Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Interior Under Secretary Frank Bracken will open the second in a series of mini-summits on education with Indian tribal leaders and educators aimed at improving the quality of Indian education in Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funded schools. The meeting is scheduled for March 12-13, 1990, in Rapid City, South Dakota, and will include tribal and state representatives from North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

"We want to hear the ideas from tribal leaders throughout the Northern Plains on how we can bring the quality of education up to, or above, national standards for the eleven percent of the Indian students attending these institutions," Bracken said. This second mini-summit follows a successful session held February 12-13 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where more than 900 Indian tribal leaders and educators from the Southwest helped the BIA to develop new ideas to enhance the education of the 40,000 Native American students attending schools funded by the BIA.

Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Eddie F. Brown said the Indian education mini-summit will focus primarily on four areas needing major improvements: (1) parental and community involvement; (2) early childhood development; (3) the elevation of expectations in Indian schools; and (4) effective evaluation of schools, students, and teachers. "The ideas we gather from participants in this conference will guide us in preparing our fiscal 1992 budget request to Congress so that we can improve Indian education in areas important to the Indian people," Brown said.

The Rapid City meeting will consist of a series of panel discussions, addresses and workshops, and will take place at the Howard Johnson Motel, 2211 LaCrosse St., Rapid City. The Under Secretary will give the opening address at 9:45 a.m. on March 12. The next conference is scheduled in mid-April in Spokane in conjunction with the National Indian Education Association.