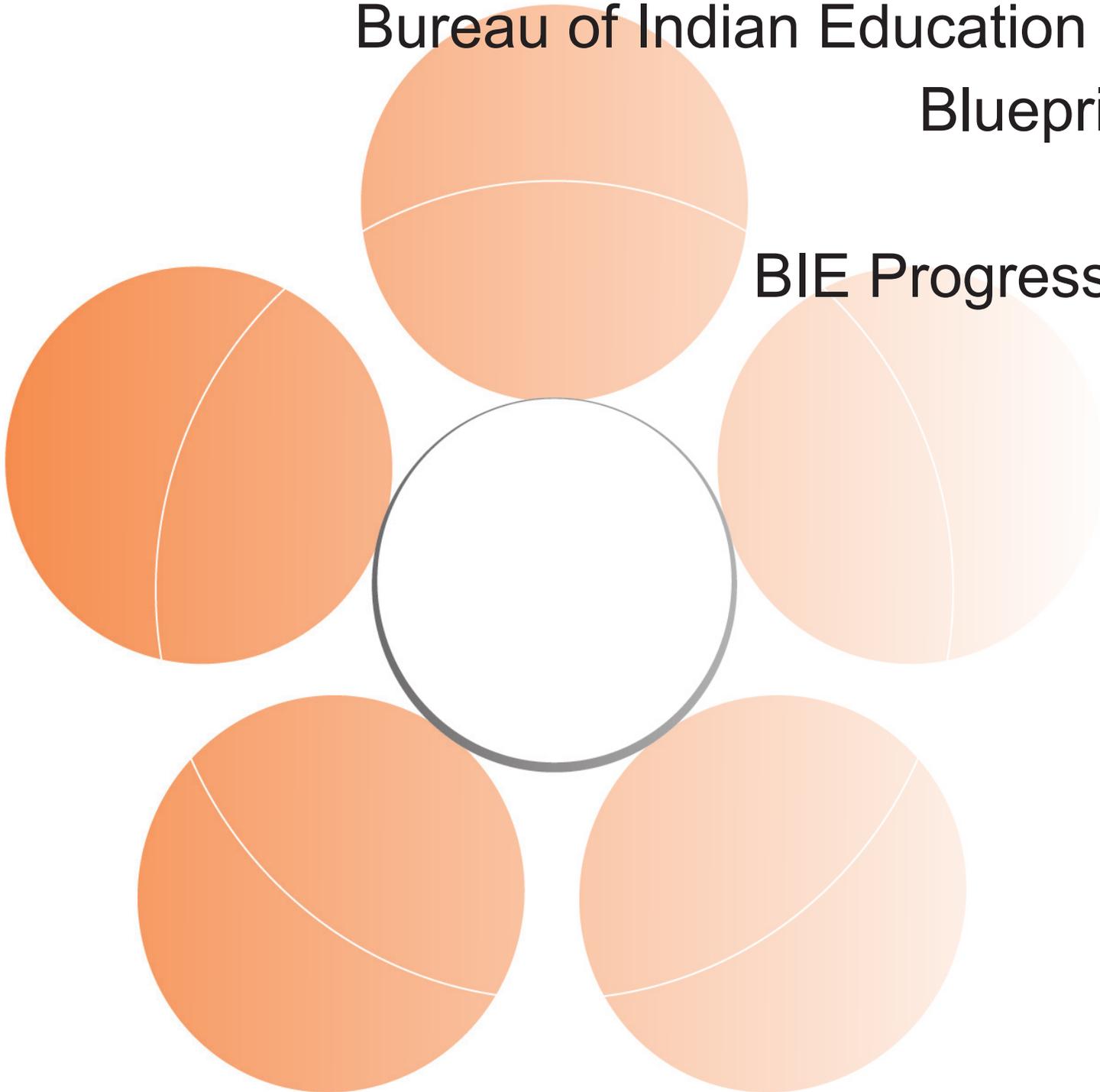


Bureau of Indian Education Study Group: Blueprint for Reform

BIE Progress Report 2015



Purpose

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is pleased participate in this opportunity to support a gathering of American Indian students and the Obama Administration’s Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative, during the first ever White House Tribal Youth Gathering in Washington, D.C. on July 9, 2015, by providing an update on recent efforts. This Progress Report (Report) provides a summary of the Bureau of Indian Education’s (BIE’s) work on the five goals published in the BIE Blueprint for Reform (Blueprint) and other efforts to provide a high-quality, culturally relevant education to students in BIE funded schools. This occasion also provides a timely juncture to take stock of progress and plan next steps one year after President Obama made his historic trip to Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Nation in Cannonball, North Dakota, on June 13, 2014, and the same day the Secretary of the Department of the Interior Sally Jewell released the Blueprint. Importantly, this report also serves as a reminder of the distance we have yet to travel to address the serious challenges that lie ahead in providing a world-class education to American Indian students attending BIE-funded schools.

The following information is included in this report:

- Introduction.....3
- About the Schools.....4
- History of Federal Indian Education.....5
- An Urgent Case for Reform.....5
- Tribal and Other Stakeholder Engagement.....6
- A Federal and Tribal Vision: A World-Class Instruction
for All BIE Students Delivered by Tribes.....7
- Timeline of Tribal and Other Stakeholder Engagement.....8
- Pillar One: Educational Self-Determination for Tribes.....9
- Pillar Two: Align Budget to Support New Priorities.....13
- Pillar Three: Highly Effective Teachers and Principals.....16
- Pillar Four: Agile Organizational Environment.....18
- Pillar Five: Comprehensive Support through Partnerships.....21
- Moving Forward.....23

In September 2013, Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell and Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, appointed the BIE Study Group (Study Group) to diagnose the educational conditions that contribute to academic challenges in BIE-funded schools and recommend progressive strategies for tackling these complex issues. The Study Group combined management, legal, education, and tribal expertise to ground their recommendations in a comprehensive, institutional understanding of American Indian affairs, how schools work, and how effective teaching and learning occur.

The DOI has a longstanding and troubling history of failing to provide a high-quality education to American Indian students in BIE-funded schools. Persistently low academic achievement, concentrated poverty, historical trauma and cultural devastation have taken a tragic toll on American Indian youth. For decades, our Nation has witnessed far too many promising American Indian youth who faced extreme barriers to realizing their full potential and achieving their aspirations. Unwilling to accept the status quo, Secretary Jewell and Secretary Duncan, made a commitment to change the trajectory for students attending these schools today and for future generations of students.

