



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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25th Navajo Nation Council receives first historic report from Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council during 2026 Spring Session



Navajo Youth Advisory Council Vice Chairwoman Tewakeedah Martin (left), Chairwoman Aryiah James (center), NNYAC member Kendri Kinlacheeni (right).

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Monday, the 25th Navajo Nation Council formally opened its 2026 Spring Session with a historic milestone, receiving the first report from the reestablished Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council (NNYAC), marking the first time a youth advisory body has formally presented before the Council.

The NNYAC, reestablished under Resolution CS-40-25, delivered its first official oral report outlining its structure, early accomplishments, and long-term vision to advocate for Navajo youth across all five agencies. The presentation was led by Chairwoman Aryiah James, Vice Chairwoman Tewakeedah Martin, and Council Member Kendri Kinlacheeni.

Speaker Crystalline Curley commended the Youth Advisory Council for stepping into leadership at a critical time and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to supporting their work.

"Today reflects the strength and future of the Navajo Nation. Our Youth Advisory Council is stepping forward with purpose, courage, and vision," said Speaker Crystalline Curley. "We stand with them and will continue to support their growth, ensuring their voices are not only heard but included in shaping policy and opportunity for generations to come."

The report detailed the NNYAC's rapid progress since confirmation on March 12, 2026, including development of a comprehensive Plan of Operations, adoption of statute-compliant Rules of Order grounded in Diné Fundamental Law, and submission of a formal fiscal year 2026 second-quarter report to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee.

The NNYAC also highlighted its commitment to strengthening youth representation, expanding engagement with local chapters, and promoting leadership opportunities for young people across the Navajo Nation.

Council Delegates responded with strong support, commending the NNYAC for its leadership, initiative, and dedication to public service. Delegates described the presentation as a historic moment and emphasized the importance of elevating youth voices within the legislative process.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty provided extensive guidance and encouragement, urging the youth leaders to focus on data-driven advocacy, mental health awareness, cultural preservation, and community engagement.

Delegates Dr. Andy Nez and Brenda Jesus emphasized the importance of preserving the Navajo language, engaging with local chapter governments, and developing clear priorities that address the real challenges facing Navajo youth.

The NNYAC expressed gratitude for the opportunity and acknowledged the significance of presenting before the 25th Navajo Nation Council for the first time.

Vice Chairwoman Tewakeedah Martin described the moment as both significant and transformative.

"This is a historic moment for us as young leaders to be recognized within the legislative branch," Vice Chair Martin said. "We are here to learn, to grow, and to represent our peers. We may still be learning, but we are committed to advocating for our youth and rebuilding connections to our culture and community."

Chairwoman Aryiah James echoed that commitment, highlighting the NNYAC's focus on advocacy and long-term impact, particularly in areas such as mental health and youth development.

"Our goal is to make sure youth voices are recognized and supported through real data, real programs, and real opportunities," Chair James said. "We want to help create a future where the challenges facing our youth today are reduced for the next generation."

Kendri Kinlacheeni, NNYAC member, also shared a message reflecting the group's collective purpose.

"We are here to be a voice for our generation and those coming after us," said Kinlacheeni. "This opportunity shows that our voices matter, and we are ready to work with our leaders to create meaningful change for our communities."

The 25th Navajo Nation Council voted unanimously to accept the report with 17 in favor and none opposed.

As the 2026 Spring Session continues, the inclusion of the NNYAC signals a renewed commitment by the Navajo Nation Council to invest in youth leadership, strengthen community engagement, and build a future grounded in culture, resilience, and shared responsibility.

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