



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**To'Hajiilee community celebrates the start of construction of a new school building**



**Speaker Curley joined President Buu Nygren, former Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, New Mexico State Rep. Michelle Paulene Abeyta, To'Hajiilee Chapter officials, and community members at the groundbreaking ceremony for a new school building.**

**TO'HAJIILEE, N.M.** — On Thursday, members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined the To'Hajiilee community to celebrate the groundbreaking of a long-awaited new school building that will provide over 300 students with a safer learning environment after decades of advocacy and planning.

Speaker Crystalyne Curley attended the groundbreaking ceremony to offer their support to students, families, educators, and community leaders, while reaffirming their commitment to ensuring the project is completed for future generations.

The new school building was made possible through federal funding appropriated by Congress in 2022 following years of advocacy by To'Hajiilee Community School Board members, chapter officials, state legislators, parents, and community leaders working alongside Congresswoman Melanie Stansbury to secure \$92 million for the To'Hajiilee community. The entire estimated cost for the new facility is over \$250 million.

"For generations, our students and families have waited for this day and we're here because of the community of To'Hajiilee who pushed forward despite the challenges," said Speaker Curley. "This groundbreaking represents hope, opportunity, and a commitment to giving our children the safe and quality learning environment they deserve. We are grateful for the support and commitment of the many past and current leaders."

The current school facility, originally built in 1935, has long faced challenges due to its location on a flood plain and aging infrastructure that no longer meets the needs of students and staff.

New Mexico State Rep. Michelle Paulene Abeyta (D-Dist. 69) commended the perseverance of the To'Hajiilee community and recognized the dedication of local advocates who worked tirelessly to secure federal support. She also thanked Congresswoman Stansbury for her strong support.

"This project became a reality because community members never gave up," said Rep. Abeyta. "The school board members, chapter officials, educators, and families pushed year after year for their children. Today is a celebration of their determination and the bright future ahead for To'Hajiilee students."

Students from To'Hajiilee Community School had the honor of breaking ground for the new school facility, along with community and elected leaders.

The groundbreaking ceremony brought together Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, state legislators, local officials, former Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, educators, students, and community members to celebrate a major milestone for the To'Hajiilee community.

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