



# BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION

# **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

2024-2030



CULTURAL IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE | WELLNESS | STUDENT SUCCESS

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Education  
1849 C Street NW, MIB-3610  
Washington, DC 20240

Osiyo,

The 2024–2030 Strategic Direction outlines a purposeful approach and student-centered path forward for Indian education. It outlines how the Bureau of Indian Education will realize its renewed vision by placing students, their cultures, and their well-being at the center of every decision.

Over the next five years, the BIE will focus on three overarching priorities: cultural identity and language, wellness, and student success. These priorities are supported by ten targeted strategies developed through meaningful engagement with a broad range of BIE stakeholders. This plan honors tribal sovereignty by empowering local decision-making while ensuring the financial and technical support necessary to provide a culturally grounded, comprehensive education.

The Strategic Direction is designed to be flexible and responsive, allowing us to adapt based on ongoing consultation with Tribal Nations. Through regular progress monitoring and transparent reporting, we will remain accountable to our core values: excellence, respect, responsibility, partnership, and integrity. These values guide every aspect of our mission.

Purposefully crafted to meet the diverse needs of the schools, colleges, and universities we serve, the Strategic Direction keeps the BIE student at the center. Every component reflects our commitment to preparing and empowering students to lead healthy, successful lives.

We are proud to share the 2024–2030 Strategic Direction and look forward to partnering with all stakeholders in its implementation. Together, we will continue to champion the promise and potential of our students.

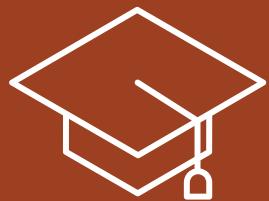
Wado,

Tony L. Dearman, Director



# 400,000

*Students Served*



## 40,000

*BIE K-12 Students*



## 325,000

*Johnson O'Malley Students Supported*

## 183

*Elementary & Secondary Schools*



## 64

*Reservations*



## 23

*States*



## 35

*Post-Secondary Schools Funded*



## 24,500

*Students at BIE-Funded Higher Education Institutions*

## BIE CURRENT STATUS AND IMPACT

The Bureau of Indian Education supports educational opportunities for more than 400,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students across the United States through a comprehensive system of direct services and funding programs spanning early childhood to postsecondary education.

BIE serves approximately 40,000 K-12 students at 183 elementary and secondary schools on 64 reservations in 23 states. This network includes 55 BIE-operated and 128 Tribally controlled schools, all providing culturally relevant education grounded in Tribal languages, traditions, and community values. In addition, through the Johnson O'Malley program, BIE supports the educational and cultural needs of more than 325,000 Native students enrolled in public schools and other eligible institutions.

BIE also provides early childhood and special education services that reach tens of thousands of students and families across tribal communities. More than 34,000 children and families are supported through early learning programs such as the Family and Child Education program, IDEA Part C, and other early childhood initiatives that promote school readiness, language development, and family engagement in ways that honor and reflect Tribal cultures. Through IDEA Part B and Part C, BIE serves over 6,000 Native students with disabilities from birth through age 21, ensuring access to early intervention services, special education, and related supports that are both legally compliant and culturally responsive.

In postsecondary education, BIE advances opportunities for Native students by directly operating Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, which enroll approximately 2,000 students annually. Additionally, BIE provides funding to 29 Tribal Colleges and Universities and two Tribal Technical Colleges, which are tribally controlled and serve more than 22,500 students nationwide. These institutions play a critical role in preserving Native languages, advancing tribal self-determination, and preparing students for careers and leadership in their communities.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS, FRAMEWORK, AND PHILOSOPHY

In 2018, the Bureau of Indian Education launched the 2018-2023 BIE Strategic Direction to transform the BIE into a service-minded institution and provide a high-quality education to students. The 2018-2023 Strategic Direction was based on the collaborative work and expertise of parents, students, teachers, staff, tribal leadership, and those invested in Native American education.. This five-year plan encompassed six goals, 26 strategies, 104 milestones, and 326 actions that instilled the values of excellence, focus, integrity, respect, and service throughout the Bureau.

## 2024-2030 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The 2024-2030 Strategic Direction was developed in partnership with students, families, employees, tribal leaders, educational partners, and community members. Their ideals are reflected in the Bureau's vision, mission, overarching priorities, strategies, and core values. The BIE's strategic planning process is rooted in the evidence-based practice of conducting research, benchmarking, environmental scans, and, most importantly, an iterative process of collecting input and feedback from BIE stakeholders. What sets the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction apart is the recognition that each tribal sovereign nation holds the solutions to the challenges, and we have demonstrated our commitment to supporting those solutions throughout this process.

### Research and Benchmarking

Before the BIE began developing the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction, we engaged in research on disciplined strategic planning for school systems. We recognized that as an educational agency, our planning impacts the trajectory of students' lives for future generations and must be thought of differently than a strategic plan for a business. We also conducted benchmarking of our existing Strategic Direction against the plans of the highest-performing state education agencies and local education agencies in the country.

Research indicates that strategic plans for educational systems are a referendum on the principles of the organization and should reflect our beliefs about what really

matters. The document should outline the actions the organization will take to fulfill its mission through backward mapping in an informed and intentional set of aligned choices to generate the desired outcome. We learned that an effective strategic plan describes the work to be done, accounts for capacity, stipulates leadership action, and addresses challenges that must be overcome. Finally, we found that we must include opportunities to collect important data to improve the strategy when implementing the plan.

