

Indigenous Insider

March 2024

IEFA School Presentations

Each month the Native American Student Services department offers Indian Education for All (IEFA) presentations for elementary schools throughout the district. Through the winter we visited Chief Charlo, Franklin, Hawthorne, Lewis & Clark, Lowell, Paxson, Rattlesnake, and Russell. Our presentations included lessons on Traditional Storytelling, Ledger Art, Traditional Uses of the Bison, and Traditional Regalia.

November - Bison

December - Storytelling

January - Ledger Art

February - Traditional and Contemporary Attire

March - Tribal Names & Languages

April - Traditional Games

May - Tipi Teachings

Each month our department has hosted a community event that coordinates with the theme for that month. We've been fortunate to collaborate with community partners such as All Nations Health Center and SPARK! Arts to purchase supplies and bring in incredible guests for these events. In December, we were joined by Chris LaTray and Ernie Cutfinger for our Winter Storytelling series, in January we hosted Alishon Kelly who taught our Ledger Art Class for staff and the community.



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



Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Apsáalooke dancer and innovative hip hop artist

SUPAMAN



FREE COMMUNITY EVENT!

MONDAY, MARCH 25TH

6:00PM – 7:00PM

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30PM

WASHINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPONSORED BY:



Traditional Regalia and Contemporary Fashion

Throughout the month of February the NASS department visited elementary schools throughout the district giving presentations on Native American clothing and apparel unique to Plains tribes. We talked about traditional regalia from our region and highlighted contemporary fashion and Indigenous designers. We were most fortunate to be joined by several MCPS students who were able to showcase their own regalia and perform a short exhibition of their dance styles.

We are so grateful for these students who had the courage to speak in front of large audiences and for their families who supported them in participating in these presentations!

THANK YOU to

Aiden Potts

Aleise Whitegrass

Andre Lamb

Catherine Potts

Dane Fisher

Ethan Lamb

Willena Whitegrass



MCPS NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

NATIVE YOUTH POWWOW

MC: ARLAN EDWARDS (BLACKFEET)
ARENA DIRECTOR: SHAWN WHITE GRASS (BLACKFEET)
HOST DRUMS:
+ DANCING BOY SINGERS (CSKT)
+ WILLOW CREEK SINGERS (BLACKFEET)

HEAD GIRL: EMMA LASTSTAR (CASSINIBOINE • SIOUX • BLACKFEET)
HEAD BOY: ANDRE LAMB (GROS VENTRE)
NYP PRINCESS: LARIAH WHITE GRASS (BLACKFEET • HUALAPAI)

CONTEST CATEGORIES

TINY TOTS (5YRS & UNDER)
MUST BE IN REGALIA

JUNIORS (6-12 YRS)
JR BOYS TRADITIONAL, GRASS, FANCY, CHICKEN
JR GIRLS TRADITIONAL, JINGLE, FANCY

TEENS (13-18YRS)
JR BOYS TRADITIONAL, GRASS, FANCY, CHICKEN
JR GIRLS TRADITIONAL, JINGLE, FANCY

ADULT WOMEN & MEN (18YRS-59YRS)
COMBINED CATEGORY

GOLDEN AGE (60YRS+)

LARIAH WHITE GRASS
OUTGOING NYP PRINCESS
17 & UNDER GIRLS FANCY SPECIAL

2024 NYP PRINCESS CONTEST
CONTACT MELISSA HAMMETT
MSHAMMETT@MCPSMT.ORG
406.728.2400 EXT. 1028

VENDORS WELCOME
CONTACT DACIA GRIEGO
DGRIEGO@MCPSMT.ORG
406.728.2400 EXT. 1068

SATURDAY - APRIL 27TH

SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL

906 SOUTH AVE W • MISSOULA



Middle School Groups

Native American Student Groups are hosted every week by NASS Specialists at Porter, Washington, and Meadow Hill. Signed permission forms must be provided before a student can participate. Forms can be picked up at the main office in each school or from your NASS Specialist.



