



OFFICE OF  
**INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

# **Facility Improvements Still Needed at Pine Hill School**

**This is a revised version of the report prepared for public release.**



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**INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Memorandum

**APR 30 2021**

To: Bryan Newland  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs

From: Mark Lee Greenblatt  
Inspector General

Subject: Final Inspection Report – *Facility Improvements Still Needed at Pine Hill School*  
Report No. 2019-CR-062

This memorandum transmits the final report on our follow-up inspection of Pine Hill School. Our objective was to determine what progress had been made to correct the issues identified in our previous reports and determine whether the conditions of the facilities at the Pine Hill School changed since our last reviews.

We made 13 new recommendations to ensure that the progress made to date will be maintained, and that future improvements will properly address many of the long-standing facility issues facing the school. We also recommended that the Department's Office of Financial Management reopen one recommendation from our 2016 inspection report that we found was not addressed and repeated another recommendation that had not yet been addressed.

In response to our draft report, Indian Affairs did not explicitly concur with our recommendations but provided information regarding the actions taken or planned, timeframes for completion, and officials responsible for implementation. We consider 12 recommendations resolved but not implemented and 3 recommendations unresolved.

We will refer Recommendations 1 – 13, the repeat recommendation, and the re-opened recommendation to the Office of Policy, Management and Budget for resolution and to track their implementation and report to us on their status. In addition, we will notify Congress about our findings and we will report semiannually, as required by law, on actions you have taken to implement the recommendations and on recommendations that have not been implemented. We will also post a public version of this report on our website.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact me at 202-208-5745.

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## Results in Brief

Pine Hill School, located in western New Mexico, is a tribally controlled school funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Interior’s Indian Affairs (IA). The school has a long history of unsafe and poor facility conditions. As a result of local media reports, we conducted an overall inspection of Pine Hill School’s facilities in 2016 and concluded that the school had an inoperable fire system as well as several major facility deficiencies and safety and health concerns.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, in May 2018, we conducted an investigation and found that the school’s fire alarm and suppression systems were still inoperable.<sup>2</sup>

Because of these longstanding issues with the facility conditions at the school, we completed a follow-up inspection in 2020 to determine what progress had been made to correct the issues identified in our previous reports and determine whether the conditions at the facilities at the Pine Hill School changed since our last reviews. Our fieldwork was performed prior to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic while students were in school.

We found that the school addressed many of the issues identified in our previous reports and that the overall facility conditions had improved. Specifically, the IA and the school implemented 9 of the 12 recommendations from our 2016 inspection and addressed a number of the safety and health issues we previously identified including the inoperable fire alarm system.

However, some of the issues identified in our 2016 inspection remain unresolved—mainly the extensive water damage and mold in the library, kindergarten classroom, and the gymnasium, as well as general deficiencies that were present throughout the school (for example, water damage on ceilings, ineffective gutters and downspouts, poor drainage, and deteriorated walkways throughout the campus). IA and school officials told us that many of these deficiencies would be corrected during the IA’s planned three-phased renovation project for the school, which includes consolidating and renovating school facilities and replacing the gymnasium. The phased renovation project is only in the planning and design stages, and COVID-19 may cause additional delays. We also found that Pine Hill School’s 25,000-square-foot dormitory remained significantly underused and that the IA’s facility inventory continued to be inaccurate, even though the IA reported that it had made corrections to its inventory since our last review.

In addition, we identified additional safety, health, and security risks during this inspection not covered in our 2016 inspection. We found that routine inspections of critical equipment and potential indoor environmental contaminants were not regularly completed; access to potentially dangerous areas was not restricted; some security cameras on school buildings were inoperable, and one school building did not have security cameras; no requirements governing the types, placement, or permissible uses of cameras were in place; and portable buildings regularly used by children and staff were in extremely poor condition. We also found that, although the IA conducted annual safety and health inspections at the school as required, we found that neither

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<sup>1</sup> *Condition of Bureau of Indian Affairs Facilities at the Pine Hill Boarding School* (Report No. C-IS-BIE-0023-2014-A), dated January 2016.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Investigation: Failure to Maintain Fire Alarms at Pine Hills* (Report No. OI-CO-15-0246-I), dated May 2018.

the IA nor the school could confirm that the deficiencies identified during those inspections were addressed. Furthermore, an IA official informed us that it was not tracking deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections to confirm they were being addressed.

We made 13 new recommendations to ensure that the progress made to date will be maintained, and that future improvements will properly address many of the long-standing facility issues facing the school. We also recommended that the Office of Financial Management reopen one recommendation from our previous report that we found that was not addressed, and we repeated one recommendation from our prior inspection report that had not yet been addressed.

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# Introduction

## Objective

The objective of this inspection was to determine what progress has been made at the Pine Hill School to correct the issues identified in our previous reports and to determine whether conditions at the facilities changed.

See Appendix 1 for our scope and methodology.

## Background

The U.S. Department of the Interior's mission includes fulfilling the United States' trust responsibilities to Native Americans. Indian Affairs (IA), composed of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs (AS-IA), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), fulfills these trust responsibilities, which include providing educational facilities to American Indians. The IA is responsible for 185 schools, of which approximately 130 are tribally controlled pursuant to contracts and grants awarded by the IA. Currently, AS-IA, the BIA, and the BIE share responsibility for school facilities. AS-IA's Office of Facilities, Property, and Safety Management, through its Division of Facilities Management and Construction, provides resources for facility improvements and repairs as well as operations and maintenance. It also manages new construction and renovations. The BIA oversees, monitors, evaluates, and provides technical assistance to BIE school facilities.<sup>3</sup> The BIE identifies safety and health concerns by conducting annual inspections. In this report, however, we will refer to AS-IA, the BIA, and the BIE, collectively as the IA.

## Pine Hill School

Pine Hill School, located in western New Mexico, is a tribally controlled grant school with 335 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The school is a complex of buildings that includes a kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, gymnasium, library, and a dormitory. Many of these facilities were constructed in the 1970s. Through grant funding, Pine Hill School receives approximately \$1.2 million annually for operating and maintaining its facilities. With those funds, the school is responsible for all operations and maintenance (O&M) expenses under \$2,500. If the school identifies an improvement and repair costing more than \$2,500, the deficiency is entered into the Indian Affairs Facility Management System (IA-FMS), and the project is eligible to receive additional grant funding. The school may either directly receive the funding and manage the project or have the IA manage the project.

From 2016 through 2019, the school directly received approximately \$4.8 million in O&M funding and \$382,337 in improvement and repair funding. The IA removed the school's

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<sup>3</sup>The BIE is in the process of assuming the oversight and management of school facilities from the BIA, and as of fiscal year (FY) 2020, BIE's budget request was presented as a separate budget justification.

authority to receive and manage the improvement and repair funding no later than 2014<sup>4</sup> but reinstated that authority in 2019, which was when the majority of the \$382,337 in improvement and repair funding was awarded and shortly after the announcement of our inspection. From 2016 through 2019, Pine Hill School primarily relied on the IA for all improvement and repairs more than \$2,500. The IA managed about \$1.8 million in improvement and repair projects for the school between 2016 and 2019.

