Crow Tribe Head Start

Our Journey of Restarting

A new beginning for our children, families, and Apsáalooke communities

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER · OCTOBER 2026

"Children are our most precious gift from Creator."

— Chief Plenty Coups

With Gratitude

Thank you, Chairman White Clay, and the Crow Tribal leadership, from the Administration to the Legislature, as well as the staff behind the scenes who made this restart possible for our sacred ones.

A Million Aho's!

A Welcome from Our Head Start Family

Restarting Crow Tribe Head Start has meant more than reopening classrooms it has meant rebuilding relationships, preparing safe and welcoming spaces, and renewing a shared promise: our youngest children deserve a strong beginning grounded in Apsáalooke identity, belonging, and care.

From family learning visits and community outreach to delivering classroom furniture, completing screenings, and welcoming children through the doors every step has brought us closer to the program our communities envision.

A Milestone Worth Celebrating

These classroom opening dates mark an important chapter in our restart. We celebrate the families and staff who helped make them possible.

Center	Opening Date
Crow Center	September 21, 2026
Lodge Grass Center	September 23, 2026
Pryor Center	September 28, 2026

All three centers are now open and welcoming children and families!

Beginning School in a Good Way

Starting September 14, families were welcomed for transition days and parent orientations. Children had phase in opportunities to meet their teachers, explore their classrooms, and build daily routines — spending up to four hours with their parents before their official first day.

> A heartfelt thank you to every parent and caregiver who participated. Your presence and encouragement helped children feel safe as they took their first steps into school life.

Parent Tips: Helping Your Child Transition to School

Talk about school together

Share what to expect, like meeting teachers and playing with new friends.

Keep a steady routine

Consistent bedtimes, morning routines, and meals help children feel ready.

Name their feelings, then say see you later

Tears are normal. Acknowledge how your child feels, then give a calm, loving goodbye and a promise to return.

Stay connected

Share questions or concerns with your child's teacher or Family Advocate.

Try saying something like:

Words You Can Use

"I see you're sad. I know you want to come with me. You get to stay here and play today, and I will always come back for you at the end of every day. Your teacher cares for you and will take good care of you."

Guest teacher Reva Little Owl visited our summer socialization to share deer (u'uxe) stew and teach Crow language.

Our Classrooms Come to Life

Months of preparation, coordination, and community effort all leading to this moment. Classrooms across all three centers are filled with learning, laughter, and the energy of children beginning something new.

What It Took to Get Here

Families First

Family centered learning visits, orientations, phase in activities, and parent conversations helped rebuild trust and prepare children for classroom routines.

Classroom Readiness

Staff coordinated supplies, furniture, learning materials, safety preparations, and daily operating procedures.

Healthy Beginnings

Child Find events and health screening partnerships connected children and families with needed supports.

Rooted in Community

Classrooms launched with family engagement, and opportunities to honor Apsáalooke language, culture, and ways of being.

Learning at Home | Parents Are Their Child's First Teachers

A Message from the Education Coordinator

All About Me, My Family & My Culture

Dear Parents and Families, This month, we invite you to spend special time with your child learning about their family, culture, and identity. This activity helps strengthen family connections, cultural identity, and language development.

Your Home Activity

1

Talk Together

Complete the "All About Me" questionnaire by talking about your child's Indian name, who gave it to them, and its meaning.

2

Share Your Traditions

Talk about your family's clan and traditions, if applicable.

3

Draw and Color

Help your child draw and color their clan or family symbol while sharing stories about its meaning.

4

Return It

Return the completed activity to your child's teacher.

Encourage your child to ask questions and take pride in who they are.

Please share only what your family is comfortable sharing.

Eva Fisher, Early Childhood Education Coordinator

Our cultural ways, like parading, are just one way we participate in our community. Our culture is alive at Crow Head Start.

Showing Up Together | Community Culture & Celebrations

Native American Month

All three Head Start centers participated in Native American Month celebrations, including parades and community events.

