

**THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION**



LEGISLATION NO: _0169-25_

SPONSOR: Dr. Andy Nez

TITLE: An Action Relating to Law and Order, Health, Education and Human Services, Budget and Finance, and Naabik'íyáti' Committees and the Navajo Nation Council; Amending the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund, 12 N.N.C. § 2301 et seq. by Approving \$30 Million Annually to be Distributed Equally Among Diné College, Navajo Technical University, and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance

Date posted: July 01, 2025 at 8:12PM

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0169-25

DATE: July 1, 2025

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO LAW AND ORDER, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES, BUDGET AND FINANCE, AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES AND THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; AMENDING THE DINÉ HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT FUND, 12 N.N.C. § 2301 ET SEQ. BY APPROVING \$30 MILLION ANNUALLY TO BE DISTRIBUTED EQUALLY AMONG DINÉ COLLEGE, NAVAJO TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, AND THE OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

PURPOSE: The proposed resolution will increase annual appropriations provided to Diné College, Navajo Technical University, and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance by amending the "Diné Higher Education Grant Fund" at 12 N.N.C. § 2301 *et seq.*

FINAL AUTHORITY: Navajo Nation Council

VOTING REQUIREMENT: Simple Majority

This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD:
Website Posting Time/Date:
Posting End Date: 07-06-25
Eligible for Action: 07-07-25

Law & Order Committee
Thence
Health Education & Human Services Committee
Thence
Budget & Finance Committee
Thence
Naabik'íyáti' Committee
Thence
Navajo Nation Council

PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION
25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL - Third Year, 2025

INTRODUCED BY:


(Prime Sponsor)

TRACKING NO. 0169-25

AN ACTION

RELATING TO LAW AND ORDER, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN
SERVICES, BUDGET AND FINANCE, AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES AND
THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; AMENDING THE DINÉ HIGHER EDUCATION
GRANT FUND, 12 N.N.C. § 2301 *ET SEQ.* BY APPROVING \$30 MILLION
ANNUALLY TO BE DISTRIBUTED EQUALLY AMONG DINÉ COLLEGE,
NAVAJO TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, AND THE OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION
SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

BE IT ENACTED:

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- A. The Law and Order Committee has the power to review and make recommendations to the Navajo Nation Council on proposed amendments to and enactments in the Navajo Nation Code. 2 N.N.C. § 601(B) (14).
- B. The Health, Education and Human Services Committee was established as a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council with authority to review and recommend resolutions relating to education and shall review and approve all requests which will require the use of money from the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund for development and operating projects. 2 N.N.C. § 400(A), § 401(B)(6), 12 N.N.C. § 2303(A).

- 1 C. The Budget and Finance Committee was established as a standing committee of the
2 Navajo Nation Council with the authority to review and recommend to the Council
3 the budgeting, appropriation, investment and management of all funds. 2 N.N.C. §
4 300(A), § 301(B)(2).
- 5 D. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee was established as a standing committee of the Navajo
6 Nation Council with the authority to hear all proposed resolutions that require final
7 action by the Navajo Nation Council. 2 N.N.C. § 164 (A)(9), § 700(A).
- 8 E. The Navajo Nation Council is the governing body of the Navajo Nation with
9 authority to review and approve amendments to Navajo Nation laws. 2 N.N.C. §
10 102(A) and 2 N.N.C. § 164(A).
- 11

12 **SECTION TWO. FINDINGS.**

- 13 A. Diné College, Navajo Technical University, and the Office of Navajo Nation
14 Scholarship & Financial Assistance request the Navajo Nation increase the amount of
15 annual appropriations provided from the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund.
- 16 B. Established in 1968, Diné College is chartered as a nonprofit educational institution
17 wholly-owned by the Navajo Nation. As a four-year higher education institution,
18 Diné College is committed to building on the academic advancements of the Navajo
19 people, advancing the success of every student, and sustaining the efforts on
20 affordable and accessible education. The College provides educational opportunities
21 at six locations throughout the Navajo Nation. The funding received from the Navajo
22 Nation allows the College to provide quality education and other services in a
23 consistent manner without having to curtail services to students and the people of the
24 Navajo Nation. Diné College has provided a detailed justification attached as **Exhibit**
25 **A.**
- 26 C. In 1979, the Navajo Nation founded the Navajo Skills Center, now the Navajo
27 Technical University. Since its founding, Navajo Technical University has expanded
28 its academic programs and student support services with a focus on research
29 beneficial to the Navajo Nation. Navajo Technical University is now the premier
30 tribal higher education research institution in the country that houses the first

