

Indigenous Insider

November 2021

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Department Changes

Cue David Bowie! The NASS Department is undergoing ch-ch-ch-changes! We have done some restructuring for the school year and have new school assignments for each of our Native American Specialists.

There are some schools without an assigned specialist at this time but rest assured that our entire department is available to provide support. Just reach out to one of us and let us know how we can help!

Here are our updated assignments:

Dacia Griego

- Paxson Elementary
- Rattlesnake Elementary
- Department Social Worker

Duran Caferro

- Big Sky High School
- Hawthorne Elementary
- Willard High School

Glenda Weasel

- Seeley-Swan High School
- Data Support Staff

Mary Fran Plumage

- Chief Charlo Elementary
- Russell Elementary
- Meadow Hill Middle School

Melissa Hammett

- Willard High School (Teacher)
- Sentinel High School

Ray Kingfisher

- C.S. Porter Middle School
- Hellgate High School
- Washington Middle School



*Native American Student Services Department
Dacia, Duran, Glenda, Mary, Melissa, and Ray*

*“Let us put our minds together to see what we can build for our children”
Chief Sitting Bull, Hunkpapa Lakota*

2021 - 2022 Staff Contact Information & School Assignments

Name	Title	Phone 728-2400	Email	Assigned Schools
Amy Shattuck	Federal Programs Director	ext.	avshattuck@mcpsmt.org	
Matt Bell	NAS Teacher	ext. 8634	mkbell@mcpsmt.org	Big Sky HS, Willard
Duran Caferro	Native American Specialist	ext. 1064	dcaferro@mcpsmt.org	Big Sky, Hawthorne, Willard
Dacia Griego	Native American Specialist	ext. 1068	dgriego@mcpsmt.org	Rattlesnake, Paxson
Melissa Hammett	Native American Specialist	ext. 1028	mshammett@mcpsmt.org	Willard HS, Sentinel HS
Ray Kingfisher	Native American Specialist	ext. 1047	rdkingfisher@mcpsmt.org	CS Porter, Hellgate HS, Washington MS
Mary Fran Plumage	Native American Specialist	ext. 1049	mfplumage@mcpsmt.org	Russell, Chief Charlo, Meadow Hill MS
Glenda Weasel	Title VI/Data Support/ Native American Specialist	ext. 1063	gfwasel@mcpsmt.org	Seeley Swan HS

2021 - 2022 Event Calendar

Event	Date	Time	Location
Native American Heritage Day Celebration: Laughter is Good Medicine	Monday, September 20th	6:00pm-8:00pm	Ogren Park at Allegiance Field (Contact: Melissa Hammett)
Trunk or Treat	Friday, October 29th	4:00pm	MCPS Admin Building (Contact: Dacia Griego)
Winter Gathering	Thursday, December 9th	TBD	TBD (Contact: Ray Kingfisher)
Family Fun Time	Thursdays, January 6-February 10 <i>*no family fun on 2/4</i>	5:00pm-7:00pm	Rattlesnake Elementary School (Contact: Mary Plumage)
Sweetheart Round Dance	Friday, February 11th	6:00pm	Franklin Elementary School (Contact: Dacia Griego)
MCPS Native Youth Powwow	Saturday, March 12th	Grand Entry at 12:00 pm and 5:00pm	Sentinel High School (Contact: Glenda Weasel)
Graduating Senior Dinner	Thursday, May 12th	6:00pm	Double Tree By Hilton Hotel Missoula (Contact: Dacia Griego and Glenda Weasel)
End of the Year Gathering	Thursday, June 8th	TBD	TBD (Contact: Duran Caferro)

Student Spotlight

Congratulations to SanTana Bearcub Goddard, Ethan Lamb, and the rest of the Panthers football team! Their hard work and dedication led to an undefeated season!

Ethan is in 7th grade at Target Range. He is Aaniiih/Blackfeet and enjoys playing sports, video games, and spending time with family; especially baby cousin, Solei.

