

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIORnews releaseBUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
For Release March 16, 1979

Lovett 202 343-7445

HEARINGS SCHEDULED ON DISTRIBUTION FORMULA FOR
INDIAN EDUCATION FUNDS

Interior Assistant Secretary Forrest Gerard has announced that public hearings will be held at seven locations between March 28 and April 13 on proposed formulas for distributing Johnson-O'Malley Act funding to schools serving Indian students.

Six alternative proposed formulas were published in the Federal Register March 9 for review and comment. The formulas will be revised according to comments received by May 1 and submitted to a vote of the tribes. The formula chosen by the tribal vote will be published as a final rule.

The 1978 Education Amendments Act (P.L. 95-561) requires that the distribution formula be established as a regulation in this manner.

The Johnson-O'Malley funds are used to provide supplemental programs for Indian students in public schools and other non-Federal education programs. In fiscal year 1979 the appropriation for this purpose, serving approximately 171,000 students, was \$31,675,000.

The current distribution formula is based on the number of eligible Indian students for whom funds are sought, multiplied by a national average per-pupil expenditure and a weighting factor which is intended to take into account the differences in education costs among the states.

The public hearings will be held in Anchorage, Alaska, March 28-29; Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 29; Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 6-7; Sulphur, Oklahoma, April 9-10; Fort Hall, Idaho, April 6-7; San Diego, California, April 9-10; and Nashville, Tennessee, April 12-13.

For additional information contact Judith Zundel, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240 (202 343-4576).

Written comments on the proposed formulas should be sent to the above address for the attention of Deputy Assistant Secretary Rick Lavis.

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