Frequently Asked Questions by Employees on the Status of Bureau of Indian Education Reorganization

These questions were collected from BIE employees at a "town hall" meeting held in Albuquerque, April 5, 2016, and in a survey sent to all participants in the BIE’s Students: Our Common Focus meeting in July 2016. The questions have been edited to eliminate redundancy and questions that called for information about specific individuals. As the BIE moves forward with implementation, we will continue to collect employee questions and add them with their answers to this document.

Bureau of Indian Education Reorganization Status

What is the status of the entire Bureau of Indian Education Reorganization and will it proceed?*
The Department of the Interior (DOI) is fully committed to completing the reorganization of the BIE. We are moving fast to implement Education Resource Centers (ERCs) in three newly organized school divisions: Bureau Operated Schools, Navajo Schools, and Tribal Controlled Schools. In order to be more responsive to the needs of schools and tribes, we are working to fill vacant assignments in all three school divisions, the ERCs, and the central office. However, we have placed these changes “on hold” in the Northern Plains region, until suit brought by local leaders can be resolved.

As part of the reorganization, BIE has created new capacity in the Office of the Director, including an Office of Assessment and Accountability and an Office of Sovereignty in Indian Education. On June 9, 2016, BIE announced the opening of the BIE Director position, which was advertised through August 8, 2016. We are now starting the rigorous process of choosing a new BIE Director.

Is the budget sufficient to complete the entire reorganization?
Phase I of the BIE reorganization has been completed with no additional funding. Phase II, which establishes a fully operational School Operations Division within BIE will require additional funding from Congress. This includes:

- In FY 2016, Congress authorized a budget increase of $2.5 million to begin the realignment of the School Operations Division.
- DOI’s proposed 2017 budget includes a request for an additional $8 million to complete the School Operations realignment and the transfer of 22 Human Resource positions from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Management to the BIE.

These new and transferred resources will augment BIE’s existing staffing.
Will you consider cancelling or calling a time-out of the implementation process of the reorganization and have a serious evaluation with BIE stakeholder input?*
We will not cancel the reorganization. The reorganization was developed in consultation with tribal governments and education experts over the course of two years. We have conducted evaluation with stakeholders and tribes throughout the reorganization. Implementing the reorganization is a high priority and BIE will continue to move forward. It is a commitment to provide better service and support to students, schools, and tribal communities. BIE will continue to involve employees and seek their input. In July 2016, we conducted a two-day meeting, *Students: Our Common Focus in the Bureau of Indian Education*, to engage employees across the agency, to establish a shared understanding and commitment to BIE’s common purpose, to learn about the new organizational structure, and to clarify roles and responsibilities.

When will the Department of Interior hire a Director?
DOI is committed to hiring a BIE Director as soon as possible and is currently reviewing potential candidates. On June 9, 2016, BIE announced the opening of the BIE Director position, which was advertised through August 8, 2016. We are now starting the rigorous process of choosing a new BIE Director.

Until that time, Ann Marie Bledsoe Downes will continue to serve as the Acting Director. In that role, she will lead the BIE into implementation of the reorganization and will engage employees with the shared purpose of building support and momentum for reform and rebuilding trust between the employees and the BIE.

Will our Acting BIE Director have a role in our partnership with our tribes?*
Yes. Acting Director Bledsoe Downes will continue the strong partnership we have with tribes that launched our current efforts to reform the BIE. In preparing the Blueprint for Reform, the BIE hosted six tribal consultations across the country to receive and incorporate input from tribal leaders. Hearing from and working with tribes to better understand issues on the ground is a critical component to ensuring we develop a better and more accessible education for our students.