The Study Group obtained a first-hand perspective of the issues by visiting schools and meeting with tribal leaders, school boards, educators, parents and other stakeholders from numerous tribes across the country. The impact was seen first-hand of our failing education system in Indian Country: high rates of unemployment, lack of technology, aging school structures, difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers, inadequate socio-emotional support networks, and an out-of-sync curriculum – not tailored to tribal needs or 21st century learning. Yet, amidst these challenges, many promising signs of change were seen, growing from grassroots solutions and best practices that can be scaled up to other schools.

Recommendations, published in the Blueprint, are focused in five core areas that bring together the evidence and expertise from the reviews, analysis, tribal consultations, tribal listening sessions, visits, and research. The Blueprint contains no directives or mandates nor is it an all-inclusive, unalterable set of recommendations that impose a one-size fits all reform strategy upon all of our schools. Rather, it provides a flexible framework for tribal education agencies, school boards and school officials, educators and others so that the BIE and tribal nations can provide a culturally rich and academically rigorous education to American Indian students.



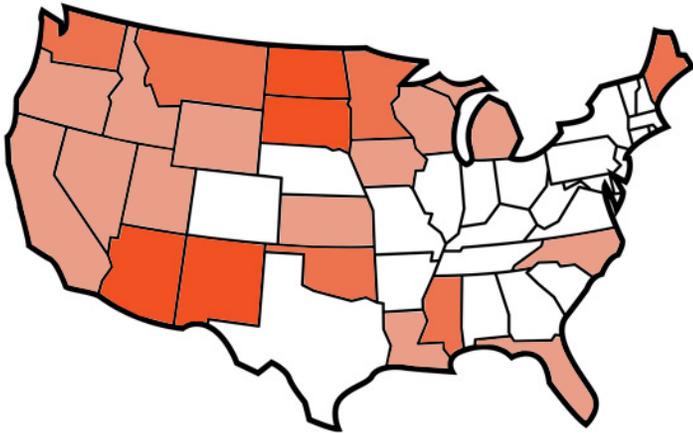
Let's put our minds together to improve our schools -- because our children deserve a world-class education, too, that prepares them for college and careers. And that means returning control of Indian education to tribal nations with additional resources and support so that you can direct your children's education and reform schools here in Indian Country. And even as they prepare for a global economy, we want children, like these wonderful young children here, learning about their language and learning about their culture, just like the boys and girls do at Lakota Language Nest here at Standing Rock. We want to make sure that continues and we build on that success.

—President Barack Obama

Tribal nations and school leaders must determine whether a particular recommendation or initiative is relevant for their situation, whether a particular recommendation can or should be customized to fit their unique needs, whether there is a core area that should be added for further research, or whether the Department should formulate other recommendations.

Most importantly, the Blueprint is a call to action and collective resolve, to fulfill our responsibility -- to become the champions for our students and deliver the education that our American Indian youth need and deserve. It will take the collective leadership, partnership, honesty and untiring efforts of everyone involved to write this new chapter in the BIE's story for students attending our schools. As work is continued together, we remain inspired by the dignity, strength, pride and resolve in the tribal communities to do whatever it takes to give their children the education system they need and deserve.

About the Schools



BIE-funded schools, both tribally- and federally-controlled, are located in 23 states: Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, and South Dakota have the highest number of BIE-funded schools; Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, and Washington have mid-range amount of BIE-funded schools; California, Florida, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming have at least one BIE-funded school.

The BIE's mission, as described in Title 25 CFR Part 32.3, is to provide high quality education opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a tribe's needs for cultural and economic well-being. In performing this mission, the BIE takes into account the spiritual, mental, physical, and cultural aspects of school-aged children within their family and tribal community. The BIE, under the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, in the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), is headed by a Director, who ensures the mission is achieved.

There are 183 BIE-funded schools, located on 64 reservations in 23 states, serving approximately 48,000 American Indian students. Of these, 126 are tribally-controlled under Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638) contracts or Tribally Controlled Schools Act (P.L. 100-297) grants, and 57 are Federal schools operated by the BIE. BIE funds or operates off-reservation boarding schools and peripheral dormitories near reservations for students attending public schools, and oversees two postsecondary schools: Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute.

History of Federal Indian Education

As discussed in the White House 2014 Native Youth Report, the BIE is the legacy of the Indian boarding schools established by the Department of War in the mid-19th century. The Federal Government created the boarding schools as part of a larger assimilation policy that sought to eradicate Native cultures and languages. Many of the children who attended government-run boarding schools were taken forcibly from their homes and sent to schools hundreds or thousands of miles away separating them from their families and cultures. After decades of debate beginning in the early 1920s, all of these past failed tribal education policies began to end during the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty with the first tribally controlled school in 1966, and finally ended under the Nixon Administration in 1975 when Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. Although the Federal assimilation policy ended decades ago, BIE schools – still funded and many still operated by the Federal Government – have produced many American Indian students who are poorly educated, unable to compete for jobs, and have lost their connection to their culture, language and heritage.



So given this history, we shouldn't be surprised at the challenges that kids in Indian Country are facing today. And we should never forget that we played a role in this. Make no mistake about it – we own this. And we can't just invest a million here and a million there, or come up with some five year or ten-year plan and think we're going to make a real impact. This is truly about nation-building, and it will require fresh thinking and a massive infusion of resources over generations. That's right, not just years, but generations.

—First Lady Michelle Obama

An Urgent Case for Reform

As documented in the Blueprint, the BIE has never faced more urgent challenges. These challenges include difficulty in attracting effective teachers to BIE schools located in remote locations, achieving compliance with academic standards in 23 different states, promoting research-based reforms in tribally controlled schools, resource constraints, and institutional and budgetary fragmentation. Both a lack of consistent leadership and strategy, and an inconsistent commitment, has hampered the BIE's ability to improve its services.

In addition to institutional challenges, the communities in which BIE students reside are more likely to have concentrated poverty coupled with geographic isolation, where the need for cultural and language preservation is immense. BIE students perform at much lower levels than American Indian students attending public schools, those attending Department of Defense schools, and those attending schools with high minority populations.



Education is how we lift people from poverty to a bright future... The only way to lift people out of poverty is to give them an education that honors their culture, their identity, and who they are as human beings.

—Secretary Sally Jewell, Department of the Interior

These challenges also contribute to the difficulty BIE leadership has in delivering the resources and support tribes need for their schools to be more successful. However, despite these challenging circumstances the students are incredibly resilient and have an amazing drive to succeed.

