

Blackfeet Academy and Project Choices are in the process of moving to the old Vo Tech building. The new school will be called the Buffalo Hide Academy and will include the best elements of both the former Blackfeet Academy and Project Choices. The name was chosen by the students. We feel that the name is symbolic of our culture and who we want to be. A buffalo hide is very important to our culture, It can be used as a story robe for the students to tell their own unique stories and express themselves, a buffalo hide also provides warmth and security just like our students and staff support each other, and a buffalo hide is strong and very resilient like our students and our school. The construction and remodel are almost complete and the building looks incredible.

Students are already engaged in several community service projects. Students are working with KW Bergan as “Big Brother and Sister” mentors and are helping with students that are having difficulty adjusting to school. Academy students provide support on the playground and during the bus line up process.

We are also beginning a project with the Medicine Bear Shelter. Through research we found out that the ladies at the shelter serve up to 150 people Monday through Friday and provide second hand coats and sweaters and a warm meal to clients ranging from infants to elders. We are planning on gathering coats and gloves for the Medicine Bear Shelter and making sandwiches that we can serve to the Medicine Bear clients on weekends when the shelter is not open.

As another community service project we are excited to partner with the Transportation department to create a Bus Mentors program. Students will ride the bus and help promote a positive environment and hopefully reduce bullying and behavior incidents.

Our counselors are busy in the classrooms and are teaching the following classes: OLWEUS Bullying Prevention, Youth Mental Health First Aid, coping with Grief and Trauma- (Trauma Informed) and Safe Dating relationships curriculum. It is our sincere belief that these subjects and the skills that our students learn from them are as important as any other subject area. We also use this time to discuss each student and staffs commitment to a positive school environment and our behavior expectations. So far we have no office referrals, no fights and only 1 reported incident of bullying.

A few weeks ago we took a reservation tour that included a pre-lesson on the Mission Schools and their impact on the Blackfeet people. This discussion also included the effects of cultural and historical trauma and identified cultural resiliency factors to deal with this Trauma. Art Deroche was our guest in class and even accompanied us on the field trip.

I want to thank Malcom Hagberg and Richard Sanchez and their respective staffs for all of the support and help in the transition process. Our staff and students are extremely anxious to move into the new classrooms and these gentlemen have been consistently checking on us and the project. We are currently serving 75 students and the average daily attendance has been impressive. Upon completion of the building we will add approximately 30 more students.



Picture from Scenic Point Hike/ Science and PE lab. 8 mile round trip with a 3000 ft. elevation gain.

Thank you

Matthew Johnson

Director of Alternative Education

Browning Public Schools