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# PARENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

## BPS Early Childhood Learning Center

December at Child Care was filled with holiday fun! Children in the toddler room learned about the shapes triangle, octagon and circle. They practiced fine motor skills by tracing and cutting. They practiced their art skills by making “stained glass” Christmas art. They also continued to practice their ABC’s, learning manners, and wearing their masks for safety. The weather has not been cooperative enough to play outside so they get plenty of time to develop their gross motor skills in the Big Room.

There are currently #12 children enrolled with an additional #5 children on the waitlist. Although we are now “fully staffed” with all positions filled, we continue to struggle with staffing the same as the rest of the district. We are unable to find substitute childcare providers so we hesitate to completely fill the roster. This is for supervision and safety purposes; children in licensed childcare facilities must always be attended by someone with the proper training (ie. First aid and infant safety). The staffing shortage makes this extremely difficult.



We continue to be extremely vigilant in terms of student health and safety. We understand that parents may be inconvenienced when they are not allowed to bring a symptomatic child to the center; however, we all realize it's in the best interest of each other. We continue our daily health screenings conducted throughout the day, consistent mask-wearing, hand-washing and diligent disinfecting. We feel these measures have contributed to our ability to keep the center open for student and staff use.

## HI-SET & Adult Basic Education

### HiSET

Currently, with Covid cases being high as they are, we are only offering remote tutoring. Our classroom is simply too small to accommodate in-person learning in the safest way possible. We are providing i-pads to those students in need of them, and we will soon be able to offer jet packs to ensure our clients have access to remote tutoring.

The HiSET program is coming along nicely with three clients setting up testing through Blackfeet Community College. The HiSET Program is offering to pay for the testing which adds up to \$53.75 overall for all 5 tests. There are four other clients currently studying to take their test as well.

### GRG/Kinship

Jerelyn, our Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) and Kinship Point of Contact, spent much of December doing outreach to grandparents identified through our Residency Questionnaire. To date, she has identified:

# 203 Grandparents/Kin raising a total of  
#510 Grandchildren/Kin

Many of these families are living in extremely crowded situations or are otherwise eligible as meeting the definition of McKinney Vento (students experiencing homelessness). It's extremely difficult to identify which families are *only* GRG, or *only* McKinney Vento because so much has to do with custody and that gets very confusing in these cases. When in doubt, if

we know that students' needs are not being met due to the living situation, we consider them eligible for both programs to be able to provide as much support as possible.

## āisspoōmmoōtsiiyō•p

McKinney Vento Data update:  
We have currently identified #252 students as experiencing homelessness.

December was an extremely busy time for us here at the “North Pole.” The āisspoōmmoōtsiiyō•p elves (Nikki, Irene, Robin & Jeri) nearly got tinsel brain coordinating our largest-ever Christmas project. We coordinated with the BHS Senior Toy Drive and referred #184 students experiencing homelessness (nearly #50 families); we also identified other students in need for our “Dear Santa” project.



The “Dear Santa” project anonymously matched community and BPS staff sponsors with #110 students in need. The sponsors received a “Dear Santa” letter to help guide their shopping. Gifts were then dropped at the PCOP, wrapped, sorted and either picked up or delivered to families.

We were also able to provide over #30 Christmas dinners thanks to our partnership with FAST Blackfeet and Oyop Food Pantry.





### *Special Thanks...*



We absolutely could not have done it without the generosity of our community members, and especially the BPS staff who sponsored students. We also want to thank Sue Cox of West Glacier for spending a day with us wrapping gifts. Our other volunteer elves included BHS Freshmen, Trysten Hannon, Sovereign Smith and Emaeyah Bird.

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

Winter apparel has been in high demand with our coming and going winter weather. We are providing winter coats, hoodies, hats, scarves, gloves, and boots (when available). We continue to have a “pop-up” coat closet but have recently begun to filter more and more coats to the buildings’ school-based clothing closets.

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

The school-based food pantries should be fairly stocked up at this point. We ordered more pallets of food through a wholesaler using a grant received from Town Pump Charitable Foundation. These pallets are all shelf-stable food suitable for meals. We are still hoping to make more connections to start filling up the deep freezers in the pantries with meat.



## **BPS YHDP**

During the months of December and so far into January, Irene has been updating with previously identified students to follow up on anything they need. In doing so, she has also been able to exit #32 students from the program for various reasons. Some of the students have transferred out of district, some of the students have since declined services, some students have reunited with custodial guardians and are therefore no longer eligible for services, and some

of the students were exited after discovering that they didn't meet all eligibility requirements.

Irene continues to provide case management services to the currently identified #28 students. Services continue to include referrals to partner agencies, supportive services such as food and hygiene products, and support with enrolling and staying engaged in school.

We have not recently received any updates regarding our application for liability insurance to be able to offer host homes. We are also waiting on an update from BTBC and Tribal Health with their Youth Transitional Home for youth experiencing homelessness.

\*This number is included in the #252 posted above.

## Foster Care

Other than including Foster Care students in our "Dear Santa" project, we haven't made any other progress in developing this component of the program. It is a work in progress.