

## Parent Community Outreach Program

.....

### March/April 2021 School Board Report

#### **BPS Child Care~by Rose Racine, Coordinator**

Welcome to the BPS Early Child Learning Center!!!

It is hard to say if we are at the end of a year or the beginning. Either way Monica, Bristen, Charlotte and myself are now under the tutelage of 5 new bosses. They are easy going yet demanding. For now it is their way or a real stand-off !



They do agree to wear face masks some days. Allergies are upon us. Just another little wrench in fighting germs. We also have a larger area to eat and play. Each area is sanitized after each use.

Our new bosses are settling into a routine and we are learning what makes each of us tick. We all do our best to stay busy. We are starting to recognize our letters. We learned "A" is for ant. In March, we talked about leprechauns. Wait until you see pictures of what they think mom or dad looks like!



But we do have to be adults also and make sure our littles are safe and practice the Covid rules. This is our sick bay. I hope we never have to use it. It is the only area that they have no interest in. I don't know why, I think it is cute.

We also have a "yuck bucket" that we are learning to put all the toys that have been touched and have germs.

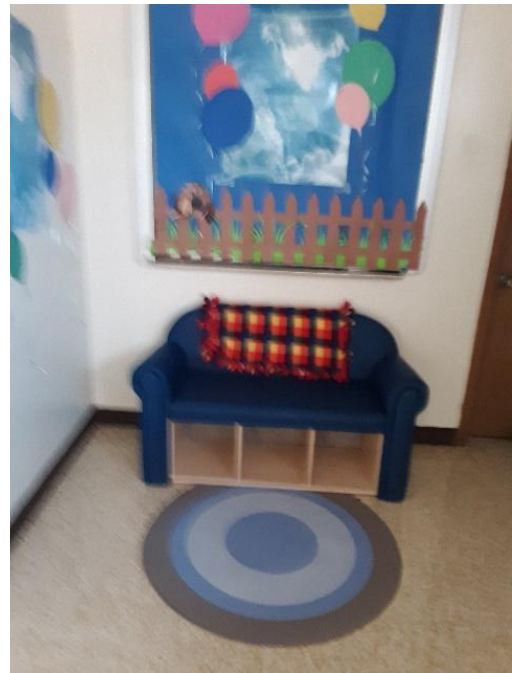


Photo credit: Rose Racine

Miss Rose has a shaky hand and must be forgiven!!!

This is just a little peek into our little piece of the educational world. I am looking forward to sharing more in the future.

### **Updates from previous report by Director, Nikki Hannon**

The BPS Early Child Learning Center is officially in operation as of March 8, 2021. We have spent the last several weeks making final preparations for the arrival of our returning & new children. We were able to complete the majority of "must-dos" on our reopening plan. The remaining items still needing completion are:

- Clear Big Room of remaining food (nearly completed~ we will be making food boxes for our teen parents and other families since the food-based pantries are already well-stocked)
- Safety flooring for section of "big room" (currently getting new quotes for wrestling mats)
- Hiring for one new full time position

Parent Orientation is being offered to each new/returning parent so that we can go over our Covid Safety plan and expectations. Along with the rest of the district, we are updating our plan to align with changes at the Tribal and State level. These changes will be communicated to parents through email, as well as an addendum to our Health Policy. It is imperative to us to continue open communication with our parents to ensure the health and safety of all children enrolled at our center.

Our #12 spot roster currently consists of :

- Teen parents (#0)~ Despite our outreach efforts, the teen parents have not returned their childcare applications, nor have they indicated recent/continuing interest in receiving childcare

- Returning staff (#3)
- New staff (#2)
- Open (#1 infant spot; #6 toddler spots)~ all parents on the waitlist have been given the option to apply; those still interested in receiving childcare are opting to wait until Fall 2021 for enrollment
- Waitlist (#0 staff)

The parents who have opted to wait to re-enroll their children until Fall 2021 will have their spots offered to new parents for Spring 2021 enrollment.

We are hoping that the new covid relief package will trickle funding down to the child care center as it did previously through our Family Connections grants. We would really like to continue to build on our curriculum, which requires separate supplies per child, and enough developmentally appropriate toys to rotate throughout the day. The “yuck bucket” fills up pretty fast with busy hands!

## **BPS Teen Parent Resource Center**

Our Teen Parent Resource Center is fully stocked with diapers, wipes and baby clothes. We also have hygiene items and school supplies for the mothers and fathers. We are more than happy to create care packages for new and expecting teen parents as well.



Photo credit: Ronnel Goss

## **BPS Hi-Set & Adult Basic Education**

### Attendance Update:

April 2021 Total Enrollment: #64

New Students (self/community referrals)	3
New Students (BHS referrals)	0
Virtual/On-line	37
Paper Packets	27
Actively Participating	14
In-active	50

Successes: Our tutor has reached max capacity which is a first for us! Jeri is currently working with 14 consistent clients, and the other 50 “drop in” as they are able. We have decided not to take any more referrals from the community at the moment and are now referring those students to the Blackfeet Community College HiSET tutoring program. Jeri is coordinating closely with their tutor to provide transitions between the clients, and even sharing clients in some cases to meet their various learning needs. However, we will continue to accept new referrals from BHS/BHA. We are also excited to be able to provide ipads to those students choosing to remain remote learning.

