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Awarding of a $409,300 negotiated contract to the Department of Public Instruction, State of South Dakota, was announced today by W. Barton Greenwood, Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Indian education in the public schools or South Dakota has been partially supported by Federal funds under a contract with the State since 1949. To qualify for these funds under the Johnson-O'Malley Act or 1936, school districts must show chat Indian students and nontaxable Indian land within the boundaries of their district constitute a financial burden. The amount received by each district is based on a computation or several need factors. The first State contract aided 61 school districts, enrolling 919 Indian students.

Working in close cooperation with the State, the objective or the Bureau of Indian Affairs is to develop public school opportunities for all Indian children on the same basis that public schools are available for non-Indian children in the State.

Between 1907 and 1953, 65 federally operated Indian schools in South Dakota were closed and the schools transferred to public school jurisdiction or the Indian children integrated into the existing public school system.

The purpose of the present contract is to provide financial assistant to affected school districts when there is a showing of need for this aid.

During the 1955-56 school year, Johnson-O'Malley aid was provided to 76 South Dakota school districts enrolling 1,821 Indian children.