Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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For Immediate Release: February 6, 1967
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Nearly $200 million in new school construction and school improvement projects were approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs during the fiscal years 1962-1967, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall reported today.

The projects funded represent intensive efforts by the Department, during the six years beginning July 1, 1961, and continuing through next June 30, to expand and upgrade Federal school facilities serving young Indians who do not have access to public schools. Bureau schools and dormitories serve about 55,000 youngsters in 18 States.

Most of the schools built and operated by the Bureau for Indians are elementary schools located on reservations, serving isolated communities far from public schools. In addition, there are a number of BIA dormitories established near public schools for children who live beyond school bus routes.

Many Bureau facilities, both on or off reservations, must include such services as kitchens, dining halls and dormitories, in addition to classroom buildings. The larger high schools, such as the new Fort Wingate school near the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico, consist of a campus-style complex of buildings and serve enrollments numbering over a thousand students.

During the six-year period, construction projects in 14 States will have built classroom spaces for a total of nearly 30,000 Indian youngsters. Some of this total represents replacement of inadequate old structures; some represents additional spaces.

The largest number of projects, adding 10,655 new classroom spaces and replacing an additional 3,000, have been carried on in Arizona, the State with the largest Indian population. For fiscal years 1962-1967, a total of more than $84.3 million was approved for projects within Arizona. Of this total, more than $57 million was earmarked for projects on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations.

Next in line was New Mexico, for which projects totaling more than $34.5 million were approved to improve or construct classrooms for 5,600 youngsters. Again, most of the money -- $32.6 million -- went for projects on the vast Navajo Reservation.

In Alaska, where the Bureau recognizes responsibility for the education of Eskimos, Aleuts, and Athapaskan Indians, over $33 million was budgeted for construction of new schools and replacement of dilapidated or outmoded buildings.

The following amounts were approved for specific projects in all States for each fiscal year since 1962:

- 1962 - $29.4 million
- 1963 - 37.9 million
- 1964 - 44.9 million
- 1965 - 29.9 million
- 1966 - 14.5 million
- 1967 - 39.1 million

The following figures indicate total funding for school construction and improvement and numbers of classroom spaces added or replaced in each State during the entire six-year period:.

State	Total Funding (in millions)	Total Classroom Spaces	New	Replaced
Alaska	$33.1	5,220	2,770	2,450
Arizona	84.3	13,680	10,665	3,025
California	5.0 *			
Florida	$0.5	120	60	60
Kansas	1.0 **			
Mississippi	3.0	360	270	90
Montana	2.0	520	120	400
Nevada	1.5	420		420
New Mexico	35.6	5,606	3,948	1,658
North Carolina	$0.7 ***			
North Dakota	5.9	1,096	540	556
Oklahoma	9.8	908	138	770
South Dakota	10.5	1,970	720	1,250
Utah ****	2.8	420	360	60

* General improvements to Sherman Institute which serves an enrollment of over 1,000

** General improvements to Haskell Institute, a post-secondary vocational and technical institute with an enrollment of over 1,185

*** Completion during 1962 of an earlier project at Cherokee School

**** Aneth School project in Fiscal Year 1963