

February 5, 2011

Secretary Kenneth Salazar
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

498112

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RE: Resolution of Communication and Facilitation Breakdown between OFMC and BIE

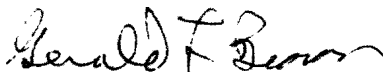
Dear Honorable Secretary Salazar:

On January 4, 2010, the Negotiated Rulemaking School Facilities and Construction Committee for No Child Left Behind (Committee) was chartered for the purposes of providing reports about the conditions and funding needs for facilities at Bureau-funded schools as well as a formula for prioritizing the allocation of funds to meet those needs. The Committee has been working on their charge and has attended 5 meetings. The tribal representatives of the Committee have determined that it is their responsibility to inform you about the continued lack of communication and cooperation we have witnessed between the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and the Office of Facilities Management and Construction (OFMC) which has hampered the work of our committee. This breakdown in communication and cooperation is causing immediate problems and has the potential of escalating into further conflicts in managing and facilitating efficient operations of school facilities for the 183 Bureau-funded schools.

David Talayumptewa, Associate Deputy Director for Administration of the BIE, contends that even though the NCLB provides that BIE is funded and responsible for operations and maintenance (O&M) of Bureau-funded schools, BIE does not have the funds to support headquarters and regional staff to effectively carry out those roles and responsibilities and requires technical assistance from OFMC. Jack Rever, Director of Facilities, Environmental and Cultural Resources, contends that OFMC cannot sufficiently provide this support because it has no authority over O&M funds nor does it have supervision over school facility personnel due to the statute.

We are writing to request immediate assistance in resolving what we have determined has become an untenable situation negatively affecting the school facilities for our children as well as the Committee's ability to complete its charge. It is imperative that these two programs work together to ensure that Bureau-funded schools receive the training and support they require in order to provide safe and quality educational facilities for our children.

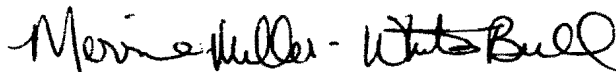
Sincerely,



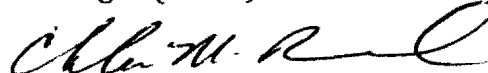
Gerald L. Brown
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe



Gregory Anderson
Muscoogie (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma

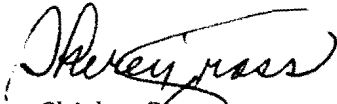


Merrie Miller-White Bull
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

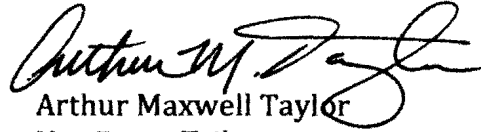


Charles M. Roessel
Navajo Nation

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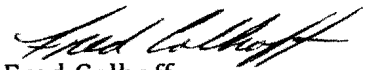
Shirley Gross
15 Tribes of ND, SD and NE



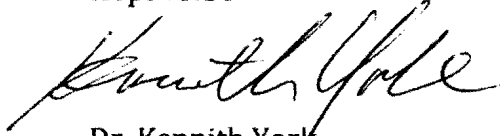
Arthur Maxwell Taylor
Nez Perce Tribe



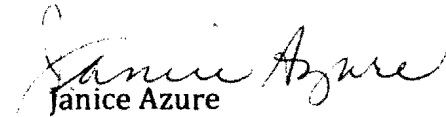
Catherine M. Wright
Hopi Tribe



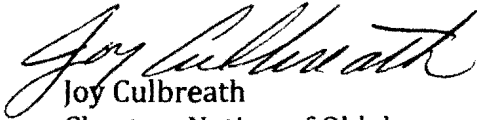
Fred Colhoff
Oglala Sioux Tribe



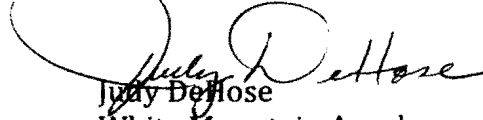
Dr. Kenneth York
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians



Janice Azure
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa



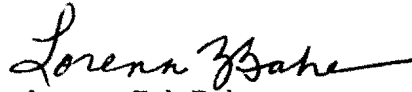
Joy Culbreath
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma



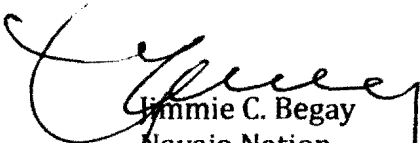
Judy DeHose
White Mountain Apache



Albert Yazzie
Navajo Nation



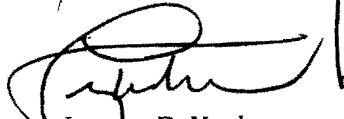
Lorena Zah Bahe
Navajo Nation



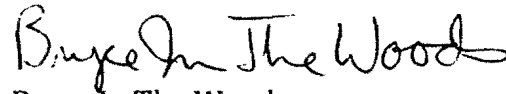
Jimmie C. Begay
Navajo Nation



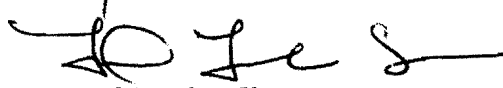
Betty Ojaye
Navajo Nation



Lester B. Hudson
Navajo Nation



Bryce In The Woods
Cheyenne River Sioux [Alternate]



Fred Leader Charge
Rosebud Sioux Tribe [Alternate]



Margie R. S. Begay
Navajo Nation [Alternate]