### Environmental Scan

The world we live in today is not the same as it was decades ago, and in recent years the landscape of education has shifted dramatically. The BIE has made sincere and extensive efforts to reengage our stakeholders in the strategic planning process to ensure that the plan is reflective of current needs, concerns, and information. The BIE has used the information gathered in these engagements to inform the Strategic Direction. Outreach will continue throughout the five-year cycle to make course corrections, tailoring it to the lived experiences of the communities we serve.

### Seeking Multiple Avenues of Input

Input is especially valuable and adds insight into our strengths and weaknesses, what educating future generations should mean, and what the BIE's priorities need to be to achieve the vision and mission.



We developed a questionnaire and conducted listening sessions and tribal consultations to solicit feedback from employees, students and families, tribal leaders, educational partners, and community members. The following section, Summary of Feedback, provides a detailed synopsis of our listening sessions and tribal consultations, including the number of surveys returned, sessions held, participants involved, comments received, and locations visited. It also encompasses an analysis of the content of the data gathered during these engagements.

**Questionnaires:** To honor the input provided during the 2018-2023 Strategic Direction cycle and to maintain momentum on the progress we have made, we utilized the existing BIE mission, vision, goals, strategies, and core values as a springboard to develop two questionnaires – one for internal stakeholders and the other for external stakeholders. In response, we received extensive quantitative and qualitative data on the components of the Strategic Direction as well as which actions are most critical to move the BIE ahead for the next five years.

**Listening Sessions:** To reach a broad audience of educational partners, the BIE held listening sessions in conjunction with the 54th Annual National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Convention & Trade Show and the 80th Annual National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Convention & Marketplace in 2023. The BIE also held a listening session with a postsecondary focus at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) legislative session in 2024. During and following the listening sessions, feedback was obtained in person and through written comments. The transcripts from the listening sessions were coded and analyzed, and the transcript data along with the questionnaire data were used to develop a draft of the Strategic Direction, which was then taken to tribal consultation.

**Tribal Consultations:** To gain more input into the draft of the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction, the BIE continued the iterative process of soliciting feedback by hosting tribal consultations to hear from tribal leaders and other community members about the content. These tribal consultations were strategically located in different geographic regions throughout the country and virtually. Similar to the process used with the listening sessions, the transcripts from the tribal consultations were coded through thematic analysis, and the data directly informed the content of the final 2024-2030 Strategic Direction.



## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

In addition to collecting feedback for the Strategic Direction components at listening sessions and tribal consultations, many participants provided additional comments to help guide the philosophy, development, and implementation of the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction. Several key themes emerged from our stakeholders that we deliberately incorporated regarding the importance of local control, stakeholder participation, and process.

First, we were asked to prioritize tribal and community control of education to promote independence and remove one-size-fits-all programming to provide Tribally Controlled Schools with the flexibility to use their own methods to achieve strategic priorities. This requires a departure from top-down approaches that can interfere with school operations.

We were commended for soliciting widespread stakeholder participation, including students, to gather a wide range of perspectives and ensure the Strategic Direction aligns with the needs and values of the communities served. We found that tribal leadership, school boards, and educational partners want to be meaningfully involved in strategic planning, and this input is seen in every aspect of the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction.

It was asked that the BIE Strategic Direction mention all age groups, particularly recognizing students at tribal colleges and extending support to encourage education at any age.

With regard to the Strategic Direction itself and the implementation processes, we were encouraged to continue efforts to shorten and streamline the document for ease of understanding and communication. We were provided feedback to clarify and standardize terminology, minimize the use of acronyms, and clearly define terms and acronyms for all audiences to avoid confusion and maintain respect for the communities served. Additionally, we were asked to avoid setting milestones and targets until the strategies were fully developed.

By implementing these recommendations, the BIE created a more effective 2024-2030 Strategic Direction that honors tribal sovereignty, encourages participation, and meets the comprehensive educational and cultural needs of tribal communities.





## **SUMMARY OF LISTENING SESSION AND QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

The BIE received 607 surveys with 138 qualitative responses and comments from roughly 175 individuals in three listening sessions. This feedback, along with the input from the 2018-2023 Strategic Direction, was used to develop a draft of the upcoming 2024-2030 Strategic Direction.

Four general themes emerged in the thematic analysis of the transcript proceedings from the listening sessions and questionnaires: family involvement, Pre-K to 12 acknowledgment, emphasis on collaboration, and asset mindset. Four themes emerged for the BIE vision regarding feelings of neglect, a student-centric focus, a call for sovereignty, and a desire for local empowerment. Four themes emerged for the BIE mission regarding cultural relevance in education, language and cultural identity, stakeholder engagement, and communication. Four themes emerged for the BIE core values regarding tribal sovereignty, the priority of children in community schools, the integrity and reputation of educational institutions, and incorporating student voices. Twenty-six themes emerged in the overarching priority areas of high-quality instruction, standards, assessments, and professional learning; sovereignty and cultural identity; behavioral health, wellness, and safety; and data-driven performance management and organizational excellence.