## **History of Unsafe and Poor Facility Conditions**

Pine Hill School has a history of unsafe and poor facility conditions. In 2010, a local news program, KRQE News 13, visited the school and found issues with the fire alarm system, and in November 2014, KRQE reported that the fire alarm system did not work and described Pine Hill as “The Most Dangerous School in America.” As a result, we conducted an overall inspection of Pine Hill School’s facilities and specifically investigated the fire alarm system issues. In our January 2016 inspection report, *Condition of Bureau of Indian Affairs Facilities At The Pine Hill Boarding School* (Report No.: C-IS-BIE-0023-2014-A), we concluded that Pine Hill School still had an inoperable fire system despite receiving more than \$7.5 million in facility-related funding over the previous 5 years; that the school was unsafe because its facilities were not properly maintained; and that known hazards that endangered students, staff, and visitors were ignored. In our June 2018 investigation report, *Failure to Maintain Fire Alarms at Pine Hills* (Report No: OI-CO-15-0246-I), we found the fire alarm and suppression systems were still inoperable. We initiated this follow-up inspection and conducted a physical inspection of the school in November 2019 because of the longstanding issues with the conditions of Pine Hill School facilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Pine Hill School personnel and an IA official told us that there were no records identifying specifically when or why the IA removed the school’s authority to receive and manage the improvement and repair funding; however, the Pine Hill facility manager told us that the school did not have the authority at the time he began employment there in 2014.

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## Findings

We found that the school addressed many of the issues identified in our previous reports and that the overall facility conditions had improved since our last reviews. However, safety and health issues and general deficiencies still existed. Specifically, we noted that some deficiencies from our 2016 inspection remain unresolved, and we also found other safety, health, and security concerns that were not identified in our 2016 inspection. Lastly, although the IA conducted annual safety and health inspections at the school since 2016, we could not confirm which, if any, of the deficiencies identified during those inspections had been addressed.

### Progress Made in Addressing Previously Identified Safety and Health Issues

We found that the school addressed the inoperable fire alarm system, exposed wiring, and unclean conditions mentioned in our previous reports. Specifically, in August 2018, the IA completed its final inspection of the newly installed fire detection and alarm system at the school. In addition, during our physical inspection of the school, we noted it had enclosed wiring in the proper electrical boxes, covered outlets, and cleaned the facilities.

The school also addressed 9 of the 12 recommendations from our 2016 inspection, (see Appendix 2). For example, we previously recommended that the school and the IA take immediate action to correct the safety and health issues we identified or ensure that students and staff were adequately protected until the problems were resolved. Specifically, we had identified water damage and mold in the library, kindergarten classroom, and gymnasium. In response, the school closed the library and the kindergarten classroom, and according to a school official, the students were moved elsewhere on campus. It also tested the gymnasium's air quality to ensure a safe environment for students and staff. In addition, the school fixed a hazardous condition in the walkway outside the kindergarten classroom, where we had previously found a metal ventilation unit door held partially closed by an air filter wedged into one side (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Ventilation Unit Outside Kindergarten Classroom in 2016 (left) and 2019 (right)**





Other improvements made since our previous inspection included the development of a communication plan between Pine Hill School and IA officials and training on the use of the IA-FMS database. In addition, the IA developed a three-phased approach to address major facility issues at Pine Hill School. Phase I included installing a lightning protection system at each facility, which has been completed. Phases II and III, which are still in the planning and design stages, include consolidating and renovating school facilities and replacing the gymnasium, respectively. The IA estimated that it will cost approximately \$19 million to complete Phases II and III.

## **Some Issues Remain Unresolved**

Despite the progress made, however, not all of the of the issues identified in our 2016 inspection had been resolved. We found that:

- Some previously identified facility deficiencies remain
- The IA's facility inventory records for Pine Hill School were still inaccurate
- Decisions had not been made on how to efficiently use the unoccupied space at the dormitory

### **Previously Identified Facility Deficiencies Remain**

Significant facility deficiencies identified in our 2016 inspection were not corrected, such as water damage and mold at the library, kindergarten classroom, and the gymnasium. Specifically, the Pine Hill School facility manager told us that the library and kindergarten building have been closed since 2015, when mold testing was performed at those buildings. We verified during this inspection that the library and kindergarten remained closed, but the moldy conditions therein have yet to be mitigated. Additionally, the significant damage to the gymnasium ceiling still existed despite the school's attempt to cover up some of the damage (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Damage to the Gymnasium Ceiling in 2016 (left) and 2019 (right)**



In addition, some of the general facility deficiencies identified in our prior inspection, including water damage on ceilings, ineffective gutters and downspouts, poor drainage, and deteriorated exterior walkways had not been corrected. For example, we found signs of water damage on the ceilings of all nine buildings we inspected (see Figure 3). While water damage in ceilings is not uncommon in older school buildings, moisture left uncorrected could lead to mold. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), molds have the potential to cause health problems as they produce allergens, irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances.<sup>5</sup> This issue is particularly concerning because the school already closed two other facilities due to mold.

**Figure 3: Ceiling Tile Damage at the Middle School (left) and Elementary School (right)**



We also found that the gutters were leaking, not working as intended, or in poor condition at all nine buildings inspected. The gutter at the elementary school, for instance, had a hole that allowed water to pour down to the foundation. At the dormitory and the Family and Child Education (FACE) buildings, a large pile of snow extended over the gutters, creating the possibility of snow falling from the roof onto students, staff, and parents who might walk in this area (see Figure 4).

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-course-chapter-2>

**Figure 4: Hole in the Gutter at the Elementary School (left) and Snow on the Gutters of the Dormitory (right)**



We also found deficiencies in certain downspouts. The EPA recommends that downspouts slope at least 10 feet from the foundation; however, seven of the nine buildings were missing downspouts, did not have downspouts connected to a gutter, or did not have downspout extensions to divert water away from the foundation (see Figure 5). Ineffective gutters and downspouts can damage buildings and their contents, result in more frequent and costly maintenance repairs, and contribute to a shorter building lifespan.

**Figure 5: Downspout Draining Straight Down to the Foundation of the Administration Building (left) and Missing Downspouts at the Dormitory (right)**



IA and school officials told us that many of these deficiencies will be corrected during Phases II and III of their approach to improve the school's facilities. However, as of February 2020, the IA did not have detailed project plans in place for Phases II and III even though the overall project had been initiated in September 2018. The IA provided us with a broad project overview it prepared in April 2019, but this document included only general project information, approximate budgets, and estimated construction timelines. Specifically, the overview stated that Phase II would consist of consolidating the school into five primary academic buildings with associated renovations, but the document did not identify which facilities would be renovated or the types of renovations intended for those facilities. For Phase III, the overview reported that the IA received authorization to replace the gymnasium; however, the IA still needed to coordinate

with the school, create a written space allocation agreement, and compose a statement of work for the initial conceptual design. In March 2021, the IA informed us that it anticipates that the design will be completed in May 2021 and that it will award a design-build contract thereafter.

