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With an appropriation of $109,410,000 for the fiscal year which began July 1, 1957, the Bureau of Indian Affairs is in position to initiate a new adult vocational training program and substantially broaden educational facilities for Indian children, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today.

Bureau plans for the new fiscal year also include expansion in the geographic scope of the relocation service operation, enlargement of the adult literacy training program on reservations, extension of welfare assistance to an increasing number of needy Indians, and some acceleration of resource work, especially in forestry and soil conservation.

Many of the program changes and expansions scheduled for the next 12 months represent a fulfillment of plans outlined by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Glenn L. Emmons in a series of field conferences held over a five-month period last summer with elected tribal officers throughout the country.

The Bureau's 1958 appropriation compares with $87,737,500 available in the fiscal year which ended June 30. Initiation of adult vocational training, construction and rehabilitation of school facilities, and operation of the Bureau's regular education program account for all but a minor fraction of the increase.

The adult vocational training program is being launched with an initial appropriation of $1,500,000 under authority of a congressional law enacted last August. It is aimed primarily at reservation Indians from 18 to 35 who need such training to enhance their earning powers and improve their personal and family living standards. Plans contemplate enrollment of Indian trainees in regular vocational schools and provision of “on-the-job” or apprentice training in industrial establishments.

While funds for relocation service to Indians have not been increased from the $3,541,000 available this past fiscal year, the Bureau will broaden the geographic coverage of its operations by reducing the staff at several existing field offices and by opening six new ones. Three of these in medium-size or suburban communities--Joliet and Waukegan, Ill., and Oakland, Calif.--actually began operations July 1. Three other offices are in process of selection.

With the increase of funds for the education of Indian children, the Bureau will be able to provide for a total enrollment of 45,465 pupils in Federal facilities--29,455 in boarding schools and 16,010 in day schools. Funds for assisting State and local bodies in the public school education of Indian children from families on tax-exempt land were increased by $2,652,200 and will provide assistance for a total of 46,140 pupils.

Of the $17,000,000 available for the Bureau's construction program, the major share will be used for the building and renovation or enlargement of school facilities to keep pace with the growing school-age Indian population and to relieve overcrowding which in some Bureau schools now runs from 25 to 50 percent. The construction appropriation also includes other buildings and utilities needed in the Bureau's program and continuation of work on existing Indian irrigation project.

For the adult literacy training program, which has been in operation over a year on five reservations, the Bureau will have $805,800, an increase of $647,800. Plans for expansion call for establishing units on 12 additional reservations, at 39 trailer locations on the Navajo Reservation, and at 10 locations in Alaska.

Funds for welfare service to Indians residing on reservations have been increased by $1,116,000 to $4,954,000. This will permit the Bureau to keep pace with the increasing welfare load which results largely from the needs of dependents of Indian patients hospitalized for tuberculosis under the stepped-up case finding program of the Public Health Service. In addition it will make possible an expansion of assistance for handicapped Indian children needing foster home or institutional care. It will also provide expanded family counseling and guidance services.

Funds for the Bureau's forestry work have been increased by $101,100 to $1,675~6l8. This will make it possible to continue inventory work on all Indian forests of commercial importance, and to place them eventually in full-scale production within the limits of sustained yield. An increase of $288,500 in soil and moisture conservation funds to $4,638,000 will permit some acceleration in the tempo of this activity on Indian lands.