

UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES, INC.

Resolution No. B-90-273

IN SUPPORT OF FORWARD FUNDING FOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS - FUNDED SCHOOLS

- WHEREAS, elementary and secondary schools for Indian children funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) have to run their financial operations on the federal government's fiscal year cycle -- October through September -- but must run their academic operations on the regular year cycle -- August through May; and
- WHEREAS, BIA-funded schools must start the school year without receiving or even knowing how much money they will have to operate for most of the school year; and
- WHEREAS, this situation makes it very difficult for these schools to do advance planning for a new school year with any degree of certainty; and
- WHEREAS, significant decisions involving funding commitments must be made in the Spring each year, six-months before the October fiscal year begins and the new year funding becomes available. These include: teacher hiring; textbook selection and orders; equipment, furnishings and supply orders; new curriculum offerings and instructional personnel and supplies needed to support them; and
- WHEREAS, because of the uncertainty as to the amount of funding that will be provided, advance hiring and purchasing commitments must be tempered. This often means that schools defer hiring additional needed teachers, ordering instructional materials, or introducing curriculum innovations if there is any question about having the funds needed to support them; and
- WHEREAS, School Boards are also limited in their ability to offer teacher salary increases (or even salaries competitive with public schools) if they are not sure they will receive enough funding to meet them. This exacerbates the recruitment/retention problems already experienced by remotely located BIA-funded schools; and
- WHEREAS, Congress currently funds the Department of Education's Chapter 1 compensatory education program on a July-June cycle to enable recipient schools, including BIA-funded schools, to perform advance planning for the use of their Chapter 1 funds; and

WHEREAS, statutory authority already exists to move BIA-funded schools to a July-June funding period (25 U.S.C. Section 2009), but it cannot be exercised without appropriations action to fund the extra nine-months of the transition year; and

WHEREAS, tribes have been forced to absorb the costs of pay increases for teacher salaries which have not been provided for in approved budgets; and


WHEREAS, tribes have been forced to pay the costs of maintaining accreditation for tribally-operated BIA-funded schools

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

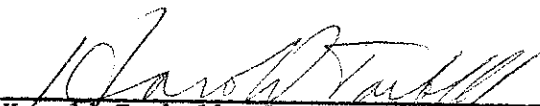
1. Funding for BIA-funded schools for their instructional programs (Indian School Equalization Formula), student transportation and substance abuse counselors should be "forward funded" on a July-June cycle which is more compatible with the academic year; and
2. In order to achieve "forward funding," Congress is urged to supply for Fiscal Year 1991 the one-time additional appropriation needed to cover the nine-month period of October-June of the partial fiscal year, together with the "regular" twelve-month appropriation amount; and
3. Although the one-time additional appropriation is needed to cover a nine-month period, the amount needed is approximately 83 percent of the full-year funding because of the higher spend-out rate endured during the months of the academic year; and
4. Adequate funding be provided by the BIA to pay for mandated raises for teachers and other personnel in BIA-funded schools, for costs of maintaining accreditation for BIA-funded schools, and for the costs of transportation and other unreimbursed costs in the operation of BIA-funded schools; and
5. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is urged to support this request and the supplemental funding for Fiscal Year 1990 and for additional funding for Fiscal Year 1991.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the Board of Directors Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Nashville, Tennessee; January 31, 1990.



Joel M. Frank, President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Harold Tarbell, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.