Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Aurene M. Martin today announced that the Joseph K. Lumsden Bahweting Anishnabe School, a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) grant day school operated by the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan, has been named a 2003 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. The school is among 233 public and private elementary and secondary schools who are the first to be honored under the Department's new No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Program, which recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. The honorees will be recognized during the Education Department's No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Awards Ceremony being held today and tomorrow in Washington, D.C.

"I congratulate the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe and the Joseph K. Lumsden Bahweting Anishnabe School on being named a 2003 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School," Martin said. "Their commitment to achieving the No Child Left Behind Act's goals has resulted in steady and sustained improvement in their students' academic performance."

The Joseph K. Lumsden Bahweting Anishnabe School is a BIA-funded, tribally-operated educational facility that serves 205 students from the Sault Ste. Marie and other Indian communities. The school is being recognized for having met the Education Department's assessment criterion that at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds have dramatically improved their academic performance, achieved high levels on state assessments and made adequate yearly progress.

There are 184 BIA-funded elementary and secondary day and boarding schools serving approximately 48,000 Indian students living on or near 63 reservations in 23 states. In School Year 2002-2003, the BIA directly operated one-third of its schools with the remaining two-thirds tribally-operated under BIA contracts or grants.

The Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs has responsibility for fulfilling the Department's trust responsibilities to individual and tribal trust beneficiaries, as well as promoting the self-determination and economic well-being of the nation's 562 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. The Assistant Secretary also oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is responsible for providing education and social services to approximately 1.4 million individual American Indians and Alaska Natives from the federally recognized tribes.

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