



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

**Media Contact:** Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152, Eric Ruff 202-208-6416

**For Immediate Release:** August 27, 2003

[Print PDF](#)

**WASHINGTON** – Interior Secretary Gale Norton and Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Aurene M. Martin will join students, parents, and tribal officials on August 28, 2003, to celebrate the opening of Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School, a new Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)-operated day school located in Prewitt, N.M.

Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School is a K-6 school that will serve approximately 390 day students from the Prewitt and Thoreau communities on the Navajo Nation reservation. The school replaces two existing facilities, Baca Day and Thoreau Boarding Schools, which are on the list of aging BIA schools slated for replacement.

The BIA school system is comprised of 185 elementary and secondary day and boarding schools located on or near 63 reservations in 23 states. In School Year 2001-2002, BIA-funded schools served approximately 48,000 students.

**WHO:** Gale Norton, Secretary, Department of the Interior Aurene M. Martin, Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, DOI

**WHAT:** Norton and Martin will visit the Navajo Reservation in northwestern New Mexico to celebrate the opening of the Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School, where they will meet with students, parents, school representatives and tribal officials.

Thursday, August 28, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. (all times are local time)

10:00 a.m.-10:40 a.m.: Dedication ceremony (open to press)

- Jacque Mangham, Master of Ceremonies and Principal, Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School
- Posting of Colors by Wingate High School ROTC Honor Guard
- Performance by Baca School Indian Club student members
- Speakers will include (in order of presentation):

**WHEN:**

- Sarah Begay, President, Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School Board
- The Honorable Joe Shirley, Jr., President, The Navajo Nation
- Boyd Robinson, Supervisory Civil Engineer, Office of Facilities Management and Construction, Bureau of Indian Affairs

- Col. Joseph Schroedel, Commander, South Pacific Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Aurene M Martin, Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior
- The Honorable Gale Norton, Secretary, Department of the Interior

10:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m.: Tour of Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School (open to press)

11:20 a.m.-11:45 a.m.: Media availability (open to press)

11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Lunch with students and faculty (open to press)

Baca/Dlo'ay azhi Community School

Directions from Albuquerque, N.M., or Gallup, N.M.:

**WHERE:** Take Exit 63 off of I-40 (exit is 11 miles East of Thoreau and 19 miles West of Grants, N.M.). When exiting, go North to Hwy. 66 (approximately one-quarter mile). School will be on the left (school is adjacent to I-40).

**CREDENTIALS:** Press registration will be provided. Please bring your sanctioned media credentials and if possible, wear on your shirt collar or around your neck for easy viewing. This will assist our staff.

Press seating will be provided.

**-DOI-**

---

<https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/opa/online-press-release/secretary-gale-norton-and-acting-assistant-secretary-aurene-martin>