Homecoming Parades

Centers joined homecoming parades, celebrating alongside students, families, and neighbors throughout the community.

Reconnecting

These gatherings offered another opportunity to reconnect with our communities and share the excitement of the Head Start restart.

Meet Our Leadership Team

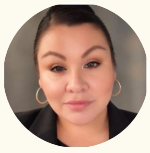
The dedicated team guiding Crow Tribe Head Start's restart and day to day work for our children and families.

Carla Catolster

Fiscal / Human Resource Manager

Eva Fisher

Early Childhood Educator / Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance Coordinator



Whispering Willow Smith

Administrative/

Program Assistant

Justin Hugs

Operations Manager (Facilities, Transportation, IT, Safety)

Alicia Stewart

Mental Health / Disabilities Coordinator

Nema Rogers

Health / Nutrition Coordinator

Tai Bulltail Dust

Crow Center Supervisor

> *"Every child who walks through our doors is family. We are here to help them grow, learn, and be proud of who they are."*
>
> *— Crow Tribe Head Start Staff*

Growing Our Team | Staffing Update

Hiring for key Head Start positions is **approximately 85% complete**, and we're grateful to the educators, family advocates, coordinators, cooks, and team members strengthening our centers every day. Bus driver, custodian, and security positions at all three centers will be filled once buses become available.

Substitutes Wanted! We're always looking for substitute bus drivers, teachers, and assistant teachers. Visit **www.crow-nsn.gov** to learn more and apply.

Meet Our Family Workers

Family Workers are the bridge of communication between Crow Tribe Head Start and families at each center, and they also call with attendance updates and help families enroll.

Connect
Keep families and teachers in touch.

Welcome
Help families feel at home.

Support
Connect families with resources.

Partner
Encourage family goals and involvement.

Attendance
Call with attendance updates.

Enroll
Help families enroll their children.

Meet Your Center Family Workers

Verleen Holds the Enemy
Crow Center

Renee Crooked Arm
Crow Center

Angie Gun Shows
Lodge Grass Center

Claura Whiteman
Pryor Center

Crow Center	Lodge Grass Center	Pryor Center
406.953.-1713	406.953-1716	406.629-8212

Every family has a story, and we are honored to walk with you. Whatever you need, we are only a phone call away.

Your Head Start Family Workers

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

WE FILL FEATURE STAFF EVERY MONTH BY NOMINATION

Meet Lucretia Takes the Horse

First Year Teacher • Crow Center

Lucretia Takes the Horse is a first year teacher at the Crow Center, and she is already making a difference in her classroom. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and brings both her training and her heart to every day with our children.

Although Lucretia is not a fluent speaker, she teaches Crow in her classroom and treats the language with deep respect, helping children grow up hearing and valuing the voices of their community. She is also a Crow traditional dancer, a tradition that reflects her connection to Apsáalooke culture and community.

Most of all, Lucretia is a mother who cherishes her role in the lives of her children. She brings that same love, patience, and care into the classroom, helping each child feel safe, known, and proud of who they are.

Education

Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood

Language

Teaches Crow in her classroom with respect

Culture

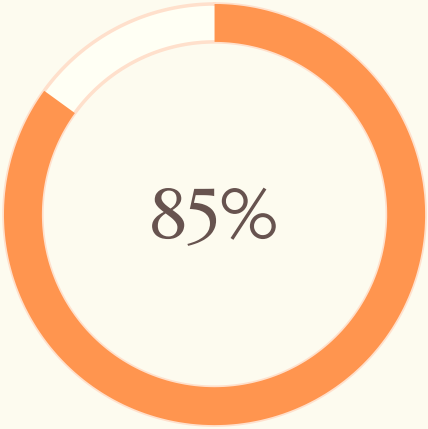
Crow Women's Traditional Dancer

Heart

Mother who brings her love to the classroom

Thank you, Lucretia, for walking alongside our children and families in this first year.

