



THE NAVAJO NATION

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VICE PRESIDENT NEZ INVOKES HOPE AND LOVE INTO SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS



Vice President Jonathan Nez shares his experience of overcoming life's challenges and defeating today's monsters by utilizing the Navajo language and culture.

SANTA FE, N.M. – On Feb. 16, Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez shared a message of hope with students at Santa Fe Indian School.

The Building Communities of Hope tour continues and stopped off in Santa Fe to provide encouragement and hope to Navajo students enrolled at the school.

“It was exciting to see the faces of our Navajo students light up when we came into the room. Through Building Communities of Hope, we are reaching out to students to inspire hope and let them know that they aren’t alone,” said Vice President Nez. “We are also connecting them with the counselors at the school to make sure that there is support, even after we leave.”

This was the first time that a leader from the Navajo Nation visited with the Navajo students of SFIS. There are 62 Navajo students

enrolled at the school, with a majority of them residing in the Eastern Navajo Agency.

“Support for our children is greatly needed on the Navajo Nation. We need our Navajo people to continually encourage their young people to strive for greatness to overcome these modern-day monsters that plague us,” said Vice President Nez. “Through BCOH, we are empowering our children to utilize the tools presented to them to fight these monsters.”

Before the presentation, Vice President Nez and the team met with school administrators and received an overview and history of the school, which included reports on their academic achievements and improvements over the years.

“I want to relay how important the visit by Vice President Nez is to the Santa Fe Indian School community. Listening to his mes-

sage of hope to the students was an outstanding message for the students and staff. We are excited for the focus and goals to help the students and communities,” said Roy Herrera, school superintendent.

The agenda included presentations from the Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral Health Services, motivational speaker Pax Harvey and singer-songwriter Sage Bond.

The school is a tribally-controlled and governed by a board of trustees. The Santa Fe Indian School Act of 2000 transferred the land for the school into trust for the 19 N.M. Pueblos.

Since 2014, SFIS has had a 100 percent graduation rate. On average, graduates receive a combined total of \$5 million in scholarships. Last year, 94 percent of the senior graduates went on to

secondary education.

We are happy to hear that 17 Navajo students will be graduating in May, Vice President Nez said.

“The support of a community makes a difference for the students and their families. Our team will continue to meet with the Navajo students to inspire and encourage them,” he said. “We would like to say thank you to Superintendent Roy Herrera and his staff, especially Michael Pecos and Kim Shije for welcoming our team to the campus.”

The BCOH team continues to travel to tribal communities to spread the message of hope.

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