SanTana is Dakota, Little Shell, and Mexico. He loves to play football and wrestles for Sudden Victory. He enjoys the outdoors, and all things 80's movies and cruising with his Tio in his low riders.

Way to go!! You make us all proud!



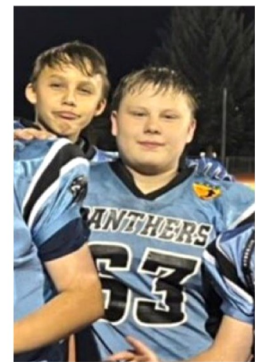
Ethan Lamb



SanTana Bearcub Goddard, Coach Josh Jones, and Vegas Longtree Bearcub



Panthers Football Champions.



SanTana Bearcub Goddard and Ethan Lamb

Parents, family members, teachers and staff: We'd love your help in celebrating our Native students in our upcoming newsletters. Please let your Native American Specialist know if you have a student who deserves recognition!

*question.
persuade.
refer.*

**QPR SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING
FOR NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH & FAMILIES**

**Gain the tools to help when you are concerned
about a friend or loved one.**

All participants will receive a certificate upon completion.

**NOV 17, 2021
4-5:30 PM, VIA
ZOOM**

**REGISTER AT:
bit.ly/38rtel6**



Halloween Fun

This year we hosted our first Trunk-or-Treat event in place of our usual Halloween dance/carnival. We had so much fun seeing everyone's costumes and all the amazing trunks.

We had more than 150 trick-or-treaters stop by for the festivities. Trunks were decorated by the NASS staff, community members, and staff from CASA Missoula and All Nations Health Center.



Melissa's Nightmare Before Christmas Trunk



Weasel Family Haunted Trunk

Halloween Fun



Thank you to everyone who participated in our costume contest! Here is the list of winners:

Elementary Students:

- 1st Place - Squid (Luke Barlow)
- 2nd Place - Witch (Maizie Upham)
- 3rd Place - Black Cat (Lilee McLean)

Middle School Students:

- 1st Place - Jason Voorhees (SanTana Bearcub Goddard)
- 2nd Place - Spooky, Scary, Skeleton (Ledson McLean)
- 3rd Place - Penguin (Caia Bird)

High School Students:

- 1st Place - Angus Young (Rickson Bull Calf)
- 2nd Place - Adam Sandler (Cecelia Coon)
- 3rd Place - Scary Clown (Peyton Racine)

The winners of our Halloween TikTok Challenge are Batman vs. the Clowns! Congratulations Logan Sinclair (Batman), Andrew Sinclair (Scary Clown) and Peyton Racine (Scary Clown)! Great job!

