

DATE 2-11-15
HB 423

FAIRVIEW SCHOOLS

Richland Co. Dist. 13 (Elementary)
Richland Co. Dist. 3 (High School)

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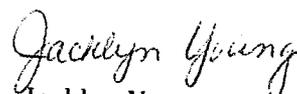
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S. Staffanson

Chairman Laszloffy,

Fairview School Districts #3 & #13 sit on the North Dakota border, 30 miles from Williston, ND. Fairview has become a bedroom community for people working in Williston and Watford City, ND. Today the K-12 enrollment is 304 students. The school hasn't had this big of an enrollment since 1996 when we moved from Class B to Class C. In August, school started with 99 new students. That's 33% of the student population. By January, 50 students had left the school. In the last week 10 new students enrolled. The constant movement of families in and out Fairview has put a burden on the teaching staff. Six classroom aides work full time in the elementary helping children with high needs. This constant movement has caused these children to fall behind academically. Students have come from 15 states and 2 foreign countries to live in Fairview. Currently Fairview has children who are Spanish and Russian speaking only attending classes. Families reside with friends in homes until they find housing for themselves. Many families live in RV campers. Staffing can be an issue too. As of today, Fairview is fully staffed. This is credited to the board foreseeing the issue and raising hourly employee salaries to be competitive with other service providers in the community. Fairview has also been forced to provide housing to staff with the high rates in the area. Without housing, many critical positions including teachers, custodians and cooks would be empty.

Fairview School appreciates the efforts made by Representative Staffanson to support Eastern Montana and specifically those schools being affected by the Bakken. Fairview supports increasing the amount of oil and gas tax a district may retain to 150% of the districts maximum budget. The need for staff housing and higher wages to compete puts a burden on Eastern Montana schools. Oil and gas tax money has been used to alleviate these costs.


Luke Kloker
Superintendent


Jacklyn Young
Business Manager