### **Recommendations**

We recommend that the IA:

1. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to ensure that the general facility deficiencies noted in this report are either addressed or included as part of the consolidation and renovation of the school facilities (Phase II)
2. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation (Phase II)
3. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the gymnasium replacement project (Phase III)

### **Inaccuracies Found in the School's Facility Inventory**

Inaccuracies in the IA's facility inventory for Pine Hill School reported in our 2016 inspection continued to be an issue during our current inspection. Specifically, we found that several of the 2019 inventory records were incorrect, and the school was receiving approximately \$132,000 annually to operate and maintain unused or unoccupied structures. In our 2016 inspection, we recommended that the IA review the school's existing inventory and make necessary corrections, so the inventory and additional needs of the school were accurately reflected for funding considerations. In August 2017, the Office of Financial Management (PFM) reported to our office that the IA had addressed the recommendation. However, in the most recent follow up work, we continued to find inaccuracies in the IA's facility inventory.

We identified discrepancies when we reconciled IA's 2019 facility inventory with its 2019 physical inventory worksheets that documented the onsite facility count and verified the use and occupancy for each facility. Furthermore, our physical inspection of the school confirmed some of the discrepancies. Specifically, 10 structures on IA's facility inventory were designated as active even though the physical inventory worksheets showed these structures as inactive, unused, unoccupied, or excessed. The school received annual funding from the IA to operate and maintain 4 of those 10 structures. For example, the IA's inventory records showed the library as active and used although the physical inventory stated the building was unoccupied and unused. As noted previously, the library was, in fact, closed during our site visit in November 2019, and school officials moreover stated to us that it had been closed since 2015. However, the school received approximately \$84,000 annually in O&M funding from the IA to operate and maintain a library that was closed. In another example, the school received approximately \$26,000 in annual funding to operate and maintain a shed, even though the physical inventory worksheets reported the shed as inactive and unused.



In addition, the school received funding to operate and maintain a structure near the pool that was built in 1974. This shed was surveyed for demolition in June 2017 and was to be removed from the inventory records (see Figure 6). We found that the building was not demolished or removed from the inventory records and that the school was still receiving approximately \$3,000 annually in O&M funding for that structure.

**Figure 6: Storage Shed Surveyed for Demolition in 2017**



#### **Repeat Recommendation**

We recommend that the PFM reopen and the IA implement the recommendation from the 2016 Inspection report to:

- Review the existing inventory for the school and make any necessary corrections so the inventory and additional needs of the school are accurately reflected for funding considerations

#### **Dormitory Space Underused**

Similar to our 2016 inspection, we found that Pine Hill School’s 25,000-square-foot dormitory was still significantly underused. We confirmed that our prior recommendation—to reassess the needs of the students boarded onsite and identify a more efficient way to house them—had not been addressed by the IA. Specifically, our 2016 inspection noted that the dormitory could accommodate up to 100 students but reported that only about 25 students resided there at the time. In 2019, we observed that 2 of the 4 wings were not occupied, and a school official told us that the other 2 wings house about 13 students.

At the time of our review, the IA had not made any decisions on how to efficiently use the unoccupied space at the dormitory, though its April 2019 project overview raised the possibility of repurposing two or more of the wings. Such possibilities included transforming portions into administrative support space, relocating academic programs, and releasing space to non-IA funded programs.

<b>Repeat Recommendation</b>
<p>We recommend that the IA implement the recommendation from our 2016 inspection report to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reassess the needs of the students boarded onsite and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory</li></ul>



## **Additional Safety, Health, and Security Issues Identified**

During our inspection, we identified additional safety, health, and security concerns at the school that were not covered in our 2016 inspection. Specifically, we found:

- Routine inspections of critical equipment and potential indoor environmental contaminants were not completed
- Access to potentially dangerous areas was not restricted
- Some exterior security cameras on school buildings were inoperable, and one school building did not have exterior security cameras
- Portable buildings regularly used by children and staff were in extremely poor condition

### **Routine Inspections Not Completed**

Routine inspections were not performed on heating and cooling systems, fire alarms, and asbestos-containing materials. Conducting such inspections ensures equipment is safe and prevents exposure to potentially harmful materials and pollutants. Moreover, routine inspection of mechanical systems can identify minor issues before they turn into costly repairs.

Although several of the buildings' heating and cooling systems were installed between 20 to 40 years ago, the Pine Hill facility manager told us that none of the systems have been professionally inspected in the past 5 years. The National Air Duct Cleaners Association, however, recommends an annual inspection of commercial heating and cooling systems by a trained professional. Annual inspections are a necessary proactive measure to ensure the quality of indoor air and protection from pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, bacteria, and fungi. In February 2020, the Pine Hill facility manager informed us that the IA recently requested information on all heating and cooling systems and plans on scheduling these inspections. In its March 2021 response to our draft report, however, the IA stated that conducting inspections was the responsibility of the school through the use of its O&M funding.

In addition, the required annual inspection of the school's fire alarm system is overdue. Specifically, IA's policy requires an annual inspection of the fire alarm systems. However, we found that the system had not been inspected since August 2018, when the IA performed a final inspection of the newly installed system. In February 2019, the Pine Hill facility manager entered

work orders into IA-FMS to obtain funding for the inspection, but, as of January 2020, the IA had not yet approved the funding. An IA official told us in March 2021 that the Pine Hill facilities management should have also conducted these inspections through its annual O&M funding. A timely inspection of the fire alarm system will help ensure that the system is functioning properly.

Finally, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act requires that facilities with asbestos-containing materials be reinspected every 3 years. The Pine Hill facility manager provided us with data showing that 13 structures at Pine Hill School have asbestos-containing material but have not been reinspected since 2013. Examples of common asbestos-containing building materials in schools include flooring, vinyl base, mastic, plaster, and ceiling tiles. In June 2017, the Pine Hill facility manager entered work orders into the IA-FMS to complete the inspections, but the IA had not approved the funding as of January 2020. After we asked the IA about this issue in January 2020, an IA official contacted the Pine Hill facility manager about funding and completing this work. Inspection of asbestos-containing materials is important because, according to the EPA, without proper maintenance, there is greater risk of exposure to airborne asbestos fibers—which may lead to an increased risk of developing several diseases, including lung cancer and several other organ cancers.

### **Recommendations**

We recommend that the IA:

4. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms, and asbestos
5. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to identify and document all required inspections for the school's facilities
6. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to develop and implement a schedule to continuously track and ensure completion of those routine inspections

### **Unrestricted Access to Unsafe Areas**

We found that children had access to potentially dangerous areas at six of the nine facilities we visited. For example, fencing was nonexistent, unsecured, or incomplete around external heating and cooling equipment, electrical transformers, and propane tanks. In the locker room of the gymnasium, we found several areas that were potentially dangerous for children, such as abandoned restrooms and showers, a mechanical room, and an electrical room (see Figure 7). The New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority recommends that electrical and mechanical equipment and propane tanks be secured or fenced.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.nmpsfa.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Security\\_Guidelines\\_Draft\\_5-18-18\\_Part1\\_0.pdf](https://www.nmpsfa.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Security_Guidelines_Draft_5-18-18_Part1_0.pdf)

**Figure 7: Abandoned, Unsanitary Restroom (left) and Electrical Room in the Gymnasium Locker Room (right)**



At one of the portable facilities, we noticed an area where children could enter a large open crawlspace, and, at the dormitory, children had full access to two large unoccupied wings where they could congregate unsupervised. Additionally, we found an unlocked custodian closet in the elementary school that contained chemicals (see Figure 8), even though EPA and New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority guidance states that chemicals should be stored in a secure location. Securing exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane gas would prevent both minor and serious injury, such as electric shock and poisoning, as well as prevent children from tampering with and damaging critical equipment.

