

# Indigenous Insight-er

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## Welcome Back!

Hello! We would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year!

We know that this school year is very different than last year and we want you to know that our department is up and running and ready to support our students and families. Our team is currently split with some working in our shared office space and some working remotely from home and other locations.

Please check in with your Specialist by phone or e-mail if you need support so they can make arrangements if meeting in person is needed.

Updates will be shared in our Facebook group, future newsletters, and email. Please make sure we have your current contact information!

From the Indian Education Department,  
Glenda, Ray, Melissa, Lewis, Duran, and Dacia

*“Let us put our minds together to see what we can build for our children”*



# Greetings from the new Federal Programs Director

Hello!! My name is Amy Shattuck and I am the new Federal Programs and Accountability Director for Missoula County Public Schools. I have been with MCPS for over 20 years and grew up in Missoula attending Paxson, Washington and Sentinel. I have been a teacher at every level, a school counselor, an assistant principal/dean/activities director and a principal.



I am very excited to join the Indian Education for All Team. I look forward to working with all of you and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

My email is [avshattuck@mcpsmt.org](mailto:avshattuck@mcpsmt.org) or (406)728-2400 ext. 1054

Thank you!

Amy Shattuck

## 2020 - 2021 Staff Contact Information & School Assignments

Name	Title	Phone 728-2400	Email	Assigned Schools
Amy Shattuck	Federal Programs Director	ext. 1054	<a href="mailto:avshattuck@mcpsmt.org">avshattuck@mcpsmt.org</a>	
Matt Bell	NAS Teacher	ext. 8634	<a href="mailto:mkbell@mcpsmt.org">mkbell@mcpsmt.org</a>	Big Sky HS, Willard
Duran Caferro	Native American Specialist	ext. 1064	<a href="mailto:dcaferro@mcpsmt.org">dcaferro@mcpsmt.org</a>	Big Sky, Hawthorne, Jeanette Rankin
Dacia Griego	Native American Specialist	ext. 1068	<a href="mailto:dgriego@mcpsmt.org">dgriego@mcpsmt.org</a>	Chief Charlo, Franklin, Rattlesnake, Russell, MOA
Melissa Hammett	Native American Specialist	ext. 1028	<a href="mailto:mshammett@mcpsmt.org">mshammett@mcpsmt.org</a>	Seeley Swan HS, Washington MS
Ray Kingfisher	Native American Specialist	ext. 1047	<a href="mailto:rdkingfisher@mcpsmt.org">rdkingfisher@mcpsmt.org</a>	CS Porter, Hellgate HS, Meadow Hill, Sentinel HS
Lewis YellowRobe	Native American Specialist	ext. 1049	<a href="mailto:lyellowrobe@mcpsmt.org">lyellowrobe@mcpsmt.org</a>	Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Lowell, Paxson
Glenda Weasel	Title VI/Data Support/ Native American Specialist	ext. 1063	<a href="mailto:gfwasel@mcpsmt.org">gfwasel@mcpsmt.org</a>	Willard Alternative HS

# 2020 - 2021 Event Calendar

Event	Date	Time	Location
Native American Heritage Day Movie Night	Wednesday, September 23, 2020	5:30 - 8:30 PM	Ogren Park at Allegiance Field (Contact: Melissa Hammett)
Halloween Trunk or Treat	Wednesday, October 28th, 2020	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Big Sky High School (Contact: Dacia Griego)
Winter Gathering	Friday, December 11, 2020	6:00-8:00 PM	Meadow Hill Middle School (Contact: Ray Kingfisher)
Family Fun Time	Thursdays, January 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th; February 4th, 11th, 2021	6:00-8:00pm	CS Porter Middle School (Contact: Lewis YellowRobe)
Native Youth Powwow	Saturday, March 27, 2021	Grand Entry 12:00 and 6:00 PM	Sentinel High School (Contact: Glenda Weasel)
Title VI Public Hearing	TBA		MCPS Admin Building—Rm 14 (Contact: Glenda Weasel)
Graduating Senior Dinner	Thursday, May 3, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM	Double Tree By Hilton Hotel Missoula Edgewater 100 Madison St. Missoula, MT 59802 (406)728-3100 (Contact: Glenda)
End of the Year Gathering	TBA		(Contact: Duran Caferro)

## Native American week Movie Night

**Movie: DreamKeeper 3 hours**  
**Date: September 23, 2020**  
**Wednesday**  
**Time: Doors open 4:30**  
**Movie starts 5:30**  
**Movie Ends 8:30**

**PaddleHead Stadium**  
**700 Cregg Lane**  
**Missoula, MT 59801**

Join us as we celebrate Native American week!  
**FREE EVENT to all**

**Contact:**  
**Melissa Hammett**  
**mshammett@mcpsmt.org**  
**406.728.2400 ext. 1028**

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!**  
**COVID-19 READINESS PLAN IN PLACE: MASKS MANDATORY**  
Not Responsible for Child Care, Accidents, Injuries or Theft.

