ANNUAL REPORT 2009
Bureau of Indian Education, Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

November 30, 2009
Letter from the Chairperson, Dr. Billie Jo Kipp

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report for the Bureau of Indian Education Advisory Board for Exceptional Children. This record chronicles the priorities and goals of the Board for 2008–2009. During the past year the Board has marked some major achievements in the area of special education of American Indian children in Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. The addition of four new members has added constituents from tribal chairman to Native American Parent Support groups to American Indian educational research. The addition of these new members and the constituents they represent has broadened the current scope of the BIE Advisory Board and has increased capacity of the Board to reach new and influential organizations to develop resources for BIE Special Education.

Our priorities include these:

- **Transition**—Support students with disabilities after they leave school and ensure that they are prepared for adulthood including higher education, competitive employment, and independent living.
- **Data**—Comprehensive plans and procedures to ensure accurate, reliable, and timely data collection and submissions for all BIE-funded schools.
- **Effective Communication**—Establish communication channels as an avenue for sharing information, to engage in building capacity of Advisory Board members and stakeholders (e.g., tribes, parents, school staff), and to serve as professional resources to one another.
- **Closing the Achievement Gap**—Close the achievement gap that exists between special education and general education students in BIE-funded schools.

The accomplishments of the past year have been truly gratifying: many of our members are developing programs within BIE such as web-based seminars, members have actively engaged in the Special Education Academy, the BIE Data Summit, and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) verification visit. This Board is engaged in being a resource and change agent for BIE Special Education.
The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children has begun plans on the 2009–2010 priorities and to align those priorities with the reauthorization of IDEA and NCLB. This Board is forward thinking, and the combination of informed board members is conducive to being prepared for the upcoming changes to Special Education.

This diverse team of people, working together with many stakeholders around Indian Country, has addressed issues related to the education of Native American children with disabilities within 184 schools that are located in 23 states, with most schools located in rural and reservation communities. We are pleased to be meaningful partners and advisors with the Bureau of Indian Education.

This begins my fourth year as chairperson of the BIE Advisory Board. I want to thank the Director of BIE Special Education, Gloria Yepa, for having had a successful program year. Additionally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the hard work and dedication that each Board member has brought to our meetings. I have never been more optimistic about the value of the BIE Special Education Program. I am confident that the productive capacities of the BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children will play a major role in helping to shape and mold the decision guiding our service to American Indian children in BIE-funded schools.

Dr. Billie Jo Kipp, Chair

History of the Board

After a one-year hiatus/absence, the current 15-member Board was appointed by Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne on November 4, 2008, to serve a two- or three-year term that expires November 4, 2010, and November 4, 2011, respectively. The Secretary of Interior also appointed Dr. Billie Jo Kipp as President of the Board. The Board is statutorily mandated and is expected to continue for the lifetime of the legislation. The Board is subject to the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2. It is anticipated that the current Charter will be renewed on January 30, 2011. The Board is also officially designated as the Bureau of Indian Education Advisory Board for Exceptional Children through the Charter.

The Board assists the Secretary of the Interior in performing their duties under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Public Law 108-446, by advising the Secretary of the Interior on the needs of Indian children with disabilities. Board members serve without compensation but are reimbursed for their travel and per diem expenses while on Board business.

The Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) provides technical assistance to the Board and assists with travel, meeting arrangements, materials, resources, and presentations.
Schedule of Meetings

There were a total of three Board meetings conducted during the year with additional committee planning meetings to help facilitate the full Board meetings:

January 23–24, 2009  Albuquerque, New Mexico  Full board meeting
April 30–May 2, 2009  Albuquerque, New Mexico  Full board meeting
September 16–17, 2009  San Diego, California  Full board meeting
November 16–17, 2009  Miccosukee, Florida  Full board meeting

In accordance with the By-Laws and Operating Procedures, meetings are held at least two times per year, but additional meetings are held as necessary. All meetings are posted in the Federal Register at least 15 days before the scheduled meeting. The Federal Register notices include the agenda, time, and place of the meetings as well as notice of public comment for those wanting to comment to the Board. Meetings are conducted in facilities that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Stakeholder Group Representation

Membership of the Board consists of individuals who are involved in or concerned with the education and/or provision of services to Indian children with disabilities, Indian people with disabilities, teachers, service providers, State and local education officials, representatives of tribes or tribal organizations, members of State Interagency Coordinating Councils in States having reservations, and individuals representing entities of the Bureau of Indian Education. (IDEA CFR 300.714–715) Current members are from 10 States: New Mexico (4), South Dakota (2), Pennsylvania (2), California (1), Florida (1), Nebraska (1), North Dakota (1), Minnesota (1), Montana (1), and Oregon (1). Members reside in States ranging in distance from California and Oregon in the West to Pennsylvania and Florida in the East. Of the members, five are male and 10 are female.