The Obama Administration is determined to address this stain on our Nation's history by transforming the BIE into an organization dedicated to supporting each tribe's capacity to educate future generations of students who are prepared for college and careers, and know and value their heritage. Over the past few decades, operation of Federal Indian education has been transferred to tribes in approximately two-thirds of BIE schools. The BIE has not been re-structured to reflect these changes and recognize its new primary role of supporting tribal education programs rather than being the primary provider of Indian education. The BIE will transform from a school administrator into a capacity builder and service provider to support tribes in educating their children and youth. The new relationship with tribes will support promoting and sustaining prosperous and resilient tribal communities in a coordinated and effective manner so tribes have the ability themselves to provide an academically rigorous and culturally relevant education to their students, according to their needs.

Tribal and Other Stakeholder Engagement

Based on extensive listening sessions in the fall of 2013 with tribal leaders, educators, and community members across Indian Country, and analysis of a wide range of primary and secondary data, the Study Group proposed to tribal leaders a restructured BIE outlined in a draft of the Blueprint. The proposed restructured BIE reflects an evolution from a direct education provider to an expert service and support provider, which promotes self-governance and self-determination through tribal operation of schools. The Study Group began conducting tribal consultations on the draft Blueprint beginning in April 2014, revised the Blueprint to reflect concerns from tribal leaders and other stakeholders, and then released a revised version on June 13, 2014, the same day President Obama visited the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Since that day, the Study Group, BIE and DOI senior officials have continued to engage Indian Country, undertaking well over 30 visits or other engagements with students, school administrators, tribal leaders, communities, employees and many other stakeholders. Secretary Jewell has visited more than a dozen schools during her tenure as the Interior Secretary thus far. In addition, Director Charles (Monty) Roessel and the Study Group have had dozens of face-to-face conversations with tribal leaders regarding implementation of the Blueprint and have adjusted implementation plans to meet the unique needs of each tribe that has BIE-funded schools.

The BIE developed and implemented a communication plan which focuses on information, transparency and access. The BIE issues bi-monthly newsletters, developed an informational webinar series and heightened its presence on social media. In November of 2014, BIE began regional calls for employees of all BIE-funded schools and has also established monthly stakeholder calls held on the first Tuesday of each month beginning in April 2015, as a part of its effort to improve communication and create an ongoing dialogue between DOI senior leaders, tribal leaders and key stakeholders regarding BIE reform efforts. All of these provide a clear pipeline of information on current activities and news between BIE leadership in Washington, D.C., and the field, as well as provide the opportunity for stakeholders across the nation to ask questions and receive answers directly.

A Federal and Tribal Vision: A World-Class Instruction for All BIE Students Delivered by Tribes

To ensure that all BIE students are well-prepared for college, careers, and tribal citizenship, the federal government and tribal nations must partner with one another. Together, we envision a BIE that moves away from a “command and control” regime and instead helps provide the services, resources, and technical assistance that tribes need in order to directly operate high-achieving schools. This restructured BIE will result in schools that can adequately prepare their students for college and the workforce and provide a culturally relevant curriculum by focusing on five areas of reform. These reform areas are structured in a five pillar framework that will steadily guide the transformation of BIE to become a champion of quality educational opportunities for all Native American children:

- Self-Determination for Tribal Nations;
- Effective Teachers and Principals;
- Agile Organizational Environment;
- Comprehensive Supports through Partnerships; and
- Aligned Budget to Support New Priorities.

DOI has begun implementation of the reforms recommended in the Blueprint, including support to build the capacity of tribal education departments, the provision of high quality professional development to teachers in BIE-funded schools, the design of BIE’s school operations division and technical assistance centers, new partnerships and funding increases. Throughout this process, BIE has regularly engaged tribal leadership and adapted strategies to better suit tribal priorities. Critically, all of the reforms underway are voluntary ones – in other words, DOI will not impose any of the reforms on any tribally controlled school.



Pillar One: Educational Self-Determination for Tribes

The Blueprint is founded on the recognition that tribal nations understand the unique needs of their communities and schools better than federal officials in Washington, D.C. The BIE will strengthen and support the efforts of tribal nations to exercise self-determination. The BIE will fully maintain its trust and treaty responsibilities by providing necessary support to schools so they can meet the demands of 21st century teaching and learning, but also build the capacity of tribal education departments (TEDs) to tribally manage their own BIE-funded school systems.

Blueprint's Key Recommendations:

- Encourage and support tribal governments in their efforts to tribally manage BIE-funded schools, such as providing full funding for contract and grant support costs and addressing facility needs;
- Clarify the maximum amount of discretion that tribally controlled schools have to teach Native languages, cultures, and histories to their students;
- Provide technical assistance on how curriculum regarding Native languages, histories, and cultures can be aligned to the Common Core State Standards; and
- Provide customized technical assistance, when requested, through School Support Solutions Teams to support tribes when tribes request assistance regarding resources or support for improving school operational practices at BIE-funded schools.
- Encourage tribes to explore the possibility of developing its own Alternative Definition of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Pillar One: Progress

Clearly communicated during the tribal consultations and other stakeholder engagement was the need for support and technical assistance for tribes and schools to begin developing and implementing their own plans. Therefore DOI has taken several steps to provide information and opportunities early in the process of accomplishing these recommendations.

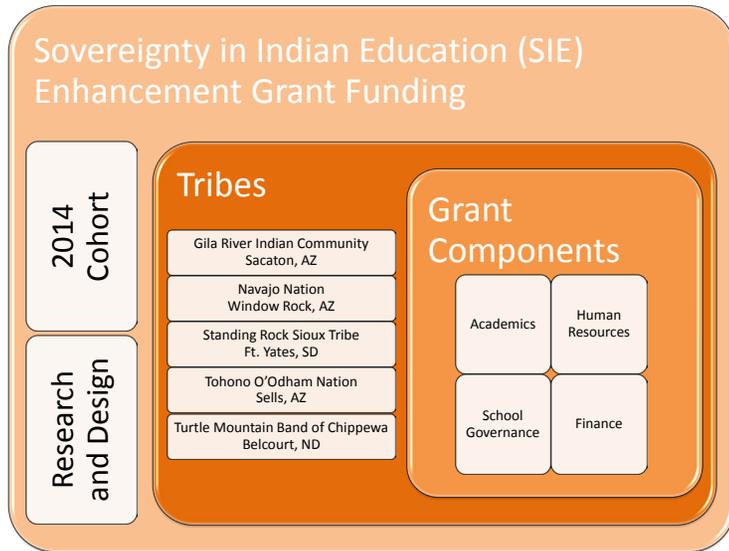
- DOI awarded \$1.2 million in Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) enhancement grant funding to federally recognized tribes and their TEDs to promote tribal control and operation of BIE-funded schools on July 23, 2014. Funds were provided to five tribal governments and used to support the development of a tribal school reform plan with the goals of improved educational outcomes for students and improved efficiencies and effectiveness in operating the schools. Initial training was provided to the



...we've been doing this exercise of white man's education for many years, we have a lot of accomplished relatives who have earned their degrees of higher education but it's our non-Indian friends' education because it came from Europe. It didn't come from our communities.