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS ENCOURAGED**  
 For everyone who preregisters, your name will go into a drawing for **AMAZING door prizes!!!**

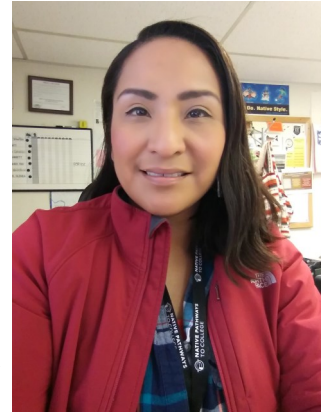
# DREAMKEEPER

# The Morning Star by Crystal White Shield

É-peve-énésétovoésta (It is a good afternoon)

Good afternoon MCPS students and families,

First of all, it has been quite the year this year! I want to acknowledge all of you for your strength and resilience. I continue to offer prayers for us all, as we are truly living through a major, historical event in time. You are truly courageous Native people and are fulfilling the prayers of our ancestors. We will live to tell future generations about this time in your life! During this time that we have been staying home, practicing social distancing, and keeping our families safe, I encourage you all to learn about your tribal languages, cultures, traditions, and ceremonies. Powwows will come back, but going to powwows isn't the only way to practice your Native culture. Although, it is very risky to attend most ceremonies, you could educate yourselves on gathering traditional foods and medicines, as most plants are plentiful right now during the late summer/fall harvest. Please take the time to learn.



Next, I am writing to conclude my portion of, "The Morning Star", of the MCPS Indian Education Department's newsletter, as I have departed from the MCPS school district in July 2020. I have accepted a new position at the Missoula Food Bank and Community Center as their new Director of Community Organizing and Equity. I am very fortunate to still be able to work with the Missoula Native American community, but in a broader spectrum to work with diverse neighborhoods and disenfranchised communities to address things such as food insecurity, lack of housing, lack of health care, and working to dismantle systemic racism. I'm happy that I will continue to work with the MCPS Indian Education Department in various other projects, and hopefully future events, as we adjust to our new "normal". In my time, I have enjoyed working with students, teachers, and families, and also working with the Native American Specialists. The department does not receive enough credit for all of the work that they do, and I know they will continue to excel!

At the Missoula Food Bank & Community Center, we are still providing the community with our emergency food assistance program, ROOTS senior program, the Meal Bus (currently delivering to only to UM Sisson Apartments, Silvertip & Creekside Apartments, Travois Village Mobile Home Park, and Futura Mobile Home Park), and free breakfast and lunch from Empower Place. We are also offering free lunches, produce boxes, and grocery boxes to our outlying sites in Clinton, Bonner, and Lolo. We have just added an Emergency Housing Assistance program, working to assist families directly affected by Covid-19. Please call (406) 549-0543 if you are interested in any of the programs that are being offered at the Missoula Food Bank.

Before I go, I would like to thank Ray Kingfisher, Glenda Weasel, Melissa Hammett, Lewis Yellowrobe, and Dacia Griego for all of their time, teamwork, encouragement, knowledge, humor, and team morale, as I know the new, incoming Native American Community Specialist will also love the MCPS Indian Education department team, as well as the awesome MCPS Native students and families.

Have a great school year everyone!

Tâhéhoestónęstse (Go to School)

Neęše'ęhe'onâtse! (Wash your hands!)

