Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Office of Indian Education Programs Director Edward Parisian will join students, parents and tribal officials on August 31, 2004, to celebrate the opening of First Mesa Elementary School, a newly-constructed Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) operated elementary school located in Polacca, Ariz., a Hopi community situated at the eastern base of First Mesa on the Hopi Reservation.

First Mesa Elementary School is a K-6 facility that will serve students from First Mesa villages and the Polacca community. The school replaces an older building, Polacca Day School, which has been on the list of aging BIA schools that have been slated for replacement.

The BIA school system is comprised of 184 BIA-funded elementary and secondary day and boarding schools located on or near 63 reservations in 23 states and serving approximately 48,000 students.

WHO: Edward Parisian, Director, Office of Indian Education Programs, Department of the Interior.

WHAT: Parisian will visit the Hopi Reservation in northeastern Arizona to celebrate the opening of the First Mesa Elementary School where he will be joined by students, parents, school representatives and tribal officials.

WHEN: Tuesday, August 31, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. (all times are local time) 10:00 a.m.: Dedication ceremony (open to press)

- Posting of Colors by Hopi Jr. ROTC
- Opening Prayer by Raleigh Namoki, Sr.
- Welcome: Bruce Steele, Principal, First Mesa Day School Lawrence Polingyumptewa, Comm. Chairman Brannon Sidney, Polacca Day School Student Body President Danielle Polacca, 2004 Miss Hopi
- Speakers will include (in order of presentation):
    - Jeremiah LaMesa, Project Manager
    - James Tewayguva, Kikmongwi
    - Leo Lacapa, Corn/Water Clan Leader
    - The Honorable Wayne Taylor, Jr., Chairman, The Hopi Tribe
    - Edward Parisian, Director, Office of Indian Education Programs, DOI
- Ribbon-cutting at main entrance of school (open to press)
- Tour of First Mesa Day School (open to press)

WHERE: First Mesa Day School Directions from Flagstaff or Winslow, Ariz.: Take I-40 to Exit 257 (State Highway 87). Go North to State Highway 264 (60 miles). Turn east and go approximately 6 miles to sign for First Mesa Elementary School. (school will be on the south side of 264). Turn right at sign.

CREDENTIALS: Please bring your sanctioned media credentials. Wear on shirt collar or around neck for easy viewing, if possible.