— Jesse Taken Alive, Elder
Standing Rock Sioux Reservation

Pillar One: Progress (continued)



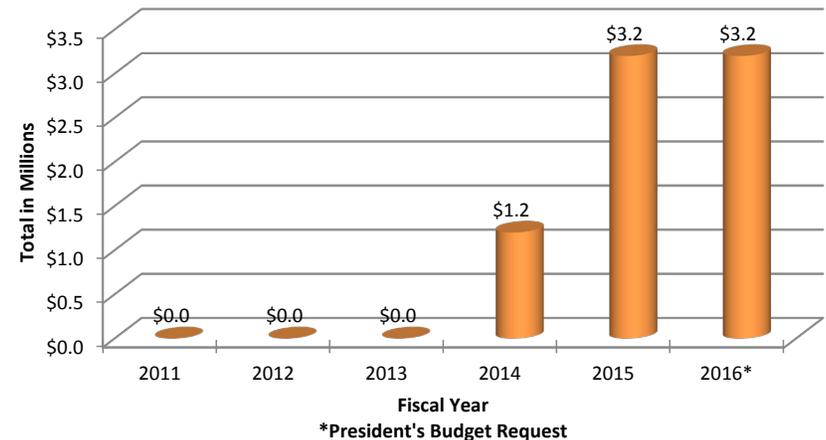
five tribes on November 14, 2014. These five tribes have been working together as a cohort, building a collaborative network to support tribal control, stronger partnerships with BIE-funded schools, and sharing best practices with one another. These tribes will present the findings of their feasibility plans to one another and DOI on August 21, 2015.

- On October 31, 2014, in response to questions from principals and school board members at BIE-funded schools regarding restrictions on the use of federal education funds. ED issued spending guidance to BIE-funded grant schools that provided technical assistance to grant schools about how Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funds may be spent, outlined ways to maximize the effectiveness of certain grants by identifying resources and flexibilities, and encouraged BIE-funded schools to spend funds so that students receive needed services. With support from the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), ED and DOI provided a webinar explaining this guidance in greater detail to stakeholders in addition to direct training to BIE-funded schools.
- A series of webinars for BIE staff, specific to topics that were requested through stakeholder consultation were developed and scheduled beginning 2015. These first webinars are always accessible on BIE's website and include:
 - Safety and Risk Management
 - Calculating Administrative Support Cost
 - Calculating the Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP) Funding and Formula
 - BIE Tribal Education Department Pre-Grant Application Webinar
 - BIE Basics: Introduction to the BIE's Budget Process
 - Suicide Prevention Training for BIE Schools
 - Application Process for the School Replacement and Renovation Program: What this means for your school
 - Understanding Operations and Maintenance From Funding Contacts and Reporting
 - BIE Facilities Management Orientation
 - BIE O&M Formula Presentation
 - Facilities O&M Funding Formula Development and Review Schedule for FY2016
 - BIE Operated Conversion to Grant Conversion
 - Overview of P.L. 100.297 Tribally Controlled Schools Act

Pillar One: Progress (continued)

- On May 15, 2015, DOI announced that it would provide \$1.45 million in new funding that the BIE received from its partners in Congress in its FY15 budget, to TEDs for projects defined by 25 U.S.C. § 2020. This funding will further DOI's efforts to build the capacity of tribal nations by:
 - Providing for the development and enforcement of tribal educational codes, including tribal educational policies and tribal standards applicable to curriculum, personnel, students, facilities, and support programs;
 - Facilitating tribal control in all matters relating to the education of Indian children on tribally controlled lands; and
 - Providing for the development of coordinated educational programs on tribally controlled lands by encouraging administrative support of all BIE-funded educational programs and encouraging tribal cooperation and coordination with entities carrying out all educational programs receiving financial support from other Federal agencies, State agencies, or private entities.
- On June 15, 2015, DOI received nine applications and in July announced awards to the following tribes:
 - Hopi Tribe
 - Navajo Nation
 - Oglala Sioux Tribe
 - Pueblo of Acoma
 - Pueblo of Santa Clara
 - Rosebud Sioux Tribe
 - Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
- The BIE held its first Native Language Summit for BIE-funded schools in November 2014, where schools and tribes came together to draft a policy statement requesting BIE to assist in providing Native language guidance to all BIE-funded schools. After the Summit, the BIE used the feedback it received to develop a Native language policy framework for BIE-funded schools, which is also available on BIE's website. The policy framework ensures that BIE supports, promotes, and requires the teaching of Native languages, with an emphasis on building fluency.

**BIE: Tribal Education Departments
Funding By DOI (All Sources)**



Pillar One: Progress (continued)



Miccosukee Indian School signing of alternative definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP) on June 1, 2015, in Washington, D.C. From left: Secretary Jewell, DOI; Principal Manuel Valera, Miccosukee Indian School; Chairman Colley Billie, Miccosukee Tribe; Secretary Arne Duncan, ED.

- Working in close coordination with ED, provided technical assistance, review and approval of the Miccosukee Indian School’s alternative definition of AYP under the ESEA. The first phase of Miccosukee Tribe’s proposed alternative definition was the first granted by ED and DOI, and was approved by the Secretaries of the Interior and Education in May 2015. While the federal government has provided similar waivers to many states and school districts, the Miccosukee Indian School is the first BIE-funded school to receive one. The waiver permits the tribe to set its own definition of AYP for guiding and measuring student’s academic progress instead of being bound by the state-adopted standards and assessments specified by the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Their plan will support culturally-relevant strategies to improve college- and career-readiness for Native children and youth. The tribe has committed to maintaining college and career ready standards in language arts, math, and science achievement, and to cutting the achievement gap in half over the next six years. Since the Miccosukee received its waiver, several other tribes with BIE-funded schools have expressed interest in following Miccosukee’s example.