### Summary of Tribal Consultation Data

From January to March 2024, the BIE hosted six tribal consultations and five student groups to gather input from tribal leaders and other community members on the content of the draft 2024-2030 Strategic Direction. The consultations were held in geographically dispersed regions and virtually to gain maximum participation, which resulted in input from 407 participants. We additionally documented 217 written comments. This valuable feedback shaped the draft into the final 2024-2030 Strategic Direction.

In the thematic analysis of the transcript proceedings from the tribal consultations, feedback was obtained on the proposed vision, mission, overarching priorities, strategies, and core values. The comments indicated a desire for a clear and specific vision statement that reflects the BIE's role and commitment to supporting the educational needs of its students. The suggestions for the mission statement pointed to a clear articulation of a supportive role for the BIE that acknowledges the importance of cultural preservation and sovereignty,

emphasizes comprehensive student development, and aligns with broader educational goals and values. The discussion of the BIE's overarching priorities reflected a multifaceted educational approach that seeks to honor tribal knowledge systems and prepare students for a variety of futures while preserving their cultural heritage. Thematic analysis of the comments regarding strategies suggested a focus on empowering local communities, enhancing educational quality and access, supporting teacher and student development, and ensuring the preservation and integration of cultural identity within the educational system. Several principles were derived from the comments regarding core values that aim to create an educational environment that honors and integrates Native American cultural values, promotes partnership and collaboration, and ensures that policies and practices support the needs of each student.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION LISTENING SESSION AND TRIBAL CONSULTATION SCHEDULE

DATE	LOCATION
October 18, 2023	Albuquerque, NM (NIEA)
November 14, 2023	New Orleans, LA (NCAI)
January 24, 2024	Puyallup, WA
January 31, 2024	Cherokee, NC
February 7, 2024	Chandler, AZ
February 9, 2024	Washington, DC (AIHEC)
March 4, 2024	Farmington, NM
March 6, 2024	Rapid City, SD
March 8, 2024	Virtual

## 2024-2030 STRATEGIC DIRECTION FRAMEWORK AND TERMINOLOGY

When an organization embarks on a strategic improvement journey, it is essential that all parties are grounded in the terminology, and this sentiment was echoed in the tribal consultation feedback. This ensures no meaning is compromised and helps generate common understanding. The circular graphic illustrates the interconnectedness of each element of the Strategic Direction. Each element is essential for delivering a comprehensive education to BIE students. Reflecting the communities' cultural lifeways, each element of success is intricately linked with the others, forming a cohesive and supportive framework. This interdependence ensures that every aspect of the educational journey contributes to the overall success, mirroring the harmony and balance in traditional practices.



### VISION

What we aspire to achieve

### MISSION

What we are doing to achieve our Vision

### OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

The high-level targets that help us achieve our Mission and realize our Vision

### STRATEGIES

Cross-functional projects that last multiple years and impact the entire organization

### CORE VALUES

Guiding organizational principles underpinning how we work and interact

## 2024-2030 STRATEGIC DIRECTION PHILOSOPHY

### Student Centered

The BIE's 2024-2030 Strategic Direction has been crafted with the student at its core, recognizing them not only as the focal point for our endeavors but also as the custodians of our history and traditions. At the BIE, we are committed to nurturing the comprehensive development of every student, rooted in the rich tapestry of their cultural heritage and identity. Every facet of this plan was intentionally designed to support and empower the wide-ranging needs of all students within our communities, ensuring that they receive the tools, resources, and opportunities needed to thrive culturally, socially, emotionally, physically, academically, and vocationally.

