



National Indian Education Association

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NIEA RESOLUTION #05-03

Title: Realignment of BIA Offices

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs has a trust responsibility to provide an education to American Indian and Alaska Native children as provided for in numerous treaties and legal doctrines between the United States federal government and tribes; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Indian Education Programs is within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agency within the Department of the Interior and is the only national education system for American Indian children and adults, operating and/or funding 185 elementary and secondary, two colleges, and 25 colleges operated by tribes and tribal organizations; and

WHEREAS, there is concern about the lack of involvement the Bureau of Indian Affairs has had with the Executive Order on Indian Education Task Force. As called for in the Executive Order signed by President George W. Bush, the Department of Interior is responsible for co-chairing the Task Force with the Department of Education. "The Working Group shall be led by the Secretaries of Education and the Interior, or their designees under this section, who shall serve as Co-Chairs;" and

WHEREAS, there has been a proposal circulated by the BIA to decrease the number of Education Line Offices despite the significant increase in functions of the offices due to the passage of NCLB, and NIEA believes that the offices should be expanded rather than reduced to ensure timely service to BIA schools; and

WHEREAS, NIEA understands there is an effort to recruit and hire a Director for the Office of Indian Education Programs within BIA and there is an effort at BIA to elevate the Director's position.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Education Association supports Indian preference for all new positions, including an elevated Director's position, that may be designed within the Office of Indian Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that that National Indian Education Association strongly opposes the realignment and restructuring of the Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP) within the Bureau of Indian Affairs that will decrease the total number of Education Line Offices from 23 to 11 and cut the funding of these offices by 18%; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that that National Indian Education Association encourages DOI to work with both BIA operated and tribal grant schools on school improvement efforts and training.

Submitted by: NIEA Board of Directors

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the NIEA Board of Directors at its October 10, 2005 meeting in Denver, Colorado at which a quorum was present.

Ryan Wilson

Ryan Wilson, President (2005-06)
National Indian Education Association