**Figure 8: Unsafe Access to a Crawlspace at the FACE Portable Building and an Unlocked Custodian Closet at the Elementary School**



### **Recommendation**

We recommend that the IA:

7. Ensure that Pine Hill School safeguards exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane to prevent unauthorized access



## Inoperable Security Cameras

We found that some exterior security cameras on school buildings were inoperable and that there were no exterior security cameras at one school building. Furthermore, the IA lacked requirements for security cameras. Specifically, the Pine Hill facility manager told us, and provided data showing, that the elementary school building did not have security cameras and that 6 of the approximately 20 security cameras at other school buildings were not operational. In October 2018, the facility manager requested to upgrade the security camera system in IA-FMS, but, as of January 2020, the IA had not funded the upgrade.

Although an IA official told us they are not specifically required, our research shows that security cameras improve student safety by preventing unauthorized access; improving reaction time to problems; and deterring crime, vandalism, and theft. According to the New Mexico Public Education Department, schools are increasingly using security cameras to monitor and improve student safety, and the Final Report of the Federal Commission on School Safety noted that “video surveillance is a valuable security measure for entry control.” School officials told us that the operable cameras can record for a limited amount of time and are monitored daily at the school’s security office. We found, however, that no prevailing requirements exist for security cameras at the Indian schools, and there are no standards in place regarding the type of technology to be used, monitoring protocols, camera placement, and storage and retention of recordings. Such standards would help ensure that cameras are used appropriately and in a consistent manner.

<b>Recommendation</b>
<p>We recommend that the IA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to determine where exterior cameras are needed and replace inoperable exterior cameras</li></ol>



In light of the deficiencies we found at Pine Hill School, we recognize that this may be an issue for other Indian schools.

<b>Recommendation</b>
<p>We recommend that the IA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. Develop and implement guidance for using security cameras that address the type of technology that is appropriate, monitoring, camera placement, replacement cycle, and storage and retention of recordings</li></ol>

## Portable Buildings in Poor Condition

We found that the overall condition of the Administration building and the FACE building—two portable buildings regularly used by staff, children, and parents—was substandard. We observed signs of extensive water damage on the ceilings of both buildings (see Figure 9), a strong musty odor in the FACE building, and a 37-year-old furnace in need of replacement in the Administration building. In addition, the wood floor surrounding the toilet in the men’s restroom of the Administration building had deteriorated so badly that the toilet partially sank into the floor (see Figure 10).

**Figure 9: Extensive Water Damage on the Ceilings of Both Portable Buildings**



**Figure 10: Sinking Toilet in the Administration Building**



Portable buildings are typically used as a quick way to provide additional space. According to industry standards<sup>7</sup>, the useful life of portable buildings is approximately 20 years; however, the Administration and FACE buildings are more than 40 years old. We also noticed other portable buildings on the school campus that we did not inspect but, if similar in age, likely have similar issues.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://modular.org/Archives/ArticleViewer.aspx?archivearticleid=809&emailisttype=PressRelease>

## Recommendations

We recommend that the IA:

10. Inspect, identify, and address any immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings at Pine Hill School, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to ensure the safety and health of students and staff
11. Evaluate all IA-funded portable buildings at the school, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to:
  - a) Assess the need for each portable facility
  - b) Determine whether alternate space on the campus could be used in lieu of the portable facility, the portable building should be replaced, or a permanent structure should be built
  - c) Implement appropriate actions based on the outcome of the evaluation

## Could Not Confirm that Deficiencies From the IA's Safety and Health Inspections Were Addressed

The IA is responsible for conducting safety and health inspections at IA and tribally controlled grant schools each year, and it has conducted one each year at Pine Hill since 2016. We found, however, that neither the IA nor the school could confirm whether they addressed any of the deficiencies identified during those inspections.

The *Indian Affairs Safety, Health, and Accessibility Inspection/Evaluation Guidelines* require an inspection of each school by a qualified IA safety inspector at least once annually. Distinct from the routine inspections mentioned earlier, IA's safety and health inspections are designed to ensure school facilities comply with the IA safety, health, and accessibility requirements, such as Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, the National Fire Protection codes, and other common building codes. According to an IA official, IA is responsible for funding or addressing safety, health, and accessibility inspection deficiencies over \$2,500, and the school is responsible for addressing deficiencies under \$2,500 with its annual O&M funding. Depending on the type and severity of the deficiency, the required time to address the deficiency typically ranges from 30 to 120 days.

The IA and the school could not provide evidence that they addressed deficiencies identified in annual Safety and Health Inspection Reports from 2016 to 2019. For example, the IA's January 2019 Safety and Health Inspection Report for Pine Hill identified 215 deficiencies, including inoperable emergency lighting, improperly mounted portable fire extinguishers throughout the building, and stairs without the required handrails on both sides. Ten months later, in November 2019, IA officials told us that none of the deficiencies costing over \$2,500 had been addressed. In January 2020, the Pine Hill facility manager told us that those deficiencies had not been funded by the IA.

In addition, although the school is responsible for funding lower-cost items, the IA is responsible for the overall management and oversight of school facilities. The IA, however, did not know if any of the deficiencies identified in the 2019 report costing *under* \$2,500 had been addressed, and the school did not provide us with evidence that it addressed those deficiencies. Likewise, IA and school officials did not provide evidence or otherwise confirm that they addressed any of the deficiencies from previous annual inspections performed at the school. In February 2021, an IA official informed us that there was a tracking mechanism in place but said that the IA had not been using it to track deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections to ensure that they were being addressed.

<b>Recommendations</b>
<p>We recommend that the IA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>12. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to address and correct deficiencies identified during IA's safety and health inspections</li><li>13. Track deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections and confirm that deficiencies are being addressed</li></ul>

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# Conclusion and Recommendations

## Conclusion

Over the last decade, Pine Hill School and the IA have struggled to correct unsafe and poor facility conditions that jeopardize student, staff, and visitor safety. These conditions have been well documented in both the media and in our own inspection and investigation reports. During this follow-up inspection, we found that the school made progress since our previous visits and that school and IA officials implemented 9 of the 12 recommendations from our prior reports. We were encouraged that a communication plan had been developed, that training on IA-FMS had been provided to school officials, and that the IA had begun developing plans for a significant consolidation and renovation of the school's facilities.

