



NMPED Indian Education Division: Indian Education Summit: Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Native Student Roundtable on Educational Experiences

In this roundtable, a space will be provided for Native students to discuss and share strengths and challenges related to their unique educational journeys. Educators will have an opportunity to listen and learn from student perspectives. Karen Trujillo, Ph.D., NM Public Education Department, Secretary of Education and Kara Bobroff, Deputy Secretary, Identity, Equity & Transformation were in attendance on the roundtable discussion to listen and learn from the student participants.

The roundtable began with the students introducing themselves by stating their name, school, grade and what tribal communities they represented. Students were given prompt questions to facilitate a meaningful and engaging group discussion around their educational experiences.

The student responses have been documented as bullet point answers.

1. What does it mean to create a space for Native students?

- Effect how students view education
- Motivating students
- Giving opportunities to students
- Having college options
- Giving hope to student
- Being Creative
- Providing space where they can be themselves
- Letting others know we are here

2. What does it mean to create space for Native student in schools?

- There is a Medicine man present at school. He helps guide them with work.
- Spiritualism
- Providing equal opportunities
- Natives' lacks representation, need more representation
- Need a club, Ideas, history
- Not many Natives are recognized
- Native American Club
- Provide Native languages
- Respect
- Native Language clubs
- Treated equally

3. Can you share, what does education mean to you?

- Having more opportunities
- Being Successful
- Able to help my community – protect it
- There's more out there
- Learning about myself
- Further oneself – exploring
- Better our lives
- Giving back

4. Can you share, what does education mean to your family?

- Role model for siblings
- Prove people wrong
- Family struggles with no education
- Family encourages and supports me
- Family experienced Boarding school days
- Family wants an easier life for me and not to struggle as much
- Opportunities they didn't have
- Governor talks and encourages education
- Family supports Native language
- Look up to sister, she went to college
- Education bettered their lives
- Education will help community grow
- Education working with livestock - hands on work vehicles
- To do better than my parents– better living
- Education is a gateway to better future
- To get a better job
- Education is a key to life
- They want me to try

5. What do you enjoy about learning in school?

- Stories about the past
- Law studies
- All subjects – learn from mistakes
- I am a Library nerd
- Build future
- Broadening my skills.
- Learn different perspectives
- I like homework, learning is like meditation
- I enjoy learning and getting right answers
- I enjoy all classes and how teachers teach

6. What challenges have you seen or observed with your friends and classmates at school?

**Many of the student participants indicated they have helped, tutored and/or encouraged their friends and classmates through learning challenges.*

- Lose interest in subject
- Lack of confidence
- Confidence issues
- Do not ask questions
- Problem hinders
- ELA/math – confusing entire class
- Different ways of learning
- No motivation – peer, home
- Bad experience with teacher
- Teachers do not approach student
- Family issues – home
- No purpose in school
- Lack of education when transferring to school (math)
- Easily distracted
- Visual learning
- More verbal than visual
- Afraid to see grown up counselor
- One to one is helpful
- Peer support
- Welding/hands on classes are good
- Lack of tutoring
- Drugs and alcohol

7. What do you enjoy about learning in your community?

- Learning about hardships
- Skills/knowledge of Elders
- Group activities – hiking, camping, fishing
- Community conferences – sharing what they’ve learned
- Youth council
- Community flyers
- Summer programs – cooking, farming in Native lang.
- Elders – how life was irrigation, crops
- Recreation – cook, sew
- Culture – language
- Living in two societies
- Sheep wool

8. Can the learning in school and community be combined? What are some examples?

- Culture in school
- Language classes
- Languages in school/dances/feasts
- Interwoven curriculum
- Elders
- NASU (Native American Student Union)
- Group meetings
- Clubs
- Activities – weekends
- Traditional food for Teachers
- Selling frybread
- Too dependent on phones

9. Does your school offer a Native language class? If yes, can you share your experiences?

- Not laughing at each other
- Record parents
- Learning Colors
- Learning how to cook, instructions in the Native language
- Field trips to historical/ancestors sites
- 2 year requirement for bilingual seal and scholarships
- Share stories – making rug
- Competitive among peers to learn
- Navajo proficiency test
- Offered as dual credit, Navajo Tech University

10. Does your school offer a Native language class? If no, would you want to have access to a Native language class?

- Talking to other Native students
- Keeping traditions in the city
- Going back home – Welcome back with open arms
- Connect through Social Media
- Have language class as a club
- Language comes from home
- Identify as a Native student
- Yes, I would like to take a language class
- Roles models – parents and Native idols in PBR
- Ceremonies – home
- Have Native Peers (friends)
- Important to Family

11. Is your school preparing you for your future goals? Can you give me some examples?

- Taking seminars
- College options
- Native liaison
- AP/Honor Class
- Next step plans
- Daily website (scholarships)
- Counseling
- College trips
- Not support traditional lines
- Teachers helpful
- Cafeteria ladies encourage us
- College prep plaza

12. One thing you wish your teachers, counselors and/or principals knew about you?

- How much potential I have
- How great I am
- I am dedicated. I am dedicated to other organizations, groups and programs outside of school
- Natives are thriving – get things done
- Paranoid and anxious, it takes me awhile to get to know people.