Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs
Media Contact: Steve Goldstein (O) (202) 343-6416
For Immediate Release: March 22, 1989
Print PDF

WASHINGTON, DC -- Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan, Jr. announced today that Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos will join him on a two-day, three-state tour of Indian schools this week. The unprecedented visit by two Cabinet members to schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in California, Arizona and New Mexico "reflects the commitment to improved education for Native Americans that President Bush, Secretary Cavazos, and I share," said Lujan.

During the trip, Secretary Lujan and Secretary Cavazos will assess the opportunities and needs that face BIA schools. Through personal meetings with BIA officials, school administrators, teachers, parents, and children, the Cabinet members hope to identify qualities in successful programs that may be duplicated throughout the BIA educational system.

"Education is the most important priority for the future of Native Americans," said Secretary Lujan. "On the reservations, 'like in all communities, proper education is the best remedy for the problems we find in society."

"Strong schools will empower Native Americans to improve their lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren."

Officials at both the Department of the Interior and the Department of Education predict that the trip will mark the beginning of a new working relationship between Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Education in the field of Indian education.

The trip will begin on Monday, March 27th and continue through Tuesday, the 28th. Lujan and Cavazos will visit the Sherman Indian High School in Riverside, California; the Salt River Day School in Scottsdale, Arizona; the Jemez Day School in Jemez Pueblos, New Mexico; the Santa Fe Indian School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Secretary Lujan will continue on Tuesday evening with a visit to The Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe.

Prior to his appointment to the Cabinet, Secretary Lujan was a twenty-year member of Congress from New Mexico. Secretary Cavazos served as President of Texas Tech University before being tapped to lead the Education Department in 1988.