KUKYOOSSIN
LEARNING CENTER

Where learning takes root.

Kukyoossin Learning Center
February 2026 Board Report

Brittany Burns, Director

Enrollment

Enrollment increased by one student during the month of February, bringing us back to our licensed capacity of 25 children. We continue to receive ongoing inquiries from staff members and families in need of childcare. Due to this demand, a meeting was held to explore the possibility of increasing capacity through additional insurance coverage. Expanding enrollment could also allow the center to explore future drop-in and after-school care options to better support district staff and families.

Attendance

Staff attendance for February averaged 88%. Lower staff attendance continues to directly impact administrative operations, as I am frequently required to step into classrooms to maintain ratio compliance. This limits time available for leadership responsibilities, compliance work, and program development.

Securing substitute staff remains a challenge. Substitutes are less likely to accept childcare placements due to lower pay compared to other district buildings, where they are compensated at higher rates and can leave when school is dismissed. This remains an ongoing operational barrier.

Health & Safety

In February, we implemented a formal Biting Policy to strengthen safety practices and ensure consistency in behavior response. The policy was distributed to all families, includes a required parent signature acknowledgment, and outlines clear procedures for documentation and communication.

This policy supports a safe, predictable environment for children, staff, and families while aligning with licensing expectations and developmentally appropriate practices.

Literacy & Family Engagement

February focused heavily on early literacy through our "Love to Read" initiative. Families were challenged to read with their child for at least 10 minutes each night. For each reading session or book completed, children brought back a paper heart to add to our classroom Reading Tree. It was exciting to watch the tree grow throughout the month, symbolizing both participation and a growing love of reading within our program.

A community book drive was also launched, and we received enough donations to establish a take-home lending library. Families are now encouraged to borrow books and return them when finished. This initiative strengthened home-school connections while improving access to books for our families.

Partnerships & Community Connections

A collaborative meeting was held with BCC and Browning High School to discuss launching a Child Development CTE course next school year. This program would allow high school students to gain hands-on experience in early childhood education by working directly within our center, supporting both workforce development and mentorship opportunities for local students.

On February 13th, BullShoe Elementary invited our center to attend a Valentine's Social Dance. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and it provided a meaningful opportunity for cross-school connection and community building.

Professional Development & Program Quality

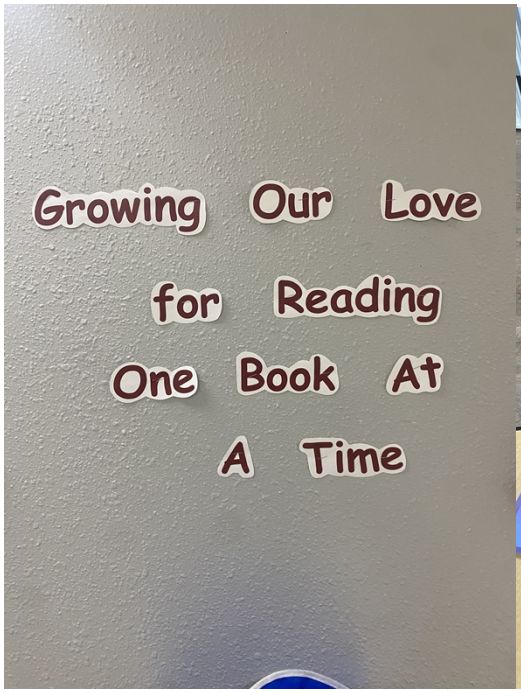
In February, I worked with our SPARK partners to shift the focus of support from coaching to intentional professional development. Within early childhood education, as with all educational fields, it is critical that educators continually add new tools to their professional toolbox. Every childcare provider is required from the state of Montana to have at least 16 hours of professional development.

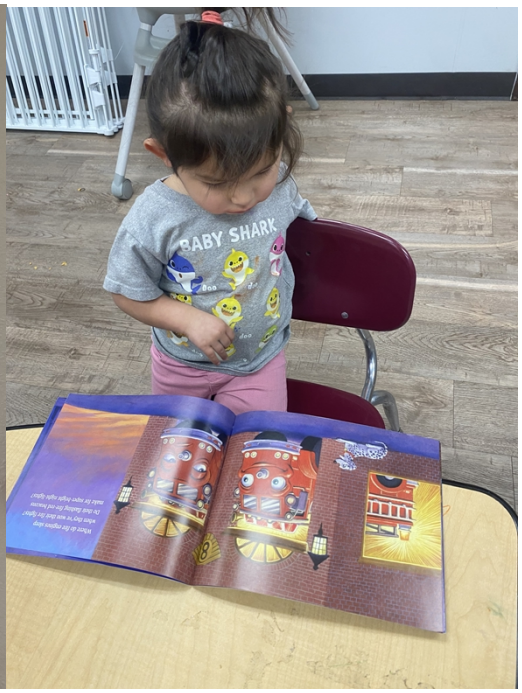
One ongoing challenge unique to childcare settings is limited access to dedicated professional development time. Unlike K–12 classrooms, our program operates beyond the regular school day. Even during extended Wednesdays and BID days, we continue providing care, which means staff rarely have uninterrupted time for training unless it is outside of working hours.

To address this, SPARK is helping create embedded professional development opportunities that work within the realities of a childcare environment. This shift ensures our teachers continue building skills while remaining present for children and supports our long-term goal of maintaining a highly skilled, well-supported team equipped to implement best practices in early childhood education.

Looking Ahead to March

- Continued exploration of expanding enrollment capacity
- Addressing substitute staffing challenges
- Strengthening behavior support systems and consistency
- Expanded professional development opportunities in partnership with SPARK
- Continued family engagement and literacy efforts
- Planning for potential CTE program implementation for the 2026–2027 school year


Growing Our Love
for Reading
One Book At
A Time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