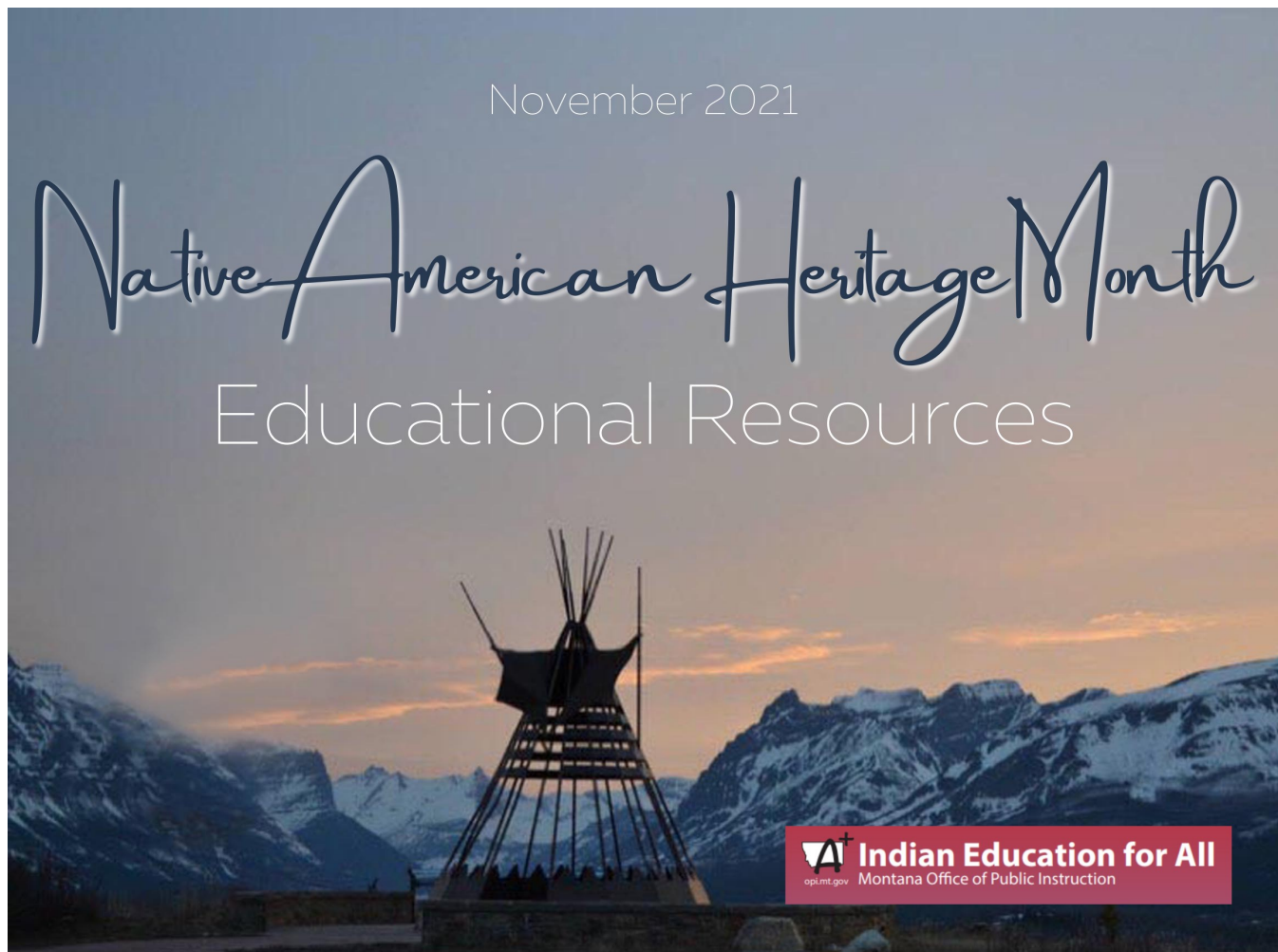


Native American Heritage Month

As we head into November many teachers look for ways to celebrate Native American Heritage Month in their classrooms. The [MCPS Native American Student Services Department](#) is happy to help! With a Native American Education Specialist assigned to each school our district has set the standard for implementing Indian Education For All (IEFA). Our department is passionate and eager to help teachers and staff. We can visit classrooms or help coordinate guest speakers, review classroom materials, and recommend resources and media. Please don't hesitate to contact the specialist assigned to your school.

In addition to the wealth of resources available on the [Montana OPI website](#), they have also put together a [resource guide specifically for Native American Heritage Month](#).

While November is the official month on our calendars, keep in mind that every month is Native American Heritage Month for the Native American Student Services Department and for our Indigenous students across Missoula County Public Schools. Consider how you can continue to celebrate and acknowledge Native American heritage throughout the year. Some suggestions include sharing: Indigenous history, contemporary issues, tribal language and stories, and notable Indigenous people throughout the year.