Despite that progress, we are concerned about the ability of the school and IA—both of which share responsibility—to continue making future improvements as needed and to maintain the progress made to date. Some of the facility deficiencies identified in our 2016 report remain unresolved, and we continued to identify inaccuracies in IA's facility inventory despite reporting to the PFM that it had addressed the issue. A significant amount of space remains unused in the 25,000-square-foot dormitory, which houses even fewer students now than during our 2016 inspection.

We also identified new concerns that, if not addressed, could challenge future efforts to improve conditions at the school. None of the heating and cooling systems had been inspected by a professional in the past 5 years. The first annual inspection for the school's newly installed fire system was already past due, and the required asbestos tests on the school's 13 structures with asbestos-containing material had not been conducted since 2013. In addition, we observed unlocked or unprotected spaces where children had access to potentially dangerous areas, learned that not all of the school's security cameras were operating effectively, and toured substandard portable buildings actively used by students, staff, and parents.

While the school identified many of these needs and entered work orders into the IA-FMS system—an improvement from our prior report—the IA had not approved funding for many of the items. Furthermore, we found that neither IA nor the school could confirm whether any of the deficiencies identified in its annual safety and health inspections had been addressed, and IA officials acknowledged they had not actively tracked the deficiencies identified to confirm they were addressed.

Both IA and school officials told us that many of the issues we identified, and those remaining from our prior reports, should be resolved with the implementation of the IA's \$19 million multi-phased consolidation and renovation plan for the school. However, the IA's project is still in the early stages of development. In fact, as of March 2021 IA has still not awarded any contracts.

## Recommendations Summary

We recommend that the IA:

1. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to ensure that the general facility deficiencies noted in this report are either addressed or included as part of the consolidation and renovation of the school facilities (Phase II)

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to ensure that the general facility deficiencies noted in the report are either addressed or included as part of the consolidation and renovation of school facilities project (Phase II).

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

2. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation (Phase II)

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will continue to coordinate with the Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation project (Phase II). The IA stated that the target completion date is May 2023.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

3. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the gymnasium replacement project (Phase III)

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will continue to coordinate with the Pine Hill school to complete the gymnasium replacement project. The IA stated that the Planning and 20-percent Conceptual Design is targeted to be complete in May 2021 but identified a target completion date for the recommendation overall of May 2023.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

4. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms, and asbestos

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to complete routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarm, and asbestos. The IA also stated, however, that

Pine Hill School is a tribally controlled school that receives O&M funds to conduct various tasks, including the items noted in this recommendation.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

5. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to identify and document all required inspections for the school's facilities

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to identify and document all required inspections for the school's facilities. The IA also stated, however, that Pine Hill School is a tribally controlled school that receives O&M funds for various purposes and that annual planning for the use of such funding is the school's responsibility.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

6. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to develop and implement a schedule to continuously track and ensure completion of those routine inspections

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to develop and implement a schedule to continuously track and ensure the completion of routine facilities management inspections. The IA also stated, however, that Pine Hill School is a tribally controlled school that receives O&M funds for various purposes and that annual planning for the use of such funding is the school's responsibility.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

7. Ensure Pine Hill School safeguards exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane to prevent unauthorized access

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to ensure safeguards are in place for exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane. IA also stated, however, that Pine Hill School is a tribally controlled school that receives O&M funds for various purposes and that "maintenance and protection of the mentioned areas is the responsibility of the local facilities management staff."

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

8. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to determine where exterior cameras are needed and replace inoperable exterior cameras

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to determine where exterior cameras are needed and provide funding for the replacement of inoperable exterior cameras.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

9. Develop and implement guidance for using security cameras that addresses the type of technology that is appropriate, monitoring, camera placement, replacement cycle, and storage and retention of recordings

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with this recommendation but stated that it would coordinate with Pine Hill School to communicate guidance that is consistent with "The Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities an Interagency Security Committee Standard."

**OIG Comment:** Although we construe the IA's response as concurring with the recommendation, its proposed actions did not meet the intent of our recommendation. Therefore, we consider this recommendation unresolved. This recommendation is not limited to Pine Hill but was instead phrased broadly so that the IA could develop guidance and implement it more generally. The IA's response only involved Pine Hill School and did not address that this may be an issue for other Indian schools. In addition, the Interagency Security Committee standard is not specific to school facilities (or tribally controlled school facilities), and it does not address the type of security camera technology that may be appropriate for schools, how schools should monitor cameras, where cameras should be placed, how often cameras should be replaced, and how to store and retain any recordings. As such, we believe that the IA could use this or other standards, as appropriate, to develop and implement its own guidance specific to Indian schools, but we do not believe this guidance is, on its own, sufficient.

10. Inspect, identify, and address any immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings at Pine Hill School, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to ensure the safety and health of students and staff

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill school to inspect, identify, and address immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings. The IA stated that Safety and Occupational Health staff will conduct the inspection and the bureau will assist Pine Hill School with creating abatement plans and costing of identified deficiencies.



**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

11. Evaluate all IA-funded portable buildings at the school, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to:

- a. Assess the need for each portable facility
- b. Determine whether alternate space on the campus could be used in lieu of the portable facility, the portable building should be replaced, or a permanent structure should be built
- c. Implement appropriate actions based on the outcome of the evaluation

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to conduct an evaluation of space needs and perform a space analysis. Alternative spaces will be assessed and incorporated into the consolidation and renovation project (Phase II).

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

12. Coordinate with Pine Hill School to address and correct deficiencies identified during IA safety and health inspections

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to inspect, identify, and address immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings. The IA stated that Safety and Occupational Health staff will conduct the inspections and the Bureau will assist Pine Hill School with creating abatement plans and costing of identified deficiencies. In addition, the IA noted it will have an action plan to address all identified deficiencies and a timeframe based on severity and complexity of the deficiencies.

**OIG Comment:** Although we construe the IA's response as concurring with this recommendation, its proposed actions did not meet the intent of our recommendation because they are limited to IA-funded portable buildings only. Accordingly, we consider this recommendation unresolved. The IA should coordinate with Pine Hill School to address and correct deficiencies identified at *all* IA-funded buildings subject to safety and health inspections.

13. Track deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections and confirm that deficiencies are being addressed

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that there is a mechanism in place to track the status of corrective actions for deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we construe the agency as disagreeing with this recommendation. The IA's response essentially stated that, through various systems, it could determine whether the school itself had closed a deficiency. However, after further discussion with IA officials, we adjusted the language in the report and modified our recommendation. In particular, these officials acknowledged that while IA has the ability to verify the status of conditions, it had not been actively tracking deficiencies to confirm that they were being addressed. Accordingly, we consider this recommendation unresolved.

We recommend that the PFM re-open the following recommendation from our 2016 report:

- We recommend that the IA review the existing inventory for the school and make any necessary corrections, so the inventory and additional needs of the school are accurately reflected for funding considerations

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will review existing inventory and make necessary corrections to the IA Facility Management System. Funding considerations will be altered to align with the results of space analysis assessment.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

We also repeat a recommendation from our 2016 inspection report:

- We recommend that IA reassess the needs of the students boarded on-site and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory

**IA Response:** The IA did not expressly concur or disagree with the recommendation but stated that it will reassess the needs of the students boarded on-site and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory. The IA noted that the Phase II consolidation project includes an assessment and repurposing of unused space in the dormitory building.