Recently, Acting Director Bledsoe Downes traveled to Arizona to visit with Tribal Education Department (TED) and Sovereignty in Indian Education (SIE) recipients that include the Hopi Tribe, Tohono O’odham Nation, and Gila River Indian Community. The Acting Director also spoke with tribal leadership at the National Congress of American Indians’ annual conference, the Tribal Interior Budget Council, Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes the Southern Pueblo Governors Meeting and the Education Summit with leaders from the San Felipe and Zia Pueblos.
Reorganization Implementation

What is the plan for continuing the BIE reorganization?
Secretarial Order 3334 and the Blueprint for Reform lay out the basic plan for reorganizing the BIE. We worked closely with Congress to address their questions through February 2016, when they lifted any final reservation they had about the reorganization, signaling the time to begin implementing.

The reform organizes several functions into the office of the Director, including leadership for academic programs, assessment, and accountability, sovereignty in education, preschool and postsecondary education. It also establishes or reorganizes five distinct divisions: Bureau Operated Schools, Navajo Schools, Tribal Controlled Schools, the Division of Performance and Accountability and the School Operations Division.

The BIE’s first step was to advertise all vacant assignments in the new organization. The BIE followed this with Students: Our Common Focus, the recent meeting in Riverside, CA. At that meeting, teams of BIE employees developed implementation playbooks that will serve as the basis for implementation plans as the agency moves forward with the remainder of the reorganization. Acting Director Bledsoe Downes and her team will work with Division leaders to finalize the playbooks in August and early September 2016.

How can I determine what my new roles and responsibilities are? What does my team focus on in the new BIE?
At our recent meeting in Riverside, CA, employee-teams began drafting “play books” or implementation guides, to describe the necessary actions, strategy, responsibilities, and milestones for each individual and team in the reorganization, including the transition period. When completed, these playbooks will be developed into an employee orientation guide, a tool to help people new to the organization or their role get a better understanding of how they fit into the organization. As we begin implementing, employees look to their direct supervisors and division leaders for information on their specific roles and responsibilities.

What is the status of the job assignments developed under the Blueprint? Are they subject to change?
Job assignments are subject to change without Congressional action. The Blueprint and the related supporting organizational charts sent to Congress were clearly designated working documents; this means that there will be ongoing changes as the BIE moves forward with implementation. Even though it was reviewed and Congress did not raise objections, and went through tribal consultation, Federal law outlines specific functions and decisions that are reserved to management (Agency Leadership) by Section 7106(a) of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute 5 USC 7106 (a). As the law outlines, the agency has the ability to assign work, to determine the personnel needed to conduct operations, and to make decisions regarding assignments of work. The agency has the right and discretion to assign work and determine the particular duties assigned to employees or positions, as well as the particular employees to whom those duties will be assigned.
Some roles in the BIE are “cross-functional.” This means that employees are hired to work in one division, but they are assigned to a team managed by another division. An example of this is the Education Program Specialist (SEP) or Special Education Program Specialist (SpED) who work out of the Division of Performance and Accountability (DPA), but are assigned to work in an ERC in the Tribal Controlled Schools Division. How do these cross-functional assignments report?

Government and private sector organizations use cross-functional assignments to ensure subject matter experts and practitioners with specialized skill sets are located where they are needed the most. Many of the BIE’s cross-functional assignments involve placing subject matter experts, like the SEP and SPED specialists, in offices that provide direct support to schools.

Cross-functional employees will look to their Division for broad program direction and final performance evaluation, but will receive day-to-day direction and participate fully in the work routines of the office in which they are assigned. For example, a SEP specialist who is located in an ERC will follow the broad program direction established by the program leader in DPA, while at the same time reporting to work and participating in all team functions at the ERC. If that SEP specialist has unassigned time, that time should be assigned to make use of their skills and knowledge by the leader at the ERC. The concept of dual reporting is used throughout the Federal government and is nothing new. It provides managers and staff an accountability structure when they are located in different offices.

The BIE is responsible for fulfilling all statutory requirements, such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA – now called the Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Those laws establish basic civil rights for students and parents, and minimum service expectations in schools. Specialists in the DPA will continue to play critical roles in making sure those statutory obligations are met. Now that those specialists are located in ERCs, they are closer to the students and communities they serve.