Members of the Board are listed below, followed by their tribal affiliation (if applicable) and professional affiliation.

**Dr. Billie Jo Kipp (Blackfeet), Chairperson**
**Profession:** Associate Director, Mental and Behavioral Health, Center for Native American Health, University of New Mexico; Psychologist for the Pueblo of Sandia.
Areas of research expertise: Developmental effects of American Indian children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, the Effect of Language and Culture on Native American Children’s Intellectual and Social Emotional Development, Psychological and Educational Characteristics of Native American Incarcerated Youth.
**Education:** Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, University of Montana.
Dr. Marilyn Johnson (*Pueblo of Acoma*), Interim Vice-Chair
**Profession:** Education Program Specialist, Bureau of Indian Education, ADD-West, Albuquerque. Focus of responsibility is on monitoring and technical assistance to programs.
**Education:** Bachelor and Master’s degrees in Special Education, University of New Mexico; Ph.D. in Special Education, Arizona State University, Tempe.

Dr. Eugene R. Thompson (*Diné*), Interim Secretary
**Profession:** Education Program Specialist, Division of Performance and Accountability, Bureau of Indian Education.
**Education:** Bachelor’s degree in University Studies, University of New Mexico; Master of Arts in Education degree, Northern Arizona University; Doctorate in Educational Administration and Supervision, Arizona State University.

Thomas Albano
**Profession:** School Principal of Miccosukee Indian School in Miami, Florida. Certified in Adult Education Supervision and Educational Leadership and Supervision.
**Education:** Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations; Master of Science degree in Social Studies Education, Florida International University in Miami; Education Specialist in Education and Technology, Barry University.

Sharon Belanger (*Lac Coute Oreilles Ojibwe*)
**Profession:** Special Education Coordinator at Fond du Lac Ojibwa School, Minnesota. Served on Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children and the Minnesota Special Education Advisory Council.
**Education:** Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, California State University-Fullerton; Master’s degree in Education, University of Minnesota-Duluth; Education Specialist degree, University of Wisconsin-Superior.

Josephine Brewer (*Oglala Sioux*)
**Profession:** Education Program Specialist, Pine Ridge Line Office.
**Education:** Bachelor’s degree from Oglala Community College, Kyle, South Dakota; Master’s degree in Education Administration from South Dakota State University in Brookings; in process of attaining Superintendent and Education Specialist degree and Ph.D. from Montana State University.

Arlene S. Davis (*Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe*)
**Profession:** Special Education Coordinator.
**Education:** Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education with emphasis in Mental Retardation; Master’s degree in Learning Disabilities from Minot State University in Minot, North Dakota.
Dr. Susan Faircloth (Coharie)
**Profession:** Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, Pennsylvania State University; Co-Director of a personnel preparation grant (Principals for Student Success) funded by the Office of Indian Education.
**Education:** M.Ed. Special Education, Pennsylvania State University; Ph.D. in Educational Administration, Pennsylvania State University.

Matthew Franklin (Miwok)
**Profession:** Tribal chairman, Ione Band of Miwok Indians; Indian Program Educator.
**Education:** Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts, California State University-Sacramento.

Betty Groos
**Profession:** Special Education Teacher and Coordinator at the Flandreau Indian School in South Dakota. Taught in the public school system in various settings—pre-school, primary, middle school, and special education.
**Education:** Bachelor of Science degree at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota; Master’s degree in Special Education and Education Leadership from Southwest Minnesota State University.

Dianne Taylor-Owens (Northern Tsalagie of Southwest Virginia)
**Profession:** Principal, Wingate Elementary School, Ft. Wingate, New Mexico.
**Education:** Bachelor of Science degree in Education, Pittsburg State College, Pittsburg, Kansas; Master of Science degree in Guidance Counseling, Eastern Central University, Ada, Oklahoma; 31 hours in graduate coursework in Educational Administration from East Central University, Oklahoma.

Dr. Jonathan Stout (Tohono O’Odham)
**Profession:** Assistant Professor of Special Education, Lock Haven University, Pennsylvania.
**Education:** Doctorate in Special Education, Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Valann S. Valdason
**Profession:** Special Education Teacher and Coordinator for Two Eagle River School, Pablo, Montana; Mental Health Counselor, Instructor at University of Montana and Skagit Valley College.
**Education:** Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction in progress at University of Montana, research on Native American “achievement gap;” Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology; Master’s degree in Communications.

