MCPS Native American Student Services

Indigenous Insighter

January 2026

MCPS Staff Shareouts



Okii,

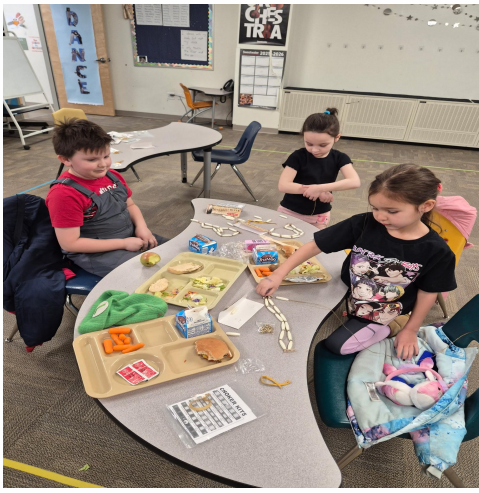
In January, my elementary students finished up their chokers. This week I introduced them to the drum and working on keeping a beat.

Our staff ordered some beading materials for the middle schools, and we were able to start beading lanyards. The students have the idea to finishing their projects and set up a stand at our pow wow to sell their beadwork.

At Big Sky high school we have our Rise meetings every other week. We are slowly trying to get our drum group going now that we have a little free time. I will be moving that to the front of the to-do list. We just finished our leadership training which turned out great and was very beneficial for our student leaders.







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)



The month of January flew by! It was so great to see my students after returning from Winter Break.

The first week of January, Paxson, Chief Charlo, Russell, and Hawthorne continued beading their chokers. We were unable to finish them, so I told my students that we would have another week in January to do so. At Lowell, we played the Powwow Highway game. The students seemed to really enjoy it.

The second week of January, I read the Blackfeet story “Old Man Napi” to each school. It was really special seeing how interested the students were while reading it.

In the third week of January, I decided to continue the storytelling theme. We read “Water Story,” which was written by Henry Real Bird, a Crow man. The students enjoyed listening to the story. For students that did not finish their chokers, I allowed them to continue beading them! It is so great to see my students wearing their chokers with pride.

The last week of January was awesome as we dove into learning about Winter Counts. I let students know that the following week they will be creating their own Winter Count based on events that have happened throughout their year.

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



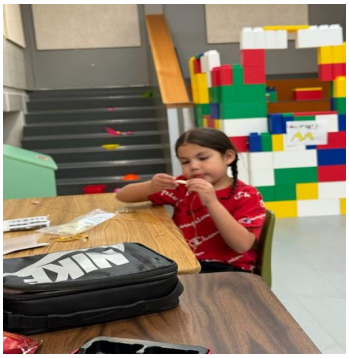




Oki!! This month was very busy. We had a leadership training for our high school students. We would like our NA students to be more active in each of their buildings. Currently, 3 of the 4 high schools have a NA student council. I am happy I was able to encourage many of the students to be on council.

Recently I have had the privilege of showing my colleagues how to wrap bead and make fry bread. They are going into their schools to teach their students these skills.

At Willard I have organized our beading supplies so that we can start a new beading project. The Student Council at Sentinel have talked about fundraising and activities they would like to do. They have also requested we meet twice a month.



Sewing of ribbon skirts has started at Washington. The girls are enjoying each other's company and getting their skirts completed. We are grateful for Mrs.Tingley, a school counselor, for all her help with the sewing machines. The Washington boys have a beading project ready to go.

The Indigenous Student Union has restarted this year at Hellgate. Things have been going well. I met with the English teachers about ideas for a book with native sensitivity at the request of a student.

Lewis & Clark student continue to work on their chokers. Those that complete them are so proud of their work. I was also invited to go into the first grade to read a book. I read the books Frybread and Pow Wow Day.







Okii (Blackfeet / Piikani)
?e-?a (Salish / Séliš-Qlispé)
Kahée (Crow / Apsáalooke)
Pevehe e'seeve'e (Northern Cheyenne / Tsis tsis'tas)

GREETINGS~

A *few* January highlights:

- Hitting the New Year strong with el-12 coaching cycles! We love meeting with teachers.
- Promoting our amazing students at BPA Regionals.
- Building connections & capacity with our RISE students, watching their friendships & advocacy for each other grow, promoting the upcoming statewide RISE student conference in April.
- Teacher Bookclub #2 "Crow Mary" by Kathleen Grissom.
- Incoming Freshman Night at Hellgate High School.
- Partnering with UM to provide families with N7 game tickets & events.
- Creating Iniskiim with Lowell 3rd graders.
- Paxson Culture Night - one of our favorite events of the year!
- Watching & celebrating our students at sporting events (like the GOAT game, etc.)



