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The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Affairs in a cooperative effort with the Department of the Interior's Office of Budget have initiated a study of 14 off-reservation Indian boarding schools, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Forrest Gerard announced today.

The purpose of the study to be completed this fall is to provide a basis for planning more effective and efficient uses of the facilities, funds and personnel of the schools.

Assistant Secretary Gerard said the off-reservation schools were “a priority issue demanding a resolution of some basic questions." He said he wanted "answers on the role and function of these schools, what students they would serve, how they fit into the comprehensive educational plans of the Bureau and what could be done to eliminate under-utilization and cost inefficiencies."

The off-reservation schools have generally served three groups of students: (1) those living in isolated areas with no suitable school accessible to them; (2) those with home or family problems and (3) those with social or educational problems. For this latter group, the off reservation boarding schools have often been schools of last resort.

The review will be conducted through both on-site visits and documentary sources.