

November 18, 2022

The Honorable Patricia A. Lundstrom  
New Mexico State Representative  
Chair, Legislative Finance Committee  
325 Don Gaspar Avenue, Suite 101  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Representative Lundstrom:

This letter is to inform you that the Indian Affairs Committee has heard testimony from the Santa Fe Indian School related to the school's academic performance and capital outlay priorities for the upcoming 2023 legislative session. The Santa Fe Indian School is requesting \$1.25 million in severance tax or general obligation bond funding for the Santa Fe Indian School's demolition and construction of the Performing Arts Center, the Paolo Soleri Amphitheater, on the campus of the Santa Fe Indian School. In the 2022 legislative session, \$3 million in funding was appropriated to the Santa Fe Indian School, and those funds are in the process of being spent on the assessment, planning and design of the project. The school is complying with the Legislative Finance Committee's direction to emphasize extensive programming, with subject completion slated in 2023. The current request of \$1.25 million for the 2023 legislative session will be added to a Santa Fe Indian School contribution of \$5 million to begin phase I construction of the project. This first phase will include major demolition and site access preparation and, in addition to the construction of the main portion of the amphitheater, will include replacement of water, wastewater and electrical infrastructure. Through phased construction, the Santa Fe Indian School will renovate the Paolo Soleri Amphitheater into a student-based performing arts center on the Santa Fe Indian School campus.

Santa Fe Indian School representatives clarified for the Indian Affairs Committee that the school is recognized as a statewide educational institution and that students who attend the school come from nearly a dozen counties across the state and represent the 19 Indian pueblos, the Navajo Nation, the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the Mescalero Apache Tribe. The committee has also come to understand that, unlike other entities such as higher education institutions, public schools and other statewide public facilities, the Santa Fe Indian School does not have any

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other avenue for presenting capital outlay requests at a formal capital outlay public hearing. Hence, the school is presenting its capital outlay priority to the Indian Affairs Committee.

The Indian Affairs Committee was particularly impressed with the academic performance of Santa Fe Indian School students and the school's overall graduation rates. The school is educating a segment of New Mexico's student population that would otherwise be required to attend public schools, where additional operating dollars would need to be allocated by the state to support those students.

The Indian Affairs Committee respectfully requests that the Legislative Finance Committee consider the Santa Fe Indian School's severance tax or general obligation bond funding capital outlay request for recommendation to the legislature and to the governor for funding as a statewide project.

Sincerely,

D. WONDA JOHNSON  
State Representative, District 5  
Co-Chair, Indian Affairs Committee

SHANNON D. PINTO  
State Senator, District 3  
Co-Chair, Indian Affairs Committee

DWJ/SDP:sv

cc: Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham  
David Abbey, Director, Legislative Finance Committee  
Senator George K. Munoz, Vice Chair, Legislative Finance Committee

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The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham  
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