Let's be honest, there is a lot of heaviness in our community & world right now, people are hurting & need help. It is easy to become discouraged & disbondant; BUT this is when we really need to lean into our community. We rise by lifting each other and this is exactly what we are bringing to 2026. With open hearts & minds, we are leaning into hope, kindness, curiosity, learning, growth, respect, & community. We carry this passion into February...

With Abundant Gratitude,
Charlie Struna & Keila Cross

Monthly Events: Bingo, N7 game, Student Leadership Training

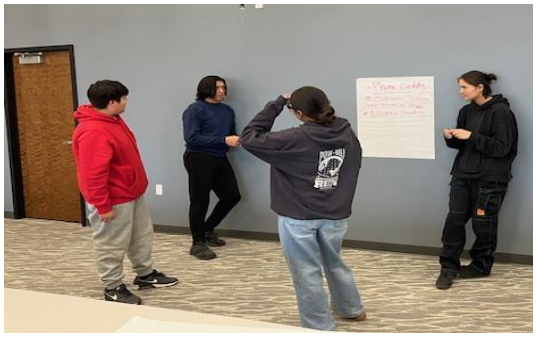






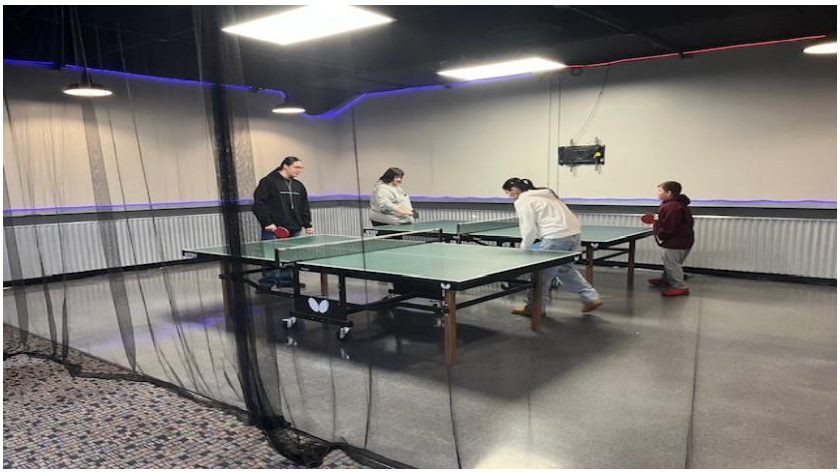















UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Bank as you go-go

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
- ★ Shauna Yellow Kidney

Student Representative

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

Teacher Representative

- ★ Alyssa Johnson



PAC meeting
2/4/2026
6 pm
MCPS Admin B
909 South Ave
West

Soup and bread

Bring something 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

Native American Student Services

YAYA DOLLS WORKSHOP

February 12th, 2026

5:30 - 7:30 PM



Join Nadia Askan and the NASS department and learn how to make a Yaya Doll!

- Materials Provided
- Limited Spots Available

909 South Avenue W
Missoula, MT 59801
Admin Building B
Professional Learning Lab

To sign up, please email Billie Jo Juneau @ bjuneau@mcpsmt.org



PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES PRESENTS

An Evening with Sean Sherman

Tuesday, Feb. 3 at 7:30 P.M.

UC Ballroom

2026 Brennan Guth Memorial Lecture in Environmental Philosophy

Co-sponsored by
UM Campus Dining,
Davidson Honors College,
and the Native American
Center of Excellence.

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
ASL interpretation will be provided for this event

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Your Invited to ANHC

VALENTINE'S *Round Dance*

Join us for a family fun free event, celebrating community and culture! ANHC will be hosting a free feed at 6pm -Indian Tacos (Catering provided by Fat Baby Fry Bread). Followed by the Round Dance at 7pm. The first 15 youth & adult singers will be paid.

Day & Time:
February 14, 2026

Location:
Franklin Elementary School
1910 S 11th St. W., Missoula, Mt 59801

- DOOR PRIZES, RIBBON SKIRT GIVEAWAY, & MUCH MORE
- ACTIVITY TABLES LED BY NATIVE YOUTH COUNCIL

*INFORMATION REGARDING PUBLIC VENDORS WILL BE POSTED CLOSER TO THE EVENT DATE

ALL NATIONS HEALTH CENTER
MISSOULA, MONTANA

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