



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

MEDIA CONTACT:

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2023

25th Navajo Nation Council encourages Elevate Navajo students to pursue financial literacy and continued education



PHOTO: Speaker Curley and Council Delegate Shaandiin Parrish discussed life skills and preparation for continued education with Elevate Navajo students at Window Rock High School.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, Nov. 13, 25th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley and Budget and Finance Committee Chair Shaandiin Parrish joined Elevate Navajo students from Window Rock High School (WRHS) for an interactive discussion on life skills and college goals.

Speaker Curley (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) and Chair Parrish (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) joined WRHS Elevate Navajo freshmen and sophomores for an interactive discussion on life skills and preparing for life after high school and college goals.

“We understand that you are at an age where you may be balancing what you want to do after you graduate and that can be a lot of pressure. We were once in your place in high school and we went through those similar thoughts and uncertainty in planning for our future,” said Speaker Curley.

Reflecting on shared experiences, Speaker Curley and Chair Parrish shared a few of the personal challenges they faced in high school ranging from peer pressure, not fitting the status quo,

stress of financial burdens, and planning for college scholarships.

Chair Parrish fielded financial questions ranging from everyday individual living expenses and liabilities to comparisons between the Navajo Nation and federal level issues such as state taxes, property taxes, the economy of the Nation, and other complex financial queries.

"I applaud Elevate Navajo. The questions the students raised demonstrated planning for their future and financial health of the Nation. This well rounded and real life approach is what our kids need to learn thoroughly to soundly impact improvement and transformation on our Nation," said Parrish.

She also shared with the students that she graduated at the age of 16 years old marking one of many achievements in her early life, reinforcing the notion that by focusing on education, achieving is possible.

Speaker Curley welcomed the opportunity to respond to questions. She explained her role as the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, and the duality of being a council delegate, explaining the many levels of the legislative branch, roles, and responsibilities of the council. She shared her educational background and her personal experiences of when she was applying for her scholarships and grants. Speaker credited courage and faith as a source of strength during her school years to current day.

They encouraged the students to learn about the various scholarships and grants to aid them and help lift the financial burdens as they work toward their academic goals.

This is the second year that WRHS has been become an affiliate of Elevate Navajo and currently is the only Native American school to participate in the program. They serve up to 50 students which is comprised of a mixture of freshman, sophomores and junior level students. The WRHS administration is looking to add additional affiliations to middle schools and hope to expand to four other agency high schools on the Nation.

The students are taught by mentor teachers who are trained at the National Affiliate Level and are teacher, mentor and life coach on-call for the student when they need someone to talk to. The curriculum is based on school success, developmental assets, character qualities, life skills, and community engagement.

"Apply for as many scholarships as you can, build your networks, join your school activities, sports, student council and also help your communities and donate your time. Always strive to balance school, work, sports, and self-care," said Speaker Curley.

To learn more about Elevate Navajo, please visit their website: elevatenavajo.org

###