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The Department of the Interior today announced the award of a $3,859,000 contract for construction of a new 18-classroom school facility at Sanostee, on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico.

When completed, the Sanostee school complex will serve 720 Navajo children, ranging from beginners through grade eight. As a result, many area children now spending most of the year away at boarding schools will be able to attend schools nearer their homes, either as day or boarding students. The new construction augments a present school which serves only 243 students, beginners through grade four.

The contract calls for 10 beginners' classrooms; 8 standard classrooms; an instructional materials center; mechanical building; multi-purpose building; three 160-pupil dormitories; a 700-pupil kitchen-dining building; housing and carport facilities for 74 employees; and a building that combines storage and maintenance areas with a fire station and a three-stall bus garage.

Included in the contract are utilities; a 250,000-gallon elevated water storage tank; sewage treatment plant or sewage lagoons; pump house; concrete play areas; street paving; grading and other site improvements.

The contractor is Northeast Construction Company of West Virginia, with home offices in Tiffin, Ohio. Five bids, ranging to $4,605,900, were received.