



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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25th Navajo Nation Council collaborates on unified position in response to federal education funding cuts and executive orders



Speaker Crystalyne Curley called for unified advocacy in response to the recent 'Dear Tribal Leader' letter.

TUBA CITY, Ariz. – On Tuesday, June 17, Speaker Crystalyne Curley and Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez joined leaders from the Department of Diné Education (DODE), Diné Bi Oltá School Board Association (DBOSBA), and the BIA Navajo Region to coordinate a unified response to the Bureau of Indian Education's recent "Dear Tribal Leader" letter.

The meeting, held at Greyhills Academy High School, brought together representatives from DODE, the BIA Navajo Region, the Bureau of Indian Education, and tribally controlled school leaders.

Speaker Curley urged stakeholders to remain vigilant in opposing federal budget cuts and staffing reductions that jeopardize the education of Navajo students.

"These challenges aren't new—we saw them coming," said Speaker Curley. "We need collaboration. We must come together and advocate for our federal partners whose hands are tied and who can't lobby for themselves."

The Trump administration's proposed FY 2026 budget includes a \$187 million cut to BIE construction programs—part of a broader \$617 million reduction across BIA programs.

Tribal leaders have strongly criticized the proposed cuts, warning that they will disproportionately impact Native American students and communities. Consequences could include school closures, fewer course offerings, and reduced student resources.

"Although these cuts are not yet final, we must continue advocating with congressional leaders. These funds are critical for campus improvements, yet we're already working with limited resources and now it's proposed to be even less," Speaker Curley said.

She emphasized the importance of a coordinated response saying, "We need a united voice and shared priorities."

Council Delegate Dr. Nez shared that he has been actively collaborating with DODE, the DBOSBA, and local school boards and administrators in response to the U.S. Department of the Interior's April 14 letter announcing a new round of Tribal Consultations.

These consultations stem from Executive Order 14210, titled "Implementing the President's 'Department of Government Efficiency' Workforce Optimization Initiative," and aim to improve federal efficiency while honoring trust and treaty obligations.

Council Delegate Dr. Nez expounded on the virtues of meeting with tribal nations in their home communities to learn, first-hand about the obstacles they face.

"I enjoy visiting with my communities. Until you visit communities and families, and sit at their dining room tables, you'll get an idea of what they're talking about," he said. "We've formulated a letter to the U.S. Department of Interior to hold a consultation on the Navajo Nation. As the only tribal nation with its own area office, this should not be difficult to accomplish."

He also called for cohesion among Navajo education agencies in responding to federal actions.

"If we focus only on internal disagreements, something detrimental will come from the federal government, and we cannot miss any opportunity," he said.

Dr. Nez concluded by reporting that a resolution outlining the Navajo Nation's official position on the April 14 letter has been submitted to the Legislative Branch's Office of Legislative Counsel. The legislation will be considered at the next Naabik'íyáti' Committee meeting on June 26, 2025.

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