

2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Bureau of Indian Affairs Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

Report Run Date: 03/28/2024 10:56:34 AM

1. Department or Agency

Department of the Interior

2. Fiscal Year

2024

3. Committee or Subcommittee

Bureau of Indian Affairs Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

3b. GSA

Committee No.

5317

4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?

No

5. Current Charter

01/09/2023 01/09/2025

6. Expected Renewal Date

7. Expected Term Date

8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

8b. Specific Termination Authority

8c. Actual Term Date

9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

Not Applicable

10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

11. Establishment Authority

Statutory (Congress Created)

12. Specific Establishment Authority

P.L.108-466, The Individuals with Disability Education Improvement Act, Part B, Section 611(h)(6)

13. Effective Date

12/03/2004 Continuing

14. Committee Type

14c. Presidential?

No

15. Description of Committee

16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for this Fiscal Year

17a. Open

0 17b. Closed0 17c. Partially Closed0 Other Activities0 17d. Total0

Meetings and Dates

No Meetings

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$0.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$0.00
19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)	0.00	0.00

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Advisory Board for Exceptional Children (Board) typically meets three to four times per year to review and discuss various BIE documents and processes, Special Education (SPED) Integrated Monitoring Process; SPED 616 and 618 data, SPP/APR Indicator data performance, Office of SPED Programs (OSEP) official monitoring reports; U.S. Department of Education (DOE) reports; Indian School Equalization Program data; and the BIE

Reorganization Plan, BIE Strategic Direction, SPED Policy & Procedures Handbook, SPED Coordinated Services Plan. As a stakeholder, the Board provides input and receives comments from parents, Tribal Education Departments, Tribally Controlled School personnel, Bureau Operated School personnel, BIE departments, and other stakeholders and other interested individuals interested in improving services for students with disabilities by receiving comments during the Board meetings. The Board uses information obtained from the various resources to advise and offer recommendations to improve services for students with disabilities and to support the BIE in carrying out the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

Public Law 108-446, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) establishes the membership requirements. As required by the Act, the Advisory Board is composed of 15 individuals involved in or concerned with the education and provisions of services to Indian children with disabilities. The Advisory Board composition reflects a broad range of viewpoints and includes at least one member representing each of the following interests: Indian persons with disabilities; Teachers of children with disabilities; Indian parents/guardians of children with disabilities; Service providers; State Education Officials; Local education officials; State inter-agency coordinating councils (for states having Indian reservations); Tribal representatives or tribal organization representatives and BIE/BIA employees concerned with the education of children with disabilities.

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The Advisory Board typically meets 2-4 times per year.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

The Advisory Board is required under Public Law 108-446, Individuals with Disability Education Act; and it is necessary to gain input and advice from individuals concerned with ensuring special education services and related services are provided to children with disabilities throughout the BIE education system; and meaningful student participation is achieved and student academic achievement progress is being met.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

The Advisory Board meetings are open to the general public.

21. Remarks

During FY2023, the Board had 4 meetings.

Designated Federal Officer

Jennifer L. Davis Education Specialist

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Cleveland, Monica	03/15/2023	03/15/2026	Director, Student Support Services	Representative Member
Finnearty, Leslie	02/10/2022	02/10/2025	Special Education Lead Teacher	Representative Member
Graves, Perry	01/14/2021	01/14/2024	Retired	Representative Member
Harrison, Rachel	04/19/2023	04/19/2026	Special Education Teacher	Representative Member
Kroupa, Wendy	04/19/2023	04/19/2026	Elementary Principal and Sped Director	Representative Member
Lehmann, Gretchen	02/10/2022	02/10/2025	Special Education Director	Representative Member

			Educational	Regular Government Technician-Special Employee (RGE) Member
Peltier, Pilar	02/10/2022	02/10/2025	Education	
Reval, Leon	09/15/2023	09/15/2026	Educational Program Analyst	Representative Member
Running Horse, Teryl	01/15/2021	01/15/2024	Teacher	Representative Member
Shawanokasic, Norman	07/10/2023	07/10/2026	Operations Manager	Representative Member
Slowman-Chee, Janet	09/15/2023	09/15/2026	Executive Director	Representative Member
Wagner, Brian	11/05/2022	11/05/2025	Director of Student Services	Representative Member
Wendell, Gretchen	02/11/2022	02/11/2025	Special Education Director	Representative Member
Younce, Elizabeth	09/15/2023	09/15/2026	Exceptional Student Services Director	Representative Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 14

Narrative Description

The Advisory Board conducted four Board meetings during FY2023. Within the 2023 Annual Report two priority areas are provided: (1) Support for the active recruitment, hiring, and retention of special educators and related service providers for BIE funded schools. (2) To ensure all students with disabilities, their families and their service providers within the BIE school system are provided with appropriate wellness support to address social, behavioral, emotional, and cultural needs.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if
Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements
Other

☐
☒

Outcome Comments

The Advisory Board is established to carry out the provision of Public Law 108-446, Section 611, Paragraphs: (A) (B) (C) (D) (E), the Individuals Disability Education Act (IDEA).