The Truth About Thanksgiving

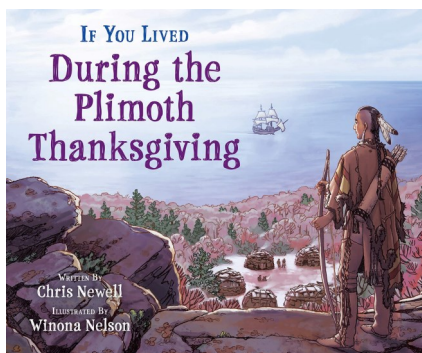
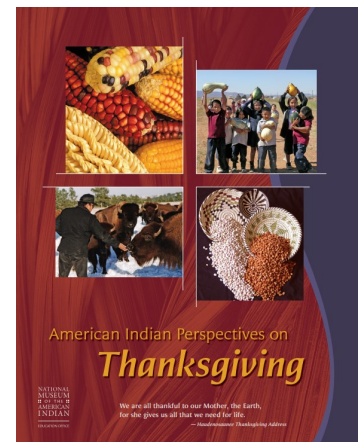
Thanksgiving has been celebrated as a holiday in the United States since George Washington was the nation's president. The holiday gained popularity over time as a time to give thanks, celebrate the fall harvest, and commemorate the supposed friendship established between the "Pilgrims and Indians" at Plymouth Plantation. The problem is that the story of the "first Thanksgiving" is a fabricated and romanticized version of history that ignores the truth about the genocide and forced removal of Indigenous people in the United States.

In classrooms across the country, and possibly within our own district children learn this false history and even re-enact the events with students dressing up and playing the parts of "pilgrims" and "Indians." When this happens not only are students misinformed but they are playing out stereotypes of Native American people. We strongly discourage these types of lessons and activities in any classroom.

Instead, we would like to encourage teachers to learn about and teach the true history of Thanksgiving or refocus their November lesson plans to topics like gratitude, food sovereignty, and Native American history and culture. We have gathered the following resources and books that help correct the false narrative.

Resources:

- [Rethinking Thanksgiving Celebrations: Native Perspectives on Thanksgiving](#)
- [What Educators Need to Know About Teaching Thanksgiving](#)
- [Oyate's List of Thanksgiving Books to Avoid](#)
- [Allyship with our Native Community](#)
- [Everyday Native](#)



Books:

- [If You Lived During Plimoth Thanksgiving by Chris Newell \(Passamaquoddy\)](#)
- [We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga by Traci Sorrell \(Cherokee\)](#)
- [Giving Thanks by Chief Jake Swamp \(Mohawk\)](#)
- [Thanks to the Animals by Allen Sockabasin \(Passamaquoddy\)](#)
(Read by Allen Sockabasin in Passamaquoddy language)
- [The People Shall Continue by Simon J. Ortiz \(Acoma Pueblo\)](#)
- [An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Debbie Reese \(Nambé Pueblo\), and Jean Mendoza](#)

New Addition to the NASS Team!

