



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

Dear Tribal Leaders and Leaders of BIE-funded Schools:

In today's global economy, a high-quality education is not just a pathway to opportunity but a vital route to success. In recognition of this fact, I am working diligently with the President, Interior Secretary Jewell, and others in the Administration, in partnership with tribal nations, to improve American Indian students' access to a world-class education that will prepare them to be the leaders of tribes, communities, and our country.

While these efforts to significantly improve Federal support for students in schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) (tribally controlled schools and BIE-operated schools) will take time to implement, there are resources and flexibilities that BIE-funded schools can take advantage of now to improve educational opportunities for Native American students.

BIE-funded schools receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), through the BIE, from a variety of ED formula grant programs. These funds may be used for a wide range of activities that meet the needs of Native American students. In response to questions from the field regarding permitted uses of these resources, we have created guidance that will help schools maximize the effectiveness of these Federal dollars to best support the needs of their students.

I encourage you to take a close look at the resources and flexibilities described in the enclosed list of activities, which is organized by funding source and identifies possible uses of funds. You will notice that funds from various grant programs can be used to improve classrooms, fund family literacy programs, and purchase technology and technological upgrades, to name just a few examples. BIE-funded schools also have access to funds that may be used in a wide variety of ways to strengthen instruction and school leadership, and thereby increase student academic achievement.

For questions about this document, please contact Susan Benbow in ED's Risk Management Service at [Susan.Benbow@ed.gov](mailto:Susan.Benbow@ed.gov), or (202) 245-6230. I hope you find this information useful, and that it will help you marshal these resources to effectively address the needs of students in BIE-funded schools.

Sincerely,

/s/

Arne Duncan

cc: Interior Secretary Sally Jewell