

## **COVID, Classroom, and Cogitation**

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On March 11, 2020, the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). This declaration prompted the United States to announce a national emergency two days later. On the same day as the U.S., the Navajo Nation declared its state of emergency due to confirmed COVID-19 cases surrounding the Navajo Nation. On March 17, 2020, the Navajo Nation Department of Health confirmed its first case, and months following became affrighting and transformational.

While many Americans and citizens of the Navajo Nation cogitated to this disease, one significant transformation across the country was brewing. Non-essential businesses became scarce, national monuments were limited, and airlines were selective among many other unprecedented transformations. However, in the midst of these immediate closures across social and economic domains, educational leaders and stakeholders were left to mitigate an entirely new transformation in teaching and learning. Despite national returns to this notion of ‘normalcy’, education in its entirety continues to combat social and economic despair. Teacher shortage, lack of internet infrastructure, parents/guardians without transportation, student attendance, including a plethora of other challenges and obstacles that conflict with the expectations outlined by educational agencies.

This interactive presentation will be prefaced with a dialogue regarding COVID and classrooms on the Navajo Nation, acknowledging a number of social and economic challenges identified from reports released by the Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education (DODE). Then, the presenter and participants will cogitate on the same factors outlined in DODE’s reports as it pertains to their Indigenous communities primarily taught or served. Finally, the researcher and participants will exchange potential solutions to assist educational leaders and teachers on mitigating the challenges currently experienced within education.

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