Challenges: As we transition to Blended Learning, we will adapt to new Covid safety protocols. Due to space constraints within the tutoring center, we are only able to serve one client at a time. We are asking the clients to make an appointment, to wear a mask while in the building, to complete the Covid health screening, including a temperature check, and to sanitize their hands prior to entering the classroom. The tutoring space will be cleaned and sanitized between each client.

## **BPS āisspoōmmoōtsiiyō•p**

The BPS āisspoōmmoōtsiiyō•p program is excited that the district has returned to Blended Learning as the majority of our referrals come directly from staff having in-person interactions with their students.

We have thus far identified #212 students in grades PreK-12th experiencing homelessness at some point during the current academic year. Although we have identified 15 more students in the last month, we know that our numbers are significantly lower than expected due to the limitations with identifying students. This is a nation-wide concern as a direct result of the current pandemic and resulting school closures and/or remote



learning. We will soon be partnering with Blackfeet Early Childhood in an effort to identify more families. Other efforts to identify students include outreach through social media and the public radio station (once it's back on air.)

### **School-based Clothing Closets**

We are tentatively making plans to accept the donation being held for us at the Heart Locker in Kalispell. We realize that there is a severe need for clothing for students in our community and it's simply a matter of connecting all of the dots. With Blended Learning now in place, we are coordinating with the various school-based clothing closets to make room in their closets for some fresh threads.

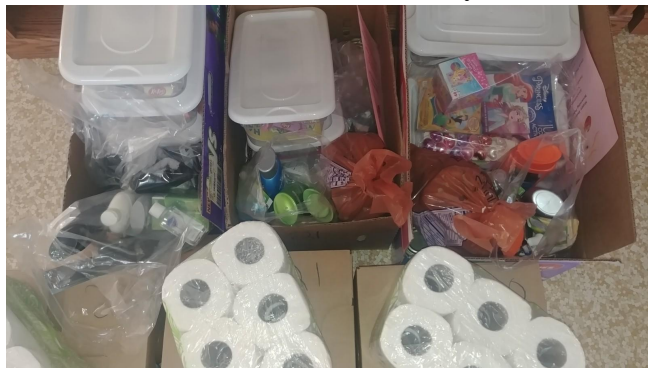
### **School-based Food Pantry**

Thanks to the PCOP staff, our PCOP-based food pantry is now set up and ready to serve! We still have an overabundance of canned items that can be shared with the four other school-based pantries at their request. Our pantry in particular was established to meet the emergency food needs of the students we serve, and as a convenience to the grandparents with children in multiple grade levels.

We are fortunate to have a partnership with the Oyop Food Pantry on Wheels to further serve our families' food needs. Oyop will be delivering food weekly to our families in the outlying communities, as well as those families living in town that lack transportation to visit the Oyop pantry themselves.



Finally, we identified #45 families who received complete Easter dinners from the Oyop Food Pantry/Nourish the Blackfeet, as well as Easter baskets for the children provided by members of the Lutheran Church in Columbia Falls. BPS Child Nutrition Program donated milk, and the Blackfeet Commodity Office donated produce boxes, cheese and yogurt.



BPS Student Volunteers prepping food boxes

## **BPS YHDP**

Our BPS Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) Youth Case Manager, Irene Augare, has already received her first referrals for our new program. She is currently working with #5 youth and has received referrals for an additional #5. Supportive Services already provided are:

- Reconnecting students with school
- Basic needs: hygiene items, clothing/shoes, food, school supplies, jet packs
- Referrals to Job Corp
- Cell phones to remain connected with YHDP staff
- Scholarship assistance
- Coaching for self-advocacy

Irene has done an excellent job also of drafting the Host Home application. Our next step with this is to have it reviewed for any liability or legal concerns associated with BPS creating host homes. There are many other parts and pieces to building the foundation for BPS Host Homes and we look forward to sharing our progress!

## **Hot of the Press: Prom 2021!**

Our Prom Event was a hit! A huge thank you and shout out to our staff and community volunteers who helped to make this event extra special for our students! This year, 23 students received prom services which may have included hair, makeup, nails, dresses, shoes, corsages, boutonnieres, jewelry, masks and sanitizer (depending on what they needed).



Thank you to our volunteers:

Jerelyn Gobert , Irene Augare, Ronnel Goss, Jodi Goss, JoRae Rattler, Sonya Gobert, Alex DeCarlo, and Hailey Bullshoe

Thank you to our sponsors: Johanna Johnson, Rose Racine,

Charlene Harrison-WhiteQuills , Teri DeRoche, Jerelyn Gobert

