



United States Department of the Interior

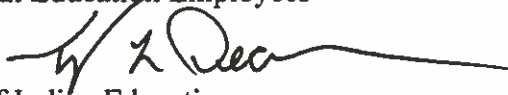
BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO

SEP 28 2018

Memorandum

To: All Bureau of Indian Education Employees

From: Tony L. Dearman 
Director, Bureau of Indian Education

Subject: Bureau of Indian Education Ombudsman

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is designating an ombudsman who will assist us in creating a safe and respectful work environment that is free of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. In doing so, the BIE will continue to take steps to foster an atmosphere that is consistent with the Administration's and Secretary Zinke's commitment to dignity and respect at the Department of the Interior. Therefore, I am pleased to announce the designation of a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Ombudsman.

The role of ombudsman will be fulfilled by Brian Bloch. Brian has a wealth of experience as an ombudsman and conducts himself with integrity and professionalism. Each employee should feel free to reach out to Ombudsman Bloch regarding a wide range of workplace issues without fear of backlash or retaliation, including concerns about harassment. Brian will work with each employee to explore all resolution options in a prompt, thorough and consistent manner.

Our ombudsman is an independent, impartial, informal, and confidential resource. The ombudsman provides a safe channel for employees to openly talk about sensitive issues, and will work with you to find solutions that benefit employees, managers, and our organization. This service is confidential and will not reveal your identity, except in a case of immediate danger, such as threats to self and others.

The ombudsman position is not part of the management structure of BIE, nor is it part of any formal grievance or complaint process. It is not an investigative unit or oversight body, and it does not replace other processes that employees can use for formal redress. Our bureau's ombudsman will communicate to management the broad themes of issues that have been identified with the utmost care to protect confidentiality. Such reporting will only be done in general terms, and individual identities and specific issues will not be discussed or identified.

Brian will be gathering a wide range of employee perspectives about the strengths and successes of BIE, areas of concern, potential weaknesses in the system, and innovative opportunities for positive change. You may reach Brian at (301) 814-7262 or brian_bloch@ios.doi.gov.

Note: Labor Relations responsibilities must be fulfilled before the services of the Ombudsman are available to bargaining unit employees.