Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) announced today that it will relocate the office of assistant director of education to the Navajo Area Office in Gallup, N.K. Dr. Kenneth Ross, who oversees BIA education operations in the Southwest, will move from his Washington headquarters to Gallup November 4 The director of the BIA's nearly $300 million education program, Dr. Henrietta Whiteman, said the move is Reared toward bringing management closer to the people it serves.

"The sheer number of students, employees and schools within the Southwest necessitates that a major portion of administrative time be focused on planning, monitoring programs, offering technical assistance and evaluating programs from a local base rather than from Washington," said Whiteman. Dr. Ross manages 94 schools and 6,000 employees in the BIA's Navajo, Phoenix and Albuquerque areas. Of the 180 Indian schools funded and operated by the BIA, 72 percent are located in the three service areas. About 53 percent of the BIA schools and education employees in Arizona and New Mexico are located in the Navajo area. "This certainly makes it easier for the BIA and tribal governments in the area to communicate and cooperate on the policies and budgets both deal with daily," Ross said. "This will save some of the time and money we spend commuting between the field and the central office."

Ross' office serves eleven pueblos as well as the White Mountain Apache, Hopi, Navajo, Papago and Pima tribes. He said his first goals are to improve relations with the tribes and assess the area education staff. The BIA, headed by Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ross Swimmer, offers education programs from early childhood through college.