

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

TIBC REPORT

NOV 2023

FEB 2024

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT HIGHLIGHT

Prepared For:

**Diné Bi' Olta' School
Board Association
Legislative Session**

Prepared By:

Shawna Allison Becenti

1. The Sub Education Committee of the Tribal Interior Budget Council met in Washington, DC, on November 7, 2023, to review the requests made during the Summer meeting in Niagara Falls, New York.
2. Sub-Education Committee Pre-Meeting with BIE and Chairs of the Tribal Interior Budget Committee on February 14, 2024

HIGHLIGHTS FROM NOVEMBER 2023 EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Education Subcommittee is led by Tribal Chair Buster Atteberry of the Karuk Tribe and Federal Co-Chairs Tony Dearman, Director of BIE, and Sharon Pinto, Deputy Director of BIE. The committee received reports from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Education IT, and National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Policy Update, which answered questions about budget comparisons between Tribally Controlled Schools (TCS) and BIE-operated Schools, pay parity for all employees, Education IT funding, and a breakdown of those funds. Attached are the TIBC Education Subcommittee Report Out, Resolutions of Support approved by the National Congress of American Indian full council.

Highlights and Queries from the Presentations
Here are some key takeaways and questions from the presentations:

- During the Education Subcommittee work session, the ranking tool was reviewed and requested for revision before the March meeting.
- Why isn't Post-Secondary Funding forward-funded, including Scholarship and adult Education, a top priority for the Navajo Nation?
- There was a request for more comprehensive information on fixed costs and pay increases for all employees, including a comparison between TCS and BIE-operated admin or fixed costs.
- Education IT primarily funds BIE-operated schools, but Education IT also supports TCS.
- NIEA Policy analyst Julia Whitford supported advanced appropriations and mandatory funding for all BIE programs and suggested that JOM be forward-funded.
- There was a discussion about how BIE could follow the process IHS used to secure advance appropriations. The Education Subcommittee plans to hold three work sessions to strategize for this objective.
- It was noted that Department of Defense Schools receive roughly \$25,000 per pupil, and their funding and data were recommended to be used to compare funding disparities.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM FEBRUARY 2024 EDUCATION PRE-SUBCOMMITTEE HYBRID MEETING

The Education Subcommittee is led by Tribal Chair Buster Atteberry of the Karuk Tribe and Federal Co-Chairs Tony Dearman, Director of BIE, and Sharon Pinto, Deputy Director of BIE. The committee had three work session topics: school construction, ranking tool for education, and assessments. This meeting was held in conjunction with the TIBC Hill Week. Because not all Education Sub-committee members did not attend Hill Week, this meeting provided attendance virtually.

Highlights from the meeting:

School construction:

- The current funding levels for FY2027 allow for the construction of only one school per year due to the high building costs and limited resources. The Committee has raised concerns about the monetary requirements for a fully funded request. The Greenbook currently only shows four schools on the list for new construction, but another list of 30 schools needs to be built. The BIE will provide the committee with the exact amount of funding required to fully fund all the line items.
- Representatives from BIE Construction indicated that the 105 Lease Program is the fastest way to build schools. To qualify for this program, schools must either own the land or have a long-term lease with their tribe. This program reimburses the principal and interest and provides assistance with building operations and maintenance.

Ranking tool:

- The committee requested the creation of ranking tool templates for education programs to avoid prioritization between JOM, Adult Scholarship, and ISEP.

Assessments:

- Schools that receive Title I funding must administer state assessment tests that align with the state standards. However, the committee has raised concerns about the potential bias in summative exams and the lack of culturally responsive testing methodologies.
- To address these concerns, the committee has requested that BIE create a team of educators to examine the current testing processes and methodologies used across both BIE and state assessments. The committee believes that the current testing methods do not fully reflect our students' achievement and may be inaccurate.

