

**MINUTES
of the
SECOND MEETING
of the
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**June 23-24, 2026
Navajo Technical University
Lowerpoint Road, New Mexico Highway 371
Crownpoint**

The second meeting of the Science, Technology and Telecommunications Committee was called to order by Senator Heather Berghmans, chair, on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 10:06 a.m. in the Academic Building at Navajo Technical University (NTU) in Crownpoint.

Present

Sen. Heather Berghmans, Chair
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana, Vice Chair
Rep. Joy Garratt
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Sen. Michael Padilla (6/23)
Sen. Harold Pope (6/23)
Sen. William P. Soules
Sen. Anthony L. Thornton (6/23)

Advisory Members

Sen. Jay C. Block (6/24)
Sen. Linda M. Trujillo

Absent

Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen

Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Rep. Christine Chandler
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. Yanira Gurrola
Rep. Charlotte Little
Sen. Larry R. Scott
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. James G. Townsend

Guest Legislator

Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom (6/23)

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Joanne Montague, Senior Legislative Librarian, LCS
William Mason, Staff, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found under the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Tuesday, June 23

Welcome and Introductions (10:06 a.m.)

Senator Berghmans welcomed everyone to the meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

Welcome and Status Update (10:10 a.m.)

Elmer Guy, Ph.D., president, NTU, welcomed the committee to Crownpoint and discussed NTU's programs and research activities. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=1>.

Sampling the Variety of Student Research at NTU (11:08 a.m.)

Jonathan Smith, electrical engineering student, NTU; Blaine Nez, environmental science student, NTU; and Justin Platero, chemistry research assistant, NTU, presented on their past and ongoing research projects at the university, including a system to test surface water quality, a program to monitor radon levels on the university's campus and a project to develop new electrochemical sensor components. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=2>.

Approval of Minutes (11:52 a.m.)

On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the May 20, 2026 meeting were approved without changes.

Examples of Microbiological Studies at NTU (1:35 p.m.)

Della Wilson, biology student, NTU, and David Willie, biology student, NTU, presented on their microbiological research, including investigations into the antimicrobial properties of Navajo tea (*Thelesperma subnudum*) and the effect of uranium contamination on the

antimicrobial resistance of soil bacteria. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=3>.

Update on Regional Broadband Development (2:18 p.m.)

Jeff Lopez, director, Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE), gave an update on the OBAE's activities and broadband infrastructure projects. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=4>.

Executive Session (3:25 p.m.)

On a motion duly made and seconded, the committee entered a closed executive session.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday, June 24

Reconvene

The meeting reconvened at 10:07 a.m.

Highlighting Two NTU Research and Engineering Projects Assisting Navajo Communities (10:08 a.m.)

Sundaram Arumugam, Ph.D., professor of electrical engineering, School of Engineering, Math and Technology, NTU, and Irene Ane-Anyangwe, Ph.D., biology professor and chair, School of Science, NTU, presented on NTU research projects working with Navajo chapters and communities, including an initiative to design a photovoltaic system for Navajo Nation residences and a program to develop hydroponic agriculture in Navajo communities. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=5>.

NTU: A Broadband Journey (11:27 a.m.)

Jason Arviso, vice president of operations, NTU, presented a white paper discussing NTU's development of broadband infrastructure and the importance of broadband expansion to the university and its students. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=5>.

Impacts of Heat on Traditional Lifeways (11:43 a.m.)

Stephanie Moraga-McHaley, board member, Healthy Climate New Mexico, and Shelley Mann-Lev, senior program consultant, Healthy Climate New Mexico, presented on the impacts of climate change on acequia communities in New Mexico and discussed the health effects of aridification and increasing temperatures across the state. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=6/23/2026&ItemNumber=6>.

Tour of NTU Advanced Manufacturing Lab and Other Facilities (1:30 p.m.)

Members of the committee and committee staff toured NTU's campus.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.