Pillar One: Next Steps

- Continue implementation of existing SIE enhancement grants, and provide this funding opportunity to tribes and their TEDs again in SY2015-16. Best practices from these projects will provide a foundation for possible future funding opportunities for tribes not previously awarded.
- Begin implementation of first cohort of grantees receiving funding under BIE’s Tribal Education Departments grant program.
- Provide technical assistance to tribal governments with BIE-funded schools that seek to develop their own alternative definition of AYP.
- Collaborate with tribes and schools to develop targeted delivery of technical assistance in the area of Native language program development.

Pillar Two: Align Budget to Support New Priorities

In order to properly serve tribally controlled schools, the Blueprint recommended that the BIE's budget be aligned with its new priorities as identified in the core areas of reform discussed above. There are some budget supports that cut across all four circles – e.g., investments in IT infrastructure and 21st Century teaching and learning environments – and others that are specific to particular circles of reform.

Blueprint's Key Recommendations:

- Invest in Infrastructure to Improve Teaching and Learning
- Align Budget to Support Self-Determination
- Align Budget to Support Effective Teachers and Principals
- Align Budget to Create an Agile Organizational Structure



Native youth are in a state of crisis. That lack of opportunity is simply unacceptable.

—Secretary Arne Duncan, Department of Education

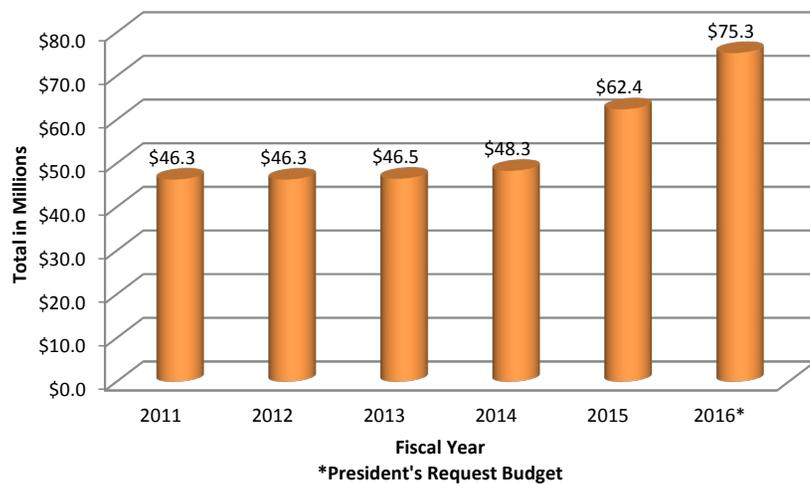
Pillar Two: Progress

As this is the underlying support for implementing recommendations for reform, a focus on opportunities was immediately undertaken. The progress achieved over the past year will pave the pathway forward for future budget development.

- In the FY 2015 omnibus spending bill, Congress demonstrated support for restructuring the BIE by increasing the BIE's budget in the following ways:
 - An increase \$19.2 million over FY 2014 funding levels to replace the Beatrice Rafferty School in Maine and fund the planning and design costs for the final two schools on the 2004 school replacement priority list, Cove Day School and Little Singer School in Arizona.
 - An additional \$14.1 million for Tribal Grant Support Costs over FY 2014 levels that increases the percentage of administrative cost grants paid to tribally controlled grant schools from 68 percent to 87 percent of the calculated need.
 - An increase of \$2 million under 25 U.S.C. § 2020 to assist tribes in the development and operation of TEDs for the purpose of planning and coordinating all educational programs of the tribe and support the development of TEDs to improve educational outcomes for students and improve efficiencies and effectiveness in the operation of BIE-funded schools.

Pillar Two: Progress (continued)

BIE: Tribal Grant Support Costs Funding

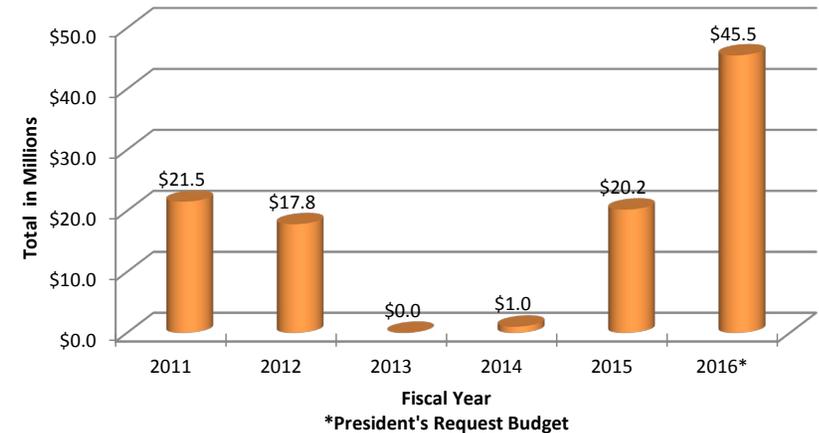


- An increase of \$1.7 million for science postgraduate scholarships to fund fellowship and training opportunities in science fields that will help provide tribal citizens the skills they need to be successful and overcome barriers to higher education.
- FY 2016 President's Budget Request. The President's FY 2016 budget proposes a \$1.0 billion investment in Indian education at BIE-funded school with increases totaling nearly \$140M for BIE educational programs, operations, and facilities construction. It includes:
 - increases of \$80 million for programs that improve school operations, increase opportunities for American Indian youth, and improve outcomes in the classroom:
 - an increase \$10 million to fund programs of critical importance to tribes, including funding \$3 million to pay for native language immersion programs;
 - an increase of \$20 million for school facilities operations and maintenance;
 - an increase of \$12.9 million to fund 100 percent of administrative costs for BIE-funded schools operated by tribes or local school boards;
 - an increase of \$3 million to strengthen delivery of services to schools and enrich instructional services and teacher quality; and
 - an increase \$34 million to bring broadband and digital access to all BIE-funded schools.
 - increases totaling \$59 million to repair and rebuild BIE-funded schools to improve the educational environment, including enough funding to pay for the construction for Cove Day School and Little Singer School in Arizona and \$11.9 million to replace individual buildings on a larger campus.
 - and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has included funding in FY 2016 budget to repair housing for teachers working at BIE-funded schools.

Pillar Two: Progress (continued)

- Following a process prescribed by a negotiated rulemaking committee in 2011, DOI released an initial list of 78 BIE-funded schools that will be eligible to make a final school construction priority list that will be published later this year. DOI applied the following school replacement criteria to develop the initial list of eligible BIE-funded schools: (1) the overall Facilities Condition Index (FCI) of “poor,” based on data in the Facility Management Information System (FMIS); or (2) schools that are both 50 years or older and educating 75 percent or more of students in portables. The next step in the process requires that eligible schools submit an application to describe their particular circumstances and needs. Schools that fail to apply will not be included on the final list for replacement.