### Fewer, Focused Components

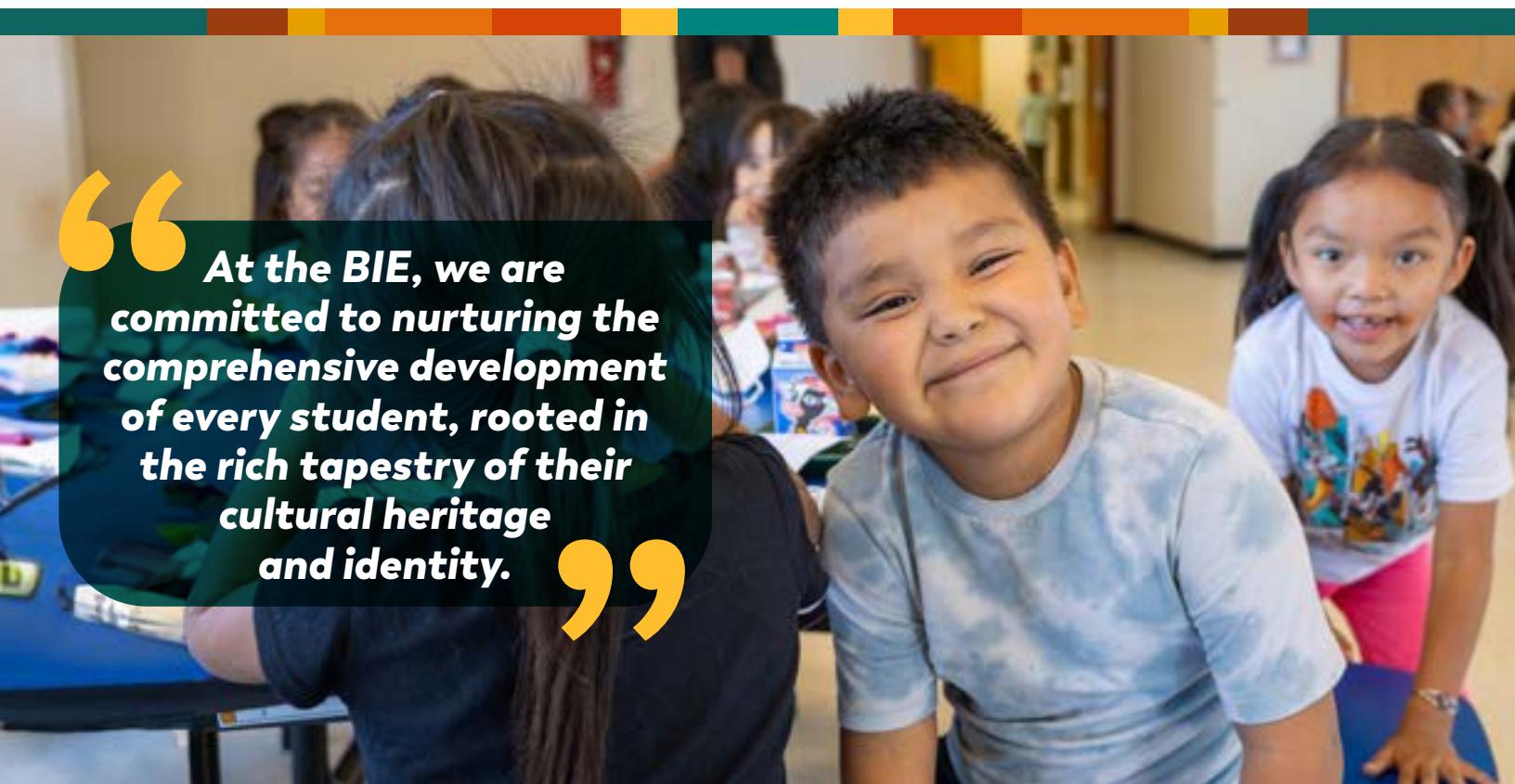
The 2018-2023 Strategic Direction was aspirational and encompassed 6 goals, 26 strategies, 104 milestones, and 326 actions. The plans of the highest-performing state and local education agencies contained, at most, 12 strategies and 20 milestones. Streamlining the BIE's vast plan into fewer, focused components honors the input provided and the work that was done on the previous Strategic Direction. This refined approach will help the BIE concentrate and prioritize efforts on what is most important to our stakeholders in a coherent and evidence-based plan.

### Tangible, Achievable, and Meaningful Roadmap

The 2024-2030 Strategic Direction is a tangible and achievable plan that resonates with all stakeholders, having been developed collaboratively with their invaluable input. This living document can be adapted as the Bureau evolves or as milestones are reached, serving as a dynamic roadmap to guide our path forward to achieve the mission and vision. By focusing on what truly matters to our communities, this plan ensures that our efforts are aligned with the needs and aspirations of those we serve.

### Eliminate Silos

In the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction, the BIE shifted from having distinct and separate goals to overarching priorities. Each overarching priority is important and serves as a critical means to achieving the mission and vision. For each overarching priority, one or more strategies were developed. Some strategies address more than one overarching priority, and some overarching priorities are connected to more than one strategy. This change promotes greater participation from all parties and honors the fact that every individual is a valuable part of the greater collective whole, working collaboratively towards all priorities rather than working in isolated goal teams.



“ At the BIE, we are committed to nurturing the comprehensive development of every student, rooted in the rich tapestry of their cultural heritage and identity. ”

# 2024-2030 STRATEGIC DIRECTION COMPONENTS

This Strategic Direction serves as a roadmap for what the BIE will achieve, how we will achieve it, and how we will measure success. It outlines the vision and mission, bolstered by overarching priorities, strategies, and core values to shape how we will accomplish the work. The 2024-2030 Strategic Direction provides the flexibility for tribes and communities to implement it in a way that works best for them.

## VISION

### **Excellence in Student-Centered, Indian Education.**

The vision statement is an idealized picture of what we will look like in the future. The vision is what we desire and aspire to achieve.

Stakeholders requested a vision statement that is clear, specific, and reflective of the BIE's role and commitment to supporting the educational needs of BIE students in a culturally relevant, empowering, and forward-looking way.

## MISSION

### **In partnership with tribal nations, the BIE promotes a culturally-based, comprehensive education that prepares and empowers students to be healthy and successful.**

The mission statement is connected to the vision in that it explains what we are doing to achieve the vision. The mission defines our core purpose and reason for existence and communicates the BIE's commitment to fulfilling our broad societal responsibilities.

Stakeholders underscored the need for a mission statement that clearly acknowledges the importance of cultural preservation, emphasizes comprehensive student development, and aligns with broader educational goals and values. It was stated that the BIE should be articulated as a facilitator or supporter rather than the preeminent provider, acknowledging that the work is done at the local level.



## OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

The overarching priorities are high-level, long-range targets and critical areas of focus. Each priority is essential and serves as a key means to drive us toward realizing our mission and vision.

Suggestions from stakeholders indicated a desire to prioritize cultural identity, comprehensive education, lifelong learning and wellness, and redefined achievement to create a multifaceted educational approach that seeks to honor tribal communities' knowledge systems, preserve their cultural heritage, and prepare students for a variety of futures. A recurring theme was that education should be about the whole child, not solely academic achievement, in order to nurture all aspects of a student's development, including cultural, emotional, and mental well-being. Over the next five years, the BIE will pursue the following three overarching priorities, each designed to collectively bring the vision to life.

