

The Isleta Elementary School Soon to be Pueblo of Isleta Elementary School Update

The transition/conversion is moving along at a fast and steady pace. The Isleta Elementary School Transition Team (IESTT) is continuing to meet every week and has had several meetings with the Pueblo of Isleta Tribal Council, the Governor's Office, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The meetings with the BIE and BIA have been particularly beneficial for the transition process to outline specific information necessary to create a quality transition.

The Transition Team wants to hear from community members and especially from parents of elementary school age children! We will be hosting more meeting sessions and now that the weather is getting warmer, we will be out at various community events to be available to answer your questions obtain/solicit comments about the school transition. So, please stop by and visit with the Transition Team. Meeting Notices will be posted in the Isleta Newsletter and on flyers posted throughout the community.

What follows is a Q & A about the soon to be Pueblo of Isleta Elementary School (POIES).

Q. How will my children benefit from this school conversion?

A. By the Pueblo of Isleta assuming the educational operations of the Isleta Elementary School, the Pueblo of Isleta's intent is to provide an enhanced curriculum, and to review and expand academic programs with the goal to be as competitive as any school here in New Mexico. In addition, we will be able to effectively initiate program changes. For example, we will now be able to begin to weave our traditional culture and language into the curriculum.

Q. Will there be any physical changes to the school?

A. No. At least not initially—changes to the buildings will only be done on an “as needed” basis. However, we are in the process of preparing to expand upgrades to computer equipment and internet infrastructure so our children will be afforded the same up-to-date technology as any other student in the United States.

Q. When will the information be available about the progress of the school transition?

A. The Transition Team and the POI project management team (Febasa Consulting) have been hosting information sessions for the community and parents; and, will continue to do so until the BIE officially turns over the school to the Pueblo of Isleta on July 1, 2015. Notices of these meetings will be continued to be posted in the Pueblo of Isleta Newsletter and on flyers that will be posted throughout the community.

Q. When will the school administrators, faculty and staff be hired?

A. The Pueblo of Isleta Human Resources Department will be handling all job postings and announcements—since all employees of the new Tribally Controlled School will be Pueblo of Isleta Employees. As of March 19, 2015 (the date of submission of this article for publication) interviews for the Education Program Administrator (EPA) are being outlined with the intent of hiring the EPA by the end of April 2015. Once the EPA is hired, he/she will oversee the hiring of the remainder of the employees (i.e., Principal, Faculty and Staff).

Q. Which office will be responsible for controlling the school?

A. In compliance with P.L. 100-297, the Tribally Controlled School’s Act, the responsible party will be a newly established school board/Governing Board. This “Governing Board” will have the responsibility to make decisions and manage the school. The Governing Board will report directly the Pueblo of Isleta Tribal Council. The EPA will report to the Governing

Board of the POIES. And, the remainder of the administrators, faculty and staff will report to the EPA.

There is much work to be done before school starts in the fall of this year. But, the Transition Team is on the right track to get this accomplished before the new School Year 2015-16 (starts/begins). Please look for flyers and future POI Newsletter articles about updates to the transition/conversion process.