CS Porter - Wednesdays during WIN
NASS Specialist, Dacia Griego
dgriego@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1068



Meadow Hill - Thursdays
NASS Specialist, Chayse Buckskin
cbuckskin@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1050



Washington - Thursdays during WIN
NASS Specialist, Melissa Hammett
mshammett@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1028



Ledge art created by the Native American Student Group at CS Porter.

RISE at MCPS High Schools

RISE is a Native youth leadership group formed by the Montana Office of Public Instruction's Indian Education Department. This group has fostered relationships across the state of Montana and continues to thrive due to the invaluable opportunities for leadership development and relationship building. One of the main focuses of **RISE** is connection with personal culture as well as heritage, the students uphold these values each meeting.

The NASS team hosts RISE Meetings at each of the following high schools every other Thursday at 2:00pm.

Big Sky High School

NASS Specialist, Chayse Buckskin
cbuckskin@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1050

Seeley-Swan High School

NASS Specialist, Dacia Griego
dgriego@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1068

Hellgate High School

NASS Coordinator, Billie Jo Juneau
bjuneau@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1063

Sentinel High School

NASS Specialist, Melissa Hammett
mshammett@mcpsmt.org, 406-728-2400 ext. 1028



<https://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Academic-Success/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-ESSA/Tribal-Relations-and-Resiliency/Youth-Community-Leadership>

MCPS Students Attend N7 Griz Games

On January 27th & February 3rd NASS team brought 22 middle school and 18 high school students for a college visit at the University of Montana. We spent the day getting a tour of campus, spending time in the Gaming Den, visiting the eSports team, and attending the Nike N7 Griz Basketball Games! Middle school students were able to visit the Planetarium at the Payne Family Native American Center to listen to Blackfeet Star Stories. High School students attended a panel of current UM students and staff.

The games were so much fun to watch with several of our students involved in the pregame and halftime performances. Maya Coleman (6th Grade, Washington Middle School) sang the National Anthem at the Lady Griz game. MCPS Students, Novi Lahr (2nd Grade, Paxson), Derek White Grass (4th Grade, Lewis & Clark), Aleisse WhiteGrass (4th Grade, Lewis & Clark), Lariah White Grass (6th Grade, Washington Middle School), Willena WhiteGrass (8th Grade, Meadow Hill), and Catherine Potts (12th Grade, Hellgate) danced during the halftime shows in their traditional regalia. We are so proud of all of them!



Community Support Needed!

We are hard at work with our fundraising efforts to raise money for the Native Youth Powwow and the Native Senior Dinner. These events could not happen without community support! Here are some ways you can help:

Fundraising:

- **Event Sponsors.** Sponsors can be businesses, groups, families, or individuals. You can be an event co-sponsor or provide a specific sponsorship like a category for the powwow.
- **Auction Items.** We are seeking donations of auction items for our online auction this spring. We are especially looking for items like Indigenous art and beadwork, gift certificates for experiences and services, and themed baskets.
- **Frybread Friday.** Support our next Frybread Friday sale by purchasing a taco and sharing with your friends and family! The next sale is Friday, April 12th from 11am - 1pm.

Volunteering:

- **Powwow Committee.** Our powwow committee is open to MCPS students and families. We would love to see more of our community involved in the planning and execution of this event. Volunteers on the day of the powwow are also greatly appreciated!

MCPS NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

FRYBREAD FRIDAY!

INDIAN TACO \$10
FRYBREAD \$5
DRINKS \$1



**FRIDAY, APRIL 12TH
11 AM TO 1 PM**

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES DEPT.
909 SOUTH AVE W, B120

CALL FOR AUCTION ITEMS!

The NASS Online Auction is coming this April!
We are seeking donations of auction items.
Proceeds go toward the Native Senior Dinner.
Contact Dacia for more info: dgriego@mcpsmt.org

- **Frybread Crew.** Volunteers are wanted to help with our next frybread sale. Some tasks include prepping toppings, helping with orders, deliveries.

