

Justification for Emergency Approval of the Information Collection for the Sovereignty in Indian Education Grant Program

Why this is an emergency situation. We are seeking emergency approval of this collection to allow us to use end-of-year funds, which only recently became available, to establish an innovative and transformative grant program to improve BIE- funded schools. The grants awarded under this program will enable tribes to coordinate operations between tribally funded and BIE-funded schools. Improved coordination will reduce costs by:

- Eliminating duplicative administrative functions, which will reduce the number of employees needed for administrative work.
- Improving effectiveness of schools, which will reduce the need for expensive remedial education.

Grants are contingent upon tribes developing collaborative programs that are self-sustaining after two years. If we are not able to conduct this information collection, we will lose the chance to establish this initiative because the funds are available for a limited time only. Furthermore, future funding for this type of program is not guaranteed in the current budget environment. Missing this opportunity will lead to increased expenses due to duplicative administrative functions and decreased school effectiveness.

We have consulted the public. Although we would not be soliciting public comment via the Federal Register if this emergency request is approved, we have consulted with several stakeholder groups on the development of this information collection.

- We consulted with the Indian Education Study Group, which includes staff from Department of Education and Bureau of Indian Education.
- The Study Group, in conjunction with the BIE, held consultation sessions in April and May 2014 to discuss the framework for education reform, which led to development of the Sovereignty of Indian Education Grant.

The broader Sovereignty in Indian Education Grant will allow opportunities for comment and input on the Initiative as it is developed, including goals and strategies for implementation.

How we developed the grant program. The Departments of the Interior and Education convened an American Indian Education Study Group to determine the causes of academic failure in BIE-funded schools, which are some of the lowest performing schools in the country. The study group, a combination of management, legal, education, and tribal expertise, was charged with developing and implementing recommendations to transform BIE and issued its recommendations on June 13, 2014.

Based on the study group recommendations, BIE developed the Sovereignty in Indian Education Grant which awards competitive grants to tribes and their Tribal Education Departments (TEDs) to promote tribal control and operation of BIE-funded schools on their reservations. These

grants will support development of an implementation plan for the TEDs to promote effective operation of BIE-funded schools in collaboration with tribally operated schools.

How the program will work. TEDs are eligible for this grant if they have three or more BIE-funded schools on their reservation. BIE will --

- Provide intensive technical assistance in the planning and implementation of each tribe's assessment and implementation plans.
- Require building a collaborative network of TEDs to support the tribal control and strengthening of partnerships with BIE-funded schools.
- Provide technical assistance to assist TEDs in understanding the control and administration of tribally controlled school processes.
- Provide a forum for TEDs to work collaboratively to gain insight and develop strategies to problem solve and borrow strategies from BIE and other tribal governments.

These efforts will encourage steps towards sovereign TEDs to increase tribal students' successful academic outcomes.