

# Indigenous Insider

## Missoula County Public Schools

### Indian Education Department

Picture: A young fox peeking out from the fall time forage

## November 1, 2018 Edition

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### [Tsa Nii Ta Pii – by Raymond Kingfisher](#)

Welcome to the 2018-19 academic year, which is shaping up to be a great one. We recently welcomed Lewis Yellow Robe and Cody Munson to our department. Check out their bio with news of their assigned schools on the following page.

Due to budget constraints, our newsletter will be sent out only via email. Please make sure that your email address is correct at your child(ren)'s school as that will be what we rely on to get the newsletter to you. If you are reading this as a community member or other member and would like to receive our newsletters, please contact me and I will place your name on our email contact list.

I am the Native American Specialist for C.S. Porter (Monday), Meadow Hill (Tuesday) and Washington Middle School (Thursday).

In the schools I am monitoring student grades and attendance. I act as an advocate and liaison for an overall great experience there at their respective schools. So, if you get a call from me or email it is only an update. I am only looking out for the student success. I found and like this saying:

“In today's world it is easy for the children to go astray, so I will work to provide positive alternatives for them. I will teach them the culture. I will encourage education. I will encourage sports. I will encourage them to talk to the Elders for guidance; but mostly, I will seek to be a role model myself.”

Be sure to check out our webpage and join our Facebook page. Both are great resources for information about our department, upcoming events, community activities and other news.

Please feel free to contact me anytime via email, [rdkingfisher@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:rdkingfisher@mcps.k12.mt.us) or call (406)728-2400, ext. 1047.

Thank you for your continued support.

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### Heading Box: Welcome Back Students and Families

Mission Statement: Help Native American students achieve academically, culturally, and socially to graduate and become successful lifelong learners.

### 2018-19 Staff Contact Information and School Assignments

Karen Allen Executive Regional Director/Indian Ed. Dept. Supervisor Ext. 1054  
[kallen@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:kallen@mcps.k12.mt.us)

Cody Munson Native American Specialist Ext. 1064 [cmunson@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:cmunson@mcps.k12.mt.us) Big Sky High School, Hawthorne, Jeanette Rankin, Lowell

Lewis YellowRobe Native American Specialist Ext. 1049 [lyellowrobe@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:lyellowrobe@mcps.k12.mt.us) Lewis & Clark, Paxson, Jefferson, Seeley Swan

Melissa Hammett Hellgate and Sentinel High School Native American Studies Teacher/Title VI Native American Specialist Ext. 1028 [mshammett@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:mshammett@mcps.k12.mt.us) Hellgate High School and Sentinel High School (teacher)

Ray Kingfisher Native American Specialist Ext. 1047 [rdkingfisher@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:rdkingfisher@mcps.k12.mt.us) CS Porter, Meadow Hill, & Washington Middle School

Stacy Thacker Native American Specialist Ext. 1068 [sthacker@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:sthacker@mcps.k12.mt.us) Chief Charlo, Franklin, Rattlesnake, and Russell Elementary

Glenda Weasel Title VI/Native American Specialist/Data Support Staff Ext. 10 [gfweasel@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:gfweasel@mcps.k12.mt.us) Willard Alternative High School

Matt Bell Native American Studies Teacher Ext. 8634 [mkbell@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:mkbell@mcps.k12.mt.us) Big Sky HS, Willard AHS

### 2018-2019 Title VI Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee

Rebecca BearCub President [rebecca\\_bearcub\\_goddard@yahoo.com](mailto:rebecca_bearcub_goddard@yahoo.com)

Crystal White Shield Vice President

Matt Bell Teacher Representative and Secretary [mattbell23@gmail.com](mailto:mattbell23@gmail.com)

Lisa Coon Parent Representative and Treasurer [lcoon@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:lcoon@mcps.k12.mt.us)

Moses Yellowrobe III Parent Representative

Mariah Maxwell-Hawley Parent Representative [mmaxwell-hawley@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:mmaxwell-hawley@mcps.k12.mt.us)

A. Vegas Longtree Student Representative

Student Representatives vacant

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*Chewing the Grass with Stacy by Stacy Thacker*

Ya'at'eeh

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a great summer. I am happy to be back as a Native American Specialist again this year. For those of you who may not know me, my name is Stacy Thacker and I'm a member of the Navajo tribe. I grew up on the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. This year I'll be working with students at Rattlesnake Elementary, Russell Elementary, Franklin Elementary and Chief Charlo Elementary. I spent the summer in New Mexico eating a lot of green chili, mutton and enchiladas. While I was sad to leave all that delicious food behind, I am excited to be back working with the students. This year I'll be continuing the Read Aloud Program and I'll be visiting with students during lunch recess. I look forward to another round of weaving and seeing what creative ideas the students have for their rugs. Let's have a great school year!