### Cultural Identity and Language

Stakeholder feedback strongly emphasized preserving and revitalizing cultural identities and tribal languages as vital aspects of education. These elements are seen as central to the students' sense of self and community and as critical to their success and well-being. The BIE will collaborate with tribes to support maintaining culture and language as part of education while providing resources for developing culturally appropriate curricula, including native language and culture programs.

### Wellness

Wellness and well-being were frequently mentioned as essential components of education. The need for funding and service providers, especially in rural areas, was noted, suggesting that health and wellness are foundational for successful learning. The BIE will implement comprehensive plans and protocols to ensure student safety, security, and well-being while addressing school safety concerns to create secure and supportive environments.

### Student Success

There was a call from stakeholders to redefine academic achievement and align it more closely with tribes ways of knowing and learning, with an emphasis on personal development, problem-solving, and preparation for life beyond school. Lifelong learning was highlighted as a priority, with a focus on continuous growth and learning beyond formal education settings. The BIE will support the development of strategic thinkers and learners who can apply problem-solving skills in various contexts to empower students to successfully lead their sovereign nations toward a self-determined future.



# STRATEGIES

Strategies are cross-functional projects and specific approaches designed to achieve the overarching priorities in the Strategic Direction. Strategies may last multiple years and impact the entire organization, and some strategies are aligned to more than one overarching priority. Strategies serve as the roadmap, tailored to address the school system's needs, challenges, and opportunities.

Thematic analysis of the consultation comments revealed several strategies for the BIE to consider. Collectively, these strategies suggest a focus on empowering local communities, enhancing educational quality and access, supporting teacher and student development, and ensuring the preservation and integration of cultural identity within the educational system. The following ten strategies address how the BIE will accomplish the overarching priorities.

## **Revitalize and Maintain Cultures and Languages**

Partner with and support tribes, including tribal colleges and universities, to revitalize and maintain cultures and languages, as native language proficiency contributes to student well-being, outcomes and performance, sense of identity, and connection to tribal communities through immersion of heritage and traditions.

## **Comprehensive Wellness Framework**

Implement a comprehensive wellness framework that includes students' physical, mental, emotional, cultural, safety, and social needs. Highlight and provide templates for school-based behavioral health and safety practices, protocols, and policies tailored for the BIE's student population.

## **Future Readiness**

Emphasize career readiness and workforce development, including the integration of entrepreneurship and 21st-century skills.



## **Educational Technology and Innovation**

Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to support technology and innovation in the organization, the workforce, and in teaching and learning.

## **Comprehensive Framework for School Improvement**

Improve schools by focusing on the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: turnaround leadership, talent development, instructional transformation, and culture shift. Provide professional learning opportunities, expanded student learning opportunities, and responsive supports and interventions for students.



## **Communication and Outreach**

Engage in effective communication and outreach with all stakeholders, including tribal leaders, school board members, tribal education departments, and educators.

## **Early Childhood and Postsecondary Partnership**

Continue to partner with early childhood development organizations, tribes, and postsecondary institutions, such as tribally controlled universities, to increase access and support.





## Data Management System for Accountability and Support

Develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive data management system to actively collect and analyze data with a real-time, strategic view of the data. Implement a system of accountability and support with guidance and training.

## Funding and Budget Alignment

Ensure that funding and resources are allocated to support the BIE's mission and strategies, particularly in areas such as language programs, career pathways, vocational training, technology, and teacher recruitment and retention.



## Facilities Management Plan

Develop a comprehensive facilities management plan to ensure the BIE facilities are well-maintained, safe, and conducive to the educational success of its students. The transfer of facilities functions from the BIA to the BIE under Secretarial Order No. 3334 represents a significant opportunity for the BIE to enhance its facilities management practices.





# CORE VALUES

Core values are the fundamental beliefs and principles that guide how we approach our work and how we interact with students, family members, tribal community members, employees, and all stakeholders, both internal and external. These values shape our decision-making and are intended to be infused into everything we do at the BIE, ultimately leading to the successful completion of our vision, mission, overarching priorities, and strategies.

Collectively, these principles aim to create an educational environment that honors and integrates Native American cultural values, promotes partnership and collaboration, and ensures that policies and practices support each student's needs. In carrying out this work, the BIE is committed to applying the following core values to how we communicate, behave, and treat one another.

## **Excellence**

Commitment to high standards through continuous self-assessment and improvement

## **Respect**

Support and recognize each tribal community's culture, language and sovereignty

## **Responsibility**

Serve and support students and communities, model core values, and be accountable

