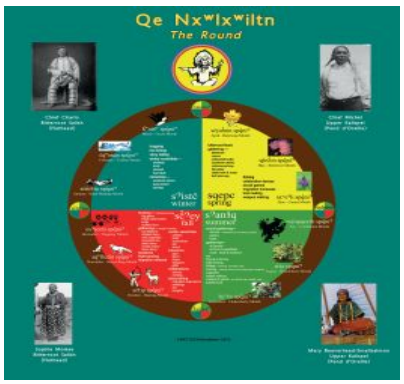
Lewis & Clark: I went into the 3rd grade classes to share a presentation about Salish seasonal rounds. I am also going into the kindergarteners classes and share coyote stories.















ember unwrapped...

(Blackfeet / Piikani)
a (Salish / Séliš-Qlispé)
ée (Crow / Apsáalooke)
ehe e'seeve'e (Northern Cheyenne / Tsis tsis'tas)



ETINGS~

ew December highlights:

Being invited to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Montana Heritage Center in Helena.
Teaching traditional Games to Professor Joe's UM preserve teachers.
Two different earring classes!
Connecting with our RISE students.
Working with Lowell 3rd graders on an Iniskim project.
Creating works of art that reflect bears unique hibernation patterns to the artwork of John Nieto & ledger art in Ms Dirnberger's Kinder class.
Fry bread feast at Seeley & fry bread fun at Hellgate.
Meaningful opportunities with students, teachers, & families.



ember has been jam-packed & we reflect on 2025 with gratitude all we've accomplished & look to 2026, with hope & optimism for hat is to come. We are grateful for food to eat, people to love, & arm place to sleep...

n deep gratitude,
rlie Struna & Keila Cross





Thank you MCPS NASS parents, students and MCPS staff! We would not be able to do the work we love without your support!



MCPS NASS Parent Advisory Committee

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

2025-26 PAC

Parent Representatives:

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

Student Representative

- ★ Seth Martin
- ★ Lance Comes at Night
- ★ Joshua Na

Teacher Representative

- ★ Alyssa Johnson



PAC meeting
1/7/2026
6 pm
MCPS Admin B
909 South Ave
West

Sandwiches
Bring a dish to share!

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

Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services



WE ARE LOOKING FOR HELPERS:

Join our team! Work with our Native Youth to keep culture alive through singing, drumming, and dancing. We are forming a troupe

Do you have the knowledge to teach?

DRUMMING/SINGING
DANCE STYLES
HOW TO MAKE REGALIA





Responsibilities:

- Teach songs to our musicians
- Help students make outfits and pieces
- Provide mentoring/support to students
- Teach powwow ettiquette
- Teach dance steps and styles

Qualifications:

- Experience participating in powwows
- Willing to work with students after school and/or weekends
- Reliable and punctual
- Willingness to be part of a team

Interested?

email Billie Jo Juneau
bjuneau@mcpsmt.org

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving

MCPS
Native American
Student Services

BINGO Night

Gather your family, friends, and fellow trivia enthusiasts for an evening of thrilling games, fabulous prizes, and unforgettable memories.

JANUARY 14TH
ADMINISTRATION BLDG B
909 S. AVE WEST

5:30-7:30 PM
Doors open at 5

Bring a Snack to share

All are welcome!
PRIZES
FOOD
FUN

Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving

The University of Montana
and MCPS NASS
PRESENTS:

N7 Game Day Experience



Jan 24, 2026

1 PM, Lunch and activities
Game at 4 pm

- Payne Family Native American Center
- E Sports
- The Adams Center
- UM Dining Services

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Missoula County Public Schools
Native American Student Services

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Scan the QR code to sign up

MCPS Native American Student Services presents:

Native American Student Leadership Training

- Learn from Native American Leaders
- Training provided by Common Good Missoula

Date/Time:

January 26th

Starts at 9:00am

Location:

909 South Ave W
MCPS Boardroom

Contact your building NASS Specialist if interested



Headwaters Foundation
BE THE SOURCE OF CHANGE