1 accredited Ph.D offered by a tribal institution of higher education. With this growth,
2 there is a clear need for additional funding to provide state-of-the-art campus facilities
3 (i.e., research and classroom facilities, student and faculty housing), recruit top-notch
4 faculty and staff, and expand student support services. Navajo Technical University
5 has provided a detailed justification attached as **Exhibit B**.

6 D. From 2018 to 2023, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance
7 (“ONNSFA”) provided awards to approximately 50 percent of the total number of
8 students submitting applications each calendar year. ONNSFA has exhausted its
9 annual funding every year over the last 20 years. For the 2023 Calendar Year, 13,404
10 Navajo students requested a Navajo Nation scholarship award. However, for the 2023
11 Calendar Year, the Navajo Nation awarded 6,264 students (47 percent) of the 13,404
12 students who submitted scholarship requests. There is a clear need for additional
13 funding for Navajo students pursuing post-secondary education. ONNSFA has
14 provided a detailed justification attached as **Exhibit C**.

15 E. Given the reasons stated, the Navajo Nation finds it in the best interest of the Navajo
16 Nation to amend Title 12 of the Navajo Nation Code, as set forth herein.
17

18 **SECTION THREE. AMENDING THE DINÉ HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT**
19 **FUND, 12 N.N.C. § 2301 *ET SEQ.***

20 The Navajo Nation hereby amends Title 12 of the Navajo Nation Code, as follows:
21

22
23 **NAVAJO NATION CODE ANNOTATED**
24 **TITLE 12. FISCAL MATTERS**

25 *****

26 **CHAPTER 23. DINÉ HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT FUND**

27 **§ 2301. Establishment**

28 There is established the “Diné Higher Education Grant Fund” (hereinafter “Fund”). The
29 Fund shall be held in trust for the ~~g~~Governmental ~~u~~Units set forth herein. Thereafter, the
30 Office of the Controller shall deposit into such fund the sum of ~~twelve~~ thirty million ~~four~~

1 hundred thousand dollars (~~\$12,400,000.00~~ \$30,000,000) per fiscal year from annual
2 recurring revenue sources. Any money deposited into the Fund plus accrued interest,
3 shall be used only as provided herein. Diné College, Navajo Technical University and the
4 Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and & Financial Assistance Program shall provide
5 an annual report on funds provided to the ~~oversight~~ Health, Education and Human
6 Services Committee and Naabik'iyáti' Committee.

7
8 **§ 2302. Purpose**

9 The purpose of this Fund is to establish a ~~special~~ permanent fund to provide ~~funds~~ annual
10 appropriations as developed and subject to approval by the Health, Education and Human
11 Services Committee and recommended to the Navajo Nation Council.

12
13 **§ 2303. Definitions**

14 A. For purposes of this Chapter, "Governmental Units" means Diné College, Navajo
15 Technical University, and Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance,
16 individually.

17 B. For purposes of this Chapter, "Operation(s)" means all day-to-day business and other
18 functions of Diné College and Navajo Technical University, including, but not limited to,
19 academic instruction, administrative services, student support services, creative activity,
20 community events, campus safety, and the security, maintenance of the flagship and
21 satellite campuses, and authorize activities and functions provided for in Dine College's
22 and Navajo Technical University's respective charters.

23
24 **§ 23034. Fund Administration**

25 A. Legislative Oversight. The Navajo Nation Council Health, Education and Human
26 Services Committee shall review and approve all requests from the ~~g~~Governmental
27 ~~u~~Units which will require the use of money from the Fund for development and operating
28 projects.