**OIG Comment:** Based on the IA's response, we consider this recommendation resolved but not implemented.

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# Appendix 1: Scope and Methodology

## Scope

We performed our inspection of Pine Hill School from October 2019 to February 2020, and focused on changes in the condition of the facilities since our prior 2016 inspection and 2018 investigation.

## Methodology

We conducted this inspection in accordance with the *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* as set forth by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. We believe that the evidence obtained provided a reasonable basis for our conclusions and observations based on our inspection objective.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Reviewed laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance applicable to the subject inspection
- Reviewed prior inspections and investigative reports issued by the Office of Inspector General
- Gained an understanding of the Indian Affairs (IA) facility management processes at the Southwest Regional Office
- Determined whether the IA and Pine Hill School implemented the recommendations from our 2016 inspection, *Condition of Bureau of Indian Affairs Facilities at the Pine Hill Boarding School* (Report No. C-IS-BIE-0023-2014-A)
- Visited the IA's Southwest Regional Office from November 5, 2019, through November 7, 2019
- Conducted a physical inspection of the school on November 21, 2019, and November 22, 2019, visiting the following nine facilities: dormitory (061), multi-purpose building (929), elementary school (803), middle school (930), high school (801), Administration building (817, 819, 840), the FACE program portable (809), the gymnasium (805), and the maintenance building (932)
- Determined whether some of the routine inspections required at the school were performed, such as inspections on heating and cooling systems, asbestos, and the fire alarm system

- Evaluated the IA's safety and health inspection process and related deficiencies identified and attempted to determine whether the deficiencies from those inspections were implemented
- Interviewed officials from the IA, as well as pertinent staff at Pine Hill School

## Appendix 2: Status of Recommendations from 2016 Inspection

Recommendation	Reported as Closed to the PFM	Status	Comments
1. Take immediate action to correct the health and safety issues, or ensure that the students and staff are adequately protected until these problems are resolved	No	Implemented	The school had either corrected the issues or had mitigated them by closing the facility or testing to ensure a safe environment
2. Take corrective action for the general facility deficiencies noted in Appendix 2 of the report or ensure that these items are entered into Facilities Management Information Systems (FMIS) or Maximo for future funding consideration	No	Partially Implemented	The following general facility deficiencies noted in Appendix 2 are not corrected: (1) damaged gutters, (2) poor drainage, (3) ceiling tile damage, and (4) deteriorating walkways
3. Develop a document clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each agency in regard to facilities management	Yes (9/2017)	Implemented	A document was developed defining roles and responsibilities
4. Work together to ensure that communication efforts are more effective to correct the current conditions and help prevent future problems of this magnitude	Yes (10/2017)	Implemented	A communication plan was established and implemented. During our on-site inspection, various officials reported that communication had improved
5. Train staff on entering data into Facilities Management Information Systems (FMIS) and Maximo	Yes (9/2016)	Implemented	Pine Hill staff received training regularly
6. Review the existing inventory for the school and make any necessary corrections so the inventory and additional needs of the school are accurately reflected for funding considerations	Yes (8/2017)	Not Implemented	The Indian Affairs (IA) did not update and reconcile inventory data with physical inventory worksheets

7. Conduct routine inspections of the school and enter deficiency data into FMIS and Maximo promptly	N/A (not tracked by PFM)	Implemented	School facilities staff conducted inspections and entered deficiencies into the IA Facility Management System
8. Create routine custodial and maintenance checklists to help determine what needs to be cleaned and checked, who is responsible for it, and how often it should be done	N/A (not tracked by PFM)	Implemented	Custodial checklists were updated. Maintenance checklist was developed approximately 2 months before the November 2019 visit
9. Create a plan to help ensure continuity of facility management and related financial management, even if staff changes occur with key personnel	N/A (not tracked by PFM)	Implemented	The custodial checklist and maintenance schedule will aid continuity of facility management
10. Assess the status of previously funded projects that were not completed and determine whether to finish the projects or have the funds returned	Yes (9/2016)	Implemented	Funded projects that were not completed had been appropriately addressed
11. Clean up the campus landscaping, walkways, recreation areas, and fencing, and make sure that fire hazards are properly maintained	N/A (not tracked by PFM)	Implemented	During our follow-up inspection, we noted the campus was clean and generally free of fire hazards
12. Reassess the needs of the students boarded onsite and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory	No	In Process	The IA is in the process of reassessing the needs of the students boarded at the dormitory

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## **Appendix 3: Response to Draft Report**

Indian Affairs' response to our draft report follows on page 29. (Note: The recommendation numbers in the Indian Affairs' response are incorrectly numbered; however, the recommendations are listed in the correct order.)



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

March 1, 2021

## Memorandum

To: Mark Lee Greenblatt  
Inspector General

From: Darryl LaCounte  
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Subject: Indian Affairs Response to Draft Inspection Report – Facility Improvements Still Needed at Pine Hill School - Report No. 2019-CR-062

This memorandum transmits the Indian Affairs (IA) responses to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Draft Inspection Report – Facility Improvements Still Needed at Pine Hill School - Report No. 2019-CR-062. IA has provided responses in the requested format to the 13 new recommendations, 1 reopened recommendation and 1 repeated recommendation identified in the previous 2016 report. In addition, IA has provided proposed language and comments to the OIG draft report.

In a separate correspondence, IA responded to the high-voltage electrical system complaint.

### **Please consider the following IA revisions and comments to the subject report.**

#### OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 1: The phased renovation project is only in the preliminary planning stages and COVID-19 may cause additional delays.

#### IA Proposed Language:

The phased renovation project is in the Planning and 20% Design stage with an anticipated design completion date in May 2021. The design-build contract will be awarded thereafter.

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#### OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 1: We also found that, although the IA conducted annual safety and health inspections at the school as required, we found that neither the IA nor the school could confirm that the deficiencies identified during those inspections were addressed. Further, there was no mechanism in place to track corrective actions for deficiencies identified during those inspections.



IA Proposed Language:

Delete or revise statement. Through the IA-Facility Management System (FMS), IA can confirm whether the location has ‘closed’ the deficiency, meaning the site level staff verify the condition no longer exists. In addition, the annual safety and health inspections serve as another method of verifying whether the previous year’s conditions still exist. In the case where the conditions still exist, the condition is ‘repeated’ in the annual safety and health inspection report. In cases where the condition no longer exists, the Safety and Condition Assessment Portal (S&CAP) system will notify the site level facility staff that the condition is pending action and closure. Both MAXIMO and S&CAP track corrective actions.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 3: The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (AS-IA) Office of Facilities, Property, and Safety Management, through its Division of Facilities Management and Construction, manages the resources for facility improvements and repairs and for facilities projects that schools decline to manage. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) oversees and manages school facilities.

