**Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) Enhancement Initiative**
Year 2 Cohort 2

BIE will begin a new round of competitive grants to tribes and their tribal education departments (TEDs) to promote tribal control and operation of BIE-funded schools on their Indian reservations. The purpose of the grants is to support the tribe's capacity to manage and operate tribally controlled schools as defined in the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-297). These funds will support development of a school-reform plan to improve educational outcomes for students and improve efficiencies and effectiveness in the operation of BIE-funded schools within a reservation.

Tribes or the tribal education departments, in whatever form or title a tribe decides on, are eligible for this grant if they have one or more BIE-funded schools on their tribal lands/reservation.

Grant awards will range from $100,000 to $200,000 per fiscal year depending on the number of schools involved, number of students, complexity of creating new tribally managed school system and the tribe's technical approach. The grants will provide funds for the tribe to:

- Research and develop an alternative definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP).
- Develop an implementation plan that will reform a tribe's current organizational structure towards an expert and independent tribal education department that will support schools and students; and
- Cover the execution of the implementation plan with identified staffing, projected timelines, proposed budgets, and activities.

BIE is seeking proposals from tribes that support efforts to take control and operate BIE-funded schools located on the tribe's reservation. Each proposal must include a project narrative, a budget narrative, a work plan outline, and a Project Director to manage the execution of the grant. The Project Directors will participate in monthly collaboration meetings, submit quarterly budget updates, ensure an annual report is submitted at the end of each project year, and ultimately ensure that the tribal education department fulfills the obligations of the grant.

## A. AMOUNT AND PURPOSE OF GRANTS

BIE will award competitive grants to tribes and their tribal education departments to promote tribal control and operation of BIE funded schools on their tribal lands/reservations. Grant awards will range from $100,000 to $200,000 per fiscal year depending on the number of schools involved, number of students, complexity of creating new tribally managed school system and the tribe's technical approach. Initial grants are for developing implementation plans in Year One. Year Two grants will be funded based on the submission of an implementation plan with a supporting tribal resolution.

The purpose of the grants is to support tribal capacity to manage and operate tribally controlled schools. Grant funds will support development of a tribal school reform plan with the goals of:

- Improved educational outcomes for students; and
- Improved efficiencies and effectiveness in operation of BIE-funded schools.

By unifying a collective body of tribes, this initiative will build a collaborative network to support tribal control and stronger partnerships with BIE-funded schools. As part of this program, BIE will provide to tribes:

- Technical assistance in planning and implementing assessment and implementation plans;
- Technical assistance in strengthening tribally controlled school processes; and
- A forum to work collaboratively with other tribes to gain insight and develop strategies to problem solve and borrow strategies from BIE and other tribal governments.

**B. HOW THIS PROGRAM CAME TO BE**

In 2013, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Education convened an American Indian Education Study Group to propose a comprehensive reform plan to ensure that all students attending BIE-funded schools receive a world-class education. Based on listening sessions throughout Indian Country, the study group issued a *Blueprint for Reform* on June 13, 2014.

The *Blueprint* recommends that BIE support tribal nations in their efforts to assume control over BIE-funded schools. Increasing tribal control over BIE schools would:

- Recognize the sovereign status of Tribes and provide them with greater discretion to determine what should be taught to their children; and
- Lead to improved student achievement.
- Help accountability and reduce institutional fragmentation throughout the BIE-funded school system.

Currently, BIE acts as a state educational agency for some funding purposes, while its grant and contract schools operate as local educational agencies. The current bifurcated structure does not allow tribal governments to manage all schools on their lands as a local educational agency would, making it more challenging to implement reforms in a comprehensive and system-wide manner across a set of schools located on a single reservation.

As demonstrated in other areas, tribal control of government services often improves services. This is because tribes understand the needs of their communities and are more likely to be held accountable for results by their communities. The Department of the Interior fully supports tribes' sovereign right to determine the structure of their own tribal government and school systems; and seeks to strengthen that support by facilitating sharing of information on efficient and successful school structures.

## C. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

In its proposal, the tribal education departments (TEDs) must provide a project narrative, a budget narrative, and a work plan outline. In addition, the TED must identify a Project Director to manage the execution of the grant. The Project Director will participate in monthly collaboration meetings, submit quarterly budget updates, ensure an annual report is submitted at the end of each project year, and ultimately ensure the TED fulfills the obligations of the grant. Detailed requirements are as follows.