## **Partnership**

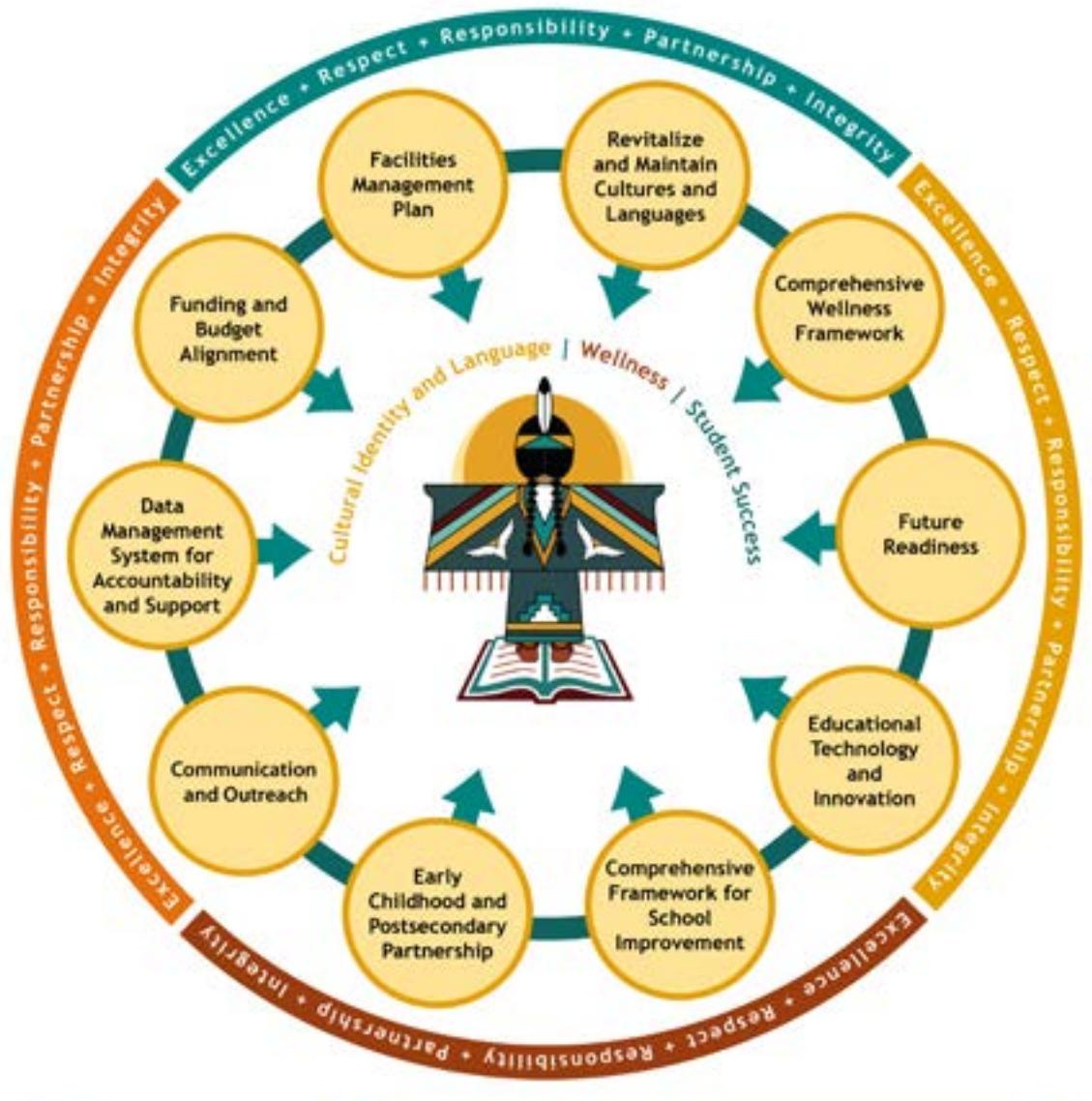
The facilitation of responsive, active, and effective consultation, collaboration, and communication while honoring tribal sovereignty

## **Integrity**

Maintain high standards of character and professionalism as the foundation upon which the Bureau is built

## HOW THE COMPONENTS FIT TOGETHER

It is essential to visualize all of the 2024-2030 Strategic Direction components together. The BIE student is at the center, with every decision, effort, and action made with them in mind. Above the student are the overarching priorities, reflecting what tribal leaders, community members, employees, and students have identified as a multifaceted educational approach that seeks to honor tribes' knowledge systems and prepare students for a variety of futures while preserving their cultural heritage. The next layer consists of the strategies, the cross-functional projects that impact the entire Bureau, which are pointing toward the student and demonstrating how the BIE will accomplish the overarching priorities. Encircling the entire graphic are the core values, the way our stakeholders requested we interact to generate collaboration and success in accomplishing all we set forth to achieve. Lastly, the vision and mission are at the base of the graphic, grounding us in our aspirations and actions, using clear language and affirming the BIE's commitment to supporting the educational needs of BIE students in a culturally relevant, empowering, and forward-looking way.



Excellence in  
Student-Centered,  
Indian Education

In partnership with tribal nations, the BIE promotes  
a culturally-based, comprehensive education that prepares  
and empowers students to be healthy and successful.

# OPERATIONAL PLANS AND PROGRESS MONITORING

The Bureau of Indian Education's Strategic Direction will continue to evolve based on the research and benchmarking we conduct along with the input we receive. Operational planning and progress monitoring are two integral actions of successful implementation, and as a Federal Bureau, we honor and value the responsibility for transparency throughout this process.

## OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The operational plan, which includes milestones, actions, and timelines, is developed collaboratively between divisions to align all tasks with the mission, vision, overarching priorities, and strategies in the Strategic Direction. While each party contributes differently to each facet of the plan, coordination is critical to ensure that efforts are complementary and supportive of one another, thus reducing duplicative or conflicting efforts. All parties will develop plans informed by data and performance trends, identify practices to realize the articulated vision, and establish milestones for gauging progress. The leadership team will use the continuous improvement process to develop and pursue its operational plan while monitoring and addressing the results to ensure full implementation of the Strategic Direction.

