



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

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News Release

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Secretary Jewell, Secretary Duncan to Visit Indian School in Maine

Visit to Beatrice Rafferty School part of efforts to reform and improve education services in Bureau of Indian Education schools

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As part of the Obama Administration’s commitment to promote strong, prosperous and resilient communities, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will visit the Beatrice Rafferty School in Perry, Maine on Monday to discuss ongoing educational reform initiatives to ensure students attending schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) receive a high quality education delivered by tribal nations.

Beatrice Rafferty School, located on the Passamaquoddy Tribal Reservation of Pleasant Point, serves about 100 students, most of whom are American Indians. The K-8 school is partially funded by the BIE and operated by the Tribe under contract. Jewell and Duncan will tour the school to see first-hand the need for additional funding for replacement school construction and will meet with school officials, teachers and students to better understand the shared challenges in delivering educational services.

In 2013, Jewell and Duncan convened an [American Indian Education Study Group](#) to assess systemic issues within BIE-funded schools – one of the lowest performing set of schools in the country – and to propose a comprehensive plan for reform to ensure all students attending BIE-funded schools receive high quality education.

The Secretaries’ visit builds on a recent Interior Department [Secretarial Order](#) to restructure and redesign the BIE over the next two school years, transforming the agency from a sole provider of education into a capacity-builder and service-provider to tribes with BIE-funded schools.

On Tuesday, Secretary Jewell will visit a second BIE-grant school, with a trip to the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School on the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe reservation in Bena, Minnesota. Originally built to house an auto mechanic school and bus garage, the facility was converted into a high school in 1984. The deteriorating building, which serves almost 200 students K-12, has multiple safety and security concerns.

Monday, August 18, 2014

- WHO:** **Sally Jewell**, Secretary of the Interior
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
James Kvaal, Deputy Director, U.S. Domestic Policy Council
Chellie Pingree, U.S. Representative
Monty Roessel, Director, Bureau of Indian Education
Reuben Clayton Cleaves, Chief, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Pleasant Point
Ron Jenkins, BIE Superintendent
Mike Chadwick, Beatrice Rafferty Principal
- WHAT:** Secretarial visit to the Beatrice Rafferty School in Perry, Maine
- WHEN:** Monday, August 18, 2014 at 3 pm EDT
Note: There will be a media availability immediately after the school tour concludes
- WHERE:** Beatrice Rafferty School
22 Bayview Drive
Perry, Maine
- RSVP:** Media interested in attending the school tour and media availability are encouraged to RSVP [here](#) by 5 pm EDT on Sunday, August 17.

Tuesday, August 19, 2014

- WHO:** **Sally Jewell**, Secretary of the Interior
Kevin Washburn, Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs
Carri Jones, Chairwoman of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Crystal Redgrave, Superintendent of the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School
- WHAT:** Secretarial visit to Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation in Bena, Minnesota
- WHEN:** Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 3 pm CDT
- WHERE:** Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School
15353 Silver Eagle Drive Northwest
Chippewa National Forest
Bena, Minnesota
- RSVP:** Media interested in attending the school tour and media availability are encouraged to RSVP [here](#) by 5 pm CDT on Monday, August 18.