(1) *Project Narrative* (20 pages maximum) – 60 Points

The project narrative should explain the vision for the tribe's TED with a supporting tribal resolution. The tribe should ensure that the vision expresses the tribe's vision for controlling and operating tribally controlled schools. The vision should be clear in terms of its

expected outcome for student success and how this implementation will increase student competency that is more effective than the current tribal and school structures in place

The project narrative should describe how the tribe in year 1 will begin and deploy the collaborations needed to complete an implementation plan for the reform of the TED to operate tribally controlled schools located on the tribal reservation. The project narrative must include a description of the following:

- The tribe's educational goals and desired outcomes;
- The tribe's education programs currently in place;
- The school systems on the tribal lands/reservations;
- Goals for changes in the organizations that are expected; and
- How the tribe will fulfill its vision for a tribally managed school system.

Furthermore, the project narrative must include a preliminary plan outline that will address the four critical areas of school system operations:

- Finance (15 points),
- Human Resources (15 points),
- School Governance (15 points); and
- Academics (15 points).

These areas are described in more detail below. It is important that the tribe explain its evaluation of the current system in place and how the implementation plan will assist in embedding a reformed tribal education department to support the tribal control of these schools

and ensure its sustainability and the success of students. The receipt of year 2 funds will be contingent upon the submission of the implementation plan.

In addition, the application must provide a formal resolution from the appropriate tribal governing body supporting the tribe's grant application. If there is not a sufficient amount of time to obtain a tribal resolution, the TED must provide an explanation of the process and completed steps in the project narrative.

(2) *Budget Narrative* (15 pages maximum)—20 Points

The budget narrative should provide a short justification for each line item for the following cost breakdown. It should provide in detail the amount of grant funds that will be allocated to each budget category. Ensure a commitment of funds for travel to a post-award training for one Project Director and a presentation of results for tribes on August 31, 2016. Locations have yet to be determined.

Salary: Provide salary costs for staffing and justification for the types of staffing needed.

Benefits: Benefit calculated on hired staffing.

Travel: Provide approximate travel costs and justification for travel.

Non-capital Equipment: Provide description of equipment for staffing to fulfill the objectives of the proposal.

Consultant Fees: Provide number of consultants, proposed duties and expected work outcomes, costs, and sub-contractor costs.

Tribal Indirect Cost: Provide a current IDC rate for your tribe with supplemental information supporting the IDC rate.

The budget narrative should explain how the funds in each category will be used by the tribe to hire and train personnel, purchase supplies and equipment, for travel, and training. It should also describe any procurements, its purpose, and processes that will be used.

BIE will evaluate each tribe's projected cost. Unrealistically high (or low) pricing in the proposal will impact this section points. The budget narrative should include sufficient descriptions to enable BIE to evaluate the realism of the tribe's projected cost and determine the reasonableness of the price submitted. Travel cost must be in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations. If the expected implementation plan extends beyond year 2 funds, the tribal education department should explain the sustainability of the tribally managed school system with current funds.

(3) *Work Plan* (15 pages maximum)—20 Points

The work plan must describe the goals, objectives, tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and expected outcomes. We highly recommend the inclusion of timelines that factor in tribal grant award processes, if awarded, that may include, tribal grant award acceptance, tribal human resource hiring, and/or consultant hiring in both the work plan and the budget narrative.

## D. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING PROPOSALS

All applications must adhere to the following guidelines. Include your DUNS Number when submitting your application.

The grant proposal is due by *January 13, 2016, at 4:00 PM Eastern Time*. The proposal should be packaged for delivery to permit timely arrival. The proposal package should be sent or hand delivered to the Bureau of Indian Education, Attn: Wendy Greyeyes, 1849 C Street NW, MS-4657-MIB, Washington, DC 20240.

Faxed proposals will NOT be accepted. Email submissions will be accepted. Email: wendy.greyeyes@bie.edu. Email submissions are limited to attachments compatible with Microsoft Office Word 2007 or later and/or files with a .pdf file extension. Emailed submissions must not exceed 3MB total in size.

Proposals submitted by Federal Express or Express Mail should be sent two or more days before the closing date. The proposal package should be sent to Bureau of Indian Education, Attn: Wendy Greyeyes, 1849 C Street NW, MS-4657-MIB, Washington, DC 20240. The tribe is solely responsible for ensuring its proposal arrives in a timely manner.

Proposal Submission Guidelines

The proposal must be organized as follows:

- Cover sheet;
- Project Narrative (20 pages maximum);
- Budget Narrative (15 pages maximum);
- Work Plan (15 pages maximum); and

- Additional Documents (resumes, supporting tribal resolution for grant application, etc.).

