

# CENTRAL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Newcomb • Naschitti • Shiprock • Kirtland • Ojo Amarillo*

## Presentation on School Re-Entry and Related Issues to Indian Affairs Legislative Interim Committee

**9/1/2020**



**Presenters:**

**Daniel P. Benavidez, Superintendent**

**Kyle Archibeque, Finance Director**

**Germaine Chappelle, General Counsel**

**P.O. Box 1199,**

**Highway 64, Old High School Road**

**Shiprock, New Mexico 87420**

**Main line: (505) 368-4984**

**[www.ccsdnm.org](http://www.ccsdnm.org)**

# I. CCSD DEMOGRAPHICS

## • Rural and Remote

- long travel time to bus stop and then long bus ride to school
- Spotty, if any, access to internet
- 30 to 40 % of families do not have electricity, potable water, indoor plumbing

## • Poverty rate is almost 4 times the national mean

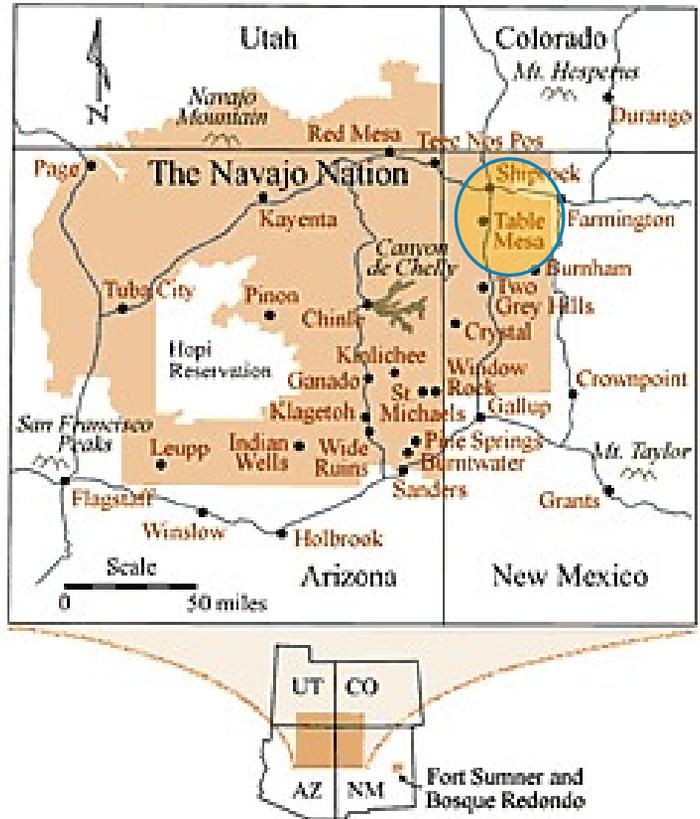
- lowest median family income of \$14,000
- lowest per capita income of \$4,788
- More than 75% of Navajo School Age Children live in poverty
- Unemployment 70%
- Free and reduced meals

## • No municipal amenities

- Unless provided by the School District there are little to no municipal amenities (i.e., no public libraries, no municipal swimming pools, no rec centers, no parks)

## • Less than 2% taxable property

- 80% of the District's tax revenues come from the San Juan Generating Station and Mine and the Four Corners Power Plant



## COVID PANDEMIC:

- Spotlight on poverty and lack of access to technology and infrastructure and daily meals
- Heightened social emotional needs of students
- Increased Child Homelessness
- Exponential increase in Learning Gaps

# Turning Challenges into Opportunities



## Challenges:

- **COVID Pandemic**
- **Identified Learning Gaps:**
  - **Historic/Current re Impact Aid**
  - **Yazzie-Martinez**
  - **Remote/Rural**
  - **Poverty**
  - **COVID**
- **Historic Underfunding of Capital and Maintenance/technology infrastructure**
- **Shorting of operational budget for below standard facility needs**
- **Poverty and Social Emotional Trauma**
- **Plant Closures**

