

SENATE EDUCATION

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 Nine Grants Awarded to Assist Oil and Gas Impacted Schools
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Nine Grants Awarded to Assist Oil and Gas Impacted Schools

Helena, MT - Superintendent Denise Juneau announced the award of \$449,855 in grants for oil and gas impacted schools that are receiving oil and natural gas production taxes in an amount less than 20 percent of the district's maximum general fund budget. The grant awards range from \$16,541 to \$75,000.

Ninety school districts were eligible for the State School Oil and Natural Gas Impact Grant, and 29 schools applied. The following schools were successful in their applications:

Culbertson High School: \$60,000

Culbertson has experienced high rates of student mobility. Many of the students moving into the area have a deficiency in their credit count toward graduation. The grant funds will support salaries for two additional certified teachers to assist student in addressing their deficiencies in reading and mathematics.

Dawson High School: \$75,000

The lack of affordable housing in the Glendive area has made it difficult for the district to recruit and retain teachers. The grant funds will be used to purchase and/or build a multi-family living structure as part of a collaborative effort with other districts in the county.

Froid Elementary School: \$30,500

As a result of the oil and gas development, Froid has experienced shortages in housing, increased rent costs, increased enrollment, and an increase in the number of students with disabilities. The grant funds will support salary costs for additional elementary teacher.

Glendive Elementary School: \$75,000

The lack of affordable housing in the Glendive area has made it difficult for the district to recruit and retain teachers. The grant funds will be used to purchase and/or build a multi-family living structure as part of a collaborative effort with other districts in the county.

Plentywood K-12: \$56,000

In conjunction with high rates of student mobility, Plentywood has experienced an increase in its at-risk student population. The grant funds will support salaries for a certified Title I teacher and an instructional paraprofessional to provide instruction and supports for at-risk students.

Powder River County High School: \$18,859

Current energy development activity in Powder River County has created a critical shortage of adequate, affordable housing, particularly for new employees, in the Broadus area. The grant funds will be used to improve the electrical service for Broadus Schools and expand the utility infrastructure for school employee housing.

Savage Elementary School: \$48,000

Savage has an open campus, which has raised concerns about student safety. The grant funds will be used for safety and security upgrades.

Winnett K-12: \$16,541

Winnett has become a major thoroughfare in and out of the Bakken Oil Fields. To address concerns about student safety, the grant funds will be used to install a school-wide communication and safety system.

Wolf Point Elementary School: \$69,955

Wolf Point Elementary has suffered vandalism on its school campuses and a recent electrical storm damaged the district's security system. The grant funds will be for communication and safety system updates.

Eligible school districts have experienced one or more of the following circumstances directly related to impacts resulting from the development or cessation of development of oil and natural gas during the years 2012-2014:

- An unusual enrollment increase;
- An unusual enrollment decrease;
- Higher rates of student mobility;
- A need to hire new teachers or staff as a result of increased enrollment;
- The opening or reopening of an elementary or high school; or
- Major maintenance for a school or district.



This is the first year that the OPI awarded State School Oil and Natural Gas Impact Grants. Grant funding comes from the state school oil and natural gas impact account, a state special revenue fund, which is collected from a percentage of oil and gas revenue that districts could not retain as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 329 in the 2011 Legislative Session. Eligibility for the grant program was significantly changed in the 2013 Legislative Session with the passage of Senate Bill 175.

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