The cover sheet should contain the Tribe's DUNS number, Tribe's Name, Project Director Name, and Contact Information. The proposal must be prepared on standard 8-1/2" by 11" page format, 1.5-spaced, single-sided, with 1" minimum margins. The type used must be 12-point or larger and all written communication must be legible. Resumes may be single spaced.

Proposal Acceptance Period and Preparation Cost

The proposal acceptance period is 60 days after the date set for receipt of proposals. The Tribe must make a clear statement in the proposal cover page that the proposal is valid until this period has ended. BIE will not be obligated to pay any costs incurred by a tribe in preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this request for proposals.

## E. EVALUATION

1. BIE reserves the right to make an award based on the outcome of the scoring of the proposal. All the requirements must be addressed in your proposal, if any are omitted your response may be non-responsive and not evaluated.

2. The tribe must be registered in the Central Tribe Registration (CCR) in order to receive a contract or purchase order from the Federal Government pursuant to FAR 52.204-7 Central Tribe Registration (Apr 2008).

3. The source selection will be conducted in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Sub-Parts 15.3 and 12.6, with the intention to award a single fixed-price contract.

4. The evaluation of factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost or price.

5. Evaluation Scoring: BIE will evaluate all elements of the proposal according to the evaluation criteria. Each proposal will be scored on a scale of 0 to 100.

**Scoring – Total Points 100**

| | |
|---|---|
| 90 to 100 Points: Outstanding | The response is very comprehensive, in-depth, and clear. Proposal consistently addresses requirements identified in the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Work Plan, Staffing, and Projected Costs. The Proposal consistently meets the requirements with no omissions. Consistently high quality outcome can be expected. |
| 80 to 89 Points: Excellent | Extensive, detailed response to all requirements identified in the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Work Plan, Staffing, and Projected Costs. The quality is similar to outstanding in quality but with minor areas of unevenness or spottiness. High quality outcome is likely but not assured due to minor omissions or areas where less than excellent outcome might be expected. |
| 70 to 79 Points: Satisfactory | The response generally meets requirements identified in the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Work Plan, Staffing, and Projected Costs, but there is no expectation of better than acceptable Grant. Deficiencies are confined to areas with minor impact on Grant and can be corrected during negotiation without minor revision to the proposal. |
| 60 to 69 Points: Poor | The response fails to meet one or more requirements identified in the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Work Plan, Staffing, and Projected Costs. Deficiencies exist in significant areas but can be corrected during negotiations without major revision to the proposal or serious deficiencies exist in areas with minor impact. |
| 0 to 59 Points: Unsatisfactory | Serious deficiencies exist in significant areas identified in the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Work Plan, Staffing, and Projected Costs. . The proposal cannot be expected to meet the stated requirements without major revisions. The proposal only indicates a willingness to perform in accordance with the requirements document without specifying how or demonstrating the capability to do so. Only vague indications of the required capability are present. |

## F. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REQUIRED FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS

After receiving a grant, the tribe must prepare a final, detailed implementation plan. The plan should describe how the tribe will achieve the vision it described in its project narrative. The final implementation plan is due August 26, 2016, and the tribe should present to the participating tribes on August 31, 2016. The implementation plan start date must begin by October 1, 2016 and must have a tribal support resolution.

The implementation plan must explain in detail how the tribe will establish a TED with an organizational structure that can operate a school system in the areas of Finance, Human Resources, School Governance, and Academics. The tribe should ensure a system of control is in place for acquisitions, budget, finance, property, academics, and evaluation of teacher and principal performance. The implementation plan must include a description of timelines, staffing, tribal code revisions, and other areas the tribe deems important in taking the control and operations of their BIE-funded schools.

Finance: The implementation plan must describe how the TED will consolidate all of its schools' finance functions. The implementation plan must describe the tribal financial management to establish a financial system to meet the needs of the tribally controlled schools and procurement consolidation. The tribe must explain their systems of control (accountability systems) for the management of funds. This section should describe how the tribe will accomplish these goals through a diagram of projected funding flow, proposed costs, staffing, outcomes, and timelines.

Human Resources: The implementation plan must describe how the tribe will consolidate all of its schools' human resource functions. The implementation plan must describe the

tribe's human resource management that will address the hiring, payroll, and benefits to teachers, principals, administrators, and non-educational staff for tribally controlled schools. This section should describe the alignment to tribal Human Resources policies guiding the implementation of Human Resources including personnel benefits that address salary, health, retirement, etc. The tribe must explain their systems of control (accountability systems) for principal and teacher effectiveness. This section should also describe human resources administration processes, proposed costs, staffing, outcomes, and timelines.