Please contact Dacia if you would like to get involved in any way or if you have any questions!

dgriego@mcpsmt.org
406-728-2400 ext. 1068

Update from our IEFA Coach

I started in this role on November 1. My primary responsibilities are curriculum development and staff development. One of my first actions after starting was to survey our teaching staff on their perceived successes and challenges with using Indian Ed for All in their classrooms in order to set a direction for curriculum materials to create and to guide my initial round of staff professional development trainings.



By and large, the biggest challenges voiced by our teachers is, first, a lack of time to access and prepare resources and plan with their grade level or school-wide team and, second, feeling scared, intimidated or unprepared to teach about a culture that is not their own.

To address the "not enough time" challenge, I've begun hosting a monthly work session for teachers to have structured time to access and work on IEFA resources, or plan with their grade level team, while also getting PIR credits (which are required by the district and OPI for license renewal). To help with the "feeling intimidated" challenge, I've invited knowledge keepers and content experts to join me at these work sessions to serve as content consultants so that teachers can feel like they worked with an expert and have, for lack of better words, a seal of approval on their lessons. Matt Bell joined me for January's session, and will be coming back again in April. Members of our Teacher Clarity cohort are assisting this month, Dr. Anna East is joining me in March, and Kim Quigley is tentatively joining me in May. We had 11 people come in December, 2 in January (which was hindered by a winter storm), and we had 11 signed up in February.

Additional staff development includes IEFA Level 1: Introduction to IEFA and IEFA Level 2: The Essential Understandings, with plans to repeat these again this school year and multiple times next school year. Finally, the staggering majority of teachers who responded to the survey self-reported "some to no knowledge about Montana's tribes and history". As such, I'm looking for ways to build knowledge in this area. I'm hosting a blended online and in-person course about the history and significance of powwows, and I'll be taking a group of teachers to the Kyiyo Powwow in April. I'm also working to secure funding for a Montana Tribal History book study to run over the next few years.

Turning to content and curriculum development, I've been meeting, by request, with teachers K-12 to develop materials and finetune lessons. Per the survey results and a review of resources, the biggest content needs are in the areas of Math, Science and Classroom Community, though teachers would like to see standards-aligned lessons across all content areas. I'm working through those gaps in available resources and building lessons and unit to close those gaps, then asking teachers to pilot the lessons for me in their classrooms. Lessons will be posted on the MCPS website.

So, as you can see, all elements of my work right now are around content creation, whether its professional development materials or classroom lessons, balanced by days in the schools doing our K-5 presentations or coaching teachers. I always love feedback and ideas, so please send them my way.

Sara Ibis
IEFA Instructional Coach
sibis@mcpsmt.org
406-728-2400 ext. 1049

MCPS NASS Parent Advisory Committee

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is made up of parents, students, and teachers within the MCPS Native community. PAC provides support and guidance to the MCPS NASS Dept. throughout the year. All parents and guardians of Native American MCPS students are encouraged to attend.

PAC meetings are held each month in MCPS Admin Building B. They are a great time to meet NASS staff, here about current happenings in the department, and bring your ideas, suggestions, and concerns to the table.

NEXT PAC MEETING: Wednesday, March 13th, 6pm - 8pm

2023-24 PAC

Parent Representatives:

