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SUMMER SCHOOL CLASSES VISIT INDIAN PUEBLO CULTURAL CENTER



Summer school students from 6th through 12th grade ended classes by enjoying a trip to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque June 28.

FT. DEFANCE—Summer school is over.

For the past month, middle and high school students of Window Rock Unified School District No. 8 completed summer classes at Window Rock High School.

Students attended classes Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon from grades 6 thru 12.

WRHS had a total summer school enrollment of 231 students, with class sizes ranging anywhere from 7 to 26 students per classroom.

Superintendent Lynnette Michalski commended students and staff for completing summer school courses during the school break.

“From traditional classroom instruction in standard classes to student enrichment courses, summer school had something for everyone. I appreciate our teachers and students for catching up on work while building momentum for the start of the new

school year,” she said.

Principal Lawrence Sam headed the summer school program, which provided classes for credit recovery and student enrichment.

He said students took pre and post-tests to gauge their progress for the month of classes.

“Students were recognized by their teachers as having deficiencies in the content areas of English, math, science or social studies. They were recommended based on that,” he said.

Enrichment classes were provided in the form of Diné language, weaving, traditional clothing creation, hoop dancing, and STEM classes. Another class titled, “Restoring and Maintaining Hozho” focused on outdoor beautification projects at the high school.

High school students attending summer school for credit recovery utilized the Apex Learning Virtual School for courses they were struggling

with during the regular school year.

“Students are taking at least 12 standard items that they are most deficient in, utilizing the Galileo pre and post-test from this past school year to get those up to a passing score,” Sam said.

The free lunch program also provided breakfast and lunch for students. Buses brought students to school and transported them back home after class.

“We’re looking forward to seeing improvements this coming school year, based on what we’re seeing in summer school,” Sam said.

Sixteen teachers provided instruction at summer school, including a parent coordinator, certified nursing assistant, school administrators and food service staff.

Sam is a fifth year employee of WRUSD and has been an educator for 15 years.

“The teachers have been very motivated, coming here every day with an upbeat attitude to make sure that all the kids are successful,” he said.

Theresa Benally, Wellness-Culture Coordinator, said the enrichment courses were paid for by Johnson O’Malley funding.

“How this happens is we do an assessment with our Johnson O’Malley program. We do a student needs assessment survey with parents, teachers and students,” she said.

The information is then presented to the Indian Education Committee for approval.

“Our IEC will then write

it into their plans and it gets approved,” she said.

One class, “Nizhoniful: Designing Traditional Navajo Clothing,” taught students how to make their own clothing, including the virtues of patience.

Instructor Judith Bitsoi of Naschitti said it was her first time teaching high school students to sew.

“I taught home economics in New Mexico for many years,” she said.

Bitsoi said students learned the basics of sewing: measurements, gathering and hand-eye coordination.

“A lot of it is just time and patience,” she said. “Even as an adult, we don’t have patience. We don’t have hand-eye coordination.”

Bitsoi said she was amazed by the male students in her class because they picked up the skills quickly.

June 28 was the final day of summer school, culminating in a trip to Albuquerque to visit the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

There, students visited various galleries such as the origin stories of various N.M. Pueblos, traditional adobe dwellings and various artwork ranging from pottery, murals, paintings and more.

The trip was an opportunity for students to travel and learn traditional culture and history from neighboring tribes after having to attend school for the past four weeks.