BIE: Replacement School Construction Funding



Pillar Two: Next Steps

- Continue dialogue with tribal leaders and other BIE stakeholders regarding changing budget priorities.
- Develop a FY 2017 budget that continues to be aligned with the priorities in the Blueprint.
- Develop a long-term school construction funding plan that will address the needs of all BIE-funded schools determined to be in ‘poor’ condition.

Pillar Three: Highly Effective Teachers and Principals



We have much work to do, but we are more determined than ever to work with Congress and tribal communities to reach our shared goal of improving educational outcomes for American Indian children.

—Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn

As stated in the Blueprint, while research has suggested many ways to improve a school system's outcomes for students, three factors matter most: (1) hiring effective teachers and principals; (2) developing teachers and principals continuously; and (3) providing targeted support to ensure every child can benefit from high-quality instruction. Accordingly, BIE is focusing on helping tribes to identify, recruit, develop, retain, and empower diverse, highly effective teachers and principals to maximize the highest achievement for every student in all BIE-funded schools.

Blueprint's Key Recommendations:

- Improve BIE's existing internal capacity to provide technical assistance to tribes around professional development, modeling, coaching, and the monitoring and evaluating process;
- Upgrade the skills of existing teachers by providing incentives for instructional staff to voluntarily enroll in the National Board Certification program and professional development process;
- Improve BIE's ability to help tribes develop and resource talent management and acquisition programs within tribal educational agencies;
- Create new, high quality teacher pipelines from colleges, including tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), to BIE schools by providing TCUs with support to improve and expand effective teacher education programs;
- Provide incentives to recruit effective teachers and principals (e.g., allow schools to spend funding on teacher housing, providing housing stipends, loan forgiveness, and educational benefits); and
- Ensure appropriate reward and remuneration structure for teachers and principals.

Pillar Three: Progress

Beginning with further analysis of the characteristics of the current environment aided in identifying resources to support these recommendations, and also revealed additional opportunities for improvement.

- Teacher recruitment is a challenge for BIE-funded schools, DOI has focused on providing high quality professional development to our existing workforce. The Department has entered into a partnership with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) to provide high-quality professional development to all interested teachers. Over 250 teachers voluntarily registered for Component I of of the National Board Certification (NBC). NBC is the highest teaching credential a teacher can receive beyond state licensure, and is based on rigorous and peer-reviewed standards and performance.

Pillar Three: Progress (continued)

NBC teachers (NBCTs) often extend their impact in a role as instructional leaders in their schools and communities by providing support and resources necessary to help colleagues in their schools improve. Independent studies provide evidence that, on average, the students of NBCTs learn more than students in other classrooms. In support of the partnership, monetary bonuses and salary increases will be provided for both BIE operated and tribally controlled schools.

- Developed a process of Instructional Rounds that targets Problems of Practice to drive professional development on specific needs of individual schools. The model is currently being used in Navajo schools and will be scaled accordingly.
- The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management (DASM) has detailed 22 human resource staff members to the BIE. This staff will help to ensure that hiring for teachers at BIE-operated schools will be done in a timely manner and aligned with the SY2015-16 calendar.
- BIE has improved its communication efforts to teachers and principals at all BIE-funded schools by expanding its web presence and making utilizing social media more effectively. For instance, BIE is now publishing a bi-monthly newsletter that includes critical announcements and opportunities for teachers and principals at all BIE-funded schools and also posting similar information on its Facebook page. Teachers and principals can find up-to-date information there.
- Customized technical assistance for BIE Principals and Educational Resource Centers (ERC) staff on school improvement and school turnaround in September 2014 provided by key educational experts obtained specifically to focus on audience needs.
- Received funding from the Kellogg Foundation to train the School Improvement Specialists in an in-depth 6 month long period that will provide support to principals and teachers in BIE-funded schools. This staff will in turn provide training to the supported principals and teachers, as the part of their regular duties as the core of School Support Solutions Teams.

Pillar Three: Next Steps

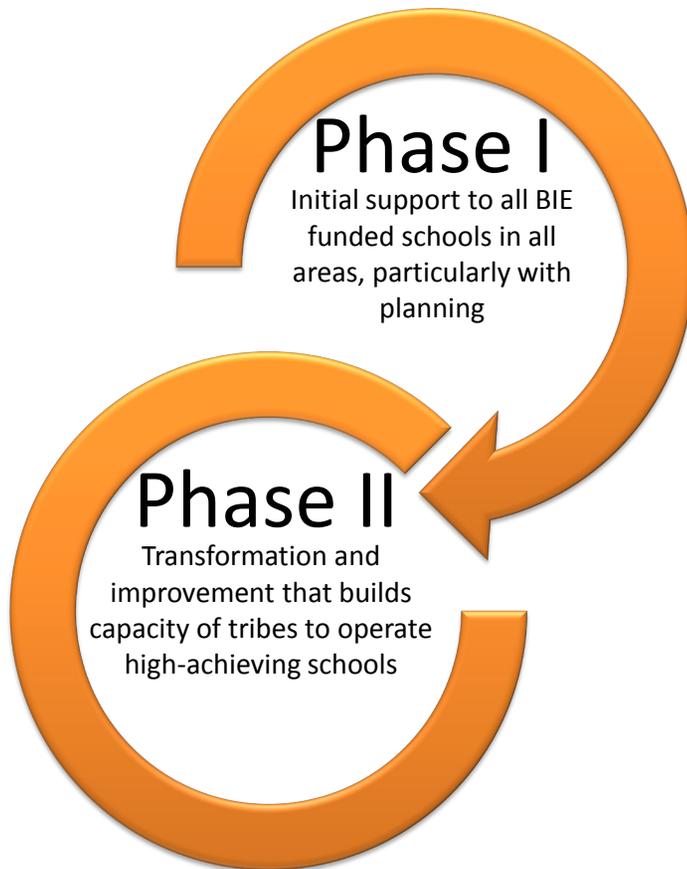
- Continue to implement partnership with the NBPTS for the first cohort of BIE teachers through all four components. NBPTS and the BIE will announce an opportunity to register for a second cohort in conjunction with the NBC class schedule. Based upon interest and subject to appropriation, subsequent cohorts of BIE teachers will be announced on an on-going basis to gain 1,000 NBC educators in all BIE-funded schools by 2017.
- Develop and implement an induction program for new teachers and principals.
- Hire a teacher recruiter to help make teacher hiring a core priority. The recruiter will focus on improve recruiting and hiring processes, so schools can fill their vacancies earlier and draw from a larger pool of candidates.