School Governance: The implementation plan must describe how the tribe will consolidate all of its schools' governance functions. The implementation plan must describe the tribe's defined lines of authority, school board authority, policy alignment to tribe, and an alignment to a single grant. The tribe should describe, for example and if applicable, the process of conversion of BIE operated schools to tribally controlled schools. The roles and responsibilities of decision-making entities such as the school boards, tribal school boards, tribal presidents, superintendents, principals, etc., should be described. Organizational diagrams are encouraged to clarify lines of authority. This section should also address proposed costs, staffing, outcomes, and timelines.

Academic: The implementation plan must describe how the tribe will consolidate all of its schools' academic functions. The implementation plan must describe the tribe's curriculum plan for academic success. This includes Native language and culture curriculum, SPED accountability, school improvement initiatives, professional development alignment, assessment use, data analysis, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) mandates, the tribes and tribal schools' accountability to ESEA,

and in some cases, to establish the feasibility of developing and implementing an Alternative Accountability Workbook. This section should show cost, staffing, outcomes, and timelines.

The implementation plan will describe the TED's reforms necessary to support the tribal control of these schools and ensure its sustainability and the success of students. The implementation plan will ensure that it has assessed the current tribe's infrastructure in the four areas described above and provides a reasonable and effective course of action to become an expert and independent tribal education department that supports the critical needs of tribally controlled schools and the success of their tribal students.

The final implementation plan will have clear and reasonable timelines beginning on the award date. The implementation should make certain that cost, staffing, outcome measures, and timelines are factored into the implementation plan and its implementation.

BIE will provide Pre-Grant Application Training at several sites to support Tribal Education Department's application to the grant.

| **Activity** | **Date** |
|---|---|
| Pre-grant application training | |
| Webinar 11 a.m. (Eastern) | December 8, 2015 |
| To register **go to** **https://dcma100.webex.com/dcma100/k2/j.php?MTID=t6394cada3bc9d9b28993ecb06b7e8ecd** **and register** | |
| Webinar 4 p.m. (Eastern) | December 11, 2015 |
| To register **go to** **https://dcma100.webex.com/dcma100/k2/j.php?MTID=t6cbc6c13d4aeab46fd3e93caa597b394** and register. | |
| Grant applications submission due at 4 p.m. (Eastern) | January 13, 2016 |
| Final implementation plan due | August 26, 2016 |
| Final Presentations | August 31, 2016 |

## G. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**1. Does the Secretary have the authority to provide funds to Tribal Education Departments**?

Yes, under section 1140, titled: Tribal Departments or Divisions of Education.(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary must make grants and provide technical assistance to tribes for the development and operation of tribal departments or divisions of education for the purpose of planning and coordinating all educational programs of the tribe. In addition, the Secretary has broad authority to provide services to Indians under the Snyder Act, 25 U.S.C. § 13.

**2. What statutory authority, regulatory authority, and policies does Bureau of Indian Education have in overseeing their schools?**

The federal government has a trust responsibility for Indians, including for educational services. The Snyder Act and P.L. 95-561 provide legal authority for the Bureau of Indian Education to oversee federally operated schools.

**3. What statutory authority, regulatory authority, and policies do tribes have in overseeing their schools?**

Tribes have an inherent sovereign right to govern their people, including children. P.L. 93-638 and P.L. 100-297 provide statutory support and funding mechanisms to enable Tribes to operate tribal schools.

**4. Once geographic attendance boundaries are established, how can they be changed?**

Tribes can change geographic boundaries of schools. Bureau regulations at 25 CFR 37.122, state that:

(a) The Secretary can change the geographic attendance boundaries of a day school, on-reservation boarding school, or peripheral dorm only after: (1) Notifying the Tribe at least 6 months in advance; and (2) Giving the Tribe an opportunity to suggest different geographical attendance boundaries.

(b) A tribe may ask the Secretary to change geographical attendance boundaries by writing a letter to the Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs, explaining the tribe's suggested changes. The Secretary must consult with the affected tribes before deciding whether to accept or reject a suggested geographic attendance boundary change.

(1) If the Secretary accepts the Tribe's suggested change, the Secretary must publish the change in the Federal Register.

(2) If the Secretary rejects the Tribe's suggestion, the Secretary will explain in writing to the Tribe why the suggestion either:

(i) Does not meet the needs of Indian students to be served; or

(ii) Does not provide adequate stability to all affected programs.

