



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Council members attend signing ceremony for educational funding bills that may benefit Navajo students**

**PHOENIX** – Last Friday, Speaker LoRenzo Bates and Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown joined Arizona Sen. Carlyle Begay (Dist. 7 – D) as Gov. Doug Ducey signed three legislative bills that seek to contribute approximately \$3.5 billion for K - 12 grade students in public and charter schools over the next decade.

The final outcome of the effort will be determined by Arizona voters through a referendum to be held in May 2016.

Voters will decide whether to draw funds from the state's land trust fund

and its general fund over the next decade to increase funding for students by \$173 per student throughout the state.

In 2010, several schools and school districts filed a lawsuit against the state for cutting funding for education during the last economic recession. A settlement was later reached and required approval from the State Legislature and the Governor.

Speaker Bates and Delegate Brown said the settlement is beneficial for the state and schools and they look forward to seeing the funding benefit Navajo students who attend public and charter schools on the Navajo Nation, if the referendum is approved by voters.

Below are estimates that show how the funding would benefit school districts within and near the Navajo Nation based on information provided by the Office of the Governor. The estimates are based on current student population and may fluctuate based on several factors.



**PHOTO: Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown, Speaker LoRenzo Bates, Gov. Doug Ducey, and Arizona Sen. Carlyle Begay following the signing of three educational bills at the Arizona State Capitol on Oct. 30, 2015.**

- Cedar Unified District - 26,803.71
- Chinle Unified District - 541,303.73
- Flagstaff Unified District - 1,526,461.68
- Ganado Unified School District - 227,763.48
- Heber-Overgaard Unified District - 86,659.36
- Holbrook Unified District - 321,509.75
- Joseph City Unified - 73,190.85
- Kayenta Unified District - 279,597.44
- Page Unified District - 413,853.76
- Pinon Unified District - 195,971.54
- Red Mesa Unified District - 133,885.05
- Sanders Unified District - 134,810.66
- Snowflake Unified District - 359,407.89
- Tuba City Unified School District - 256,161.19
- Window Rock Unified District - 300,937.58
- Winslow Unified District - 329,935.87

Delegate Brown said that if the referendum passes in May, the Navajo Nation should invest in more Navajo language immersion programs and cultural classes for students.

“Let’s invest in programs that diversify our children’s learning experience and that will maximize their potential and ultimately improve their test scores,” said Delegate Brown.

In a statement released on Oct. 30, Sen. Begay thanked the Governor and legislative leadership for supporting the education community.

“The settlement adds much needed funding to Arizona’s public schools, and provides educators with stability and predictability,” stated Sen. Begay. “I am proud to have supported this agreement, and I look forward to continuing my efforts to improve education in Arizona.”

Gov. Ducey signed the bills following the approval of the Arizona House of Representatives on Oct. 29 and by the Senate on Oct. 30.

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