Nè-sta-éva-hóse-vóomatse (I will see you again)

Haho! Néá'eše! (Thank you)

Crystal White Shield  
Director of Community Organizing and Equity  
Missoula Food Bank and Community Center  
crystal@missoulafoodbank.org  
(406) 549-0543 x 250

## Grab-and-Go Kids Meals

SCHEDULE UPDATES BEGINNING MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

<b>Kids Eat Free Mobile Meal Bus Schedule</b>	<b>M-F, Breakfast &amp; Lunch</b> 10:45-11:05am: Sisson University Apts 11:20-11:45am: Silvertip & Creekside Apts 12:00-12:30pm: Travois Village 12:30-1pm: Futura Mobile Home Park
	<b>Meal Schedule at Empowerplace</b> HOUSING • BOOKS • MINDS <b>Breakfast &amp; Lunch</b> M, T, Th: 10am-7pm W, F: 10am-1pm <b>Afterschool Super Snacks</b> M, T, Th: 2pm-7pm

Empower Place is located at Missoula Food Bank & Community Center at 1720 Wyoming Street | 406.549.0543

# Stoodis! by Duran Caferro

Hello, my name is Duran Caferro.

I am the new MCPS Indian Education Specialist hired to work with the Indian Education Department. The schools I am assigned to work with are as follows: Big Sky High School, Hawthorne Elementary School and Jeanette Rankin Elementary School.

I am an enrolled member of the Northern Cheyenne tribe of Montana. I grew up and lived in Helena, MT before relocating our family to Missoula in 2019. My wife is attending law school here at the University of Montana. I have a huge family with 20 nieces and nephews and 3 children of my own.

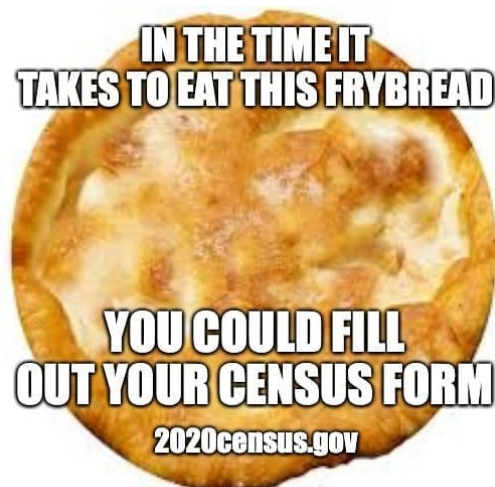
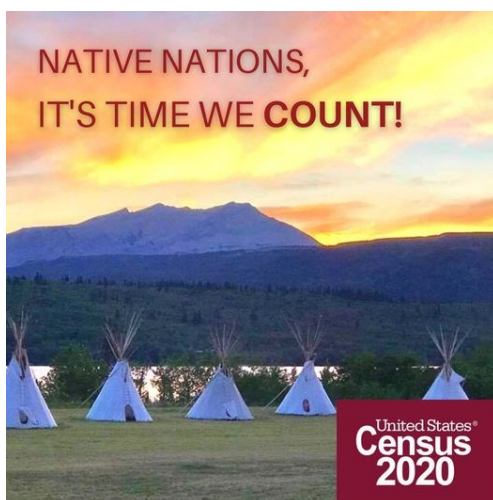
Before working in education, I was an elite amateur and professional boxer. As an amateur I collected many accolades including 9 national championship titles, Helena Independent Record Male Athlete of the year, Sullivan Award Finalist, and Office of Public Instruction Honor Yourself Native American Role Model. I earned a spot on Team USA competing and training around the world for 2 years. In my professional career I fought my way to a 16-1 record before a knee injury ended my career. I also worked to pass on my knowledge to youth as a volunteer for H-Town Eagles Boxing Club for 13 years. Throughout my career I strive to be an advocate and role model for Native American youth.

After retirement I started my work as an Indian Education Tutor for the Helena School District, serving 4 years working with elementary school students and 1 year with middle school students. My goal in my career in education is to directly impact the experience of children and adolescents. I strive to be a positive factor in the education and health of our Native American students.

I am excited to bring my experience and enthusiasm to the MCPS Indian Education Department! Be on the lookout as I roll out activities to engage with students and families. I know this school year will at times be unpredictable, stressful and difficult. I look forward to working with students and their families to rise to this unprecedented challenge with courage, grace and intelligence.

Sincerely,

Duran Caferro  
(406)728-2400 ext. 1064  
[dcaferro@mcpsmt.org](mailto:dcaferro@mcpsmt.org)



# Data Guru by Glenda Weasel

Good Day to Everyone.

I would like to welcome everyone back to the start of another school year. As we well know this start of the school year is quite different from any other. Thank you to the parents and students for being patient, and respectful of the process the MCPS school district with the (MOA) Missoula Online Academy.

