Hook-up completes BIA effort to bring its 185-school system online

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(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Interior Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs Neal A. McCaleb will complete the Bureau of Indian Affairs' effort to connect its 185-school system to the Internet, known as Access Native America, when he brings Chichiltah/Jones Ranch Community School in Chichiltah, N.M., online this Thursday, August 23. Chichiltah/Jones Ranch Community School, located on the Navajo reservation, is a K-8 boarding and day school serving 206 students.

Assistant Secretary McCaleb, accompanied by William A. Mehojah, Jr., Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs, will be joined by students, parents, teachers, community representatives and Navajo Nation officials in celebrating the school's entrée onto the Information Superhighway.

Since 1997, the goal of the Access Native America project has been to bring Internet access to all Bureau schools, which serve 48,693 elementary and secondary American Indian students, including 11,000 boarding school students, located on 63 reservations in 23 states. Bureau schools can be found in some of the remotest areas of the United States; one is even located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. The Bureau partnered with corporations, universities, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Laguna Pueblo Tribal Education Department to provide computer hardware and software, network-engineering services and teacher training.

WHO:	Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Neal A. McCaleb
WHAT:	Bringing Internet access to the Chichiltah/Jones Ranch Community School and completing the BIA's Access Native America project.
WHEN:	1:00 p.m. (Mountain Time), Thursday, August 23, 2001 Refreshments will be served immediately following the event.
WHERE:	Chichiltah/Jones Ranch Community School, Chichiltah, N.M.; Phone: 505-778-5573.

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