Growing Our Team | Staffing Update



Key Positions Filled

Hiring for key Head Start positions is approximately 85% complete.

We are grateful to the educators, family advocates, coordinators, cooks, bus drivers, and team members helping our centers grow stronger every day.

Bus driver, custodian, and security positions at all three centers remain open and will be filled once buses become available.

Substitutes Wanted! We are always looking for substitute bus drivers, teachers, and assistant teachers. Visit **www.crow-nsn.gov** to learn more and apply.

Open Slots for Enrollment! Join Our Head Start Family

Great news, families: we have open slots at our centers! Give your child a joyful, caring start grounded in Apsáalooke language, culture, and community. Contact your center's Family Worker or scan to apply.

Scan to Apply

Getting Our Buses on the Road | Transportation Update

As we continue to rebuild and strengthen our Head Start program, a key focus is ensuring safe and reliable transportation for our children. We are actively working to get our buses fully operational and to bring on board the dedicated team of drivers and support staff required to serve all three centers. Bus driver positions, along with related custodian and security roles, remain open and will be filled as buses become available.

Getting Buses Up and Running

Ensuring all vehicles are ready for safe and reliable service.

Bringing Drivers and Staff On Board

Recruiting and training a full team for all three centers.

Target: By the New Year or Sooner

Anticipating completion of this phase by the upcoming New Year.

We deeply appreciate our families' continued patience and understanding as we work diligently to complete this critical phase. We are committed to providing timely updates on our progress.

Families interested in joining our team as drivers or substitutes are encouraged to visit **www.crow-nsn.gov** to learn more and apply.

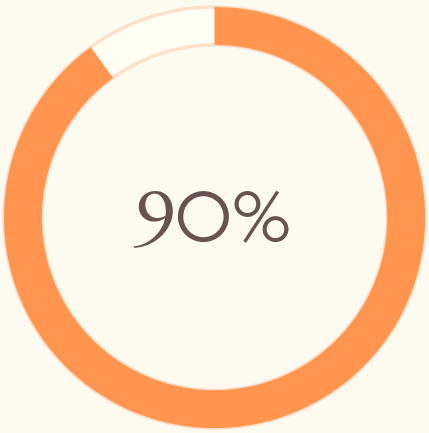
Justin *Hugs-Operations Manager*

We Have Open Slots! Bring Your Little Cousins to School

Enrollment is open! Bring all your cousins, nieces, nephews, grandbabies or neighbor ready to learn and play? Tell them to come to school! Contact your center's Family Worker or scan to apply.

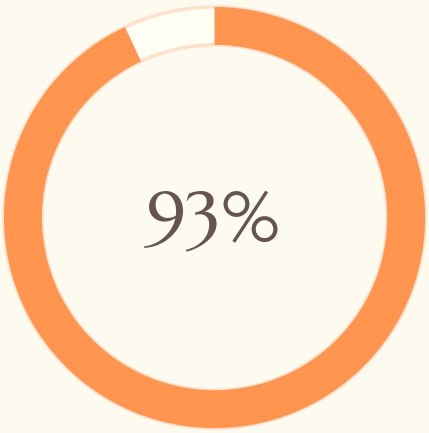
Scan to Apply

Building for the Future | Construction Update



Architectural Planning

Nearly complete



Head Start Approval

Awaiting final design

Pryor Head Start Center

Project has gone out to bid.

Crow Center

Next steps follow completion of design.

We will keep sharing updates as work moves forward.

Now Enrolling: Crow Language and Culture at the Heart of Every Lesson

Enrollment is open!

Learn Crow

Hear and speak our language daily.

Know Your Clan

Learn who you belong to.

Live Our Ways of Being

Grow up proud in Apsáalooke traditions.

Ready to join us? Contact your center's Family Worker or scan to apply.