I would like the parents and students to also be patient with our MCPS Indian Education Department as we navigate through this process, also. Most of our contact with students and parents will be done through telephone calls, Zoom meetings, Google meets, etc. We are in the process of trying to figure out how our community events will look like for the school year. So if any of our community members have any suggestions/ideas on how we can accomplish this that would be awesome.

Sincerely,

Glenda Weasel  
Title VI Indian Education Specialist/Data Support Staff  
(406)728-2400 ext. 1063  
gfweasel@mcpsmt.org



# Smoke Signals by Melissa Hammett

Welcome back to a successful 2020-2021 school year whether it may be in person at your school or through the Missoula Online Academy. My name is Melissa Hammett. I am the Native American Specialist at Washington Middle School and Seeley Swan High School. I look forward to meeting and working with new and current students and families.

Although this school year is a lot different than any other school year you have experienced, I believe in our schools, teachers, families, and students to make this transition from a traditional school year to something where we all can learn and succeed from. I know all of our students are tech savvy, so let's use this time to our advantage and make it a great year. Teach someone something new about technology like your siblings, grandparents, parents, or even your teachers. There is always something positive in any situation.

*"Technology is best when it brings people together."*  
**Matt Mullenweg, Social Media Entrepreneur**

Melissa Hammett, M.ED.  
Native American Specialist/ELL  
Indian Ed. Department  
406.728.2400 ext. 1028  
[mshammett@mcpsmt.org](mailto:mshammett@mcpsmt.org)



## Oki Niksokowaaksi Tsa Niitaapi? By Raymond D. Kingfisher

(Hello My Relatives How is it Going?)

Oki Niksookowaaksi,

Well folks we are back at it again for another outstanding time of learning. Although some students may be remote and some are in person, speaking for myself, we may feel uncertain about the future. Looking at my list of students it takes away some of that uncertainty because YOU are our future. I know you will all become leaders when your time comes. With that, Welcome Back.

I have started a Native American Lunch Group "GOOGLE MEET." This runs from 10:20am - 2pm, here I will be live to visit with students and teachers. I will try to make this fun and interactive for the students. I am adding a lot of information to the classroom. Parents, go in there with your students and look around, check out the content. If you should see something that is in there that shouldn't let me know or if you think something should be added, let me know.



**Question: Do you think we should change the name of the "Indian Education Department?" What would you change it to?**

With that I am available during school hours by email and phone. Leave me a message if I do not get back to you and I will do my best to help the students and families. Have a good month of September.

Raymond Kingfisher

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## The Teacher's Corner by Matt Bell

Here at Big Sky, our English 2 class finished up There There by Tommy Orange! I can say many enjoyed the story and gave some critical thought to the themes!

In the next few weeks, we are beginning our Native American Studies class. Due to the current schedule and timing, we are jumping right in with some history of the East Coast and South America.

We'll circle back to traditional stories when our class returns in a few more weeks.

Thank you everyone and stay safe!

Matt Bell



# Lewis' Place by Lewis YellowRobe

Hello Students and Parents:

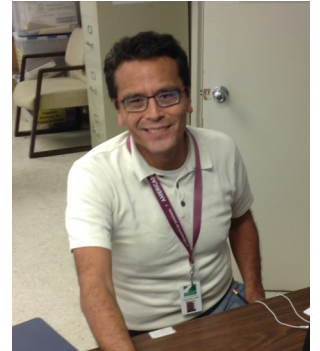
I'm Lewis YellowRobe, Native American Specialist, at Lowell, Paxson, and Lewis & Clark Schools. This school year, I'll spend most of my time at Lowell School and still keep a focus on Paxson and Lewis & Clark Schools.

Only at Lowell School, I will have in class read aloud sessions with all Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes. I'm excited to work with all students to read Native American written children's books.

I will send out recorded read aloud sessions to Paxson and Lewis & Clark Schools for use in the online academy.

I'm looking forward to working with students, parents, and families this school year in class or in the online academy.

Lewis




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# Tansi Nitotem! by Dacia Griego

Tansi! Hello! Welcome back to a brand new school year! I am the Native American Education Specialist for Chief Charlo, Franklin, Rattlesnake, and Russell Elementary Schools.

As you all know, this school year is looking very different for all of us and I am currently working remotely during this time. Although I am not visiting schools in person I am still available as a support person if you need anything! Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

I am happy to connect with you and your students by e-mail, video conferencing, or phone. I will be learning as much as I can about the Missoula Online Academy so that I can be a support for the families who have chosen this option as well. We are all learning, adjusting, and in this together!