How will different teams work together effectively and support one another?
The Director and division leaders will prioritize collaboration across divisions. BIE divisions have a reputation among school and community leaders for operating in silos – failing to communicate effectively, making redundant requests, even blaming other divisions for failing to provide effective support or service. When it reorganized, we sought to address this criticism. Relocating specialists from divisions like School Operations and DPA into assignments in the ERCs is only one way of doing so. As the BIE moves to implementation, collaboration will be a responsibility of all employees. As an organizational priority, the Director and all division leaders will be responsible for making sure this is occurring.

What type of support will be provided for the reorganization?*
The BIE reorganization is receiving assistance from the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, technical assistance on the assessment and data collection process from the Department of Education, and subject matter expertise from organizations such as the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).
Will the reorganization change when the new presidential administration comes in?
The Acting Director, the Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs, and the Secretary’s office will be working closely to develop a transition plan that ensures the continuation of the reorganization.

What is the status of those BIE offices that are subject to litigation in the Northern Plains?
The BIE organizational chart shows proposed offices in Belcourt, ND, Bismarck, ND, Flandreau, SD and Kyle, SD. Staffing of those offices is on hold due to pending litigation. Until the BIE can move forward, no new staff will be hired to fill vacancies in those offices. Therefore, the current BIE Education Line Office (ELO) structure remains in place. We have Mr. Robert Parisian located at the Standing Rock ELO, Ms. Charmaine Weston at the Rosebud ELO and Crow Creek/Lower Brule ELO, Mr. Robert White Eyes at the Pine Ridge ELO, Ms. Rose Marie Davis at the Cheyenne River ELO, and Ms. Davis and Ms. Cheryl Johnson sharing duties at the Turtle Mountain ELO. These staff will continue to provide guidance and support to schools in these locations.

Additionally, the Crow Creek/Lower Brule and Turtle Mountain ELOs remain as they currently are, i.e., the tribes have contracted under P.L. 93-638 many of the functions provided by office personnel formerly identified under the ELO structure. The contracts with these Tribes have not changed because of the reorganization.

The BIE is filling vacancies in the other offices supporting Tribal Controlled Schools, including ones in Minneapolis, MN, Albuquerque, NM, and Seattle, WA.

Why does the organizational chart keep changing? How is Congress notified of these changes?
The BIE organizational chart submitted to Congress was a Director level organizational chart and did not provide the position-level detail for all the offices. Although new charts have been developed with the position detail, the organizational structure has not changed from the one reviewed by Congress. The detailed-level organizational charts for the proposed School Operations Division have not been released pending final department review. The current signed organizational charts are different from the organizational charts employees distributed to employees at the meeting in Riverside, CA because the signed charts have differences in position titles, position grades, and several positions changed locations. The BIE is currently working with HR and the Department to have a new official organizational chart approved.

What does it mean to “increase tribal sovereignty in education”?
A major purpose of the BIE reform is to promote educational self-determination for tribal nations. The BIE supports tribal nations who wish to assume control over BIE-funded schools. Increased tribal control over BIE schools recognizes the sovereign status of tribes and provides them with greater discretion to determine what should be taught to their children. Tribes that choose not to assert tribal control over their schools are also exercising their sovereignty.
What progress has been made on staffing new positions? Do we have an estimate or goal for when the BIE will be fully staffed?
The BIE is working diligently to fill vacant positions. A recent round of position announcements closed in early August. We are in the process of interviewing for these positions.

What is BIE’s commitment to training and developing staff for their new positions?
As the BIE implements the reforms called for in Secretarial order 3334 and the Blueprint for Education, we will be calling on BIE employees to grow into new roles and responsibilities. The BIE will continue to engage its employees in a range of professional and organizational development opportunities. The agency and division leaders will play a critical role in making sure that individual and team development opportunities are relevant, not only to employees, but to the needs of students, schools and tribes.

