



Navajo Nation Council funds scholarships, encourages students to study hard as schools begin

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Office of the Speaker and the 24th Navajo Nation Council wish all pre-K, K-8, high school, vocational and college students a healthy, safe and successful return to school.

“With each graduating class, we see the Navajo Nation grow its professionals, educators, physicians and vocational workers who will help our great Navajo Nation overcome our present and future challenges,” said Speaker Seth Damon. “We are proud of every one of our students, whether you become a welder, a scientist or a member of any of the many professions out there. As Council, we value and support your time and efforts as students.”

Promoting and improving Navajo Nation students’ mental and physical wellbeing during the pandemic has been an ongoing priority of the Council as students take online and hybrid learning. The Council encourages students to take advantage of this time to learn as much as they can, in any way they can.

“We understand that there are challenges trying to learn online. We hope our parents are mindful of recommendations on screen time and the different ways that our children learn,” said Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) Chair Daniel Tso. “We feel for you, are rooting for you and are fighting to ensure you have the resources available to improve both your life and your communities with your education. Remember that lessons come from listening carefully to your relatives’ teachings or from simply being outside on the land.”

To promote student success and ensure higher education students are assisted financially, the Council allocated \$2,500,000 to the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Aid in December, 2020 through emergency Resolution No. CD-97-20. Delegate Eugene Tso, who sponsored the legislation, expressed his desire to see federal funding deficiencies made up for by the Nation’s own resources.

HEHSC Vice Chair Carl Roessel Slater (Round Rock, Rock Point, Tséché’izí, Lukachugai, Tsaile-Wheatfields) added: “Monitoring the safety and quality of our students’ educations has been and will continue to be a priority for the Council. Whether its opposing in person instruction or funding hotspots and internet improvements, we stand behind our student, parents, and educators.”

On Oct. 22, 2020, the Council approved the opposition to in-person schooling for schools operating within the Navajo Nation with Resolution No. Co-84-20. The Resolution stands until the federal and state governments can ensure Navajo student safety with respect to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The Navajo Nation currently has approximately 150 educational facilities consisting of state-funded public schools, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools, Navajo Nation controlled contract and grant schools, private schools and charter schools.

The 24th Navajo Nation Council has also adapted by moving to teleconferences and online streaming as a result of the pandemic. The Council encourages students to follow along through the Council’s website and updates on the Council’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

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