Key Dates for Families

Date	What's Happening	Center
OCTOBER		
October 15–16	**No School; all staff off**	All Centers
October 22	Parent Committee Meeting, 5:15 PM	All Centers
October 29	Policy Council Elections, 5:15 PM	All Centers
NOVEMBER		
November 3 & 11	**No School**	Pryor Center only
November 4	Parent–Teacher Conferences	Lodge Grass Center
November 16	Picture Day	Lodge Grass Center
November 17	Picture Day	Crow Center
November 18	Picture Day	Pryor Center
November 19	Policy Council Meeting, 5:15 PM	All Centers
November 25	**No School**	Crow Centers only
November 26–27	**No School** — Thanksgiving Break, all staff off	All Centers
DECEMBER		
December 14	Family Picture Day	Lodge Grass Center
December 15	Family Picture Day	Pryor Center
December 16	Family Picture Day	Crow Center
December 17	Policy Council Meeting, 5:15 PM	All Centers
December 21–January 1	**No School** — Winter Break, all staff off	All Centers

Schedule Reminders

We follow the school district calendar where your center is located. We also follow early outs, holidays, and weather related late starts or cancellations.

🕑 Crow Center

Follows the Hardin School District.

Early release every **Wednesday at 2:00 PM**. Please arrange pickup accordingly.

🕑 Lodge Grass Center

Follows the Lodge Grass School District.

Early release every **Friday at 2:00 PM**. Please arrange pickup accordingly.

🕑 Pryor Center

Follows the Pryor School District.

Starting in January, classes run Monday through Thursday with **no school on Fridays**. Please arrange pickup accordingly.

📋 Stay Informed

Please check with your center directly for any schedule changes or additional days off throughout the year. If you have questions about your child's schedule, transportation, or programming, reach out to your center team. We are here to help.

Keeping Our Little Ones Healthy as the Seasons Change

A Health & Wellness Reminder from Alicia and Nema, Crow Head Start Health Team

As seasonal coughs, colds, and fevers arrive, keeping a sick child home gives them time to rest and protects their classmates, teachers, and our whole Head Start family.

A Gentle Reminder from Our Parent Handbook

Our 2026–2027 Parent Handbook asks families to keep children home when they are sick:

Fever above 100°F

Fever free for 24 hours without medication.

Vomiting or diarrhea

Symptom free for 24 hours before returning.

Severe coughing, breathing concerns, or unexplained rashes

May need medical evaluation or clearance.

Contagious illnesses

Some infections require treatment or provider clearance.

Frequent handwashing, covering coughs, dressing for the weather, and plenty of rest all help. If your child is sick, please notify their teacher or Family Advocate. Our Health Team is here to help with any questions.

Our Apsáalooke children are precious. By caring for one another, we help create a healthy, loving place where every child can learn, grow, and thrive.

With care, Alicia & Nema — Crow Tribe Head Start Health Team

Looking Ahead Together

- Strengthening classroom routines, transportation, nutrition services, and family partnerships.
- Expanding staff training and coordinated support for children with individual needs.
- Anticipating the next milestones in our facilities projects as designs and approvals are completed.

Thank you for your patience, your questions, your encouragement, and the trust you place in us. Together, we are creating places where children feel known, safe, curious, and proud of who they are.

Our restart is not just a return. It is a promise to keep Head Start in our community.

CROW TRIBE HEAD START

Children · Families · Community

www.crow-nsn.gov

Enrollment is open! Contact your Family Advocate or apply online at www.crow-nsn.gov.

Scan to Apply

All About Me, My Family & My Culture

A Family Activity from Crow Tribe Head Start. Complete together at home, then return to your child's teacher.

My name is	**My Indian name is (if applicable)**
Who gave me my name	**What my name means**
My clan is (if applicable)	**Cultural things I love to do with my family**

My Clan or Family Symbol

Draw and color your symbol in the box. Share the story of what it means.

Please share only what your family is comfortable sharing. Return this page to your child's teacher for an incentive.