

Corvallis School District #1

P.O. Box 700 / 1045 Main
Corvallis, MT 59828

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EXHIBIT

DATE

HB

9

Jan. 13, 11

15

Monte Silk
Superintendent
961-4211

Jason Wirt
High School Principal
961-3201

Tyson Tucker
High School
Assistant Principal
Athletic Director
961-3201

Rich Durgin
Middle School Principal
961-3007

Janice Stranahan
Primary School Principal
961-3261

Virginia Haines
Special Services Director
961-3201

Russ Hendrickson
Technology Director
961-3201

Wendy Ihde
Curriculum Director
961-3007

Vannesa Bargfrede
Business Manager
District Clerk
961-4211

January 12, 2011

Reference: Quality Schools Grant Program Project Grant Awards, HB 15

To Members of the Long-Range Planning Subcommittee;

On behalf of the Corvallis School Board of Trustees, I wish to bring your attention to and urge your support for HB 15. This bill contains the recommendations of the Governor for Quality Schools Grant Program Project Grant Awards, and the bill includes a project selected by the Department of Commerce for the Corvallis School District.

The Corvallis School District's proposes to construct a vocational facility of 6871 square feet and the renovation of the existing shop of 2345 square feet into two science classrooms with labs. The DOC chose Corvallis to receive this grant through a statewide competitive process, and we ranked 13th in priority out of 30 selected projects. The \$1,000,000 that would come to the district, if approved by the Legislature, would provide for the construction of a structure to house our Shop, Welding, and Computer Assisted Drafting classes, and it is sorely needed in the District. It would also provide for a science lab large enough to accommodate at least 26 students.

The proposed Corvallis School District vocational facility will address serious safety issues that exist because of the cramped conditions of the current vocational facilities at Corvallis High School. Importantly, expanded facilities will enable woods classes and welding/metals classes to be physically separated, eliminating the hazard posed by combining welding activities with wood dust. With separation of these two activities, Corvallis High School will be able to offer metals and woods classes simultaneously and, thus, increase the availability of these classes to students. Currently, because of the safety issues, enrollment must be severely limited.

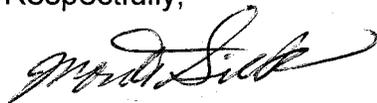
The Quality Schools Grant Program selects and ranks projects according to criteria which include safety issues, energy efficiency, and the enhancement of educational opportunities for students. Funding for the program comes from the school facility and technology account in the state special revenue fund. The Corvallis proposal satisfies these criteria and the purposes of the program.

We urge your support throughout the legislative process for the appropriation for this valuable program, which enables school districts across the state to address long-standing facility issues that might otherwise go unaddressed for many more years. In terms of local impact, it, of course, goes without saying that the construction of this facility will provide short-term economic benefits to the struggling Bitterroot Valley construction industry. Even more important, however, is that many more Corvallis High School students over the years will have the opportunity to receive training in valuable workplace skills and enter the workforce better able to contribute and succeed.

The Department of Commerce should be commended for providing 1) school facility and technology grants; 2) matching planning grants; and 3) emergency grants for public schools. Corvallis received a \$25,000 matching grant in the spring of 2010, which allowed us to design the blueprints needed for completion of the Project Grant application for \$1,000,000 for our vocational facility. We also received over \$150,000 for energy efficiency and deferred maintenance needs over the last two years. Without the Quality Schools Grant Program, Corvallis would be in dire straits.

In conclusion, I assure you the Corvallis School Board strives to provide all students with the best possible preparation for their lives after high school. HB 15 will enable the Corvallis School District to better prepare students in the vocational area. I thank you for your consideration and support for HB 15.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Monte Silk".

Monte Silk
Superintendent