Brian Wagner
**Profession:** Special Education Director for the Oceti Sakowin Education Consortium.
**Education:** Master’s degree in Administration, Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota.
Judy Wiley (*Chiricahua Apache*)

**Profession:** Director, National Indian Parent Information Center.

**Education:** Parent of a son with disabilities.
# Bureau of Indian Education
## Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

### Members, Representative Group, and Professional Affiliations

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Representing</th>
<th>Professional Affiliations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Billie Jo Kipp</td>
<td>Service provider</td>
<td>• American Psychological Association&lt;br&gt;• Society of Indian Psychologists&lt;br&gt;• Advisory Board for Faith Based Tribal Victims Assistance Programs&lt;br&gt;• Research Society on Alcoholism&lt;br&gt;• Indigenous Women’s Science Network&lt;br&gt;• Native Children’s Research Exchange&lt;br&gt;• Native Research Network</td>
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<td>• American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities&lt;br&gt;• American Educational Research Association&lt;br&gt;• Council for Exceptional Children&lt;br&gt;• Phi Delta Kappa</td>
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<td>Representative of tribe or tribal organizations</td>
<td>• Florida Educational Leadership Association</td>
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<td>Teacher of Indian children with disabilities</td>
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<td>Arlene S. Davis</td>
<td>State and Local Education Official</td>
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<td>Betty Groos</td>
<td>Representative from State Interagency Coordinating Council</td>
<td>• South Dakota Education Association (IDEA)&lt;br&gt;• Council for Exceptional Children</td>
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| Dr. Jonathan Stout          | Teacher of children with disabilities and service provider | Council for Exceptional Children  
AAUW  
Eastern Navajo CAU Committee |
| Dr. Valann S. Valdason      | Teacher of children with disabilities  | Montana Council for Exceptional Children  
Montana Indian Education Association  
Montana Council Exceptional Children |
| Brian Wagner                | Representative of tribe or tribal organizations | South Dakota Council of Special Education Administrator  
South Dakota Caring Advancement Respect Education Solutions (CARES) |
| Judy Wiley                  | Parent/guardian of child with a disability |                                                                              |
Priorities Addressed

The Board adopted four priorities on which the Board members would focus their efforts and energy. The priorities are (1) Data, (2) Achievement Gap, (3) Communication, and (4) Transition. Although there are numerous other areas in which needs exist, the Board determined that these four priorities were essential to promoting student success and were aligned with the State Performance Plan.

**Priority 1—Data** *(Indicator 8—parent involvement; Indicator 15—monitoring, compliance, and hearings; Indicator 20—timeliness of state reported data and reports)*

**Workgroup:** Dianne T. Owens, Dr. Valann S. Valdason, Tom Albano, Brian Wagner, Dr. Susan Faircloth, Jody Brewer, Dr. Jonathan Stout

**Goals**

1. Comprehensive plans and procedures to ensure accurate, reliable, and timely data collection and submissions for all BIE-funded schools
   a. Clarification of data reporting
   b. Centralized collection site
   c. Ongoing training for schools
   d. Analysis and feedback to schools from DPA and special education staff at BIE

2. Capacity for BIE and Special Education personnel to collect, analyze, and report data and provide verification, technical assistance, and information to schools
   a. Verification of data collection by education line offices
   b. Accurate compliance monitoring by knowledgeable staff

3. Capacity and procedures to ensure knowledgeable compliance monitors and accuracy of the compliance monitoring process
   a. Revise the parent survey so that it is more user friendly and provides more accurate and representative data.

**Priority 2—Achievement Gap** *(Indicator 1—graduation rates; Indicator 2—dropout rates; Indicator 3—statewide assessment; Indicator 5—LRE placement)*

**Workgroup:** Tom Albano, Dianne T. Owens, Sharon Belanger, Jody Brewer

**Goal**

Close the achievement gap that exists between special education and general education students in BIE-funded schools. Activities to reach the goal include these:

a. Professional development for general and special education teachers (teaching strategies)

b. Support for general education teachers who have students who are mainstreamed back into regular education classrooms

c. Staffing—all special education teachers will be certified.

d. Training for parents to increase parent involvement—The focus of the parent training will come from parent survey data.
**Priority 3—Communication** *(Indicator 15—monitoring, complaints, and hearings)*  
**Workgroup:** Dr. Marilyn Johnson, Brian Wagner, Arlene Davis, Matthew Franklin

**Goal**  
Establish communication channels as an avenue for sharing information, engaging in building capacity of Advisory Board members and stakeholders (e.g., tribes, parents, school staff), and serving as professional resources to one another. Activities to reach goal include the following:

a. Development of a model communication flowchart for the Secretary’s (through BIE Director) review and implementation  
b. Development of a communication matrix to clarify (a) who is communicated with, (b) mechanisms for communication, and (c) evaluation component  
c. Develop and disseminate brochure (paper and electronic) that includes (a) main telephone number for BIE, (b) website address for BIE, (c) BIE programs, supervisory staff, and telephone numbers, and (d) technical assistance websites (2–3) in areas of special education, disability (e.g., autism), behavior, homeless, and parent involvement  
d. Establish FAQ segment on the BIE website.  
e. Identify organizations on which BIE could be listed as a link.

