



The 21st Navajo Nation Council

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Education Committee approves Impact Aid Indian Policies, Procedures for Gallup McKinley County Public Schools

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Education Committee of the 21st Navajo Nation Council passed a resolution today supporting the Gallup McKinley County Public Schools' revised Impact Aid Indian Policies and Procedures for the 2009-2010 academic school year.

The resolution, Tracking No. 0396-10, sponsored by Leonard Anthony (Shiprock), was approved by the committee with a vote of 5-0 and now goes to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee for final standing committee approval.

Carmen Moffett, director for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Consolidated Programs, said Gallup McKinley County Schools' (GMCS) goal is to provide Native American students access to equal educational opportunities and activities under the Impact Aid Indian Policies and Procedures.

Impact Aid, under Title VIII of the NCLB Act, assists local school districts with supplemental funding. School districts that have lost property tax revenue from students who live on tax-exempt federal property such as Navajo and Zuni students who live on tribal trust lands are eligible for impact aid.

The GMCS school district serves a huge Navajo and Zuni student population who do not benefit from the City of Gallup's property tax base; thus, application for impact aid and collaboration with tribal leaders such as Navajo Nation Council delegates concerning the Impact Aid Indian Policies and Procedures is an important aspect of the process.

Although the law does not require the president of any tribal nation to approve the policies and procedures, the GMCS school district involves the tribal leadership of President Joe Shirley out of courtesy efforts. The Indian Policies and Procedures also provides opportunities for Native American parents and communities to participate in the impact aid process through meetings held through an academic school year.

"It is a requirement under the U.S. Department of Education," Moffett said referring to the impact aid process. "Any time a school district applies for impact funding it must have Indian Policies and Procedures adopted by its Board of Education." In the case of GMCS, for example, approval is also required from Navajo Nation Chapters, the Pueblo of Zuni and parents of Native American children.

Moffett added that the school district receives approximately \$5.6 to \$7.1 million per year in impact aid and said about 80 percent of the impact aid goes to personnel. The impact aid pays for counselors at all 19 elementary schools and secondary schools and educational assistants, she said.

"We appreciate this responsibility to recognize this very important piece of legislation on behalf of GMCS," Anthony said. "This is going to serve Navajo children that live on Indian boundaries and sets precedence for other school districts that operate on Navajo Nation lands. The passage of this resolution means that Navajo leaders are taking care of Indian children in the GMCS school district."

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