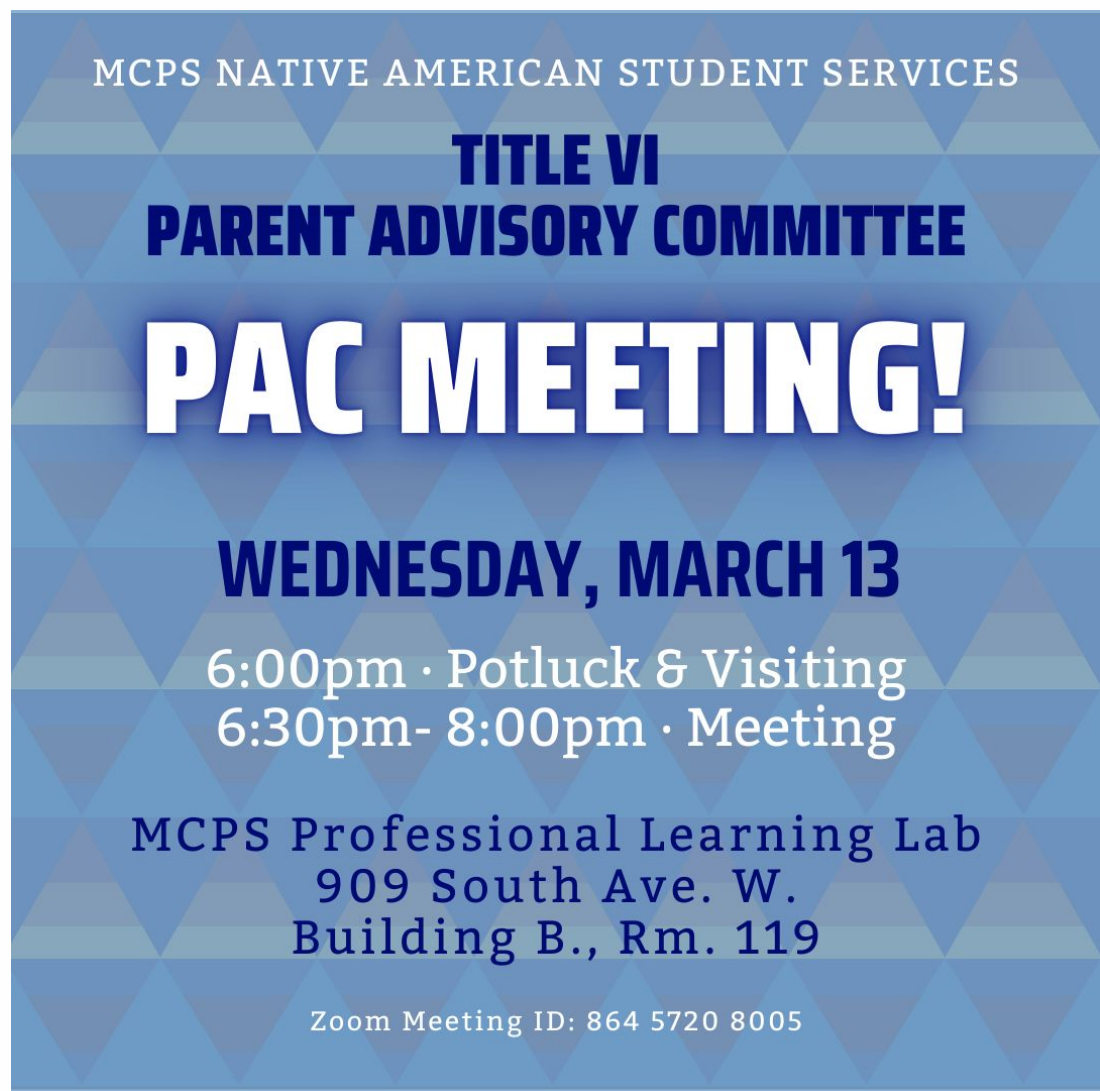
- ★ Matt Bell
- ★ Julie Cahoon
- ★ KaylaBeth Charlo
- ★ Amber Shaffer
- ★ Chad Villegas

Student Representative

- ★ Jude Juneau

Teacher Representative

- ★ Alyssa Johnson

A graphic with a blue background featuring a geometric pattern of triangles. The text is centered and reads: MCPS NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES, TITLE VI, PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PAC MEETING!, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 6:00pm · Potluck & Visiting, 6:30pm- 8:00pm · Meeting, MCPS Professional Learning Lab, 909 South Ave. W., Building B., Rm. 119, and Zoom Meeting ID: 864 5720 8005.

MCPS NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

TITLE VI

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PAC MEETING!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

6:00pm · Potluck & Visiting
6:30pm- 8:00pm · Meeting

MCPS Professional Learning Lab
909 South Ave. W.
Building B., Rm. 119

Zoom Meeting ID: 864 5720 8005

Visit our website for more information about PAC:

<https://www.mcpsmt.org/Page/6728>