Reorganization Logistics

BIE’s approved reorganization includes ERCs. What key components are you encouraging to be in place as we move toward ERCs?*
The ERCs will function in a team-like fashion with practitioners in schools to improve academic and life outcomes for students. They are designed to support different kinds of schools based on the way the schools are organized. Bureau operated schools will be served by one set of ERCs, Tribal Controlled schools by another, and schools operated by the Navajo Nation by a third. ERCs will be staffed with experts on programs relevant to the schools they serve, including residential life, school board development, school improvement, and special education.

Previously, the BIE field offices were all identical—they provided the same services irrespective of the unique needs of the schools or the tribes in the region. In contrast, the new ERC structure rejects this one-size-fits-all approach and proposes a new structure that is tailored to meet the needs of each tribe as informed by consultations.

How is the chain of command different now than it was before the reorganization?
The reorganization simplifies the chain of command for employees in the field. The ADDs of the three school divisions and the Education Program Administrators (EPAs) will lead coordination and collaboration among ERC staff. Decision-making is also located closer to the schools for real-time, relevant, and responsive action. You can expect the ADD’s to be making the day-to-day decisions related to school improvement in collaboration with the Education Program Administrators, principals, tribal leaders and other stakeholders.

When will the ERCs receive a budget?
The School Operations Division is collaborating with the leaders of the three school divisions to develop specific budgets for the ERCs.

How will the reorganization affect DPA?*
Under the reorganization, the BIE and its schools will continue to be required to meet all requirements established by the United States Department of Education. The DPA will continue to play a critical role
ensuring that we comply with these regulations. DPA’s responsibilities include school improvement planning, special education oversight and reporting, collecting and reporting federally required data and more recently managing contract relationships with assessment providers. Some of its previous functions, such as management of assessment contracts and collection of data from schools have been relocated to the Director’s Office in order to establish system-wide direction and alignment of services. Some of its employees have been assigned dual reporting assignments in ERCs, so they will be closer to and better able to support schools.

**Hiring Practices/Revisiting Hires**

**How will BIE select its current team members to fill vacant assignments in the new structure?**

The BIE is following DOI policy and hiring the most qualified candidates available under those policies. Current team members will fill vacant assignments if they are qualified and selected. Only if no qualified applicants are selected will positions be filled by eligible candidates from outside the BIE. Every effort will be made to find assignments for current BIE employees who are eligible. The Human Resources (HR) Office will give BIE employees who do not have assignments, or who do not apply for jobs, direct assignments. All hiring decisions are final. Once a BIE team member is assigned to a vacant position, the BIE will not reconsider that decision. BIE team members may apply for new vacant positions once they become available.

**What will be the specific practices and assurances that will be implemented and followed to ensure that fair and equal treatment is enforced for current BIE employees? How are candidates deemed “qualified” if they only have a phone interview?**

HR Staff assess the qualifications for all candidates prior to interviews. Interviews conducted by selection panels are a further assessment of a candidate’s qualifications for a position. Selection panelists ask all candidates for the same position a standard set of questions to make sure the information they are gathering is comparable. In the interest of time and consistency, selection panels consistently conduct interviews for all applicants by phone, including those in the central office, and will continue to do so. It is possible to schedule in-person interviews if phone interviews prove insufficient. Final offers are made to candidates when effective dates are established and background checks are completed.

**How will BIE HR restructure to avoid favoritism, unfair/illegal hiring practices, field assignments/details, and the hiring of family members and close relatives. How can we be sure that favoritism did/does not come into play when selecting individuals for the new jobs that were announced due to the BIE reorganization?**

We intend to meet all legal and policy requirements when making hiring decisions. The SF-306 is reviewed for the tentative selectee, prior to any offers being made, to determine if any family members currently work for BIE. BIE Policy Bulletin Number HR-001 titled “Guidance on Nepotism” ensures that the BIE is continually committed to eradicating nepotism and applies to all BIE managers, supervisors,
and employees involved in the recruitment and selection process of applicants. This policy is to be reviewed every two years to discourage any practice of nepotism.

