



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

JAN 31 2011

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Memorandum

To: Employees, Bureau of Indian Education

From: *Acting* Director, Bureau of Indian Education *Jim Martin*

Subject: Invitation to Participate in the Presidential Challenge-Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) for Bureau of Indian Education funded schools

On February 9, 2010, First Lady Michelle Obama unveiled her 'Let's Move' initiative to combat childhood obesity. More recently, the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity issued a report to the President on "Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity within a Generation." The report highlighted what many of us have known for years about the susceptibility of American Indian and Alaska Native children to childhood obesity and related diseases, such as juvenile diabetes. Today, obesity rates in Indian Country are higher than those of any other racial or ethnic group studied. Obesity is twice as common among four year old American Indian and Alaska Native children (31percent) than among white (16 percent) or Asian (13 percent) children. This is a health and quality of life issue that cannot continue to go unaddressed. I want to invite all Bureau of Indian Education funded schools to join in the fight against childhood obesity by participating in the President's Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) Challenge, this spring. Information about the program is provided within this memorandum.

What is the President's Active Lifestyle Award (PALA)?

The PALA challenge is a six week physical fitness challenge managed by the President's Council on Physical Fitness, Sports & Nutrition. The PALA challenge is for everyone - individuals, groups, schools, families, etc. BIE funded schools will compete with each other to see who can obtain the highest number of individual PALA awards. The goal is to get 25,000 people across Indian Country to achieve PALA and support the President's 1 million participants PALA challenge (get 1 million participants by August 2012).

Bureau of Indian Education funded schools will have from **February 14, 2011 to April 9, 2011** to complete the six week PALA activities (in order to be considered for any additional honorariums). Schools unable to participate during this period will have until June 17, 2011 to complete the PALA challenge to meet the designated 1 million participants mark.

What will each participant win?

Each participant who completes the PALA challenge will receive a special presidential award certificate. The schools that coordinate special PALA challenge activities and/or have a large number of PALA challenge recipients will receive a special honorarium, public acknowledgement and/or visit from a notable athlete.

How does it work?

Every person commits to participating in some form of physical activity five days a week, for six out of eight weeks. Youth, ages 18 and under, have to complete 60 minutes of activity and adults have to complete 30 minutes of activity. At the end of eight weeks, anyone who successfully accomplishes the challenge will receive a special presidential award! To measure the *Let's Move!* in Indian Country goal of achieving 25,000 PALA completions, a special code (97158) has been set up for Indian Country PALA participants.

Next steps for schools accepting the PALA challenge

Each school that chooses to accept the PALA challenge must designate a PALA coordinator. A special training for PALA coordinators will be announced. Please submit the **name, title, email, and telephone number** of your schools PALA coordinator to letsmoveinindiancountry@doi.gov by **February 2, 2011**, in an email entitled ***PALA Coordinator for (INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL)***.

Once received, each PALA coordinator will receive additional information and materials on the BIE PALA challenge, including instructions on how to participate in upcoming PALA training opportunities.