**Priority 4—Transition** *(Indicator 1—graduation rates; Indicator 2-dropout rates; Indication 13—secondary transition; Indicator 14—secondary transition/post-school outcomes)*  
**Workgroup:** Dr. Billie Jo Kipp, Dr. Eugene R. Thompson, Betty Groos, Judy Wiley

**Goal**  
Support students with disabilities after they leave school and ensure that they are prepared for adulthood, including higher education, competitive employment, and independent living through the following activities:

1. Developing partnerships and collaboration between schools and community/tribal sources (e.g., tribal colleges, temporary assistance to needy families, tribal vocational rehabilitation programs, etc.) that will  
   a. Help plan needed transition services, and  
   b. Support students with disabilities and their families with transition from school to adulthood through higher education, competitive employment, and independent living before they leave school  
2. Developing resources for students with disabilities, parents, and BIE-funded schools on best practices in effective transition from school to adulthood models for use in BIE-funded schools  
3. Self-advocacy for students with disabilities and their families for increased awareness and understanding of individual student need—Some specific capacity-building activities include  
   a. Developing a continuum of care for self-advocacy that recognizes students will transition at an early stage of school,  
   b. BIE Advisory Board involvement through webinar presentations,
c. Counseling for parents upon initial placement of their child receiving special education services so parents understand disability, and

d. Ensuring that parents are accessing appropriate follow-up (parents/school involvement).

**Significant Board Activities and Accomplishments**

The following are activities that were the primary emphasis for the Special Education Advisory Board during the past year. Activities reflect Board involvement and responsiveness to BIE issues and have made a positive difference for Indian children with disabilities.

1. **Established Advisory Board priorities for SY 2008–2009**: data, achievement gap, communication, and transition.

2. **Two vacant Advisory Board positions** were filled: Judy Wiley (Chiricahua Apache), Director of National Indian Parent Center and Dr. Jonathan Stout (Tohono O’Odham), Assistant Professor of Special Education, Lock Haven University, Pennsylvania.

3. **Three Advisory Board Members** participated in the BIE Summer Institute in Phoenix, Arizona, during June 2009: Dr. Eugene R. Thompson, Tom Albano, and Dr. Marilyn Johnson.

4. **The Board data priority workgroup participated in the 2009 BIE Special Education Data Summit** in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The data workgroup provided input into the scoring rubric for levels of determination and the determination criteria, rewards, and consequences.

5. **Participated in the 2009 BIE Special Education Academy** in San Diego, California.

6. **Established an Interim Board Committee**, comprised of Dr. Billie Jo Kipp, Interim Chairperson; Dr. Marilyn Johnson, Interim Vice-President; and Dr. Eugene R. Thompson, Interim Secretary.

7. **Received Advisory Board orientation from the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE)** regarding roles and functions.

8. **Received Advisory Board Ethics Training from TAESE** relative to serving on advisory boards.

9. **Conducted public comment sessions** accessible via teleconferences or on-site during Advisory Board meetings in Albuquerque, New Mexico (2); and San Diego, California; and Miccosukee, Florida.
10. **Conducted a face-to-face panel discussion** with general and special education teachers and related service providers at Miccosukee Indian School, Miccosukee, Florida.

11. **Advisory Board members participated in the Office of Special Education Program’s (OSEP) teleconference on the Critical Elements Analysis Guide (CrEAG)** on October 19, 2009. The purpose of the teleconference was to discuss with OSEP the role of the Advisory Board relative to stakeholder involvement with the BIE.

12. **Advisory Board members participated in the exit conference with OSEP** relative to the OSEP verification visit of the BIE on November 5, 2009.


15. **One school was visited:** Miccosukee Indian School, Miccosukee, Florida.

**Resources/Data/Information Used**

The Advisory Board continues to provide advice to the BIE regarding the State Performance Plan, Annual Performance Report, Levels of Determination, and Verification Visit. This data is helpful to the Advisory Board in supporting recommendations provided to the BIE.

