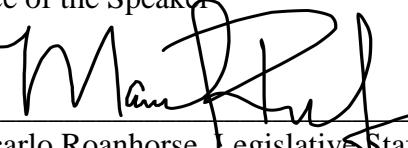




MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Crystalyne Curley, Speaker of the 25th Navajo Nation Council
Honorable 25th Navajo Nation Council

FROM: 
Jacob James, Legislative Staff Assistant
Office of the Speaker


Marcarlo Roanhorse, Legislative Staff Assistant
Office of the Speaker

DATE: January 22, 2026

SUBJECT: Status Report on the Reestablishment and Implementation of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council (NNYAC) – Legislative Branch

This memorandum provides a formal status report to the Speaker and the 25th Navajo Nation Council regarding the reestablishment, planning, implementation, and funding of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council (NNYAC) under the Legislative Branch. This report outlines the historical actions taken, the legislative development timeline, staffing and operational preparations, and the FY 2026 budget authority that now enables full implementation.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council was originally established to ensure Navajo youth have a meaningful and consistent voice in governance. Over time, the Navajo Nation Council determined that structural realignment was necessary to strengthen legislative oversight, accountability, and access to policy-making processes.

In 2025, the Navajo Nation Council acted to amend Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code to reestablish the Youth Advisory Council under the Legislative Branch. This action followed extensive consultation, legal review, and legislative deliberation and culminated in final Council approval and veto override. The reestablished NNYAC now operates under the Legislative Branch with oversight by the Naabik’íyáti’ Committee.

PLANNING AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Planning and preparatory work for the reestablishment of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council began on August 28, 2024, when Speaker Crystalyne Curley reassigned the responsibility



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

for advancing the initiative to a Legislative Staff Assistant within the Office of the Speaker. Following this assignment, meetings were held to discuss structural options, oversight, and sustainability for the Youth Advisory Council.

On October 13, 2024, proposed amendments to the Youth Advisory Council Plan of Operation were formally submitted to the Office of Legislative Counsel for legal review and drafting. This marked the transition from conceptual planning to formal legislative development.

After months of review and refinement, a proposed final draft was completed on April 23, 2025, and introduced as Legislation No. 0066-25, titled:

An Act Relating to the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, the Law and Order Committee, the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee, and the Navajo Nation Council; Amending Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code, the Plan of Operation for the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council, from the Executive Branch to the Legislative Branch.

Legislation 0066-25 was sponsored by Council Delegate Germaine Simonson and co-sponsored by Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Council Delegate Arbin Mitchell, Council Delegate Cherilyn Yazzie and Council Delegate Shawna Ann Claw, reflecting strong legislative support for the initiative.

STAFFING AND IMPLEMENTATION UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Following enactment, the Office of the Speaker initiated implementation efforts to operationalize the Youth Advisory Council. A Legislative Staff Assistant was hired on January 12, 2026, and assigned specifically to launch and coordinate the Legislative Branch Youth Advisory Council, including development of administrative systems, outreach strategies, application processes, and foundational governance documents.

Initial implementation work began on January 12, 2026, and focused on:

- Development of a comprehensive launch and rollout timeline.
- Coordination of public outreach and communications involving Council leadership.
- Preparation of application materials, evaluation tools, and selection processes.
- Drafting foundational documents including mission and vision statements.
- Initiation of a proposed Executive Director position classification to support long-term operations.

The Office of the Speaker set a clear objective for the Youth Advisory Council to be fully operational and thriving by March 2026.

BUDGET AUTHORITY AND FY 2026 FUNDING STATUS

A key factor affecting the timing of the Youth Advisory Council’s launch was the absence of an approved operational budget during much of the planning and legislative development period.



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

While the Council had taken action to reestablish the NNYAC, no dedicated operating funds were available until the FY 2026 Navajo Nation Council budget was approved.

On December 13, 2025, President Buu Nygren signed Resolution CN-56-25, approving the FY 2026 Navajo Nation Council budget, which included full funding for the Legislative Branch Youth Advisory Council. In his accompanying memorandum, the President indicated that he did not exercise the line-item veto authority for the Navajo Nation Council's Youth Advisory Council budget, thereby allowing the program to move forward as approved.

With this action, the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council is now fully funded for FY 2026. The approved operating budget totals \$245,043.00, allocated to travel, supplies, communications, lease and rental costs, repairs and maintenance, special transactions, and assistance to support youth engagement activities. At the time of this report, the Office of the Speaker is actively working to modify and align the budget to meet the operational needs of the newly reestablished Council.

STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

With legislative authority established, staffing in place, and FY 2026 funding approved, the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council is now positioned to proceed with full implementation. The Office of the Speaker will continue to oversee launch activities, application review, member selection, and coordination with Council Delegates to ensure the Youth Advisory Council becomes a sustainable and effective advisory body within the Legislative Branch.

CONCLUSION

The reestablishment of the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council under the Legislative Branch reflects a deliberate, multi-year effort by the Navajo Nation Council and the Office of the Speaker. The planning, legislative development, and budget approval processes were necessary steps to ensure the Council is properly structured, legally sound, and adequately funded. With these elements now in place, the Youth Advisory Council is prepared to fulfill its mission of empowering Navajo youth and strengthening their role in governance.