I hope you are all settling in to the new school year and again, please let me know if there is anything I can do to help your students thrive this year!

Best wishes,  
Dacia Griego  
Native American Education Specialist  
[dgriego@mcpsmt.org](mailto:dgriego@mcpsmt.org)



# Title VI Parent Advisory Committee

The Title VI Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is made up of parents, students, and teachers within the MCPS Native community. The Title VI PAC provides support to the MCPS Indian Education Dept. throughout the year and hosts the Native Senior Dinner at the end of each school year to honor that year's graduation class of Native American seniors.

We have several new Parent Representatives on PAC this year. Welcome to Duran Caferro, Rebecca Bearcub (who has participated in previous years), and Amber Shaffer! They are filling roles left vacant by departing PAC members Crystal White Shield, Lisa Coon, and Benji Headswift. Returning members are Toni Alvernaz, Stephen Chase, and Dacia Griego. Parent/Guardian spots are filled by those who have at least one child who is an MCPS student with a completed Title VI ED 506 Indian Student Eligibility Certification Form. The child can be an enrolled Tribal Member or a 1st or 2nd degree descendent of an enrolled tribal member.

The Title VI PAC had their first meeting of the school year on September 10th. New members were welcomed and officers were voted in. This year Dacia Griego will serve as PAC President, Duran Caferro was elected Vice President, and Rebecca Bearcub will hold a dual role of Secretary and Treasurer. Alina Espino, who is a Junior at Sentinel HS, is our Student Representative.

There is a current vacancy for a Teacher Representative on the committee. The Teacher Rep. does not have to be an enrolled tribal member, but they do have to be a teacher within the MCPS school district. Please send nominations for Teacher Rep to PAC President, Dacia Griego at [dgriego@mcpsmt.org](mailto:dgriego@mcpsmt.org)

We will be meeting on the first Thursday of every month, with our next meeting on October 1st. We will be going over our budget for this year's Senior Dinner and talking about fundraising ideas.

Everyone is welcome to join our meetings and families of graduating seniors are especially encouraged to participate throughout the year. All meetings will be held remotely via Google Meet until further notice.

We look forward to a busy year of fundraising and planning so that we can honor our graduating class of 2021!

*Children learn from what they see. We need to set an example of truth and action.*

*- Howard Rainer, Taos Pueblo-Creek*

2019-2020 Title VI Parent Advisory Committee	
Name	Title
Dacia Griego	President
Duran Caferro	Vice President
Rebecca Bearcub	Secretary/Treasurer
Toni Alvernaz	Parent Rep
Stephen Chase	Parent Rep
Amber Shaffer	Parent Rep
Alina Espino	Student Rep
Vacant	Teacher Rep

Title VI Parent Advisory Committee Meeting Dates	
Meetings are scheduled for the 1st Thursday of each month at 6pm. All meetings will be held remotely via Google Meet until further notice. Contact Dacia Griego for a link to join.	
Date	Time
September 10, 2020	6:00-8:00 PM
October 1, 2020	6:00-8:00 PM
November 5, 2020	6:00-8:00 PM
December 3, 2020	6:00-8:00 PM
January 7, 2021	6:00-8:30 PM
February 4, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
March 4, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
April 1, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
May 6, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
June 3, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM

# Emergency Housing Assistance Program

The Emergency Housing Assistance Program provides rent, security deposit, mortgage payment assistance, and/or hazard insurance for Montanans who have lost a job or substantial income due to COVID-19. Applicants are eligible for up to \$2,000 per month. The program pays the difference between 25% of the household's net monthly income and their eligible housing costs. Income limits range from \$75,000-\$125,000 annually based on family size.

You may be eligible for this program even if you have now returned to work or regained income. The program is focused on the time you experience the most impact from COVID and extends back to April 1, 2020. Once you apply, if you continue to have lost income due to the impact of COVID-19 support can be provided based on continued need on a monthly basis.



Apply online at: [nwmt.org/covidrelief](https://nwmt.org/covidrelief)

**If you need assistance applying, please email NeighborWorks Montana at [covidrelief@nwmt.org](mailto:covidrelief@nwmt.org) or call 406.604.4500.**

## In-Home Grants for Families

The COVID-19 Pandemic has created unique challenges for Montana's families who are working to balance returning to the workforce with childcare and support needs. The scholarship is available for families with children aged 0-18. The scholarship aims to provide an opportunity for families that include children or family members with special needs which may include health or safety needs requiring in-home care. This may also include foster families and kinship families with unique in-home needs.