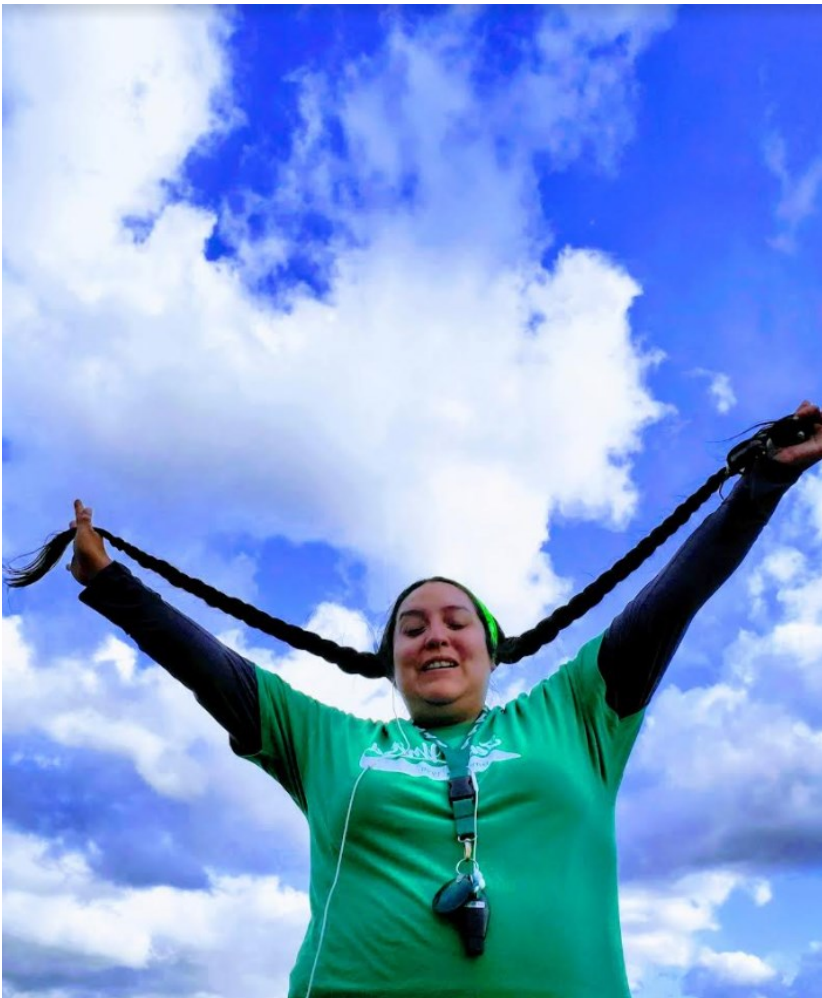
My name is Mary Fran Plumage, the students call me Ms. Mary. I am an enrolled member of the Salish tribe. I was born and raised on the Ft. Belknap Reservation. I am new to the department but not new to MCPS, before I worked as a para at Russell Elementary. I am excited to join the Native Education Department. The schools that I have are Chief Charlo Elementary, Russell Elementary School, and Meadow Hill Middle School.

Currently I have 2 children in MCPS, one in middle school and a senior at Big Sky. My oldest is my daughter and she is working on her degree at the University of Montana. I moved to Missoula in June 2007 and love Griz football games, huckleberry picking, and home cooked meals.

I am excited to work with your students and offer support to our community.

Pinamiya!

Mary Fran Plumage
Native American Specialist
(406)728-2400 ext. 1049
mfplumage@mcpsmt.org



Oki Niksookowaaksi Tsa Niitaapi? By Raymond D. Kingfisher

(Hello My Relatives How is it Going?)

Oki Niksookoowaaksiiksi,

I am the NA Specialist for CS Porter, Washington Middle School and Hellgate High. I host an in-person lunch gathering at each school throughout the week. I have been monitoring grades and attendance of the students at these schools.

I have noticed that there are a number of our students that are "chronically absent," based on the Infinite Campus system. I know that the NA community has and is still being hit hard by the Coronavirus. The ones that have been absent I just check on them, email or visit, encouraging them to try and be there at the school. Absenteeism has a huge effect on the students' grades so we are seeing that lead to other things such as mental/emotional problems, somethings that we as NA Specialists are not equipped for. I am doing my best by trying to get them help, telling them about the services available, All Nations, School, and other places that can help them deal with what is going on in the world. We are still in the midst of a pandemic and it is taking a toll on everyone.

This month, Native American Heritage, I have been telling oral stories and doing Blackfoot language lessons. I have shown a few videos as well as to what NAHM is today and ask "How do you feel as a NA?" They do have some great/creative answers. In the evenings I have started a basketball open gym, with help from the Native Connections of All Nations. I am hoping to field a team of 6-8 girls' and boys' teams in the local youth tournaments. The High School students are present as well. They are using the Gym time as preparation to "try-outs" and the upcoming season.