## Opportunities:

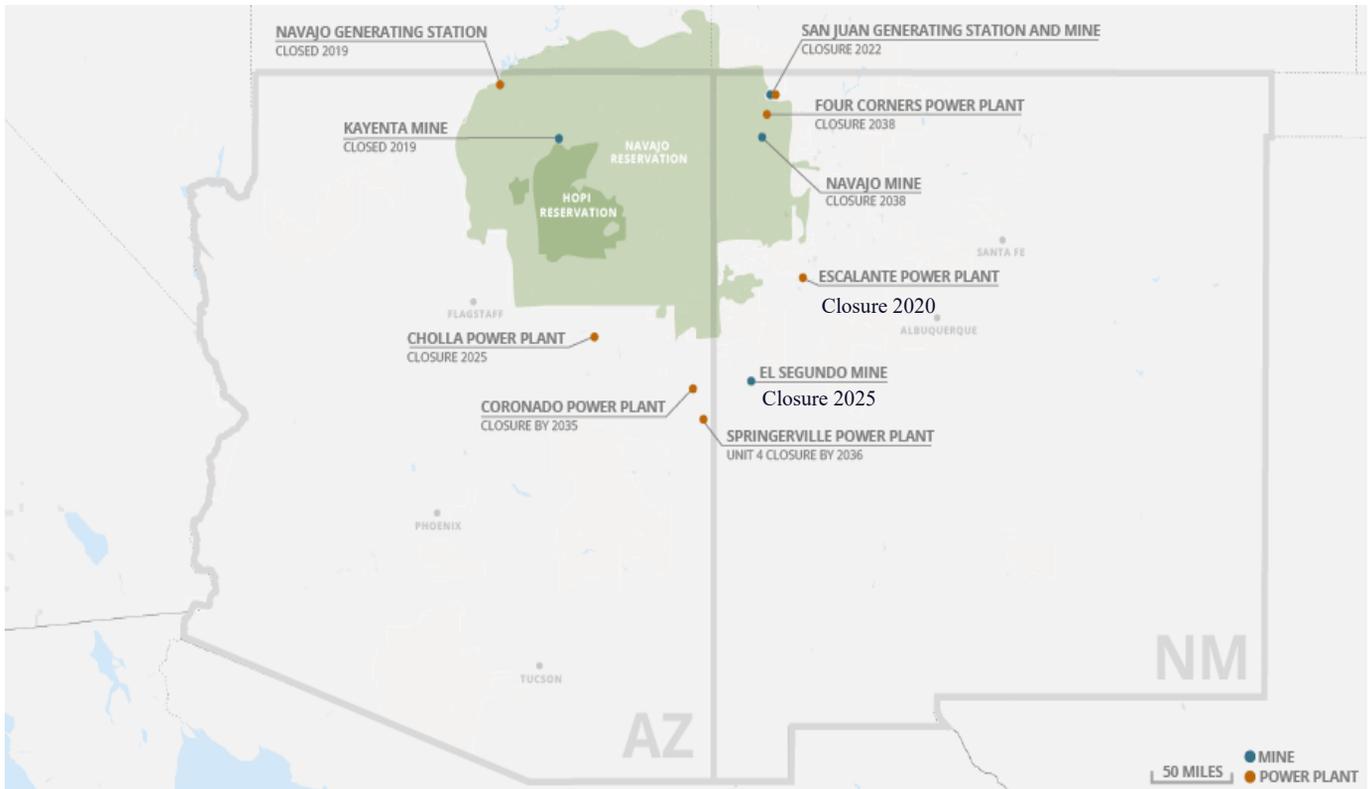
- **COVID Re-Entry and Technology Infrastructure Expansion**
- **Focus in all Departments on Bridging the Gap**
- **Creation of InterCultural Community Outreach Department**
- **Graduate Profile**
- **Stronger Community Ties and Participation in Economic Development:**
  - **National**
  - **Statewide**
  - **Regional Four Corners**
  - **Navajo Government-to-Government**

