

Education -

Report for Agent Galus Eastman in 1879. The one school (at Ft. Defiance) was a small, filthy, leaky adobe. A new building had been authorized but Congress failed to appropriate funds.

1880 Old adobe at Ft. Defiance only school.

1879 foundation laid for Industrial School at Ft. Defiance

1881 Industrial School opened at Ft. Defiance. At this time Indian Service did not employ school teachers. Contracts were made with various religious organizations in exchange for opportunity to give religious instruction.

1883 Riordan appointed agent - renovated school + brought reforms

1887 Compulsory School Attendance law

1932 Collier, Commissioner.
Improvement + renovation of boarding schools. Also community centers for adults.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Shortly after the return of the Navaho to their own country following the exile to Fort Sumner, the first effort to offer an educational program resulted in complete failure. A small day school was opened at Fort Defiance in 1870 with a very few children attending. They stayed to satisfy their curiosity and to receive some clothes which were donated, then they vanished, and all efforts to bring them back proved fruitless. In 1883 the first boarding school was started at Fort Defiance, fraught with problems of insufficient funds, and help. This also lasted only a short while. Then the Government turned to the missionaries who were appearing on the scene wanting to be of some benefit to the Indians, and suggested the establishment of schools. There were four early missions and schools, the first, a Methodist school ~~first commenced~~ ^{opened} at Hogback, near Farmington, and soon moved to a new location at that town. ^{Third} ~~Second~~ the Presbyterian Mission at Ganado in Arizona, established in 1901, with a school opening the following year and a hospital ten years later. Second, the Catholic Mission of Saint Michaels, established by the Franciscan Order in 1898. A school was opened in 1902 by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrement. Fourth a Mission founded by the Christian Reformed Church at Rehoboth, near Gallup, also in 1898 with a school opening shortly thereafter. Other denominations followed at other areas of the reservation. There were again many trials and tribulations that beset all of these schools, caused by the natural suspicion of both parents and children, and also by some members of the staffs of these institutions, for it is a matter of record that there were many instances of physical brutality, due doubtless to lack of understanding of Navaho ways, and by sheer frustration on the part of some who had little or no idea of the remoteness, hardships and problems of their tasks, so far removed from our homes.

many raised

Then as the Indian Service progressed with endeavors, new schools were built and slowly some children did attend. But the policy of forcing education on the Navaho provided many stumbling blocks. For a long time children were forbidden to speak Navaho and everything possible was done to try to superimpose our culture onto the Navaho. Some children, from twelve to sixteen years old, were sent away to schools in California or a number of points in the east. ~~The~~ ^{when} ~~problem~~ ^{were through school they} here was that these children were not fitted to enter our society with any hope of success. More than 95% of them drifted home where they found themselves misfits, for they knew little of their own traditional ways and were not competent to enter reservation life. More reservation boarding schools were built, still there was only partial success due to inadequate staff understanding and still the effort to change Navaho ways.

With the coming of the New Deal and much road improvement, a new policy was adopted to build day schools and to bring the children to the schools by bus. This was a big step in advance, and soon many well trained ~~educators~~ teachers with a new ^{er} point of view undertook these teaching jobs. Some of these created a new desire on the part of the children to learn and some even conducted adult classes in the evenings with people coming from miles away to attend ~~these~~ classes. The Indian Service Educational System continued to grow ^{many BIA schools} and in recent years the Public School System has taken over or ^{also} erected many new schools. At the suggestion of Dr. George Boyce, long in the Indian Service, dormitories were built in a number of the reservation border towns so that children from 12 years up could go to the public schools in these towns. X

So to-day there are hundreds of eager children soaking up everything they can learn, like little dry sponges. Some are still shy and diffident, but most are absorbing their school work ^{with unusual} ~~and eager~~ ^{rapidity}, and many go on into ^{many} ~~into~~ fields of advanced learning.