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

None
Unable to Determine
Under \$100,000
\$100,000 - \$500,000
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000
Over \$10,000,000
Cost Savings Other

☐
☐
☒
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Cost Savings Comments

During FY 2023 several factors were involved that prompted operational cost savings: The BIE had a total of 4 Board meetings. All meetings were offered online and in-person. On average 4 members (out of 14 total members) traveled to the board meetings, which is less than half of the total committee members. The other nine Board members opted to attend the meeting virtually. This drastically cut down on board travel expenses. BIE hired a contractor, reducing the time the DFO previously had to dedicate to administrative work and reporting. The contractor handled all travel planning, meeting sites, meeting set up, and report writing for the minute and annual report.

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

103

Number of Recommendations Comments

For FY2023, the Board addressed two areas of concern with 12 recommendations. In order to support the active recruitment, hiring, and retention of special educators and

related service providers for BIE funded schools the board recommends the following: (1) Conduct a self-assessment of current processes to determine barriers leading to loss of qualified candidates due to the length of the hiring process; (2) Inform all BIE funded schools of local job fairs and collaborate with them on recruiting efforts and make an effort to hold job fairs closer to the schools they are recruiting for, especially in rural areas; (3) Collect data regarding the adequacy and quality of current housing arrangements for school staff in BIE school communities and promote strategies for the development of low cost, no cost housing or relocation support for educators who work at BIE funded schools; (4) Provide a range of options to fill special educator and related service provider positions including virtual delivery systems as deemed appropriate for the individual needs of the students; (5) Facilitate partnerships between BIE schools and educator preparation programs at Tribal colleges, Haskell Indian Nations University, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic University, and other institutions of higher education serving significant numbers of Native American college students to develop “grow your own” approaches and BIE pathway programs to educator preparation; (6) Promote loan forgiveness programs for educators, paraprofessionals and Related Service Providers including Occupational Therapists , Physical Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Applied Behavior Analysis providers, School Psychologists, etc, and; (7) Continue robust public relations campaigns across the BIE system to promote the value of education and educators and emphasize the positive aspects of education, particularly special education, and a career as an educator. In order to ensure all students with disabilities, their families, and the service providers within the BIE school system are provided with appropriate wellness support to address social, behavioral, emotional, and cultural needs, the board recommends the following: (1) Increase support for families of children with disabilities to proactively reduce the possibilities of abuse and neglect (e.g., connecting parents to the state parent centers, encouraging activities with regional parent technical assistance centers, connecting parents with school-based resources, and sharing national resources such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics/healthychildren.org, Indian Health Services (IHS), etc.); (2) Increase support and services for students with disabilities in overall social-emotional and wellness through means such as ensuring adequate staffing, providing access to as mental health providers, use of evidence based social-emotional learning curricula, providing trauma informed care and training for staff, coordinating with Indian Health Services and the BIE Behavioral Health and Wellness Program, and accessing other community resources; (3) Increase support and services for special education personnel and related service providers in overall social-emotional and wellness though peer supported networks, capacity building, promotion of resiliency, trauma informed care and related training in order to adequately support students); (4) Foster regular communication between the school staff and the parents/ guardians ; (5) Offer professional development and

resources to BIE funded schools on proven behavioral interventions.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

30%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

41.0%

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

30%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

58.0%

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

The BIE works closely with the advisory board during each meeting and provides feedback and input for the annual report during each board meeting. For FY 2023 the BIE provided input and feedback to the Board during four board meetings. The BIE supports the Board and ensures that various BIE personnel (the Director, supervisors, and Education Specialists from various departments) responds to questions and supports the various BIE offices that are included in the published agendas. BIE personnel present the Board with various reports and answer questions from the Board. Feedback from BIE can be found in the Board's meeting minutes. All Board minutes, annual reports and other important documents are located in the BIE website located at <https://www.bie.edu/landing-page/special-education>.

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Approved grants or other payments

☐

Other

☐

Action Comments

Not Applicable

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

No

Grant Review Comments

No grants were reviewed.

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO

☒

Online Agency Web Site

☒

Online Committee Web Site

☒

Online GSA FACA Web Site

☒

Publications

☒

Other

☐

Access Comments

Individuals may contact the Designated Federal Officer, Jennifer Davis at jennifer.davis@bie.edu or (202) 208-7845 (mobile). The Advisory Board section can be found within the BIE website www.bie.edu using this link:
<https://www.bie.edu/landing-page/special-education>