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## **BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL RECEIVES FEDERAL FUNDING FOR REPLACEMENT SCHOOL**

(Sacaton, Arizona) On, Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Tara Sweeney announced the Blackwater Community School within the Gila River Indian Community will receive \$30.1 million to construct a replacement school. The replacement school will serve approximately 400 students in grades K through 5 who will learn in state of the art classrooms and in a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building.

Governor Stephen Roe Lewis commended Assistant Secretary Sweeney and the Department of the Interior for prioritizing the construction of school facilities where Native American students can thrive and learn in environments that are conducive to academic success. Lewis stated, "The education of our youth is vital to our Community and its future. We must invest in our children's education in order for them to reach their highest potential. The Gila River Indian Community is committed in working with the Department of the Interior to build the Blackwater Community School. It is our hope there will be continued collaboration between Indian Tribes and the Department of Interior to find innovative solutions to breaking the backlog of schools needing construction throughout Indian Country."

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*Gila River Indian Community located on 372,000 acres in south-central Arizona and home to the indigenous O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa) people. The Tribe is comprised of seven districts, the administrative offices and departments are located in Sacaton, and serve the people throughout these seven community districts. 100% of its profits from gaming and 17 other Enterprises are utilized by the community providing services and opportunities to achieve the highest quality of life.*