I am the point person for the December event. Initially I wanted to have a mini-powwow but as I was back home last weekend I seen the death toll first hand that we are still experiencing. I think having an in-person event would not be wise during this time. I will try and come up with something soon. Other than that, we continue to move forward doing the best we can.

Thanks. Ray



Join us on Facebook!

[Facebook.com/groups/mcpsNativeAmericanStudentServices](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mcpsNativeAmericanStudentServices)

[Facebook.com/groups/mcpsmtTribalLanguages](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mcpsmtTribalLanguages)

Tansi Nitotemak! (Hello Friends!) by Dacia Griego

Tansi! Hello!

Things are moving right along with lots of changes so far this school year! We are so happy to have our newest specialist join the team. My role has changed a bit for the school year as well. I am now working as a part time Native American Specialist and part time Social Worker for the Native American Student Services Department. I'm feeling optimistic about this opportunity to be of support to our department, our students, and their families.



My background is in social work with degrees in both social work and psychology from the University of Montana. I have been an advocate for families in our community for the last decade. Prior to joining the MCPS crew I worked at the YWCA Missoula for several years as the Emergency Housing Program Coordinator where I worked with families experiencing homelessness and housing instability and survivors of domestic violence. I also worked for several years at Women's Opportunity & Resource Development (WORD) as a Family Advocate and briefly for the State of Montana in the Office of Public Assistance. My experience has given me a vast knowledge of community resources. I'm always happy to help families who need assistance in navigating these systems.

Because of this change in my role, I have had to reduce the number of schools I am assigned to as a Native American Education Specialist. I continue to be the specialist assigned to Rattlesnake Elementary School and have joined the team at Paxson Elementary School. I have started classroom read aloud visits with the Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade classrooms at both of these schools. So far this year I have read "Awasis and the World-Famous Bannock" and "We Are Grateful."

I am not hosting in person lunch gatherings at this time but will be visiting with students during lunch and lunch recess. I will be reaching out to parents and guardians over the next few weeks to check in and introduce myself to Paxson families. I look forward to getting to know you all!

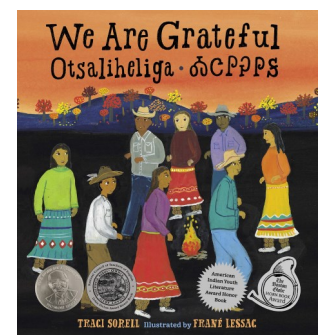
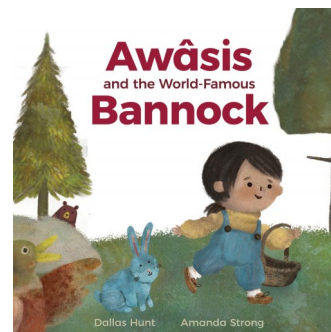
Best Wishes,

Miss Dacia



Dacia Griego, BSW (she/her)
Native American Education Specialist
Social Worker

dgriego@mcpsmt.org
406.728.2400 ext. 1068



Stoodis! by Duran Caferro

Good day everyone. Here is my mini-update:

At Hawthorne Elementary, we are getting used to a new read aloud routine called Rounds. Each time I meet with classes for read aloud, I get to hear from each student. This allows me to gauge information the students already know on a given topic, as well as what they are curious about. These little ones also get to practice introducing themselves, speaking clearly to a group, and listening respectfully.



At Big Sky, students have organized 2 groups. Each regular Thursday morning, students are welcome to join me in the Aux Gym, 9:00 -10:25. Here I offer homework/missing work check, healthy snacks, a welcoming routine, and, of course, basketball. We also meet bi-weekly for a statewide Native Youth Leadership group called RISE. Students learn leadership skills like public speaking, planning and running meetings, as well as self-advocacy and self-efficacy. I am available at BSHS, room 11, Wednesday and Thursday. We have our own space for students to utilize in any way they need to be successful at school.

