



McKinney
Vento;
Kinship/
Grandparents

ĀISSPŌŌMMOŌTSIIYŌ
•P
“WE HELP EACH

TEEN PARENTS;
YOUTH
HOMELESSNESS
DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT

The Parent Community Outreach Program spent the last few weeks reviewing emerging trends, evolving challenges that were navigated by both students and staff, transitions faced, and attendance challenges. Undoubtedly, the barriers our students faced and challenges that emerged, reveal a need for a stronger collaboration across all systems serving students and families. As we wrap up this school year and prepare for the 2026-2027 school year, I can’t help but to be extremely amazed at the resilience our students and families show.

For the 25/26 School year we identified #303 students experiencing homelessness, #192 students being raised by grandparents or other kin; #9 Pregnant or Parenting Teens; and #85 students in Foster Care.

McKinney Vento (MV):

During the month of May and now into June, we focused on developing individualized summer plans with our students in the McKinney-Vento (MV), Foster Care (FC), and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). Many students are pursuing summer employment to build work experience and financial independence, while others plan to attend summer school to recover credits and stay on track toward graduation.

I also had the opportunity to attend the tour of the Blackfeet Boarding Dormitory (BBD) during Greg Gianforte’s visit to our community, alongside members of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, Tribal Behavioral Health, Child & Family Services. It was encouraging to learn more about the upcoming transition of the Blackfeet Boarding Dormitory from a B.I.E.- operated facility to a 638 program operated by the Blackfeet Tribe. The discussion also included a possibility of operating 24/7.

Although enrollment was expanded in recent years to include descendants, many families continue to face significant emotional barriers. Grandparents, great-grandparents, and other caregivers frequently shared the lasting effects of trauma and PTSD associated with their own experiences at the BBD. As a result, many caregivers are hesitant to have their children attend the BBD. This comes as no surprise but moreso, an ongoing challenge when trying to connect eligible students, particularly those currently experiencing homelessness, with a safe and structured living environment that can support their educational success.

I'm hopeful as this transition moves forward, that those leading the effort will prioritize the opportunities for healing by working closely with families and acknowledging the historical trauma associated with the institution. Even something as simple as reconsidering the name "Blackfeet Boarding Dormitory" could help create a more welcoming environment and reflect a renewed commitment to healing, cultural respect, and a positive future for Blackfeet students and families.

We've identified #19 students who are unaccompanied and experiencing homelessness for the academic year 2025/2026 SY. #12 are currently enrolled in the YHDP

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP)

Submitted by: Tamara G.

- **YHDP students identified as unaccompanied and experiencing homelessness for the 25-26 SY: 19 total**
- **YHDP students enrolled currently: 12 total**
- **YHDP students Exited program: Exited Homelessness or are residing back with their legal guardians : 6 total**
- **Pregnant or Parenting Teen Parents: 6**

Transportation was the greatest request under "supportive services". Next was hygiene/clothing and food.

Food Pantries-

Thanks to the Town Pump Charitable Foundation Grant, we were able to stock the food pantries at BHS and BMS with shelf stable food items for the first semester of the school year. We then referred students/families to the FAST Blackfeet Food Pantry and assisted with applications to the Commodity Office.

We were also thankful for the donation received from the Napi Elementary Pep Club in November. We were able to include 6 additional families into our holiday food basket give-a-way.

Thanks to the Montana Food Bank Network and staff at Bullshoe, BES, and NAPI, we were able to provide **176 weekend food backpacks** every Friday.

Clothing Closets:

Thanks to the generosity of more than 65 individuals, families, community partners, and the significant donation received from the Butte community and Joey Potter Missions, we were able to fully stock the clothing closets at BHS, BMS, Napi Elementary, BES, Babb School, and Bullshoe Elementary.

During the 2025–2026 school year, we fulfilled the following student needs:

- **644 clothing requests**, including everyday clothing, winter gear, and shoes.
- **467 hygiene requests**, including personal hygiene items and lice treatment kits.
- **28 Laundry support requests**, including distribution of detergent and fabric softener.

In addition, we responded to **251 general requests for assistance** from community members and school staff. While these requests were not specifically related to students or families experiencing homelessness, we worked collaboratively to connect individuals with available resources and provide support whenever possible.

These numbers reflect not only the growing needs within our schools and community, but also the incredible impact that community partnerships and donations have on ensuring students have access to basic necessities that support their health, well-being, school attendance, and academic success.

June-July Outreach Opportunities:

- We will be receiving a generous donation from the office of Victoria (Vicky) Augare, Director of Blackfeet Domestic Violence Program. Through her tireless efforts of applying for and receiving a very large grant, we are grateful to be receiving over \$14,000.00 worth of clothing, hygiene supplies, and food, for the 26/27 school year.
- I plan to attend (and encourage you all as well) the Fire In The Mountains Festival this summer in July. I will have an information booth and share our data and give some insight on the barriers some of our students and families experience as well as advocate for our students' every day essential needs.
- **Gratitude!**- We have so many individuals, families, and partnering organizations to thank for supporting our mission to end homelessness whether it was through volunteering during our outreach events, sharing our information, referring students/families, to those who dropped off donations, wrapped christmas gifts, and helped with connecting our students to the supports they needed. There are notes of gratitude coming your way and an open invitation to continue offering support!

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Thank you,
Parent Community Outreach Program Staff