

Parent Community Outreach/Childcare~ Nikki Hannon
Board Meeting: August 14, 2018

The Parent Community Outreach Program (PCOP) is comprised of the Student and District Employee Child Care Center, Hi-Set (formerly GED) and Adult Basic Education study center, BPS Teen Parent Program, and the Families In Transition (FIT) program. The FIT program serves students eligible as McKinney Vento (homeless), students in Foster Care, and has most recently added a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren component. Also falling under the umbrella of FIT are the school-based clothing closets, food pantries and backpack program. A final component to PCOP is the district-wide Early Warning System (EWS) which identifies those students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

The 2018-2019 academic year is one of transition, rejuvenation and exciting opportunities within the Parent Community Outreach Program. I would like to provide a bit of reflection and a hint at what is yet to come within each of the PCOP components:

- **Child Care**~ During the 2017-2018 academic year, #16 children were enrolled in childcare at some point. We have recently begun the process of renewing our license and ensuring all staff receive the appropriate training. Currently, there are 12 children of district employees on the waitlist for 2018-2019 enrollment; final enrollment is pending the childcare needs of teen parents who will continue to receive priority. One exciting change is the collaboration with KW Bergan to establish the Child Care as a feeder into their academic setting. Our hope is to provide more support to teen parents in preparing their children for early education.
- **Hi-Set**~ During the 2017-2018 academic year, we served #28 students. We did not have any students take the Hi-Set test last year. This is largely due to the fact that we did not have a local testing site. We will be evaluating the Hi-Set program this academic year to determine how the model can best be modified to attract, retain and ultimately, graduate, more students. We would also like to offer more Adult Basic Education courses to the community for vocational enhancement.
- **Teen Parent Program**~ During the 2017-2018 academic year, we served #20 teen parents through supportive services, material goods, and a parenting class offered through a partnership with Man Power's Pregnant and Parenting Teen Coalition. This year, we hope to continue these services as well as strengthen the opportunities we provide for our teens to gain meaningful and practical parenting skills. One of our strategies will be to invite our teen parents to volunteer at childcare and form a mentoring relationship with childcare staff.
- **Families In Transition**~ During the 2017-2018 academic year, the FIT program received an amazing amount of local support from the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, Faughts, and numerous individuals; we also received an overwhelming amount of support from Kalispell's Heart Locker, the Whitefish Soroptomists, Nourish the Flathead/Blackfeet, and Town Pump. This support allowed us to provide winter coats, snow boots, holiday food baskets, personal hygiene items, baby supplies, and school supplies to students

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qualifying as either homeless (McKinney Vento), Foster Care, or Grandchildren Raised by Grandparents.

Our weekend back pack program, sponsored by the Montana Food Bank Network, provided over #3400 weekend backpack meals. Our School Pantries, largely funded by a donation from Town Pump, also provided weekend meals to numerous families in need. School Pantries have been established in the Academy, BMS, BHS and Babb. Nourish the Flathead/Blackfeet frequently supplemented our pantries and backpacks with fresh fruit and other snacks.

We do not have an accurate count of how many students visited the clothing closets last year. The FIT closet was initially based in BES, and continues to offer a variety of sizes as a one-stop convenience to larger families. Due to the high need, we also established closets at Napi, BMS, the Academy and BHS. KW had previously established a clothing closet and we try to support their needs as requested. We also provide Babb with items as needed (ie. Snow pants and snow boots!).

For the 2018-2019 academic year, we hope to continue to grow our partnerships and secure additional resources for students in need. We also intend to more accurately identify students eligible as McKinney Vento, Foster Care, and Grandchildren Raised by Grandparents in order to provide support and resources such as access to the clothing closets, food pantries and weekend back pack meals.

Last year, we identified #220 students as homeless; this number is statistically lower than expected for our community. In an effort to better identify students, we have amended our Student Residency Questionnaire (self-report) and will continue to offer professional development to raise staff awareness in identifying students.

- **Early Warning System~** During the 2017-2018 academic year, the Early Warning System was not utilized to its full potential. This is an area we hope to improve upon this academic year. We will begin by re-introducing EWS to the school board and administrators and then collaborate on a plan to most efficiently incorporate its usage into existing data implementation practices.

The mission of the Parent Community Outreach Program is to serve as a resource to the school district and our community in a collaborative effort to keep our students in school until graduation.

We invite you to stop by the annex for a cup of coffee and conversation.