IA Proposed Language:

The AS-IA’s Office of Facilities, Property, and Safety Management, through its Division of Facilities Management and Construction provides technical assistance and oversight for regional and school level programs, which includes providing resources for facility improvements and repairs and operations and maintenance. The BIA provides oversight, monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance to Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) locations within the respective region and serves as the ultimate authority and responsibility for the regional facilities management program. The BIE Tribally Controlled schools are responsible for the oversight, monitoring and evaluation of their respective facilities management program, origination and completion of operations and maintenance work orders, development of abatement plans, creation of location and asset records, overall facilities management of the location, and decommissioning of structures in adherence to IA Facilities Management Program policies consistent with Grant, Contract or Compact Agreements.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 3: With those funds, the school is responsible for all operations and maintenance (O&M) expenses under \$2,500.

IA Proposed Language:

In accordance with the Pub. Law 100-297 Grant between the Pine Hill Community School and the BIE, the Pine Hill school facility management program is responsible for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of facilities located on the Pine Hill Community School inventory. O&M funds are provided to school locations to keep buildings in safe, healthy, and environmentally compliant conditions.

Facilities Operations funds are provided to the school location for the following purposes:

- Operations activities and costs include janitorial services, utilities expenses, refuse disposal, fire protection, maintenance of vehicles, communication services expenses, and pest control.
- Utility expenses include electrical power, natural gas, propane, heating oil, potable water, sewer, and refuse collection.

Facilities Maintenance funds are provided to the school location for the following purposes:

- Funding covers annual routine maintenance activities and preventive, cyclical, and emergency unscheduled repairs and replacement projects below \$2,500 addressing needs at structures, equipment, and utility systems.
- In addition to buildings, structures include telecommunication radio repeater towers, water towers, underground and above ground fuel storage tanks, parking lots, landscaping, sidewalks, and fencing. Equipment includes Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), boilers, furnaces, fire alarm panels, sprinkler controls, security lights, cameras, emergency lights, sirens, and master control systems.
- Utility systems include electrical systems, potable water treatment and distribution systems, sewer treatment and collection systems, storm drainage, fire hydrants, gas distribution, street lighting and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 6: Phases II and III, which are still in the planning stages, include consolidating and renovating school facilities and replacing the gymnasium, respectively. The IA estimated that it will cost approximately \$19 million to complete Phases II and III.

IA Proposed Language:

Phases II and III, which are still in the Planning and 20% Design stages, include consolidating and renovating school facilities and replacing the gymnasium, respectively. The IA estimated that it will cost approximately \$19 million to complete Phases II and III.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 9: In February 2020, IA officials told us they aimed to award initial conceptual design planning contracts for Phases II and III by April 2020, just shortly after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, which may have delayed their progress.

IA Proposed Language:

The phased renovation project is in the Planning and 20% Design stage with an anticipated design completion date in May 2021. The design-build contract will be awarded thereafter.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 11: Annual inspections are a necessary proactive measure to ensure the quality of indoor air and protection from pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, bacteria, and fungi. To the IA's credit, in February 2020, the Pine Hill facility manager informed us that the IA recently requested information on all heating and cooling systems and plans on scheduling these inspections.

IA Comment:

Unclear as to whether the facility manager is stating that the school level was planning on scheduling inspections or if it is the impression that IA is planning on scheduling the inspection. IA is not assuming the inspection functions. The performance of HVAC inspections is an O&M funded function of which the location receives \$1.2M through its Pub. Law 100-297 grant agreement.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 12: In February 2019, the Pine Hill facility manager entered work orders into IA-FMS to obtain funding for the inspection, but, as of January 2020, the IA had not yet approved the funding. A timely inspection of the fire alarm system will help ensure that the system is functioning properly.

IA Comment:

The performance of fire alarm and fire sprinkler system inspections are O&M funded functions of which the location receives \$1.2M through its Pub. Law 100-297 grant agreement.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 16: The IA and the school could not provide evidence that they addressed deficiencies identified in annual Safety and Health Inspection Reports from 2016 to 2019. For example, the IA's January 2019 Safety and Health Inspection Report for Pine Hill identified 215 deficiencies, including inoperable emergency lighting, improperly mounted portable fire extinguishers throughout the building, and stairs without the required handrails on both sides. Ten months later, in November 2019, IA officials told us that none of the deficiencies costing over \$2,500 had been addressed. In January 2020, the Pine Hill facility manager told us that those deficiencies had not been funded by the IA.

IA Comment:

None of the listed deficiencies exceed the \$2,500 threshold. The listed deficiencies should be funded with O&M funds of which the location receives \$1.2M through its Pub. Law 100-297 grant agreement.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 17: We also found that the IA does not have a mechanism to track corrective actions for deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections.

IA Comment:

Maximo and S&CAP track corrective actions. Through the IA-FMS, IA can confirm whether the location has 'closed' the deficiency.

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OIG Draft Report Language:

Page 17: IA officials told us that the S&CAP will transfer the deficiencies as work orders into the IA-FMS system for funding. Once the work order is noted as complete, however, the IA-FMS cannot update the S&CAP system to show that the deficiency was addressed. That is, the only tracking system that was identified to us focused on work orders and funding but did not provide a way to determine whether corrective actions had actually been completed.

IA Comment:

Prior to the deficiencies becoming a work order, the school location (facility staff) must create an abatement plan and cost each deficiency. Deficiencies under the \$2,500 threshold are funded with O&M funding and deficiencies over the \$2,500 threshold are submitted for funding consideration. The IA-FMS will update the status of the deficiency as closed and track accordingly.

**Please consider the following as IA responses to the subject recommendations.**

Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to ensure that the general facility deficiencies noted in this report are either addressed or included as part of the consolidation and renovation of the school facilities (Phase II).

IA Proposed Action(s): IA will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to ensure that the general facility deficiencies noted in this report are either addressed or included as part of the consolidation and renovation of the school facilities (Phase II) project. The IA-DFMC will work with the BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Management office, the BIE-School Operations Division and Pine Hill School to correct deficiencies that can be corrected prior to implementation of the large scope Facility Improvement and Repair (FI&R) project. By the target date, IA will have a consolidated list of deficiencies identified within this report with a clear indication as to the status, proposed completion date and deficiencies to be included in the FI&R project.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation (Phase II).

IA Action(s) Taken: IA will continue to coordinate with the Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation (Phase II) project. The project combines facility replacement and major FI&R funding in the amount of \$18.3M and consolidates the existing campus into 5 primary academic buildings and construction of a replacement gymnasium of 19,483 Square Feet. The Program of Requirements (POR) has been developed and reviewed by the BIE and the Ramah

Navajo School Board (RNSB). The Planning and 20% Conceptual Design is targeted to be complete in May 2021.

Target Date: May 2023

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC

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Recommendation 2: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete the gymnasium replacement project (Phase III).

IA Action(s) Taken: IA will continue to coordinate with the Pine Hill School to complete the planned consolidation and renovation (Phase II) project. The project combines facility replacement and major FI&R funding in the amount of \$18.3M and consolidates the existing campus into 5 primary academic buildings and construction of a replacement gymnasium of 19,483 Square Feet. The POR has been developed and reviewed by the BIE and the RNSB. The Planning and 20% Conceptual Design is targeted to be complete in May 2021.