We want to go forward, believe me... We're talking about doing things new. How about doing something, you know, a little bit challenging, a little different.

—Hank Edmo-McArthur, Facilities Manager
Shoshone Bannock Junior/Senior High School

Pillar Four: Agile Organizational Environment



The fourth area of reform focuses on improving how the BIE delivers operational services to BIE-funded schools. Research shows that management redesign that co-locates decision-making authority and reduces bureaucracy can enable low-performing school systems to leverage resources and talents to raise student academic performance and allow principals to focus on their primary mission of instructional leadership. The BIE's goal is to be a more responsive organization that provides resources, direction, and services to tribes so that they can help their students attain high levels of achievement.

Blueprint's Key Recommendations:

- Restructure Indian Affairs to improve the delivery of operational services to BIE-funded schools;
- Support BIE-funded schools to develop and resource or improve their own talent management, logistics, and information technology divisions;
- Offer tribes financial management and budget execution guidance and training;
- Provide customized technical assistance to enable tribal educational agencies to perform LEA-like functions to manage their schools;
- Assist tribes by training human resource staff at tribal schools and recruiting highly effective teachers and principals through the use of effective marketing and through the use of national connections and the development of a database;
- Develop a toolbox of interventions to meet and/or customize to the needs of schools in varying states of performance;
- Share best practices and research in teaching, learning, and leading schools (e.g., effective interventions to improve student achievement and reduce the achievement gap); and
- Provide training to school boards.

Pillar Four: Progress

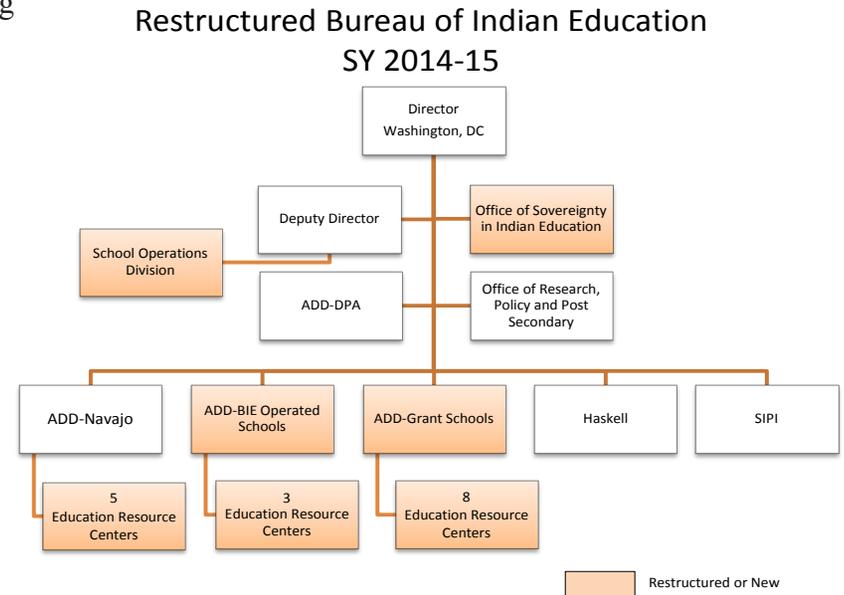
While supporting tribes in educational self-determination, the need to support the schools in providing services at the same time is necessary and continuous. Recommendations in this area necessitate restructuring while continuing operations, therefore the achievements in this area are conducted with deliberation and consultation.

- In response to recommendations contained in the Blueprint, Secretary Jewell issued Secretarial Order 3334 on June 13, 2014 authorizing Indian Affairs to begin the process of implementing reforms by restructuring the BIE into an innovative organization that will improve operations for all BIE-funded schools. The Secretarial Order

Pillar Four: Progress (continued)

outlines a phased process to restructure and redesign the BIE over the SY2014-15 and SY2015-2016 school. The first phase of the process focuses on improving the responsiveness of operational support to schools.

- Indian Affairs completed a functional analysis of existing BIE-wide conditions and has developed a proposal for a preliminary design to improve service delivery through a Division of School Operations (DSO) within the BIE that will address concerns raised by tribal leaders and other BIE stakeholders regarding poor operational and administrative services provided to schools. The proposed improvement will be under the direction of the new Deputy Director for School Operations, where the DSO will focus on improving how teachers, principals and other skilled staff are recruited, processing acquisition and grant requests more expeditiously, and ensuring that school facilities and IT requests are processed in a timely manner.
- The BIE has proposed a detailed plan, developed in consultations with tribal governments, to realign the BIE's administrative structure and transform its Education Line Offices (ELOs) into Education Resource Centers (ERCs). The proposed plan would ensure support services are moved closer to BIE-funded schools. The BIE has proposed the realignment of two of the Associate Deputy Directors (ADDs) that oversee all BIE-funded schools by function rather than geography. Specifically, there will be an ADD for tribally controlled schools and ADD for BIE-operated schools. This new organization takes into account the understanding that the relationship between an ADD and a tribally controlled school and an ADD and a BIE-operated school is fundamentally different, requiring a different set of skills.
- The restructuring will also redesign the BIE's Division of Performance and Accountability (DPA). ED and the BIE invited accomplished practitioners, leading experts and organizational leaders for a day and half long facilitated workshop to redesign the BIE. The working group identified key issues and proposed a plan that would transform the DPA from a monitoring and compliance-focused organization to one that would focus on the improved delivery of technical assistance, resources and support to BIE-schools. Furthermore, the restructuring envisions decentralizing DPA and moving staff from Albuquerque to the ERCs in order to have staff closer to schools.



Pillar Four: Progress (continued)



- The restructuring will also redesign the BIE’s Division of Performance and Accountability. ED and the BIE invited accomplished practitioners, leading experts and organizational leaders for a day and half long facilitated workshop to redesign the BIE. The working group identified key issues and proposed a plan that would restructure the DPA from a monitoring and compliance-focused organization to one that would focus on the improved delivery of technical assistance, resources and support to BIE-schools. Furthermore, the restructuring envisions decentralizing DPA and moving staff from Albuquerque to the ERCs in order to have staff closer to schools.

Changes that will be most beneficial for our children should be the number one concern. It’s not about me as a person, not about the school board, not about the tribal leader, but for the children.