**What is the BIE doing to streamline hiring processes?**

BIE is collaborating with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to assist the HR office with streamlined processes for the recruitment of teachers and principals and for other key BIE positions. The BIE will also hire, for the first time ever, a full-time teacher and principal recruiter. The recruiter, an expert in the field of educational networking and placement, will develop and implement recruitment strategies for BIE-operated schools and provide technical assistance to BIE-funded grant schools.

BIE has also developed a marketing plan to promote and fill employee vacancies located throughout BIE’s 183 schools and regional offices across 23 states. The main priorities outlined in the marketing and recruitment plan include materials development; identification of strategic partnership to support recruitment at the local, regional, and national level; and an advertising campaign that encompasses online and print advertisements, targeted emails, job fairs, social media outreach, and commercial job recruitment websites.

Every effort is being made to streamline the processes for clearance and background checking, but this is proving to be difficult. This is a problem not only for the BIE, but also for federal employees more generally.

**Is it possible to revisit the idea of hiring specific BIE contracting officers?**

Yes. The restructuring of the new Schools Operations Division under the Director will vest BIE with authority for school acquisitions. If the next steps in the reorganization of the School Operations Division are approved, BIE will have its own, dedicated contracting officers. The Department has reviewed the restructuring plan for acquisitions, and it is in the approval process now. If our FY 17 budget request is approved, BIE will have its own contracting staff beginning in FY 17, or school year 2016-2017.

In the meantime, we have asked the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management (DASM) to look into improvements in the acquisition process, and specifically into the purchase order process, so principals have what they need, on time, to deliver a high quality education for our students. The DASM will keep the Director’s Office informed of his progress, and ensure the information is passed along to BIE employees.

**BIE Communication**

**We received several questions on communication and transparency, and a need for better information sharing.**

BIE has created a full-time Program Analyst position in Washington D.C. that focuses on communications. In response to the need for transparency, BIE has revised its communications plan to prioritize regular communications to its employees, schools, and internal and external stakeholders of
critical developments in and key information about the BIE reorganization that could affect the operation and instruction of BIE schools and success of our students.

Key communication accomplishments include updating the BIE National Directory, increasing BIE’s social media presence with increased followers and daily updates on BIE policies, activities and events; developing an internal newsletter delivered to employees biweekly via email; disseminating timely and targeted information through BIE email LISTSERVs; creating talking points and other written materials for employees on issues related to BIE policies and the BIE reorganization; conducting weekly conference calls with senior management; and offering a weekly webinar series that focuses on a range of topics relevant to the broad range of BIE employee roles and responsibilities. BIE will continue to enhance its communication and outreach efforts based on input and feedback from BIE employees and schools. Additional communication priorities include a revision of the BIE website that improves readability and usability for employees and the public, including a forthcoming Employee Resource Webpage.

Facilities

When will the final list of the new school construction be made public?*
Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Lawrence S. Roberts announced on April 5, 2016 the 10 BIE schools eligible for funding for campus-wide replacement. Publication of this list completes the process for identifying the Department’s top priority schools for campus-wide replacement developed through negotiated rulemaking required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The full list can be found here: http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/text/idc1-033734.pdf

What is the plan for bringing all school facilities into good condition?
The Department is working with Congress on a plan to improve all school facilities and ensure safe, appropriate, and healthy learning environments for 21st century teaching and learning. Some progress has been made:

- In Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016, we received funding to complete construction for the final three schools on the 2004 campus construction list: Beatrice Rafferty School (ME), Cove Day School (AZ), and Little Singer Community School (AZ).
- 31 repair and maintenance projects are underway in Fiscal Year 16 to address high priority health and safety deficiencies in BIE school facilities
- We published the 2016 Replacement School List and identified the top 10 schools to be replaced. We have received funding to begin the planning effort, and the Department continues to work with Congress to obtain design and construction funding for these schools.

