

# BIG SANDY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

High School District Number 2  
Elementary District Number 11

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE Jan 13, 11  
HB 15

Supt. 378-2501  
Clerk 378-2501

Big Sandy, Montana 59520

H.S. Prin. 378-2502  
Elem. Prin. 378-2406

January 13, 2011

To: Representatives – Montana Legislature  
From: Big Sandy Schools Board of Trustees, Administration, Staff  
RE: Funding of HB15 – Support of Quality Schools Project Grant

On behalf of Big Sandy Schools, we thank you for the opportunity to address House Bill 15. The proposed funding of the Quality Schools Project Grant is dear to our hearts as we, along with 29 other school districts, have been selected as recipients of the grant through your continued support of this program.

As a rural school district with older facilities where continued maintenance and updates are a priority, we celebrate in the opportunity to update and put the final nail into our energy saving projects. In 2007 we took the replacement of our ancient boilers to the tax payers and ran a levy which will be paid in full in February 2012. In the last year we had an energy audit performed by CTA Architects and Engineers of Great Falls. We have been able to respond to their recommendations by replacing the aged energy inefficient outside entry doors to both our buildings. But the biggest and most costly recommendation to retrofit our lighting system to the much more energy efficient TR 5 fixtures and place occupancy sensors in our buildings is a project that would not be done without your help and the Northwestern energy rebate that will come upon the completion of the project. With said energy saving measures, our school district stands to save \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year in energy costs alone. This is not chump change to Big Sandy Schools. Not only will this retrofit allow us to be more "green" by doing our part to save energy, but will also help maintain current programs and staff, extremely significant in our school district.

We were not only excited for our opportunity to apply for the Quality Schools Grant and work with their outstanding and helpful staff but were also thrilled for other schools districts to potentially do much needed repairs, whether it be boiler replacements, roof replacements, and other projects that would be completely out of reach without this grant award.

Elimination of this grant or any variation to the disbursement of funds would be such a discredit to the program and to the 30 school districts that have been notified as potential recipients of the Quality Schools Grant. It is our hope that you will not only keep the funding intact for

Quality Schools for the current biennium but would also consider continued funding in the future. We believe that school districts, as well as the companies who will facilitate the construction of said projects, will be helped through this program as has been the case with the Quick Start Program and prior Quality Schools grants.

Again, we thank the Legislators for our primary consideration in receipt of this year's Quality School Grant and for this forum to express our support and appreciation.