

Bureau of Indian Education Reorganization Implementation Frequently Asked Questions for Employees

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Indian Education's (BIE) reorganization to implement the Blueprint for Reform and Secretarial Order #3334 was approved by Congress through the reprogramming process. The reform addresses the chronically low performing schools and poor financial management identified by the American Indian Education Study Group, various reports and the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

Major organizational changes will occur at the central level, along with the reorganization of the regional offices to match the school functions, and a decentralized structure to meet its State Education Agency responsibilities. Overall, the first steps of the reform will be the hiring of new staff across BIE.

ALL CURRENT BIE EMPLOYEES

Why is the Department conducting this reorganization?

The reorganization will better align our resources, functions, talent, and technical assistance to our mission--ensuring our students are college and career ready with a high-quality education that honors their culture, identity, and dignity as human beings.

What is the effect of the reorganization on BIE staff and offices?

The reorganization will better align services to BIE-funded schools with the specific needs of BIE-operated schools and Tribally-controlled schools. The reorganization also focuses staff resources and clarifies roles and responsibilities within the BIE for both academic performance and school operations.

The reorganization addresses the changing fabric of the BIE school system including Sovereignty in Indian Education and Tribal Education Departments and Department of Education requirements. These changes will result in a limited number of geographical moves to accommodate the Agency's mission and goals. Because new positions will be created and some positions eliminated, staff members might be required to apply for a position within the reorganized BIE. We will notify all employees regarding the status of individual positions and next steps. We encourage you to speak with Human Resources staff if you have any questions or concerns.

Will there be a Reduction-in-Force (RIF)?

We do not anticipate conducting a reduction-in-force. We are committed to doing everything possible to avoid a RIF and to minimize the stress and anxiety such restructuring actions inevitably have on staff. We hope to find placement for all current employees who wish to continue employment within the restructured BIE. Further, there will be new positions throughout the BIE, and we encourage all

employees to apply for any open vacancies. We will also work with employees who are unable to find placement or who no longer wish to remain in the BIE.

I received an offer letter in 2015 for a position in the new organization. What happens now?

Some BIE employees received offer letters in 2015 for positions in the BIE reorganization. These offer letters were sent in error. To provide equal opportunities to all employees, all new or vacant positions as a result of the reorganization will be advertised. Employees must apply for all position(s) in the new organization to ensure that every current employee who is qualified has an opportunity to be considered. All new and/or vacant positions will be announced on www.usajobs.gov starting the week of February 22, 2016. Announcements will be open for 15 days.

Do I have to reapply for a position I already occupy?

No. If you already have a position that will continue to exist in the restructured BIE, the restructuring will not affect your position. Thus, you may remain in your current position. You may, of course, apply for any new or vacant positions for which you are qualified and interested.

What are the next steps?

Vacancies will be announced on February 22, 2016. The announcements will be open only to current BIE employees, including those whose positions will not be impacted by the reorganization. Employees will have 15 days to apply for any and/or all open vacancies for which they qualify. Employees should visit the website (www.usajobs.gov) and follow the guidelines to search for position vacancies. Employees may also go to our website (www.bie.edu/jobs/apply/index.htm) to obtain further information regarding the application process. Employees must follow the instructions included in each vacancy announcement and submit all requested documents. After announcements close, applications will be reviewed for completeness and qualification determinations. Employee applications will be referred then to selecting officials for selection. Selected employees will receive offers by April 1, 2016. Reporting dates will then be established. Please visit the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website (www.opm.gov/faqs/) and the BIE's Frequently Asked Questions at (www.bie.edu/HR/FAQ/index.htm) for additional information.

What is the timeline for hiring?

We anticipate selections will be made within three weeks following the closing date identified in the vacancy announcements. Offers will be made as selections are returned to the Human Resources Office for processing. If relocation is not involved, actions may be effective as soon as the pay period following acceptance of an offer. We anticipate placements as early as March 21, 2016. Effective dates will vary depending on whether relocation is required.

If I am selected for a position, will relocation expenses be paid?

For employees who are selected for positions where relocation is necessary, relocation expenses will be paid. The home buy-back program will not be authorized for relocating employees. For additional information on relocation expenses, please contact the BIE Human Resources Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico at (505) 563-5300.

How long will I have to relocate?

Where relocation is necessary, current employees with the BIE will have 60 days to report to the new position and duty station.

What happens if I am not selected?

We expect to place all current employees who would like to remain within the BIE into positions within the restructured BIE organization. If you are not selected for any position for which you apply, the BIE Human Resources staff will assist you in exploring career opportunities within the BIE, Bureau of Indian Affairs, other bureaus and offices within the Department of the Interior, as well as within other Federal Agencies. However, to maximize your chances of selection for open vacancies with BIE, we encourage you to apply for all positions for which you would like to be considered.

Will you offer early retirement options?

No. We will not be offering early retirement as part of the BIE restructuring.

Will there be new job opportunities in the future?

Yes, but we encourage you not to wait. There are a significant number of positions that will be announced. Visit the USAJOBS website (www.usajobs.gov) for new job opportunities.

Will I receive training for my new job?

Yes, BIE is developing training curriculum to help employees understand the position requirements and expectations, and to be successful in their new role. Supervisors will develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for employees who are hired into new positions.

Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns?

Please contact the BIE Human Resources Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico at (505) 563-5300. For employee and labor relations questions, please contact Glenn Himebaugh in Albuquerque, New Mexico at (505) 563-5307.