



**DEPARTMENT OF DINÉ EDUCATION  
THE NAVAJO NATION**

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## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 4, 2019

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### **Dr. Tommy Lewis, Jr., Navajo Nation Superintendent of Schools Announces Resignation, Retirement Plans**

Dr. Tommy H. Lewis, Jr., Navajo Nation Superintendent of Schools, announced recently he submitted his letter of resignation to the Navajo Board of Education on Oct. 24 and plans to begin retirement effective on Nov. 15, 2019.

“It has been a great honor for me to serve as Superintendent of Schools and to work with Navajo Nation leadership in addressing education for our children and Diné people,” Dr. Lewis said. “I greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with so many dedicated school officials and the Department of Diné Education staff over the last six years.”

He said he reached retirement age and decided to focus his time and attention to his family and move back to Flagstaff, Ariz. “I have always stressed to those I work with that family is of paramount importance, he said.

The board of education is expected to take formal action on Dr. Lewis’ resignation letter on Nov. 8, 2019.

“The Department of Diné Education is a strong and vibrant organization, and I am proud of the work we have been able to accomplish during my tenure as Superintendent. I have great confidence that Assistant Superintendent Dr. Tim Benally will provide a smooth transition while candidates are sought for my position.”

Dr. Lewis said he was most proud of seeing our young people going to school and receiving their promotions, diplomas, and degrees.

“It is a great honor to be an educational leader to promote high-quality teaching and learning as well as high student academic success,” Dr. Lewis said. “Education has to be a high priority in our tribal government, and our tribal leaders have to be strong advocates for education at all times.”

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Dr. Lewis is from Standing Horse, Arizona, which is near the Dilkon Chapter. He attended Northern Arizona University where he earned his Doctor of Education degree in educational leadership in 1992. He oversaw 260 schools located on and near the Navajo Nation with a student enrollment of approximately 85,000 in grades K-12, and a staff of 920 employees within the DODE. He also served on Diné College's board of regents.

Dr. Lewis has 43 years of experience in education and has held senior-level positions working with schools, colleges, universities, and other education organizations at the local, state, and national levels. He has extensive experience working with students, parents, school boards, tribal leaders, as well as state and federal officials regarding education reform to improve the quality of education.

He is a strong advocate for youth to enhance opportunities for educational programs and to improve teaching and learning. His involvement has contributed to gaining a better understanding and appreciation of issues and opportunities for minority people and mainstream institutions.

Dr. Lewis holds a Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University and also a certified teacher, principal, and Superintendent by the state of Arizona.

A retirement celebration will be held on Friday, Nov. 8, 2019, at the Navajo Education Center in Window Rock, Ariz.

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Dr. Tommy H. Lewis, Jr.