With the $11.2M appropriated by Congress in Fiscal Year 16 for replacing an individual school building in need of replacement, we are working to replace the Bug O Nay Ge Shig High School.
What are the plans for the facilities, safety, and environmental programs?
The newly created School Operations Division will oversee, manage, and operate the school facilities program. The reorganization consolidates authority to operate education facilities, safety, and property functions under the BIE. This will allow the BIE to eliminate redundancy and work fragmentation, improve the condition and operation of education facilities, and strengthen the BIE’s technical assistance capability. The BIE is committed to delivering quality customer service by being responsive, flexible, innovative, and efficient. The Central Office in Washington, DC will house new positions related to Facilities management:

- The Facilities Specialist (Education) will provide educational construction expertise in the facilities function to develop education specific guidelines for modernizing/replacing school facilities
- The Facilities Specialist (Environment) will provide overall policy and guidance, oversight and accountability of the BIE Environmental/Energy and Sustainability Program.

The proposed realignment will establish Facilities Teams at each of the three ADD’s, with engineers, architects, safety specialists, housing specialists, and property specialists to address facility, safety, and environmental issues. Functional experts will support the teams from the BIE Regional Office in Albuquerque, NM.

Will facilities and contracting be reorganized under BIE?
Yes. Acquisitions and grants will be realigned and restructured under the BIE Director. An office will be established with acquisition teams specializing in school goods and services, construction, and grants administration. The teams also will have acquisition planners to assist schools in developing and planning their acquisition and procurement requirements in a timely manner.

Schools

How will the schools respond to ERC’s and how do we prioritize which schools need the most support?
ERCs are the source of first response to schools. ERCs will respond to schools based on needs assessment and performance data. Supports will be allocated to schools based on collaboration between ERC staff and division leadership, with guidance and direction from the BIE Director, the Chief Academic Officer and other headquarters staff.

How do small reservation schools recruit teachers?
Recruiting and retaining teachers, especially our most remote and most historically challenged schools, is a longstanding systemic challenge for BIE. Following the direction of Secretarial Order 3334 and the Blueprint for Reform, recruitment and retention of effective educators is a high priority for the whole organization. We are committed to changing results in those schools that have struggled to attract and retain educators in the past.
Through a partnership with TNTP, the HR office is developing streamlined processes for the recruitment of teachers and principals and for other key BIE positions. The BIE will also hire, for the first time ever, a full-time teacher and principal recruiter. The recruiter, an expert in the field of educational networking and placement, will develop and implement recruitment strategies for BIE-operated schools and provide technical assistance to BIE-funded grant schools.

BIE has also developed a marketing plan to promote and fill employee vacancies located throughout BIE’s 183 schools and regional offices across 23 states. The main priorities outlined in the marketing and recruitment plan include materials development; identification of strategic partnership to support recruitment at the local, regional, and national level; and an advertising campaign that encompasses online and print advertisements, targeted emails, job fairs, social media outreach, and commercial job recruitment websites.

These efforts will help all of our schools, and especially those on small reservations and in extremely rural areas, to recruit qualified teachers. We are also working on a Teacher Equity Plan to ensure that all BIE students, regardless of which school they attend, have equal access to highly qualified educators.

**What are examples of other educational programs at each level of the new BIE that have been proven to work?**

There are schools in the BIE that are examples of success in our community. We are proud of our schools with consistently high growth and relatively high achievement compared to similar schools, like Sequoyah Indian School, Navajo Preparatory Academy, Chittimacha Tribal School, and others. We know that we can improve our results, in part by learning more from these examples.

The Blueprint for Reform is modeled in part on the successful implementation of reform in the Navajo schools between 2010 and 2014. The Navajo Schools serve as an example that it is possible within BIE to improve results more than one school at a time. Again, we could do better, even in the Navajo School Division, but their track record is a source of optimism.

