# Bureau of Indian Education Transformation Plan



Presentation for Tribal Consultations
American Indian Education Study Group
April 28 – May 5, 2014

## LISTENING SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

## **Remote Locations**

- Unable to recruit and retain effective teachers and principals due to remote locations of schools
- Geographic distance between schools and administrative offices hinders BIE and BIA's ability to provide services to schools in cost-efficient manner
- Some communities among poorest in nation
- Lacks access to IT infrastructure necessary to meet demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning

# **Crushing Bureaucracy**

- Uncoordinated and often duplicative requests for data sap instructional time from principals and teachers
- Principals unable to focus on instructional leadership due to complexity of navigating bureaucracy of BIE, BIA and DAS-M offices
- Lack of coordination and communication between Bureaus, offices within Bureaus, and schools resulting in haphazard planning and operation

# Lack of Support

- Bureaucrats fail to provide services tailored to meet unique needs of schools and students
- BIE issues dictates rather than provide supports necessary for principals and teachers to do their jobs
- Lack of responsiveness to tribal requests regarding alternative standards and assessments
- Many facilities totally inadequate and require extensive maintenance
- Lack of adequate training regarding implementation of Common Core and federal special education requirements

# BIE Students Face Significant Barriers to College and Career Readiness

Student outcomes are low:

Due to numerous factors, BIE-funded schools perform poorly across multiple measures.

Teachers and principals are unsupported:

Geographic isolation challenge BIE's ability to provide essential supports to teachers and principals.

BIE leadership is constrained:

Organizational fragmentation hinders BIE's ability to support all BIE-funded schools.

Budget is not aligned with school improvement:

Prescriptive and inflexible budget structure prevents allocation of resources for disruptive reforms.

Students suffer from trauma:

Due to long-term exposure to violence, drug-abuse and extreme poverty, many BIE students are not ready to learn.

Listening to BIE stakeholders around the country, we have learned the root causes of these unacceptable outcomes. The causes and outcomes are not a surprise; they mirror some of the same challenges faced by other low-performing rural and urban SEAs and LEAs.

Some of those same low performing SEAs and LEAs are dramatically improving. While factoring in the unique needs of BIE students, and the demands of tribal sovereignty, those same techniques can be used to create an environment where the BIE can rapidly improve.

### VISION FOR BIE BASED ON LISTENING SESSIONS

#### Promote Tribal Control

- Tribes understand unique needs of their communities better than bureaucrats in DC
- Align BIE's path forward with President Obama's policy of self-determination for tribes
- With careful transition plan in place, BIE gradually gets out of business of running schools and transfers direct operation to tribes

# Achieve High-Performing Schools

- Ensure BIE meets its responsibility that all students attending BIE-funded schools receive a world-class education, are prepared for college and careers, and can contribute to their tribe and country
- Provide necessary resources and support (e.g., facilities and human capital) to schools so that they can meet demands of 21st century teaching and learning

# Improve Services and Support to Build Capacity

- Scale up best practices in successful tribally controlled schools to other schools
- Support failing schools with adequate support and research-based interventions, if necessary
- Encourage tribes to take control over remaining BIE-operated schools by providing technical assistance and guidance about how to operate high-achieving schools

# Helping tribes deliver high quality instruction to every BIE student requires systemic transformation

# **Tribes Directly Operating High- Achieving Schools**

#### World Class Instruction for All BIE Students Delivered by Tribes

Build the capacity of Tribes to directly operate high-performing schools that ensure all BIE students are well-prepared for college, careers and tribal / global citizenship.

#### Highly Effective Teachers and Principals

Help tribes, identify, recruit, retain and empower diverse, highly effective teachers and principals to maximize achievement in all tribally-controlled schools.

#### Agile Organizational Environment

Build responsive organization that provides resources, direction and services to tribes so they can help their students attain high-levels of student achievement.

#### Budget that Supports Capacity Building Mission

Develop budget that is aligned with and supports BIE's new mission of tribal capacity building and scaling up best practices.

#### Comprehensive Supports through Partnerships

Foster parental, community and other partnerships to provide the emotional and social supports BIE students need in order to be ready to learn.

By focusing on these four pillars, we can achieve system-wide reform and take an important step towards our goal of having tribes provide a world class education to all BIE students.

# Goal: World-Class Instruction in Tribally Controlled Schools

Build the capacity of tribes to directly operate high-performing schools that ensure all BIE students are well-prepared for college, careers and tribal / global citizenship.

#### **Best Practices:**

Rapidly improving school systems shift their entire organizational focus to the fundamentals of exemplary instruction:

- College and career ready standards
- Effective teachers and principals
- Efficient school operations
- High quality learning environment / facilities
- Data driven instruction supported with technology
- High expectations and accountability
- Culturally relevant standards

#### **Example:**

Santa Fe Indian School, a tribally controlled BIE-funded school has had a near 100% graduation rate for all of its students, including its limited English proficient and special education students.

#### **Next Steps / How We Get There:**

- Implement Common Core State Standards; align curriculum, instruction, assessments
- Build BIE's capacity to help tribes identify, recruit and train effective teachers and principals
- Build BIE's capacity to be a service provider to tribes, and ability to teach tribes how to operate high-achieving and efficiently run schools
- Allow tribes to shape what children are learning about their tribes, language and culture in schools
- Provide BIE budget flexibility and tools to spur innovation and rapid improvement
- Forge partnerships with other providers so BIE students receive comprehensive supports to address social and emotional issues and are ready to learn

# Pillar One: Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders

Help tribes, identify, recruit, retain and empower diverse, highly effective teachers and principals to maximize achievement in all tribally-controlled schools.

