



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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The Navajo Nation appoints former Bus Driver, School Administrator, and United States Marine - Dr. Harold G. Begay as Diné Education Superintendent

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Earlier today during a Special Session, the 24th Navajo Nation Council approved the appointment of Dr. Harold G. Begay as Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Diné Education (DODE), which was unanimously approved by a vote of 23 in favor.

Chairman Daniel Tso of the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) sponsored the bill along with co-sponsors Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tuba City) and Council Delegate Edison Wauneka (Oaksprings, St. Michaels).

In November, the Navajo Nation Board of Education (NNBOE) passed a resolution recommending the confirmation of Dr. Harold G. Begay as Superintendent of Schools. He will now lead the Department of Diné Education and work with the board on its overall direction as Chief Administrative Officer.

“The Navajo Board of Education as the leaders of our local schools made a critical decision to recommend the appointment of Dr. Harold Begay. The Navajo Nation believes he will be an effective advocate for our teachers, students, parents, and school districts across the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States. Dr. Begay is a proven education leader who is now working with Stanford University to prepare Native students for college by linking them with Indigenous students from Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Japan. He brings decades of classroom experience and has published scholarly articles to preserve Native American languages and to uplift Indigenous cultures. We have full confidence Superintendent Harold Begay will make sure our Navajo students are prepared for college, trade schools, and more” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

Superintendent Harold G. Begay is Táchii'nii (Red Running Into the Water People Clan), born for Tódich'ii'nii (Bitter Water Clan). He received his Doctorate in Philosophy from the College of Education at the University of Arizona in finance and educational leadership.

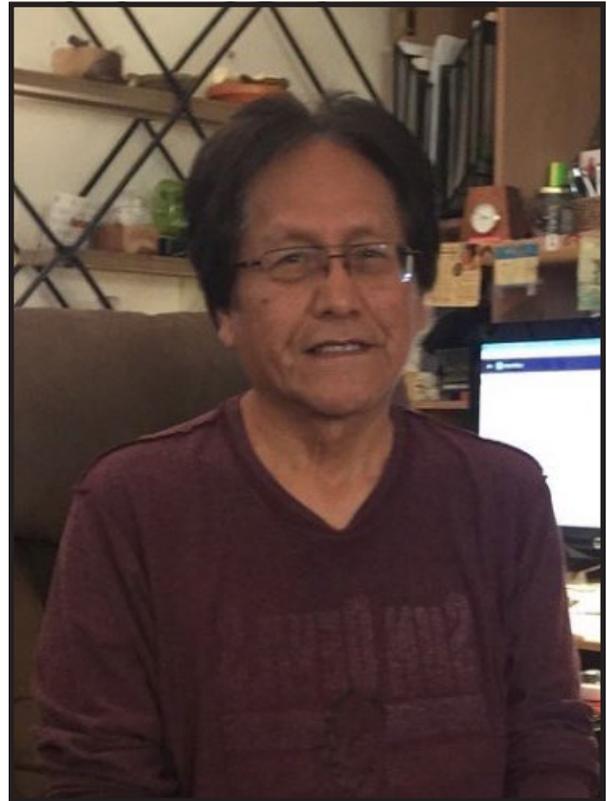


PHOTO: Newly appointed Diné Education Superintendent, Dr. Harold G. Begay.

As a school bus driver for the Tuba City Unified School, he continued his higher education at Northern Arizona University receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

“Our collective history as Navajo people has been a basis for the retention of our language and forms the basis of maintaining and protecting our sovereignty in the world. The outdated education policies of the United States government have shown us that our culture, language, and history is important to the future of our Indigenous people. Sovereignty in the classroom is the first step to protecting our future as Navajo people. Diné Superintendent Harold Begay believes in our students and through his decades of experience, will hold the education departments of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah accountable. His leadership as our Superintendent will transform classrooms and get hard work done now,” said Chairman Daniel Tso (Littlewater, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake, Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Ojo Encino, Counselor).

A United States Marine and disabled veteran from the Vietnam War, Dr. Harold G. Begay served over 40 years as an educator, principal, school administrator, and district superintendent advocating for Indigenous students.

“Our students are our greatest resource, and they need us now during this pandemic. We must invest into the future of our young ones as I keep my own seven grandchildren in mind every day making decisions. The southside of Tuba City was where I was raised, and the Tuba City School District hired me as a local bus driver. Teaching our students arithmetic and writing skills are tools they will use to change the world. The first priority is to make sure all our Navajo school facilities are safe and prepared for any situation. No student should be sitting on top of a muddy hill in the middle of the Navajo Nation just to get an internet connection to attend class. All of our Navajo students should have access to the internet, be prepared to attend college, and to challenge any future they face after this pandemic,” added Superintendent Begay.

Dr. Harold G. Begay has served as the community manager for the Tuba City Chapter and is a visiting scholar for the University of California - Berkeley. In 1994, Greyhills Academy High School named him an ‘Administrator of the Year’ and he has since served as the Tuba City Unified School District Superintendent from 2011 to 2019.

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