Dr. Tommy Lewis, Jr., Superintendent of Schools
Department of Diné Education

Pillar Four: Next Steps

- Meet Congressional requirements regarding proposed restructuring, and once completed, aggressively seek reprogramming approval from the Hill. Once the DOI’s reprogramming request is approved, aggressively recruit and fill vacancies for the school solutions teams housed within the ERCs.
- Establish an Office of Sovereignty in Indian Education to support tribal sovereignty by building the capacity of tribes to operate high performing schools, allowing tribes to shape what their children learn about their tribes, language and culture and helping interested tribal nations seek approval of an alternative definition of AYP.
- Undertake and administrative review by Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to assess BIE’s strengths and weaknesses as it undertakes reform efforts outlined. This is scheduled for August 13, 2015.
- Finalize and implement plans for the Division of School Operations.
- Broaden scope of improved recruitment and hiring recommendation, to also assist tribes by promoting sustainable and robust investments in school operations and maintenance through the development and retention of a skilled facilities management workforce.

Pillar Five: Comprehensive Support through Partnerships

Students attending BIE-funded schools, and American Indian students generally, face a multitude of challenges, including emotional trauma and depression due to numerous environmental factors such as high unemployment, rampant crime, substance abuse, and poor health outcomes. In order to address the unique needs of this student population, this fourth core area of reform focuses on providing comprehensive supports to students attending BIE-funded schools so they can come to class ready to learn. Facilitating public and private partnerships between tribes and local, regional, and national organizations will ensure that BIE-funded schools have the opportunity to benefit from resources made available through these partnerships.

Blueprint's Key Recommendations:

- Create public/private partnerships by reinstating the National Foundation for American Indian Education (NFAIE), a congressionally chartered non-profit foundation with the mission of supporting BIE-funded schools;
- Coordinate with other Federal agencies so that community-based tribal grants help provide wraparound services to students attending BIE-funded schools;
- Work with Indian Health Service (IHS) to increase and institutionalize the practice of providing of school-based services to ensure that students are ready to learn and can focus (e.g., provision of immunizations in time for start of school and counseling services); and
- Work with all BIE-funded schools to increase the number of applications for E-rate funding.

Pillar Five: Progress

The process of developing strong partnerships that support transformation and successful future endeavors both in the short-term and long-term began with identifying resources and resulted in several finalized opportunities, and an increase in communication with additional resources and collaborations.

- BIE expanded its partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) to help prepare and motivate students attending BIE-funded schools to graduate from high school and attend college. BIE prepared funding in July 2015 for twenty tribally controlled colleges and universities (TCUs), as well as Haskell Indian Nations University and the Southwestern Polytechnic Institute, to develop “bridge programs” with over 45 BIE-funded schools to design and implement college and



Every child can learn, and every school can succeed. We have a moral obligation to ensure that we are providing Indian Children with the quality education that they deserve. This redesign is a critical step in supporting each Tribe's capacity to educate future generations of students who are prepared for college and a career and know and value their heritage.

—BIE Director Monty Roessel

Pillar Five: Progress (continued)



Partnerships outside of DOI are with various types of organizations for the broadest range of opportunities. Entities listed above are not in a particular order.

career ready opportunities for students attending these schools. The focus of the program is on elementary, middle and high school students. The programs will be delivered on-site directly to students and help make a significant impact on academic performance and participation in and completion of higher education programs.

- In 2014, BIE became a member of the CCSSO to officially participate in networks and relationships with state educational agencies, and connect to resources, particularly in the area of standards, assessments, and technical assistance to improve consistency and connection with the nation's state assessments, opportunities, and educational leadership. For instance, with support from CCSSO, DOI procured two assessments aligned college and career ready standards used by many BIE-funded schools in spring 2014.
- Verizon conducted 10 site visits to BIE dormitory locations during 2014 in preparation for high speed internet installation to bring connectivity to more than 1,000 students who live in federally-funded dormitories while attending schools outside of their reservations. Verizon, working with Alcatel-Lucent and Cross Wireless, is in the process of wiring approximately 10 dorms with wireless broadband connectivity. In conjunction with Verizon's donation, DOI negotiated an agreement with Microsoft Corporation to provide broadband service at no cost for up to two years. The companies will provide students with a wireless device, such as a laptop or tablet, to ensure learning does not stop at the classroom door. Dormitory staff will be trained to use the devices and the wireless system. Students will receive training when they return in the fall, and will receive laptops or tablets in the first part of SY2015-16.
- DOI deployed additional staff to support the Indian Affairs' E-Rate team this past year resulting in a surge of E-Rate applications on behalf of BIE-funded schools. Specifically, Indian Affairs submitted 99 applications, an improvement of 26 applications over last year's cycle.
- In May-June 2015, Pine Ridge School, a BIE-operated school, applied for and received funding from ED's Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV) grant program. Project SERV funds short-term and long-term services for local educational agencies (LEAs) to help them recover from a violent or traumatic event in which the learning environment has been disrupted. Pine Ridge School applied for the funds following a series of American Indian youth suicides on the Pine Ridge reservation and will use the funding to hire additional counselors and social workers, implement a support alliance between students and parents, as well as a multi-faceted and holistic approach to healing based on Lakota traditional culture.

Pillar Four: Next Steps

- Continue to explore the creation of public-private partnerships for the BIE through reinstating the NFAIE, the congressionally chartered non-profit foundation with the mission of supporting BIE-funded schools.
- Identify and connect with additional public-private partnerships and resources that will help BIE achieve the goals contained in the Blueprint.



White House Council on Native American Affairs - 2014

Moving Forward

Although the BIE has taken several important steps in the right direction since the Blueprint was issued, there is still much work remaining to be done. The Blueprint is premised upon the fundamental belief that all students, including our children attending BIE-funded schools, can learn. Failure to learn is about the educational circumstances of the Indian schools, as well as leadership and commitment to change. Challenging these current educational circumstances require vision, uncompromising values, conviction, and the courage to make difficult decisions. At the same time, challenging circumstances present opportunities: an opportunity to unleash untapped potential; to be bold; to solve a problem previous generations could not tackle. For the first time, the DOI, and the Federal Government, has taken ownership of the problem and embraced this challenge. It is understood that success of American Indian students is the success of Indian country and that a high quality education is the framework for successful and sovereign nations. Further, true progress cannot be made without understanding how this system has failed and acknowledging the trauma caused before we can create the new BIE, a BIE which can provide a culturally rich and academically rigorous education to American Indian students and supports the building of tribal nations.

