



Written Presentation of Dr. Elmer J. Guy  
New Mexico Tribal College Consortium  
Fiscal Year 2027 State of New Mexico Legislative  
Priorities  
Before the  
New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
December 10, 2025

## INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chair and esteemed members of the Legislative Finance Committee, thank you for granting the New Mexico Tribal College Consortium the opportunity to present our legislative priorities. It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the Consortium, which includes the four tribal colleges located within the state of New Mexico.

Diné College, the first tribally chartered and operated college in the United States, serves as a premier tribal liberal arts institution. The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), Congressionally chartered, focuses on fine arts and cultural expression. Navajo Technical University (NTU) is the first tribal University to offer a Ph.D. program and provides an array of STEM degrees, workforce development, and vocational programs. The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), operated by the federal Bureau of Indian Education, offers vocational, technical, and liberal arts programs to students from tribal communities across the region.

We deeply appreciate your continued support of our capital outlay projects, dual-credit initiatives, and the New Mexico Legislative Lottery and Opportunity Scholarship Programs. These investments significantly expand access to higher education for students across New Mexico and Indian Country.

The Consortium's legislative priorities are outlined below, including individual capital outlay funding requests from each tribal college. All funding requests have been reviewed and supported by the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED).

---

## **NEW MEXICO TRIBAL COLLEGE CONSORTIUM PRIORITIES**

### **High School Dual Credit Reimbursement Funding**

The tribal colleges are committed to strengthening partnerships with local high schools to support student success, increase graduation rates, and create clear pathways to college for Native American students. Many Native American students are first-generation college attendees, and the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school has proven transformative. Dual-credit participation encourages enrollment in postsecondary programs and improves retention, persistence, and graduation outcomes.

Collectively, the tribal colleges currently serve more than 1,000 high school students through dual-credit partnerships with more than 35 school districts, Bureau of Indian Education schools, and independent charter schools. Enrollment is expected to grow substantially in the coming years.

We are grateful for the Legislative Finance Committee members and NMHED's recommendation for allocating \$800,000 in recurring funding for the Tribal College High School Dual Credit Program.

---

## **CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING REQUESTS SUPPORTED BY NMHED**

### **Navajo Technical University (NTU)**

- **New Construction – \$5,000,000**  
Navajo Technical University (NTU) is seeking \$5,000,000 in Capital Outlay Project funding from the State of New Mexico Higher Education Department for fiscal year 2027. The allocation will be dedicated to planning, designing, constructing, and equip the Early Childhood and Multigenerational Education Facility on the NTU campus in McKinley County. The facility will function as a centralized educational hub in which pre-service teachers can apply and refine instructional strategies under the supervision and guidance of expert faculty.
- **Institutional Safety and Security Enhancements – \$1,318,900**  
NTU is also requesting \$1,318,900 to install surveillance cameras, access control systems, enhance entryways, and upgrade campus lighting.

## Diné College

- **New Construction – \$4,000,000**  
Dine College is requesting \$4,000,000 in Capital Outlay Project funding from the New Mexico Higher Education Department for fiscal year 2027. The funding allocation is for planning, designing, constructing, and equip Phase II of the Shiprock Agriculture Multi-purpose Center. The Agriculture Multi-Purpose Center is a building which will house classrooms and demonstration space. The Building is to serve as the Agri-Business Centers main building for training in Horticulture and Tribal Agriculture.
- **Institutional Safety and Security Enhancements – \$325,000**  
Dine College is also requesting \$325,000 to install surveillance cameras, access control systems, enhance entryways to buildings, entryways to access roads to the campus and to upgrade all exterior lighting for security and safety. This is for the Shiprock Campus

## Institute of American Indian Arts

- **Infrastructure Improvement: NMHED is recommending \$1,250,000 Capital Outlay Project funding for a Campus Generator Project.**  
The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) Campus Generator Project involves purchasing and installing a campus generator that will support the entire campus during any power outages. A battery backup system will be purchased and connected to the campus generator. The solar panels that have been installed across the campus will feed the battery backup system. A network will connect the entire system to ensure

campus remains operational during any power outages. Positive Energy Solar has also provided guidance to IAIA regarding the planning and implementation of this project.

The \$1.25 million will cover the costs for the first phase of the IAIA Campus Generator Project. The remaining two phases of the project are estimated to cost \$2 million in which IAIA will access a combination of private sector, federal and state dollars to fund the completion of the project.

- **Safety and Security Enhancements: \$850,000**

IAIA is also requesting \$850,000 for surveillance cameras and access control. The project includes the installation of surveillance cameras and access control in and around campus residential areas, including exterior building entrances, parking lots, pedestrian pathways, and common areas. The scope of work will cover all necessary infrastructure upgrades, and system integration with existing campus security platforms. The project includes the installation of card-based access control on primary entry points.

## **The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute**

- **Safety and Security Enhancements: 1,020,000**

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute is requesting \$1,020,000 for perimeter fencing and automated gates – an installation of perimeter fencing and upgrades to campus gate access.

## **CONCLUSION**

Distinguished members of the Legislative Finance Committee, thank you for allowing the Consortium to present our priorities for the upcoming legislative session. We thank the Higher Education Department Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez for her support and contributions to tribal colleges. Secretary Rodriguez has fostered open communication and provided critical assistance, enabling New Mexico's tribal colleges to strengthen higher education opportunities for students across the state. We invite you to visit our campuses to see first-hand the positive impact this committee's work has had.