The BIE is collaborating with organizations with national records of accomplishment of success, such as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Teach for America, and TNTP. They have achieved positive results in classrooms and schools in BIE and across the country and can help reshape our system. We have support from organizations that improve State and Local Education Agencies, like the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Education Delivery Institute, and we are collaborating with organizations like the National Indian Education Association, who are committed to improving results in our community.

**If we are to be assisting the schools/tribes, will we get specific training on how to assist these schools?**

It is one of the BIE’s highest priorities to develop models for providing results-oriented technical assistance to schools and tribes. The ERCs began work on these efforts in March 2016, as soon as the Blueprint for Reform received its final greenlight from Congress. The leaders of the three school divisions, with the support of the Acting Chief Academic Officer are creating technical assistance
modules, including ones on engaging tribal leaders and one on using instructional rounds to improve academic performance in schools.

Other

Are there any other tribes that will be working on their own accountability workbook?*
The Navajo Nation alternative accountability workbook is currently going through the clearance process at DOI and the Department of Education. Other tribes have indicated an interest in alternative accountability workbooks. BIE will continue to provide technical assistance to tribes as requested.

How will professional development be determined and how will we follow through with offering continuous support of professional development at the school level?
DOI and BIE will have ongoing professional development opportunities. This answer responds only for those controlled by the BIE. Professional development opportunities within the BIE will be determined by the Director in collaboration with division leaders. Although opportunities will be flexible and responsive to the needs of the respective office, in the next year we should all expect that some professional development opportunities will focus on implementation of the BIE’s reform, including development of a shared understanding of the rationale and methods of our reform, as well as continuous improvement based on data.

What plans are prepared for future changes that impact schools that want Tribal Controlled status?
There is growing demand for schools to switch to the Tribal Controlled model. BIE will provide Technical Assistance to schools that want to make this change. The reorganization created a new position focused on Sovereignty in Education in the Director’s Office to develop a programmatic response to this demand. Once schools make the transition, they will be supported by the Tribal Controlled Schools Division and the BIE.

What upcoming legislation do we need to be informed of and how will we track these legislations/bills?*
BIE will be hiring a Management Analyst in the Director’s Office who will be responsible for providing updates about new legislation to BIE staff. We will continue to work with the Department’s Congressional and Legislative Affairs Office.

How will updated equipment be issued?
We have purchase requests in FBMS for copiers for ten ERCs and expect acquisitions will have the contracts issued prior to year-end cut-off. We have prepared acquisition packages for laptops for both DPA and School Operations and hope to order needed equipment by year-end. During the first quarter of the new fiscal year, we can order any remaining equipment needed.

Is there any way for purchase orders, for schools, to be issued in a timely manner? *
While we continue to work through BIA contracting officers, we continue to improve our relationship with them to ensure our purchase requests are processed in a timely manner. You can use
your government charge card for micro purchases that are $3,500 or less and services up to $2,500. We have also run a report to identify the number of actions in the past year based on dollar thresholds that can help us identify where training issues are, the need for additional staff with FBMS access, and the need for accelerated planning or exceptions that we will explore with the Department. We are working to see where the bottlenecks are and how we can resolve them. Should a division or office need training, the School Operations Division will provide it.

**How will BIE be working with BIA to be successful?**
The BIA will provide technical assistance, training, and mentoring to ensure a smooth transition to the newly established BIE School Operations Division. The BIE and BIA will work together to ensure service and support to schools are not disrupted during the transition and implementation period.

**How does the BIE plan to build trust and credibility in the Navajo District when there are many schools that have been impacted with declining enrollment, lack of trust in the District leadership, and stakeholders in a state of confusion on whether they will continue as BIE operated schools or schools taken over by the Department of Dine’ Education?**
The Acting BIE Director, ADD for Navajo, and the Chief Transformation Officer have met with the Navajo DODE to engage in open dialogue about their concerns. The Navajo ADD office is available to offer support and guidance to schools as needed.