

How did we start?

We began as a group of concerned educators, parents, and community members meeting in a living room in the summer of 2014. After 80+ one-on-one meetings, weekly public planning meetings, and countless presentations at chapter houses and other civic organizations, we developed a plan and wrote a charter application to start a new school, which was approved in September 2015!

We started with the intention of re-imagining the school experience for Native youth in and around Gallup, a group that experiences large opportunity gaps in terms of academic rigor, graduation rates, culturally relevant curriculum, school funding, a representative teaching force, and more.

Today, we operate with the foundational belief that we can create an equitable and excellent school experience through culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum. Both research evidence and theoretical works by indigenous scholars support this belief. **We believe that in doing so we can build the capacity of students and families to achieve their own vision of excellent education.**

Who are we?

Ben Soce – A co-founder and member of the Governing Council, Ben is an outdoor educator with the National Indian Youth Leadership Project.

Philmer Bluehouse – A member of the Governing council, Philmer is a traditionalist and retired law enforcement officer.

Susan Estrada – A fifth grade teacher extraordinaire, Susan is a member of the Governing Council.

Madeline Leyba – A long-time employee of both GMCS and TFA, Madeline is a member of the Governing Council.

Neomi Gilmore – A lawyer on both the Navajo Nation and with New Mexico Legal Aid, Neomi is a member of the Governing Council.

Lane Towery – Lane, a teacher and instructional coach previously, has served as lead organizer for SDIS.

Our Partners

The Native American Community Academy

The National Indian Youth Leadership Project

Contact Us

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Six Directions Indigenous School

A free, open-enrollment public charter school opening with 6th and 7th grades in August 2016 in Gallup, NM.



Mission Statement

The Six Directions Indigenous School, through a commitment to culturally responsive indigenous education, will develop critically conscious students who are engaged in their communities, demonstrate holistic well-being, and have a personal plan for succeeding in post-secondary opportunities.

Our Model

Culturally Responsive Schooling

- We are committed to ensuring students' cultural identities are seen as assets and are represented in the curriculum we create by:
 - Providing Native language instruction
 - Utilizing Project-Based Learning methodology that is interdisciplinary and focused on local history, literature, ecologies, etc.
 - Providing opportunities for community-based service learning
- We are committed to a rigorous academic program that ensures students the opportunity to thrive after high school.

Holistic Wellness

- We are committed to attending to students' social, emotional, relational, physical, intellectual and spiritual wellness through:
 - Creating a wellness framework and encouraging student reflection and goal-setting
 - Outdoor experiential education with the National Indian Youth Leadership Project

Restorative Practices

- We are committed to building fair and equal relationships between staff, students, administration, families, and our Governing Council through daily Advisory, community-building circles, an active Family Advisory Committee, and a Faculty Committee.
- We are committed to utilizing Restorative Justice Conferencing to respond to conflicts or wrong-doing so that students stay in school rather than being suspended or expelled.

Quick Facts

- ❖ SDIS is a **FREE** public school for New Mexico residents, open to **ANY** student who wishes to enroll.
- ❖ We will open with 6th and 7th grades in August 2016, and will grow one grade each year until we serve 6th through 12th grades.

Why come to SDIS?

- ❖ It's different! Great for anyone who has struggled in, is frustrated with, or has been expelled from "standard" public schools.
- ❖ To go to a small school with a close-knit and supportive community.
- ❖ Students will have rigorous academic support in a way that values their culture and language.
- ❖ To be prepared to succeed in college.

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 /sixdirectionsschool