**5. By tribes controlling their own education, is the federal government not fulfilling its trust responsibility?**

No, the federal government will uphold its commitment to tribes and support tribes as they take control of their own education. This grant is completely voluntary. It has been the belief by many tribes that tribes can do a better job of promoting better student outcomes—and the federal government supports this belief. In addition, BIE will continue to provide quality technical assistance and monitor school performance whether a tribe is part of the grant or not.

*Finance Questions:*

**6. What statutes and policies will the tribe have to consider when moving funds from Bureau of Indian Education to the schools?**

All statutes and regulations that apply to grant schools now will apply to the tribe if it becomes the grantee.

**7. Who will be responsible for audits?**

The grantee is responsible. If the tribe becomes the grantee and all schools are under one grant, the tribe will be responsible.

**8. What about the conditions of assurances like FOCUS, SIG, etc.?**

Receipt of this grant will not change the conditions of any other funding from the Department of the Interior or the Department of Education.

*School Governance Questions:*

**9. What statutes do tribal education departments have to consider in developing a school board governing structure, if it's desired?**

The tribal education department would need delegation of authority by their tribal governing body.

**10. What are the lines of authority (government to government) between BIE and the tribal education department?**

There are currently no lines of authority between the BIE and TEDs, except as delegated by the tribal council.

*Human Resources Questions:*

**11. What Human Resource (HR) policies are currently being executed by Tribally Controlled Schools?**

Each grantee is expected to develop its own HR policies and procedures manual. Some grantees have developed and implemented their own while others buy HR policies and procedures from consultants or in the case of some Arizona grant schools they buy policies and procedures from the Arizona School Board Association.

**12. What federal statutes will the TED have to follow to establish a uniform HR system for all Tribally Controlled Schools?**

P.L. 107-110 NCLB, P.L. 101-630 - Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act, P.L. 101-647 – Crime Control Act of 1990, P.L. 93-638 Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act. The Tribe may also have its own existing Human Resources laws and policies.

*Academic and Curricular Questions:*

**13. Are there statutes that require the tribe to take on certain curriculums?**

All schools are required to meet the education standards of the state in which they are located. All curricula should be aligned with these state standards.

**14. How can the tribe support curriculum at the schools sites?**

If a tribe takes control overall BIE funded schools, it can control all curriculum at school sites.

## H. DEFINITIONS

1. *Bureau* means the Bureau of Indian Education of the Department of the Interior.

2. *Indian* means a member of an Indian tribe, and includes individuals who are eligible for membership in a tribe, and the child or grandchild of such an individual.

3. *Indian tribe* means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including an Alaska Native Village Corporation or Regional Corporation (as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.]), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

4. *Secretary* means the Secretary of the Interior.

5. *Tribal governing body* means, with respect to any school that receives assistance under this Act, the recognized governing body of the Indian tribe involved.

6. *Tribal organization* means --

(a) In general --

- the recognized governing body of any Indian tribe; or
- any legally established organization of Indians that

(i) Is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization; and

(ii) Includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of the organization's activities.

(a) In relation to an authorization --

In any case in which a grant is provided under this chapter to an organization to provide services through a tribally controlled school benefiting more than one Indian tribe, the approval of the governing bodies of Indian tribes representing 80 percent of the students attending the tribally controlled school must be considered a sufficient tribal authorization for such grant.

7. *Tribally controlled school* means a school that—

(a) is operated by an Indian tribe or a tribal organization, enrolling students in kindergarten through grade 12, including a preschool;
(b) is not a local educational agency; and
(c) is not directly administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

8. *Bureau-Funded School* means —

(a) a Bureau school;

(b) a contract or grant school; or

(c) a school for which assistance is provided under the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988.

9. *Bureau School* means a Bureau-operated elementary or secondary day or boarding school or a Bureau-operated dormitory for students attending a school other than a Bureau school.

10. *Contract or Grant School* means an elementary school, secondary school, or dormitory that receives financial assistance for its operation under a contract, grant, or agreement with the Bureau under section 102, 103(a), or 208 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, or under the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988.

## I. PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT COMPLIANCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), as implemented by the Office of Management and Budget in 5 CFR 1320, a person is not required to respond to a collection of information by a Federal agency unless the collection displays a valid Office of Management and Budget control number. The grant applications and reporting requirements related to this program are considered to be a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA. The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collections related to this program and has assigned control number 1076-1082, expiring on November 2015. We estimate the annual burden associated with this information collection to be 682 hours.