As part of the continuous improvement process, the team will revisit the Bureau's Strategic Direction, examine the results, data, and student outcomes to determine progress, and make revisions as necessary. Establishing timelines, assigning roles and responsibilities, monitoring routines, and tracking evidence of success are all integral to the improvement process and will be the ongoing work of the BIE. Timelines and tasks will be updated to maintain the pace needed to accomplish the strategies.

## PROGRESS MONITORING

Progress reviews will be conducted at all levels to assess our organizational advances in implementing the Strategic Direction. These meetings are to be positive, student-centered, data-informed, and focused on continuous improvement. Discussions will identify areas of success, challenges, and support needs. The operational plan will be monitored at regular intervals to ensure fidelity as the team verifies progress in completing specific milestones and actions.

Tracking evidence of success is integral to the improvement process. The BIE will establish key metrics around items such

as native language accessibility, graduation, and attendance to track progress on the overarching priorities. The success of each strategy will be regularly monitored through key performance indicators (KPIs). These metrics will be collaboratively developed to ensure alignment with each overarching priority and strategy and will measure what is most important to stakeholders. For transparency, these metrics and our progress toward achieving them will be published in a publicly available annual report. Internally, the BIE will also track progress metrics for each milestone within the operational plan. These progress metrics will be formative lead measures to track the critical activities driving the KPIs and key metrics.

The immediate next steps to standardize progress monitoring within the BIE include selecting a platform to enter plans and progress data, developing common metrics to gauge organizational performance, and conducting training at all levels for developing and entering operational plans and progress aligned with the Strategic Direction.

Additionally, the BIE will publish individual school report cards and a BIE Consolidated Report Card. These reports will provide stakeholders with data on enrollment, attendance, graduation rates, and test performance in reading, mathematics, and science. They will also include information on language proficiency, educator qualifications, and per pupil expenditure.

# ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH ALIGNED ASSESSMENTS

Integrating valid and reliable assessments into the curriculum ensures access to accurate and timely student and school-level data that can be used for educational decision making. The strategic use of this information facilitates high-caliber technical assistance and professional learning for school and department personnel while reinforcing policies, procedures, and decision-making processes that underpin a high-performing, accountable educational system.

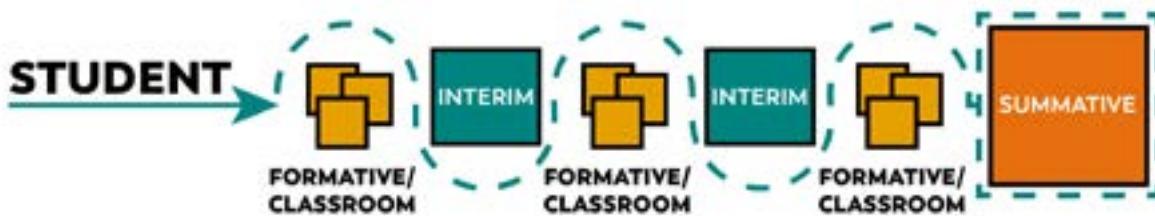
## BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

To better serve our students, educators, and families, the BIE provides a balanced assessment system that offers interim assessments that are connected to academic content standards and the summative assessment. Additionally, the BIE is working to include culturally-relevant items in the balanced assessment system. The balanced assessment system supports educators in strengthening their understanding of the role assessments play in informing instruction throughout the school year and ultimately improving student outcomes. However, testing alone will not lead to improved student outcomes; it is important to review assessment data regularly to identify strengths and weaknesses within the school, classroom, and individual students. This is a key part of the informed instructional model utilizing data from formative/classroom, interim, and summative assessments to target specific areas of both success and improvement.

### Criterion-referenced Assessments

There are three types of criterion-referenced tests available to BIE-funded schools:

- Formative: Formative assessments occur daily in classrooms, providing educators with immediate feedback regarding student mastery of each standard that is taught. The data can be used to inform targeted and personalized instruction and support student learning.
- Interim: Interim assessments are administered two to three times per year on a bank of standards. Interim assessments provide a snapshot of student progress toward year-end expectations and can be used as a predictor of summative performance.
- Summative: Summative assessments are administered annually as an end-of-year test and measure course-level student proficiency to provide a large-scale comparison.



### Balanced Assessment System Benefits

The benefits of a balanced assessment system include:

- Assessments are coherent and aligned.
- Assessments are used to inform teaching and enhance learning.
- Students are provided feedback to improve their learning and build self-efficacy.
- The community shares the goal of improving student learning.
- Assessing becomes a continual process of improvement rather than a single event.

## Balanced Assessment System Grade Levels and Timelines

All BIE-funded schools are required to administer the BIE unified summative assessment unless both the BIE and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have granted a waiver. The BIE conducts assessments in the following grade spans for each assessment:

- English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics – Grades: 3-8, 11
- Science – Grades: 5, 8, 11
- Alternate ELA, Mathematics, Science (for students with cognitive disabilities as per IEP)
  - ELA/Mathematics: Grades: 3-8, 11
  - Science: Grades: 5, 8, 11
- English Language Proficiency – Grades: K-12

Summative-assessed grade levels in ELA and Mathematics (Grades 3-8, 11):

- Opt-in, no-cost interim assessments in ELA and Mathematics administered in fall and winter in Grades 3 through 8 and Grade 11
- Summative assessment administered in Grades 3 through 8 and Grade 11 for ELA and Mathematics, and Grades 5, 8, and 11 for Science



By weaving together formative, interim, and summative assessments into a coherent balanced assessment system in BIE-funded schools throughout the school year, assessments are transformed into tools for learning, not merely evaluations of learning.