# COVID RE-ENTRY

NM PED Reentry Guidelines	NM Category: REMOTE Substantial Spread	NM Category: Hybrid Minimal/Moderate Spread	NM Category: Full Reentry Low/No Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, and communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students engage in remote learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The number that can be accommodated while adhering to at least six feet of social distancing or 50% capacity level caps the number of students in the building at any time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· All students eligible to return.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Maximize the amount of safe, in-person learning opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Limited Small groups (special education, some K-3 students) eligible for in-person instruction if feasible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students not in the building engage in remote learning.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Make decisions based on science and data</li> </ul>			

## Discussion of CCSD Considerations and Approach

# Area Challenges – Industrial Complex Closures



## Turning the Tide of Disaster – Economic Death Spiral

“To understand why Mayor Nate Duckett wants Farmington, N.M., to reopen while the governor wants it shut, it helps to know something about what he calls his city’s “death spiral.” Perched in a rural corner of northwest New Mexico, Farmington watched its wealth vanish as its oil and gas industries went elsewhere. Its population is one of the fastest-shrinking in America. What keeps the lights on in Farmington is a coal-fired power plant whose fate remains uncertain. And all of that was before the virus leveled what remained of Farmington’s economy.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/12/us/politics/farmington-nm-jobs-coronavirus-reopening.html>

Even harder hit by the economic downturn and potential multiple closings of area mining and electric generation facilities is the Navajo Nation located to the West of Farmington. Particularly in the most remote rural areas of the Navajo Nation, more than 1/3 of the residents do not have access to running water, indoor plumbing, electricity or the internet.



A water tank in the backyard of an elderly Navajo woman whose home lacks running water.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-navajo-nation-running-water-cbsn-originals/?ftag=CNM-00-10aag7e>



An extreme challenge for residents of the Navajo Nation is access to jobs. Unfortunately, the jobs that do exist at area mines and power plants are set to close within the next 1 to 10 years. These jobs have enabled several Navajo generations to enter the middle class with jobs that pay upwards of \$80,000 per year. Typically, these wages do not just support the immediate family of a worker, they support that worker’s extended family as well. [insert 4CED report]

The poverty rate among the Navajo is three and a half times the national mean. The lowest median family income, \$13,940. The Navajo also had the lowest per capita income, \$4,788. More than 75% of Navajo school age children live in poverty. 100% of Navajo seniors over age 85 live in poverty. Unemployment in Navajo Nation is nearly triple the U.S. average

In an area that has exponentially higher poverty and unemployment rates than the rest of the country, it isn’t hard to predict that the disproportionate impact of 6 industrial complex closures, leaving thousands of Navajo workers unemployed, will be disastrous for Navajo Nation residents.

Educational opportunities for children attending the Central Consolidated School System (CCSD) and other schools located in the region have also been undermined due to the economic downturn. CCSD, for example, is located primarily within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

Together with Four Corners Mine and Power Plant, the San Juan Generating Station and the Mine represent over 80% of the property tax revenues that CCSD receives to help fund the educational needs of its students.

*Additional economic development provides additional learning opportunities and career pathways for our children so when they grow up they can raise their families with family right here at home.*



Given the remoteness and lack of basic needs experienced by many of these children in their homes, their educational opportunities have been severely limited, which has dire conditions, have only been exacerbated during COVID-19 as they do not have access to long distance learning.

Due to lack of access to running water, living conditions, and underlying health concerns attributable in large part to poverty, Navajo and other Native Americans have one of the highest COVID-19 infection rates per capita in the U.S. Making matters even more grave, as a result of job loss of their caregivers, the homeless and poverty rates of children are likely to become even worse.

CCSD's focus is on bridging these gaps so that our children can have a bright future.

