Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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For draft documents recommending ways to improve Indian education programs are now available for review and comment by interested persons, the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Director of Indian Education Programs William Demmert announced today.

Demmert said that the papers deal with "major matters of immediate concern to me." He said that he hoped Indian tribal governments, school boards, parents and other citizens would take the opportunity to read the documents and make their suggestions.

The papers are about 1) changes needed in the BIA boarding school system; 2) the provision of comprehensive early childhood education in Indian communities; 3) implementing sound bilingual education programs in Indian schools, and 4) policies and procedures for determining school construction priorities.

Demmert said he planned to submit recommendations for BIA policy and program changes in these educational areas to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs by the end of March. He said he would also be participating in a March meeting with representatives from other Federal agencies to consider legislative, administrative, and regulatory changes related to Indian education. The Washington, D .C. meeting is being sponsored by the Federal Interagency Committee on Education. "At this meeting," Demmert said, "we will also consider these areas of concern from a somewhat different aspect to determine where Congressional support or interagency coordination is needed or desired."

Copies of the draft papers have been distributed to BIA area offices and schools and to some Indian groups. Requests for the papers should be sent to Dr. William Demmert, Office of Indian Education Programs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20245.

The papers range in length from about 20 typewritten, double-spaced pages to more than 50. Suggestions and comments should be sent to Demmert by the end of February at the above address.