Stacy Thacker

Contact information:

Indian Education Department B2—Missoula County Public Schools—215 S. 6th St. West—Missoula, MT 59801

(406) 728-2400 ext. 1068

[sthacker@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:sthacker@mcps.k12.mt.us)

2018-19 EVENT CALENDAR

Spooky Scary Halloween Round Dance Friday October 26, 2018 5:30-8:30 PM Meadow Hill Middle School

Supaman ft. Tahj Montana and Express 2 Speak 5:30pm-8:30pm October 29, 2018 CS Porter School

Winter Gathering December 14, 2018 5:30-8:30 CS Porter Middle School

Sunday Funday January 6, 13, 20, 27 1:00-3:00 CS Porter Middle School February 10, 24, 2019

Native Youth Powwow Saturday, March 16, 2019 Grand Entry 12pm and 7pm Sentinel High School

Graduating Senior Dinner Friday, May 16, 2019 6:00-8:00pm Double Tree Edgewater

End of the Year Gathering Friday, May 31, 2019 3:00-6:00pm Hawthorne Elementary

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[Spooky Scary Halloween Dance Flyer](#)

Picture: Green header with the Missoula County Public Schools Indian Education Logo (Bison head with feathers) and Missoula County Public Schools Logo (Forward thinking, Higher Achiever)

Three lit jack lanterns in a dark and spooky forest looking out with the text, Spooky Scary Halloween Round Dance; Friday October 26, 2018, 5:30PM-8:30PM, Meadow Hill School

Text: Community Social Event / All Are Welcome to Attend

Singing, Dancing, and Socializing

Spaghetti/Potluck Dinner (bring your top side dishes)

Games and Family Fun

Costume Contest

Community Information

Student Groups

Contact: Ray Kingfisher 728-2400 x1047

Glenda Weasel 728-2400 X1063

Picture: Medicine Wheel (White, Yellow, Red, and Black) with Feathers on each side

Text: American Indian Commercial Tobacco Quit Line 1(855) 372-0037 [MTAmericanIndianQuitLine.com](http://MTAmericanIndianQuitLine.com)

Picture: A waving and smiling ghost, a smiling bat with wings spread with his hands in the air

Picture: The Missoula Urban Indian Health Center Logo, Indian design with a headdress, teepee, feathers and medical snake logo.

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*TITLE VI PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2018-19*

*NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY*

What do you feel are the most important needs of the Indian students in Missoula County Public Schools? Please indicate your thoughts by circling the number.

1. Increase school readiness
2. Integration of Indian specific content into curriculum
3. Academic achievement
4. Knowledge of cultural identity and awareness
5. Enhance problem solving and cognitive skill development
6. School attendance rate
7. School dropout rate
8. Graduation rate

9. Career readiness skills
10. College enrollment
11. Substance abuse prevention
12. Increase parent participation

Other suggestions:

Rank the three most important needs:

Please check the category(ies) that describe you (check all that apply):

Native American  Yes  No

Parent/Guardian  Community Member  High School Student  Middle School Student  
 Elementary School Student  Missoula County Public Schools District Employee

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

Are there 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

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The Teacher's Corner by Matt Bell

Picture: Matt Bell smiling

Hello,

My name is Matt Bell and I am a teacher at Big Sky High School and the Willard Alternative High School Program. My family and I are from the Fort Belknap (Nakoda and Aaniiih) reservation, so I love Montana (especially the High Line)! I went to college at the University of Montana where I received a degree in English teaching and Native American studies.

Mr. Bell's Native American Studies classes at Big Sky have kicked off by taking a look at what we know about the history of South and Central Americas before contact. We also have begun digging into the novel, "The Last Powwow". We would love to have community members come in and teach us some games this year!

Thank you all for the community support and we hope to see you at our next gathering!

