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DODE CELEBRATES HISTORIC APPROVAL OF DSAP

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZ-Last Thursday, the Department of Dine Education (DODE) celebrated the historic approval of the Dine School Accountability Plan (DSAP) by the U.S. Department of Education with an honorary luncheon to recognize the leadership of educators involved in the process.

The DSAP affects 60 Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools on the Navajo Nation by implementing a Navajo-formulated accountability plan as opposed to the schools utilizing a state accountability system developed by the states in which the schools are located.

Academic standards and assessments vary among the three states that the Navajo Nation exists in, which makes it difficult for the Navajo Nation to access student performance. The plan addresses the central issue of accountability.

The plan also ensures that Navajo children, regardless of where they reside on the reservation, will have equal standards and that the schools will have a strong curriculum that highlights Diné language, history and culture.

“Navajo leaders, past and present, have worked tirelessly in this effort and the Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) is honored to acknowledge the leadership of these educators in having the plan approved and implemented. Congratulations to you all,” President Russell Begaye said.

The process began in 2005 when DODE initiated the development of the Navajo Accountability Workbook under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to use as an alternative definition of Adequate Yearly Progress. The Navajo Nation will continue to work with the U.S. DOE and Interior to develop future phases of the plan to be consistent with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

OPVP Executive Staff Assistant Leonard Chee represented the Office at the luncheon and congratulated DODE, the Board of Education and affiliated schools on this achievement.

“Title 10 Amendments of 2005 authorized Navajo Nation to develop its own testing and educational standards for Nava-



Top: Former Superintendent of Schools, Andrew Tah, talked about educators who were critical to the process of formulating the DSAP. Below: OPVP Executive Staff Assistant, Leonard Chee said the DSAP for the best interests of Navajo children.

jo schools,” Chee said. “DODE, the board, along with school boards, school associations, and parents are encouraged to support the accountability plan. The plan is in the best interest of our children and grandchildren.”

The luncheon highlighted remarks by Andy Ayze, Chair of the Education Committee of the 21st Navajo Nation Council, Katherine Benally, member of the Education Committee of the 20th Navajo Nation Council, and Andrew Tah, Superintendent of Schools from April 2009-January 2014, among many other presenters.

DODE also presented awards to honorees who were integral in the process of having the DSAP approved.

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