Special Circumstances might include, but are not limited to:

- Compromised health of a household member.
- Children with special needs who are not able to be in school under these conditions or now need additional support with remote learning.
- Foster families, kinship families needing respite or extra in home, remote learning support.
- No group care available in rural area.
- Unique work schedules.

These funds cannot be used to support attendance at child care facilities

For more information visit: [childcareresource.org/parent](https://childcareresource.org/parent) or call 406-728-6446





**MCPS TITLE VI PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE &  
INDIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
2020-2021 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**



What do you feel are the most important needs of the Native students in Missoula County Public Schools? Please indicate your thoughts by placing a circle around the number.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Enhance problem solving and cognitive skills development and directly support attainment of state standards | 7. Increase college enrollment                             |
| 2. Decrease school drop-out rate   | 8. Increase graduation rate                                |
| 3. Increase academic achievement   | 9. Increase knowledge of cultural identity and awareness   |
| 4. Increase activities for prevention of violence, suicide and substance abuse                                 | 10. Increase Native American Language Instruction programs |
| 5. Increase At-Risk student support  | 11. Increase parent participation                          |
| 6. Increase career readiness skills  | 12. Increase school attendance rate                        |
|  | 13. Increase school readiness                              |

14. Other suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank the three most important needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the categories that describe you:

Native American \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_ Middle School Student

\_\_\_ Community member

\_\_\_ Elementary School Student

\_\_\_ High School Student

\_\_\_ Missoula County Public Schools District Employee

What do you think is working well in the Missoula County Public Schools Indian Education Department?

\_\_\_\_\_

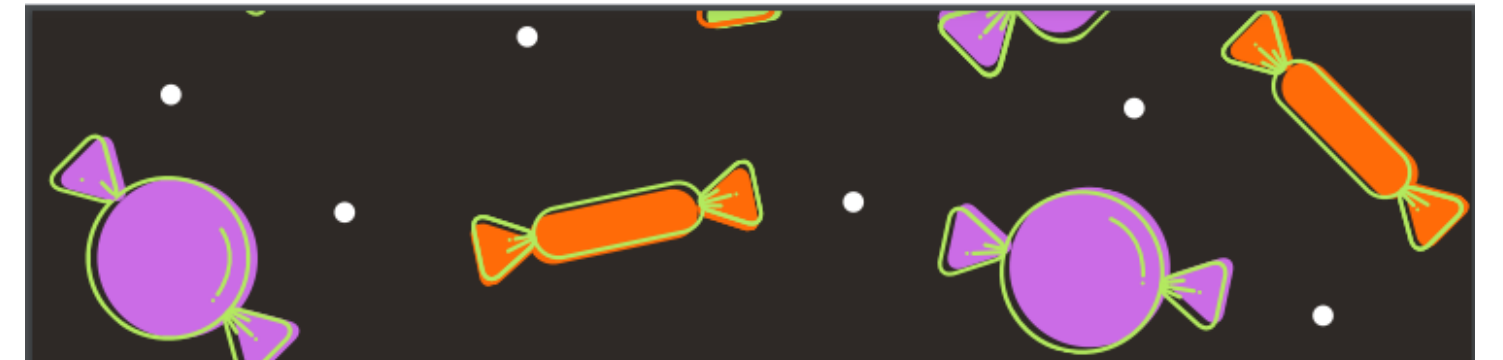
What are some areas that you would like to see addressed by the school district or services that you would like to see offered by the Indian Education Department?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please drop this by or mail to:

Missoula County Public Schools  
Indian Ed. Department B2  
215 S. 6th Street West  
Missoula, MT 59801

OR email to: [gfwaseal@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:gfwaseal@mcps.k12.mt.us) or [mshammett@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:mshammett@mcps.k12.mt.us)  
Your voice is very important to us! Thank you!



MCPS INDIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

# HALLOWEEN TRUNK-OR-TREAT

October 28, 2020 | Big Sky High School  
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Face masks and social distancing required!  
Prizes for costume contest and trunk-or-treat stations!

Contact: Dacia Griego, [dgriego@mcpsmt.org](mailto:dgriego@mcpsmt.org)

