

Diné (Navajo) as a Home Language

Language: Diné (Navajo)

Program Base: Elementary school, middle school, and high school in Bloomfield, NM

Goals:

1. To teach children to converse with peers, parents, and elders.
2. To teach children to read Navajo.
3. To teach children to write in the Navajo language.

Brief Description:

Bilingually endorsed, licensed, and fluent Navajo teachers provide instruction at each grade level, following the state bilingual education guidelines. The district, Bloomfield Schools, incorporates culture with language. At the secondary level the district has beginning, intermediate, and advanced Diné (Navajo) language classes addressing oral speaking, conversational skills, reading, and writing in the language. The program also follows the Diné Language and Culture Framework put out by the Diné Nation Education Department. Students do not have to be American Indian to participate in the classes.

The program began in 1985. The district was able to order Navajo language materials, but a committee was assigned to work on the scope and sequence of the curriculum for K-7, which is ongoing.

Materials: Books and children's stories.

Support:

Title IX (Indian Education), Johnson O'Malley, and state department of education funds support the program. Fluent native speakers, a language and culture committee, and volunteers have all assisted the program, while collaboration with a school has been a source of support as well.

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