



By Jason Allison
Gila River AZ

On Tuesday February 15th, 2010 Dr. Calvin White, Peggy Nakai, Council Delegates Willie Tracie & David Tom (both who serve on the Education Committee) along with several Native American Tribal Leaders traveled to Gila River Arizona to attend and meet with Democratic Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota to address various issues that affect Native American Education.

Issues from Native Land pertaining to Issues varied from attendance being affected by the extreme weather conditions and the damage it has done to Indian Community roads and bus routes. Attendance numbers are affected by the extreme weather conditions and it was made known to the Senator because of the impact it will have in overall AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). Extreme road conditions has been a problem this school semester as schools in communities such as Pinon AZ have had a 3 week cancellation of school in this semester alone.

Other issues pertaining to yearly AYP including the lack of funding to schools across Indian Land. Lack of funding is an issue that has a strong domino effect on Native Education. Lack of funds affect everything from competitive teachers wages, to building facility maintenance which potentially creates dangerous working and learning conditions for schools across Native Land.

Tribes from various parts of Native America each gave presentations and made comments to the Senator about the education system including the Navajo Delegation which included ODSMT's Dr. Calvin White. Dr. Calvin was given the chance to speak after Council Delegate Willie Tracie from Kinlichee AZ addressed the Senator.

Dr. Calvin White presented the Senator with an Accountability Workbook which incorporates cultural aspects of the Navajo Culture and modern western schooling. The Workbooks was just one of 3 documents that was presented to Senator Dorgan along with the Department of Dine Education's Enrollment Summary and the AYP listing from school year 2008-09. Dr. White mentioned to the Senator that the Accountability Workshop that integrates Navajo Cultural methodology and culture has been a successful curriculum and that the Office of Science Math and Technology would like the support from the Senator to impliment the program in hopes of preserving historical and cultural identity in additional to its success in yearly proficiency. The Senator was more than interested in the concept and made mention that he will review the workbook and the AYP and Enrollment Summary books that were presented to him and his cabinet.