Matt Bell

I really appreciate being able to share my knowledge and love of Native American studies at Big Sky. In addition, at Willard I teach various classes including a culinary class known as 'Native Eats' where we work with foods from the Americas. So with that, here is a recipe perfect for the holidays:

### Sweet Potato Casserole

#### Ingredients

For the sweet potatoes:

3 c (1 29-oz can) sweet potatoes, drained OR 3 sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/4"

1 medium to large carrot, peeled and sliced 1/4"

1/2 c melted butter

1/3 c milk

3/4 c sugar

1 t vanilla

2 eggs, beaten

Salt to taste

For the topping:

5 T melted butter

2/3 c sugar

2/3 c flour

1 c pecan pieces

Instructions: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mash the sweet potatoes and add the melted butter, milk, sugar, vanilla, beaten eggs, and a pinch of salt. Stir until incorporated. Pour into a shallow baking dish or a cast iron skillet. Combine the butter, brown sugar, flour, and pecan pieces in a small bowl, using your fingers to create moist crumbs. Sprinkle generously over the casserole. Bake for 25-35 minutes, until the edges pull away from the side of the pan and the top is golden brown. Let stand for the mixture to cool and solidify a little bit before serving.

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*Lewis's Place by Lewis YellowRobe*

Hello,

I'm Lewis YellowRobe, Native American Specialist. I work with Native students in Paxson and Lewis & Clark Schools and Jefferson Pre-school. This is my first year in the Indian Education Program. I'm a Gros Ventre (a'aniih) tribal member from Fort Belknap.

Previously, I worked in the school district with refugee students new to the United States and served as a substitute teacher at all grade levels. Before my education career, I planned and designed roads and bridges for tribal, county, and city governments in Western Montana. In my free time, I participate in triathlons, open water swims, and spend way too much time at the gym. I look forward to working with all students and family throughout the year.

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*Smoke Signals by Melissa Hammett*

Picture: Melissa on the phone at her desk looking busy

Oki,

Welcome back students and families. My name is Melissa Hammett. I am the Native American Specialist for Hellgate High School and Sentinel High School. I look forward to meeting all the students and their families of Sentinel and all the families and students returning back to Hellgate. I teach a class at Hellgate classroom 257 and Sentinel classroom 247 called Native American Studies Business Concepts of MT Tribes.

Currently, my main goal is to be more familiar with the students and increase awareness of my presence at Hellgate. So far my goal of making connections with students and staff is working. The Native American Studies class that I teach at Hellgate is called NAS: Business Concepts of Montana Tribes. This class is offered every semester and is a CTE practical arts course or can be an elective course if students already have the practical arts class. In my class I focus on Montana tribes and reservations and the Essential Understandings. The class is introduced to business concepts starting off with the Montana trading system, Colonization, Comparing American Indian and European Economic Systems, Native American Trade Routes and the Barter Economy, and Indian Economic Development. There is potential for students to start projects if they decide to continue the class a second semester.

Each one of us in the MCPS Indian Education Department, as a Native American Specialists, brings something different and special to our program, but our ultimate goals are basically the same: for Native American students in the Missoula County Public Schools to be successful academically.

Remember to help and encourage others.

Na-kais-pom-mo Ma-ta-pik-si (help people)

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*Cody Munson by Cody Munson*

I am Cody Munson, a new member of Missoula County Public Schools' Native American Community Specialist team in the Indian Education Department. This letter is to express my genuine excitement in working within four of the district's schools starting this fall. I am very excited about collaborating with

each school team already in place, and am eager to work with the students in the classroom setting on a regular basis to help them explore their world and grow as individuals.

I am a Missoula Native, born and raised, and am a first generation Salish Descendent among many other tribal affiliations in and around the Western Montana region. Growing up in my home, I was encouraged to value culture and education. I want to be a positive role model, and to set an example for our future generations' leaders both outside of, and also within our Indian communities.

I look forward to meeting with you throughout the school year and at our activities to discuss the school years educationally and culturally enriching opportunities. I want to help our Native American students achieve academically, culturally, and socially through to graduation and on into the future to become successful lifelong learners and leaders.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you,

Cody Munson

Native American Community Specialist

Missoula County Public Schools

215 South 6th St. West

Missoula, MT 59801

406-728-2400 x1064

[cmunson@mcps.k12.mt.us](mailto:cmunson@mcps.k12.mt.us)

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*Data Guru— by Glenda Weasel*

Data Guru: I would like to give a shout out “Welcome Back” to all the Native American Families in our community for this school year 2018-2019. This year is starting out to be very busy. We have two new hires to the Indian Education Department. Cody Munson and Lewis Yellowrobe. Welcome. This year I will be starting beading classes, during lunch hour, every Wednesday at Willard Alternative High School. So if you are in the neighborhood stop in and say HELLO.

Glenda Weasel

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