**Advice/Guidance to Bureau of Indian Education**

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children makes the following advice to the BIE:

1. **Data.** The BIE must ensure that accurate and timely data is provided and noncompliance items identified are corrected as soon as possible within the required timelines.
   a. To ensure compliance with data collection and reporting requirements, we recommend hiring of a staff member whose primary responsibility is the collection, analysis, and reporting of data specific to the requirements of the special education unit rather than a joint position shared with the larger data collection and accountability unit.
   b. We recommend that compliance personnel undergo training to ensure that each member of the compliance monitoring team is knowledgeable of and familiar with the special education process, collecting the same
types of information at each school, knowledgeable of federal requirements at both the BIE and school levels, and that they are trained as it relates to federal requirements regarding confidentiality of and access to records.

c. We recommend a review of the statistical method used to calculate parent perception of satisfaction on the current instrument. In response, we recommend a review of the use of the current instrument and/or a review of other possible instruments.

2. **Achievement Gap.** The BIE must ensure improved educational programs for Indian children with disabilities by doing the following:
   a. Provide ongoing training for regular and special education teachers at conferences and workshops and online WebEx training.
   b. Provide support for a “grow your own” program that would allow general education teachers to seek special education certification. This could be done through the BIE’s partnering with online universities, similar to the program that the BIE is currently doing for science teachers.
   c. Develop peer adult mentoring programs in schools where special education students would be matched with adults for mentoring and support.
   d. Develop and present a special education track at future BIE Summer Institutes.
   e. Due to the lack of retention, conduct a study on modified school calendars that extend the school day, extend the school year, and/or decrease the time students are out of school in the summer.
   f. Determine the feasibility of providing laptop computers for home use for special education students.
   g. Establish skill-building programs for special education students (e.g., test-taking skills, tutoring, leadership development, and time management) that should begin early in elementary school

3. **Communication.** The BIE must ensure that communication strategies at all levels are improved.
   a. Adopt a communication plan for use within the BIE. The purpose of the plan is to disseminate information within BIE and from BIE to stakeholders.
   b. Adopt an up-to-date BIE brochure that will be included on the BIE website. The brochure will include purpose and mission of the BIE, contact information to include names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
   c. Recommend to the Secretary of Interior that a staff person be responsible for updates of information on the website on a regular basis. Presently, contact information on the website is out-of-date and inaccurate.
4. **Transition.** Addressing the many challenges associated with transition will require that the BIE engage a much larger audience in our discussion on how best to proceed.
   a. This process should include young people with disabilities, parents, general education teachers and administrators, tribal colleges, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), vocational rehabilitation, post-secondary education programs, and employers.
   b. Achievement of needed improvements in secondary education and transition services will require a broad-based commitment to educating all stakeholders and to promoting meaningful collaboration at all levels.
   c. The priorities of the transition initiative is an attempt to be inclusive by including all who are involved with our youth who are transitioning out of the comprehensive service continuum of IDEA.

5. **Special Education Leadership.** The BIE must ensure that Gloria Yepa, Supervisory Education Specialist—Special Education is included on the BIE Senior Management Team.

**Emerging Issues for Next Year**

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children has identified the following topics and emerging issues for 2010–2011 using the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report:

- Meaningful Parent Involvement
- State Performance Plan
- Fiscal Accountability—Data Issues
- Reauthorization of IDEA 2004 and NCLB Regulations
- Evidence-based Practices/Accountability
- Coordinated Early Intervening Services/Secondary Transition
- Highly Qualified Staff
- Research-validated Reading Methods
- Bridging the achievement gap between General and Special Education
- Residential Education Placement Program
- Juvenile Detention Centers (youth at risk/offenders with disabilities)
- Renewal of Advisory Committee Charter

**Anticipated Membership Vacancies for Next Year**

Effective November 4, 2008, the current 15-member Board was appointed by the Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne to serve a two- or three-year term. The terms expire November 4, 2010, and November 4, 2011, respectively. “The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs may provide the Secretary of the Interior recommendations for the Chairperson; however, all board members will be appointed by the Secretary as
required. Board members shall serve a staggered term of two or three years from the
date of their appointment. Vacancies occurring through removal, resignation, or death
will be filled for the balance of the vacating member’s term in the same manner in
which the original appointment was made.” (Excerpt from the BIE Advisory
Board Charter)

**Dissemination of Report**

The annual report will be submitted to the Secretary of the Interior and disseminated to
all BIE-funded and operated schools and agencies located in 23 States. The report will
also be available on the BIE’s website at [http://www.enan.bia.edu](http://www.enan.bia.edu).