



The 22nd Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker
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NNC Delegate Walter Phelps Provides Comments at Education Tribal Consultation

Window Rock, AZ – Navajo Nation Council Delegate Walter Phelps provided comments last week as the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) held the first of five consultation meetings being held around Indian country regarding the No Child Left Behind School Facilities & Construction. The goal of the consultations is to collect comments on how to develop formulas to equally distribute funds for the repair and replacements of BIE funded schools.

“We need to make sure that the Navajo Nation gets the funding it needs to make BIE school facilities safe and effective in getting their students to achieve,” said Health, Education, & Human Services Vice Chairman Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake). “Making sure that our children are getting the correct learning foundation is critical in preparing them for successful careers and lives.”

There were four recommendations developed by the BIE to address the conditions of BIE schools.

One would create a catalog for school facilities by including more support by federal agencies, the inclusion of needs better access through the Internet and better communication between those assessing the properties and those administrating the schools.

The other recommendations concentrated in the creation of formulas that will prioritize which schools get replaced or repaired and how those funds are distributed.

According to the BIE, the impacts from the proposed changes would create new approaches that will be needs based, foster compliance with health and safety standards, be uniformly applied, practical, not susceptible to manipulation, defensible legally and technically, and be clear, consistent and transparent.

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