At Willard Alternative High School we have already had numerous awesome projects. We attended the Public Land Law Conference at UM Law School, online of course. We also attend RISE bi-weekly; we will begin to meet every Tuesday morning for a welcoming routine. I am new to Willard; I am looking forward to learning about the students and bringing them exciting programs to help with engagement.

At this time in history, given the flux event we are experiencing, my focus is on pro-social activities, self-esteem, and belonging. All programs are student driven and student led. Our youth are the experts of their own experience. I believe all students are capable of greatness; when they believe in themselves, anything is possible.

Duran Caferro (he, him, his)
 MCPS Native American Community Specialist
 -Willard HS, BSHS, Hawthorne Elementary
 MCPS Native American Student Services
 Dept.
 (406)728-2400 ext. 1064
dcaferro@mcpsmt.org



Champion Boxing

Cold Springs School Cafeteria

Boxers are expected to be in the gym at least 3 practices/week, on time, ready to work. This is a minimum. I suggest making it to more practices if being a champion is a goal. I have some funding sources in the works. We may see a ring and heavy bag structure in the gym within the next 2 months. Make sure your athlete is communicating with teachers about missing work, getting plenty of sleep, and drinking water throughout the day. I have seen tremendous growth in boxing skills, mental and physical strength, and positive social skills. Good work everyone, we are just getting started.

*these practices may change or be cancelled as competition opportunities arise.

Duran Caferro
406-465-6429 (text preferred)
championshipboxingmissoula@gmail.com



November 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:30-6:30	2 4:30-6:30	3 4:30-6:00 Family Feed and Study Lab 6:00-7:00	4 6:15-7:45	5 4:30-6:00	6 12:00-1:30*
7 12:00-1:30*	8 4:30-6:30	9 4:30-6:30	10 4:30-6:00 Family Feed and Study Lab 6:00-7:00	11 6:15-7:45	12 4:30-6:00	13 Competition, either Missoula, Hilton, 5:00-9:00
14 No practice, rest	15 4:30-6:30	16 4:30-6:30	17 4:30-6:00 Family Feed and Study Lab 6:00-7:00	18 6:15-7:45	19 4:30-6:00	20 12:00-1:30*
21 12:00-1:30*	22 4:30-6:30	23 4:30-6:30	24 No Practice or feed, have a good feast at home!	25 No Practice or feed, have a good feast at home!	26 4:30-6:00	27 12:00-1:30*
28 12:00-1:30*	29 4:30-6:30	30 4:30-6:30				

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 graduating class of Native American seniors.



All parents/guardians and members of the Missoula Native American community are welcome to attend and participate in Title VI Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings and events. Our meetings are open to the public.

The PAC has one vacancy open for a Parent Representative for the 2021-2022 school year. 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.

Committee members attend monthly meetings, support the NASS Dept. and participate in fundraising and planning for the Native Senior Dinner.

Please send nominations to PAC Chairperson, Dacia Griego at dgriego@mcpsmt.org

2021-2022 Title VI Parent Advisory Committee	
Name	Title
Dacia Griego	Chairperson
Duran Caferro	Vice Chairperson
Amber Shaffer	Secretary/Treasurer
Toni Alvernaz	Parent Rep
Stephen Chase	Parent Rep
- Vacant-	Parent Rep
Alina Espino	Student Rep
Barbara Frank	Teacher Rep

Title VI Parent Advisory Committee Meeting Dates	
Meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 5pm. All meetings will be held remotely via Google Meet until further notice. Contact Dacia Griego for a link to join.	
Date	Time
September 8, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
October 6, 2021	6:00-8:00 PM
November 10, 2021	5:00-6:30 PM
December 8, 2021	5:00-6:30 PM
January 12, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM
February 9, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM
March 9, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM
April 13, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM
May 11, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM
June 8, 2022	5:00-6:30 PM