Target Date: May 2023

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC

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Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to complete routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms, and asbestos.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to complete routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms and asbestos. It must be noted that Pine Hill School is a Tribally Controlled School that receives \$1,204,028 in appropriated Facilities Operations (\$623,749) and Facilities Maintenance (\$580,279) funds each year. Operations and Maintenance funds are provided for structures and grounds identified within the IA-FMS inventory and are distributed to conduct preventive, routine, and unscheduled maintenance for buildings, equipment, utility systems, and ground structures, to include routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms and asbestos.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to identify and document all required inspections for the school's facilities.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to identify and document all required inspections for the school's facilities. It must be noted that Pine Hill School is a Tribally Controlled

School that receives \$1,204,028 in appropriated Facilities Operations (\$623,749) and Facilities Maintenance (\$580,279) funds each year. Operations and Maintenance funds are provided for structures and grounds identified within the IA-FMS inventory and are distributed to conduct preventive, routine, and unscheduled maintenance for buildings, equipment, utility systems, and ground structures, to include routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms and asbestos. Annual planning for the utilization of O&M funding is the responsibility of the Grantee.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to develop and implement a schedule to continuously track and ensure completion of those routine inspections.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to develop and implement a schedule to continuously track and ensure the completion of routine facilities management inspections. It must be noted that Pine Hill School is a Tribally Controlled School that receives \$1,204,028 in appropriated Facilities Operations (\$623,749) and Facilities Maintenance (\$580,279) funds each year. Operations and Maintenance funds are provided for structures and grounds identified within the IA-FMS inventory and are distributed to conduct preventive, routine, and unscheduled maintenance for buildings, equipment, utility systems, and ground structures, to include routine inspections for heating and cooling systems, fire alarms and asbestos. Annual planning for the utilization of O&M funding is the responsibility of the Grantee.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Ensure Pine Hill School safeguards exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane to prevent unauthorized access.

IA Proposed Action(s): It must be noted that Pine Hill School is a Tribally Controlled School that receives \$1,204,028 in appropriated Facilities Operations (\$623,749) and Facilities Maintenance (\$580,279) funds each year. The day-to-day maintenance and protection of the mentioned areas is the responsibility of the local facilities management staff. The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to ensure safeguards are in place for exterior crawl spaces, abandoned rooms, and areas at the school that contain electrical equipment, chemicals, and propane.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to determine where exterior cameras are needed and replace inoperable exterior cameras.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to determine where exterior cameras are needed and provide funding for the replacement of inoperable exterior cameras. Guidance will be consistent with 'The Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities an Interagency Security Committee Standard – Appendix B: Countermeasures.'

Target Date: May 19, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Develop and implement guidance for using security cameras that addresses the type of technology that is appropriate, monitoring, camera placement, replacement cycle, and storage and retention of recordings.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to communicate guidance for using security cameras that address the type of technology that is appropriate, monitoring, camera placement, replacement cycle, and storage and retention of records. Guidance will be consistent with 'The Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities an Interagency Security Committee Standard.'

Target Date: May 19, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 1: Inspect, identify, and address any immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings at Pine Hill School, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to ensure the safety and health of students and staff.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to inspect, identify, and address immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings at Pine Hill School to ensure the safety and health of students. Safety and Occupational Health staff will conduct the inspection and Bureau staff will assist Pine Hill School with creating abatement plans and costing of identified deficiencies.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 11: Evaluate all IA-funded portable buildings at the school, including the Administration and FACE buildings, to:

- a. Assess the need for each portable facility
- b. Determine whether alternate space on the campus could be used in lieu of the portable facility, the portable building should be replaced, or a permanent structure should be built; and
- c. Implement appropriate actions based on the outcome of the evaluation

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to conduct an evaluation of space needs. A space analysis will be performed based on the allowable space per IA and BIE policy. Alternative spaces on the site will be assessed and incorporated into the FI&R (Phase II) consolidation and renovation project.

Target Date: May 19, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 12: Coordinate with Pine Hill School to address and correct deficiencies identified during IA safety and health inspections.

IA Proposed Action(s): The IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Regional Facilities Office and BIE-School Operations will coordinate with the Pine Hill School to inspect, identify, and address immediate safety and health issues at all IA-funded portable buildings at Pine Hill School to ensure the safety and health of students. Safety and Occupational Health staff will conduct the inspection and Bureau staff will assist Pine Hill School with creating abatement plans and costing of identified deficiencies. Severity and complexity of identified deficiencies will determine permanent solution. By the target date, IA will have an action plan to address all identified deficiencies and timeframe based on complexity.

Target Date: April 14, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC, BIA-Southwest Region and BIE-School Operations

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Recommendation 13: Develop and implement a mechanism to track the status of corrective actions for all deficiencies identified during safety and health inspections.

IA Action(s): Through the IA-Facility Management System (FMS), IA can confirm whether the location has 'closed' the deficiency, meaning the site level staff verify the condition no longer exists. In addition, the annual safety and health inspections serve as another method of verifying whether the previous year's conditions still exist. In the case where the conditions still exist, the condition is 'repeated' in the annual safety and health inspection report. In cases where the condition no longer exists, the Safety and Condition Assessment Portal (S&CAP) system will notify



the site level facility staff that the condition is pending action and closure. Both MAXIMO and S&CAP track corrective actions.

Target Date: Complete

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC

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**Recommendation 1 (Reopened):** We recommend that the IA review the existing inventory for the school and make any necessary corrections, so the inventory and additional needs of the school are accurately reflected for funding considerations

**IA Action(s) Taken:** The IA-DFMC, in coordination with Pine Hill School, will review the existing inventory and make necessary corrections to the IA-FMS. Funding considerations will be altered to align with the results of space analysis assessment.

Target Date: May 19, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC

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**Recommendation 2 (Repeated):** We recommend that IA reassess the needs of the students boarded on-site and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory.

**IA Action(s) Taken:** The IA-DFMC, in coordination with Pine Hill School, will reassess the needs of the student boarded on-site and identify a more efficient way to house them in the dormitory. The IA-DFMC will assess the existing inventory and make necessary corrections to the IA-FMS. The Phase II FI&R consolidation and renovation project does include the assessment and repurposing of unused space in the dormitory building. The POR will be reviewed by the BIE and the RNSB. By the target date, IA-DFMC will have an assessment completed and action plan developed.

Target Date: May 19, 2021

Responsible Official: IA-DFMC

We will continue to monitor the OIG recommendations and ensure conditions are timely addressed. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact [REDACTED] at [REDACTED].

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## Appendix 4: Status of Recommendations

Recommendation	Status	Action Required
1 – 8 and 10 – 11  Reopened Recommendation 6 (Report No. C-IS- BIE-0023-2014-A)  Repeat Recommendation 12 (Report No. C-IS- BIE-0023-2014-A)	Resolved but not implemented	We will refer these recommendations to the Office of Policy, Management and Budget to track implementation.
9, 12, and 13	Unresolved	We will refer these recommendations to the Office of Policy, Management and Budget for resolution.

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