Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs has already assigned staff to prepare plans that will provide 5,000 additional school seats for Indian and Eskimo pupils and correct unsafe and obsolete Federal Indian school facilities in line with yesterday's mandate from President Kennedy, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall announced today.

Swift action was possible, Secretary Udall added, because the Bureau has for some time been formulating long-range plans for expanding and modernizing its nationwide school system for Indian youngsters.

As soon as the plans have been completed, the Secretary said, a specific request for funds will be submitted to Congress. It is expected that Indian Bureau planning to meet the needs will be completed in a week or ten days.

"The most urgent needs, II he continued, "are in the Navajo area of New Mexico and Arizona where we have a shortage of about 3,700 seats and in Alaska where we need roughly 1,000. About 300 additional seats are needed in the Choctaw area of Mississippi and in other scattered locations."