29 B. Program Management. As authorized by their enabling legislation or plan of
30 operations, the ~~g~~Governmental ~~u~~Units shall use the funds:

1 1. Diné College.

- 2 a. To operate and maintain programs, facilities, and maintenance.
- 3 b. To enter into and form partnerships, joint ventures, associations, and other
- 4 initiatives and arrangements.
- 5 c. To conduct activities and Operations in all areas of higher education.
- 6 d. To be used for leverage and/or match funding requirements.

7 2. Navajo Technical College.

- 8 a. To operate and maintain programs, facilities, and maintenance.
- 9 b. To enter into and form partnerships, joint ventures, associations, and other
- 10 initiatives and arrangements.
- 11 c. To conduct activities and Operations in all areas of higher education.
- 12 d. To be used for leverage and/or match funding requirements.

13 3. Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance. To provide

14 financial assistance to eligible applicants at the undergraduate, graduate, and

15 dissertation levels.

16 C. Diné Language Teacher Programming.

17 1. Diné College.

- 18 a. Diné College will use at least 1% of its funding toward Diné language teacher
- 19 programming.
- 20 b. Diné College will use at least 1% of its funding to contribute toward their
- 21 endowment.
- 22 c. Diné College will use at least 1% of its funding toward K-12 education pipeline
- 23 programs.

24 2. Navajo Technical College.

- 25 a. Navajo Technical College will use at least 1% of its funding toward Diné
- 26 language teacher programming.
- 27 b. Diné College will use at least 1% of its funding to contribute toward their
- 28 endowment.
- 29 c. Diné College will use at least 1% of its funding toward K-12 education pipeline
- 30 programs.

1 3. Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance. Office of Navajo
2 Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance will use at least 1% of its funding
3 toward Diné language teacher programming.

4 D. Fund distribution. The Fund shall be distributed yearly in the following amounts:

- 5 1. Diné College.....\$4,700,000 10,000,000
6 2. Navajo Technical College\$4,200,000- 10,000,000
7 3. Scholarship and Financial Assistance.....\$3,500,000- 10,000,000

8 E. Fund Management/Accounting. The records and books of account for the
9 ~~g~~Governmental ~~u~~Units shall be kept separate from the Navajo General Fund as a separate
10 Fund with its own Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Statement. Day to day
11 accounting for the Fund shall be performed by the ~~g~~Governmental ~~u~~Units in accordance
12 with generally accepted accounting principles. The ~~G~~overnmental ~~u~~Units shall account
13 for the funds spent out of the Fund. Such accounting shall be included as part of the
14 Annual Audit of the Navajo Nation submitted to the Navajo Nation Council.

15
16 **§ 2305. Distribution of Annual, Supplemental, and Special Appropriations to Diné**
17 **College and Navajo Technical University**

18 Annual appropriated funds shall be directly distributed in full on October 1st of each
19 fiscal year.

20
21 **§ 23046. Effective period**

22 The effective date of the Fund shall be the beginning of Fiscal Year 2006, and shall be
23 maintained ~~for twenty (20) fiscal years~~ in perpetuity thereafter.

24
25 **SECTION FOUR. CODIFICATION**

26 The provisions of this resolution that amend or adopt new sections of the Navajo Nation
27 Code shall be codified by the Office of Legislative Counsel. The Office of Legislative
28 Counsel shall incorporate such amended provisions in the next codification of the Navajo
29 Nation Code.
30

1 **SECTION FIVE. EFFECTIVE DATE**

2 This Action shall become effective in accordance with 2 N.N.C. §221(B). However, the
3 first appropriation of general funds by the Navajo Nation pursuant to the amended
4 amounts approved herein shall begin in Navajo Nation Fiscal Year 2028.

5
6 **SECTION SIX. SAVING CLAUSE**

7 If any portion of this Action is determined invalid by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court,
8 or by a District Court of the Navajo Nation without appeal to the Navajo Nation Supreme
9 Court, the remainder of this Action shall be the law of the Navajo Nation.