## College Entrance Exams

College entrance exams serve as a tool for students who are looking for guidance as they navigate their college, career, or workforce journey. College entrance exams are standardized aptitude tests that measure verbal, mathematical, analytical, and writing skills. They are not designed to measure what students learn in school. Rather, as norm-referenced tests, they measure a student's potential, their strengths and weaknesses, and their ability to perform well in the future of their choosing. Two of the most widely recognized college entrance exams are the American College Test (ACT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and these are traditionally used by colleges and universities to make admissions decisions.

Currently, all BIE high schools do not consistently enter ACT and/or SAT assessment results in the student information system, and some schools do not administer college entrance exams to students. However, the SAT and ACT will be offered as a locally selected, nationally recognized assessment option in all Bureau Operated Schools. The results will be entered into the student information system and used to enhance the future readiness of all BIE students. To support this, technical assistance will be provided to ensure high schools properly enter ACT and/or SAT results in the student information system. By tracking this data, schools can provide more targeted support to students through academic advising, financial aid, scholarships, and more.

# GLOSSARY

## Accountability

The obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and transparently disclose the results. Accountability in education holds schools, districts, educators, and even students responsible for learning results. An accountability system is the set of policies and practices that states, districts, and schools use to measure how schools are performing for students, reward those that are addressing the needs of all students well, and provide support for those schools in need.

## Bureau Funded School

Schools funded by the BIE are either operated by the BIE or by tribes under contracts or grants.

## Bureau Operated School

Bureau Operated Schools (BOS) are under the direct auspices of the BIE.

## Continuous Improvement

The ongoing process of examining results, data, and student outcomes to determine progress and make revisions as necessary. Establishing timelines, assigning roles and responsibilities, and tracking evidence of success are all integral to the continuous improvement process.

## Core Values

Core values shape our decision-making and are intended to be infused into everything we do. They are the guiding principles and fundamental beliefs underpinning how we approach our work and interact with all internal and external stakeholders.

## Data Management System

An education data management system typically includes the ability to gather and report demographic, enrollment, graduation, and performance data; students' transcripts specifying courses taken and grades earned; school and district data, including staffing, auditing processes for data quality, validity, and reliability; and the ability to share data from preschool through postsecondary education data systems.

## Early Childhood Development Organizations

An Early Childhood Development Organization is any tribal, federal, state, or private entity that provides pre-kindergarten educational services.

## Future Readiness

When a student has the knowledge, skills, and personal competencies needed to be successfully employed. An example of being future ready or career ready is having the knowledge, skills, communication, problem-solving, collaboration, and perseverance needed to be qualified for a vocation of the student's choosing.

## Lifelong Learning

Having the desire, curiosity, and persistence to continuously learn for the sake of learning. Life-long learners pursue and take advantage of new learning opportunities and share knowledge and skills, so others may learn. Although public education concludes when a student graduates from high school or when students with disabilities reach age 21, schools strive to model and support students in asking questions, exploring ideas, and taking advantage of new learning opportunities in various settings. Hence, students value learning and see it as a continuous process to pursue after K-12 education.

## Milestones

Specific projects and actions we must accomplish to complete a strategy.

## Mission

In partnership with tribal nations, the BIE promotes a culturally-based, comprehensive education that prepares and empowers students to be healthy and successful.

## Operational Plan

Processes, procedures, and routines that strategically define work, track progress, and utilize data to improve productivity and efficiency while creating the conditions for innovation. Creating a plan and completing monthly status reports on actions to complete milestones are examples of performance management processes or routines.

## Overarching Priorities

Overarching priorities are high-level, long-range targets and critical areas of focus that will drive us toward realizing our mission and vision.

## Partnerships

An agreement where two or more individuals, groups, or organizations work together toward mutual goals. An educational partnership is where the focus is on enhancing student development and learning.

## Postsecondary Study

Any education beyond high school, including formal classes and learning in various public and private institutions and settings. Examples include technical training programs, industry certification programs, two or four-year colleges, and military schools.

## Strategies

Strategies are cross-functional projects and specific approaches designed to achieve the overarching priorities in the Strategic Direction. They may last multiple years and impact the entire organization. Strategies, tailored to address the needs, challenges, and opportunities within the school system, are the roadmap to achieve the mission and realize the vision and are aligned with the overarching priorities.

## Tribal Colleges and Universities

Postsecondary institutions that qualify for funding under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) or the Navajo Community College Act (25 U.S.C. 640a note); or is cited

in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note). Tribal colleges and universities include the two BIE-operated colleges and universities, Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, and the tribally operated colleges and universities.

## Tribally Controlled School

Tribally Controlled Schools (TCS) are run by individual federally recognized tribes with grants or contracts from the BIE.

## Vision

Excellence in Student-Centered, Indian Education.

## Wellness

Wellness is defined as a student's optimal quality of physical and behavioral health supported through physical activity, good nutrition, safe learning environments, and access to cultural, health, and behavioral health resources.