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VICE PRESIDENT NEZ SUPPORTS FACE PROGRAM GRADUATES IN FT. WINGATE

FT. WINGATE, NM-During the Family and Child Education (FACE) Program graduation today at Wingate Elementary School, Vice President Jonathan Nez told the graduates that it's important for them to be proud of who they are as Dine'.

"Congratulations to the students here at the FACE program," Vice President Nez said. "It's a happy occasion to have our little ones promoted and honored with a celebration. It brings great joy to me to see them dressed up traditionally."

The program included performances by the FACE students in which they counted, identified shapes and colors, and led the Pledge of Allegiance in the Navajo Language.

The FACE Program is a collaborative effort that requires parental participation in the education of their child. Parents are required to attend class sessions with their children while also being given the option to pursue a General Education Development (GED) diploma.

Along with graduating ten students into kindergarten, the FACE program also celebrated two parents receiving their GED diplomas.

Parents are responsible for their children completing their homework and also reinforcing teachings from the day's lessons. Parental involvement contributes to the successful mastery of objectives with the students.

Dr. Edie Morris, Wingate Elementary School Principal, reiterated that it's family that makes a person strong. Principal Morris said she was grateful for the support of the parents.

"The most important thing we learned about was Ke', our relatives," Dr. Morris said. "We are nothing without Ke'. Family is very important and that is what makes us strong. Let's continue to support these students as they transition into kindergarten."

Vice President Nez supported the traditional concept of Ke' by telling the parents and students that family is the core of the Navajo people. He encouraged parents and relatives to be supportive of their children and to provide them with encour-



Top: Vice President Jonathan Nez stands next to Aariah and Aiyanna Vallo, graduates of the FACE program. Above: Vice President Nez stands with parents, Ervin Billie (left) and Brandie King (right) who both received their GED diplomas as a part of the FACE program.

agement.

"We need to continue to say to them that they are important. We need to tell them that we love them. This encouragement goes a long way," he said. "We also need to keep reinforcing the value of our language, culture and traditions."

The vice president told students that the Office of the President and Vice President will continue to pray for their success and congratulated the class on behalf of the Office.

"There is so much potential within these young people," he said. "Attending an event like this puts a smile on my face."

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