Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Substantial progress in the Department's program to provide educational facilities for 22,000 Navajo children during this school year is being made, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay said today.

As of October 15 about 19,000 children are enrolled in public, Federal and mission schools, both on and off the reservation.

Expansion of reservation schools scheduled for completion in November will accommodate another 1,500 children.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs reports that completion of a new school on the reservation at Kayenta, Arizona, in January, will permit the enrollment of 500 more children. An additional 1,000 seats will be provided' in public schools now under construction on the reservation at Fort Defiance and Ganado.

When the Navajo Emergency Education Program was drawn up last winter, approximately 14,000 Navajo children, out of a total school-age population of 28,000, were enrolled in schools of all types. The Bureau's goal, announced at that time, was to provide for at least 7,000 additional children during the present school year and to accommodate the remainder of the "backlog" group by the fall of 1955.