**Best Practices:** Because teachers and principals are key factors driving student outcomes, rapidly improving school systems rethink their human capital systems:

- Use of performance-based evaluations tied to student achievement
- New designs of recruiting, hiring and developing effective teachers and principals
- Deep professional development around effective use of data to guide instruction
- High and transparent professional expectations
- Sustained classroom level support

**Example:** South Dakota used a Rural Leadership and Learning Grant to help:

- (1) Train principals to lead rural schools
- (2) Upgrade skills of principals in rural schools
- (3) Provide on-site mentoring and professional development that is aligned to local needs
- (4) Increase retention rates

#### **Next Steps / How We Get there:**

- Build BIE's capacity to provide technical assistance to tribes around professional development, modeling, coaching, and the monitoring and evaluating process
- Build BIE's capacity to help tribes stand up talent management and acquisition departments
- Create new teacher pipelines from colleges, including TCUs, to BIE schools through incentives
- Upgrade skills of existing teachers and principals in contemporary instruction techniques
- Provide incentives to recruit effective teachers and principals (housing stipends, loan forgiveness, educational benefits)
- Provide incentives to tribes to adopt certain evaluations and staffing formulas

# Pillar Two: Agile Organizational Environment

Build a responsive organization that provides the resources, direction and services to tribes so they can help their students attain high-levels of student achievement.

**Best Practices:** Rapidly improving school systems transform their central offices into nimble and responsive organizations with laser-like focus on supporting high quality instruction:

- Business and operations functions are assumed by central office allowing principals to focus on instruction
- Technology and other asset procurement is aligned to educational goals and priorities
- Rebalance command-oriented functions to provide ongoing support to build school capacity
- Streamline bureaucracy to reduce time spent on school operations

#### **Examples:**

States of Delaware, Tennessee, Florida and Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD). RSD has 80 schools, 40,000 students, including some direct-run schools and others managed by charter management organizations but funded by RSD. RSD turnaround model is designed to support autonomy, flexibility and innovation at the school-level.

#### **Next Steps / How We Get There:**

- Build BIE's capacity to teach tribally controlled schools how to improve or stand up their own talent management, procurement, acquisitions and IT divisions
- Provide targeted, highly customized technical assistance to struggling schools via "School Solutions Teams" that would be embedded in regions
- Build BIE's capacity to teach tribal education agencies (TEAs) how to function as SEAs that oversee high-performing LEAs
- For remaining BIE-operated schools, redesign BIE so that principals can spend more time on instructional leadership and less and time spent on school operations
- Ensure decisions regarding school construction and major repairs are driven by educators

# Pillar Three: Budget that Supports Capacity Building Mission

Develop a budget that is aligned with and supports BIE's new mission of tribal capacity building and scaling up best practices.

**Best Practices:** Rapidly improving school systems have budgets that will produce the largest improvements:

- Budget requests that are aligned to initiatives designed to improve student achievement
- Budget flexibility so superintendents can set educational priorities that meet unique needs of local student population
- Financial management practices and policies that reduce unnecessary procedures
- Targeted grant investments that provide incentives and spur innovation

Research: Studies show many school system budgets have been constructed piece-meal over decades to meet new demands and conflicting priorities. Several case studies, however, suggest a correlation between systems that take a more deliberative approach to budget development, including selecting goals and models, and tracking costs, and improved student achievement.

#### **Next Steps/How We Get there:**

- Develop FY16 budget that is aligned to BIE's new mission of building capacity of tribes by consolidating underutilized budget subactivities into one larger stream that can be used for capacity building activities
- Foster competition and innovation through Race to the Top-like incentives for tribes; provide implementation support to tribes receiving grants, but also hold them accountable for results
- Identify flexibilities within ED funding and propose new spending plan to ED that is aligned with new DOI priorities
- Pass technical amendments package on Hill that makes BIE eligible to compete in various ED discretionary grants, etc.

# Pillar Four: Comprehensive Supports through Partnerships

Foster parental, community and organizational partnerships to provide the emotional and social supports BIE students need in order to be ready to learn.

**Best Practices:** Improving systems use full field of resources to create environments where students are ready to learn:

- Partner with businesses and nonprofits to provide comprehensive services and resources
- Join innovation consortia like the League of Innovative Schools to access collaborative ideas
- Seek grants and technical assistance from national foundations to develop or scale improvement initiatives
- Work with community organizations to provide well being services for children and families

Example: DoDEA's Incentive Grant Program improves educational opportunities for students by funding research-based programs that aim to increase student achievement and ease challenges that military children face due to their parents military service. Includes support for unique social and emotional needs of military-connected students.

#### **Next Steps / How We Get there:**

- Coordinate with IHS, DOJ and other federal agencies to provide school-based services, including health, counseling and law enforcement services
- Provide incentives to tribes to co-locate other tribal support services near BIE schools
- Reinstate the BIE Foundation with strong leadership and direction to acquire funding from outside sources
- Work with FCC to improve and obtain additional E-rate funding for tribally controlled schools
- Bolster tribes' self-determination by respecting and supporting tribal models of excellence based upon language, culture and history, as appropriate