

Justification for emergency approval of information collections for the Sovereignty in Indian Education Grant Program

Why following the normal clearance process would lead to public harm. We seek emergency approval for the information collections for this program because following the normal Paperwork Reduction Act clearance procedures would make program implementation impossible and would result in public harm for the following reasons:

- This grant program uses end-of-year funds, which only recently became available, to provide BIE-funded schools the opportunity to address issues surrounding academic failure at their schools.
- These funds must be used before the end of the fiscal year, or they will no longer be available.
- Obtaining funding for this program in another fiscal year will be difficult or impossible due to fiscal constraints imposed by the current budget environment.
- Failure to act immediately would probably mean that the opportunity to award distribution of these grants would disappear forever.
- Losing this opportunity to improve education for Indian students would result in serious public harm because lower-performing schools will lead to less successful outcomes and increased future social and economic costs.

The need for expeditious approval is the result of an unanticipated event. This program implements the American Indian Education Study Group's recommendation, which was only issued on June 13, 2014. While we expected the Study Group to issue recommendations, we could not anticipate what the specific recommendations would be. The need for emergency clearance arises because of the combination of the recent issuance of the Study Group recommendation and the fortuitous availability of year-end funds for implementing this recommendation.

This information collection is essential to the Bureau of Indian Education's mission. The Sovereignty in Indian Education Grant program is essential to the mission of the Department of the Interior and more appropriately the Bureau of Indian Education's mission. As stated in 25 CFR 32.3, our mission is to provide quality education opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a tribe's needs for cultural and economic well-being, in keeping with the wide diversity of Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages as distinct cultural and governmental entities. This program will further that mission by fostering improved collaboration to raise standards and improve schools for Indian children.

We've already consulted with the affected parties. We ask OMB to waive the requirement for a public comment period because we consulted with the Indian Education Study Group and held consultation sessions which led to development of this grant program. We ask for approval of this emergency collection for a maximum of 180 days. During this time, we will request approval for this information collection under the normal clearance procedures. We will also be able to improve the information collection during this period by considering public feedback from grant recipients after we implement the emergency collection.