

*Equitable Distribution of Effective Educators in BIE's Schools*  
**Education Resource Center, Phoenix, Arizona Listening Session**  
Friday, October 28, 2016

**Participants: School leaders and board members served by the Phoenix, ERC**

**Session Attendees** [see table at the end of this document]

Brad Jupp, Acting Implementation Officer and Acting Chief Academic Officer:

***Background/Framing***

- The U.S. Department of Education has identified a problem of inequity within schools nationwide. The issue is low income and minority students are disproportionately served by non-effective educators compared to high income and mainstream students.
- The U.S. Department of Education recognizes the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) as a “State.” The BIE receives funding like a State and interacts with schools like a State. In 2014, the U.S. Department of Education asked States to revise their Equity Plans to address unqualified and inexperienced educators. The federal agencies asking the questions in the forthcoming section do not presume that educators are the only problem that needs to be solved.
- The U.S. Department of Education is requesting a plan from States, including the BIE, to address the inequity issue. When the term “Teachers,” is used during the listening sessions, the term includes specialists, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, etc.

Brad Jupp, Acting Implementation Officer and Acting Chief Academic Officer:

***Two Major Questions***

- Question 1: What can BIE do to collaborate with tribal leaders and tribal educators to encourage the most effective educators to come and stay in our most rural schools?
- Question 2: What can BIE do in collaboration with tribal leaders to attract educators to our historically most underperforming schools?

Response 1:

- Can't compare salary of our teachers to other places. We have teachers ready to retire and we have teachers who have retired from other places. We see teachers that have been there forever. They are protected by the union. Our hands are tied. We have young teachers that are doing well. You see differences in the ages of teachers. It has been a goal of our tribe to get native teachers. The level of education among natives needs to be addressed. Our tribe has scholarships. It is up to students to decide if and what they want to study. Offer more to pay and other incentives versus what outlining communities offer.

Response 2:

- A lot of teachers do not live on campus. The location is depressing. Some feel that way. Need to upgrade the housing. I feel as if here we get everyone's left overs -the rejections, the retirees. Don't know if it is factual. I had good teachers. They did their job. They were sincere about their jobs. They lived on campus and it wasn't always about the pay. We lost a lot of teachers. Would like to offer early retirement so new teachers can come on board. Teachers are up in age.

### Response 3:

- The principal drove away one of our native teachers. Because we are so rural, it seems like evaluations are not completed on the principals and employees. At the smaller schools, I learned from sitting with bus drivers, the bus drivers were never evaluated and didn't have a say in that. Because we are so rural maybe it gets overlooked. Some speak up and end up leaving and go to other schools. When two of our teachers left, there were no more creative skits, no Christmas programs. The difference was singing versus singing and skits. The quality of the programs dropped when a few key teachers left the school.

### Response 4:

- Another response included offering better pay and targeting interests they have. Schedule visits to tour the villages and so potential staff know what they are dealing with. They have expectations of students and don't recognize where the students come from.

### Response 5:

- When I first got there, a parent said to me, "There are a lot of teachers here that we would love to keep. There are a lot we would like to see go."
- At the Day school, we have housing issues. We had weeds all over. Manure sitting here and there on campus and on the sidewalks. When my mom first came to see where I worked, she said the place is too desolate. I said mom, don't worry it will be OK.
- I saw that there was huge room for improvement and that was the only way to go. Parents expect their kids to be learning. That is my responsibility and my staff's responsibility, to make sure they are ready for the next grade level. Housing is a need. A lot of the housing is not ready to live in. Teachers would love to live on campus and do evening events – family nights and movies and dinner. But housing is a challenge.
- The other thing is retaining teachers and background checks. There are issues and difficulties with someone that doesn't belong there. You have to go through the process and procedures with Human Resources and document things that have happened. Recruiting – making sure the teachers are rated accordingly. The HR process sometimes creates disgruntled employees when HR doesn't rate correctly. HR doesn't give them credit for their experience or knowledge. Applicants state that they applied and thought they would start at a certain level so they leave or decline.

### Response 6:

- Principal recounted that he drove 2 hours to get an employee card. Got ahold of HR and ABQ office but HR had the wrong birthdate in the system. The wrong birth date affected their insurance coverage and a hospital stay. Principal had a phone interview and checked out the school. Thought, "What did I get myself into?" However, the community accepted me. It was suggested to me to do an internship to decide if I wanted to stay. Been at the school for 16 years. I've watched U-Hauls come and go. Issue isn't always housing and funding. If you are looking for a younger, more experienced group, they need something to do. Principal stated that he goes to Phoenix every weekend to see something else.

### Response 7:

- One principal stated that she did not have any problems recruiting or retaining teachers. The school pays very well. The location of the school is about 40 miles from town. The principal said she never has a shortage of staff. However, sometimes the background check process is an issue.

### Response 8

- Principal stated he has enough staff right now. Morale is an issue at first. Staff is collegiate. Working together as a team now. We try to do a lot of fun things with the community-parent nights and fun activities. Teachers that have been recruited tell others at ASU and talk to the staff. Ask staff, “Where do you think you will be in 5 years?” Help staff to buy in and boost morale. Ask people to stay.

Response 9:

- I love where I work. If I could retire and stay, I would. Different strokes for different folks. I have found dynamic teachers at all grade levels. If you facilitate and create a professional environment, they will rise. Let them do the best they can do. There is a challenge for non-connectivity (internet). It is a frustration. Make sure they have help to meet their goals. I try to promote collaboration and horizontal leadership. Have a challenge with recruitment. Getting them to begin with is a challenge. Once they are there, they stay. In another Texas teaching position, received 400 applicants. How do you do that? How do you have a large applicant pool?

**Major Themes**

- Incentives to recruit teachers are limited (e.g., low pay, rural locations, slow hiring)
- Housing needs to be updated
- Mixed bag of teacher performance, but negative and positive consequences cannot be issued one way or another
- Length of Federal background check is cumbersome
- Teachers and school leaders need to be aware of the situation in which they are walking

**List of Participants**

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