PAC Fundraisers

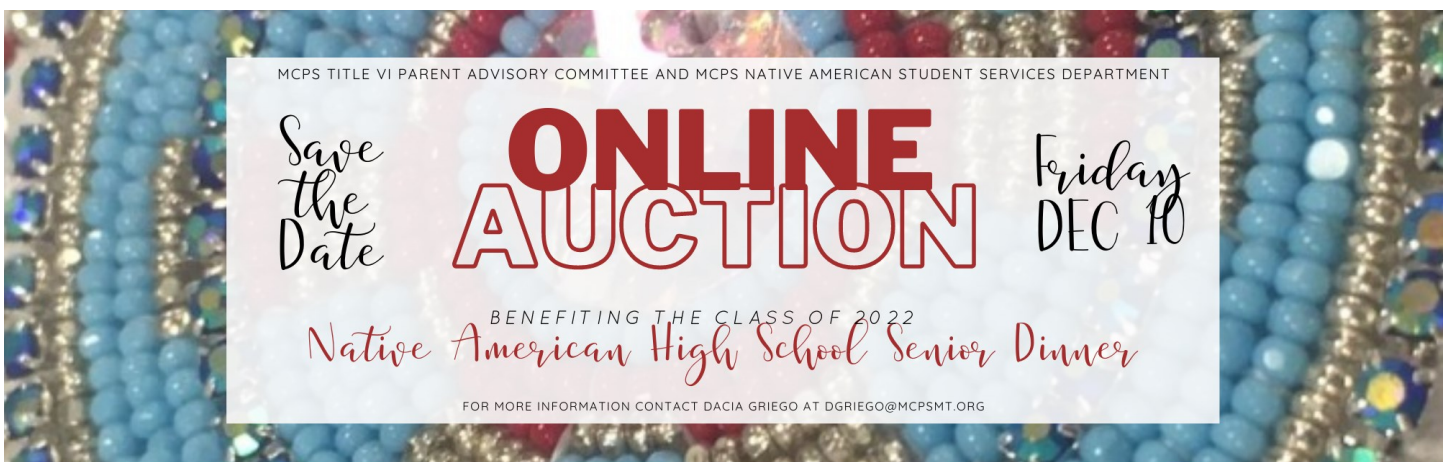
PAC members are hard at work raising funds for the Class of 2022 Native American Graduation Dinner. There are several opportunities to show your support. The Turkey Dinner Raffle is a favorite with an opportunity to "Pay It Forward." When you purchase a "Pay It Forward" ticket you give a local family a chance to win the basket.



We are also excited to host an online auction on Friday, December 10th. We have a variety of items available to bid on. This is a great way to find holiday gifts and support a great cause! We will share more information, including auction items and auction link, one the date approaches.

Thank you for your support!

The Parent Advisory Committee





Native American Student Services Department



2021-2022 Event Calendar

September

"Laughter is Medicine"
Native American Heritage
Day Celebration
Monday, September 20
Paddleheads Stadium

October

Trunk-or-Treat
Friday, October 29
MCPS Admin Building

December

Winter Gathering
Thursday, December 9

January - February

Family Fun Night
Thursdays, 1/6 - 2/10
Rattlesnake Elementary
No event on Feb. 4th

February

Sweetheart Round Dance
Friday, February 11
Franklin Elementary

April

MCPS Native Youth
Powwow (NYP)
Saturday, March 12th
Sentinel HS

May

Senior Dinner
Thursday, May 12
Doubletree

June

End of Year Celebration
Thursday, June 8

**Events subject to change.*



MCPS TITLE VI PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE & NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT 2021-2022 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
Native American Student Services Department
909 South Ave W
Missoula, MT 59801

OR email to: gfwheel@mcps.k12.mt.us or mshammett@mcps.k12.mt.us
Your voice is very important to us! Thank you!