

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Williams County to provide grant funding to public school districts and townships; to fund study

Williston, N.D., (August 6, 2019) –During today’s regular meeting of the Williams County Board of County Commissioners, Commissioners unanimously approved plans to support public school districts and townships in Williams County.

Commission Chairman David Montgomery proposed a plan to provide \$20 million in grant funding to public school districts and townships in Williams County over the next two years.

In 2019, \$4 million will be available to townships and \$6 million will be available to public school districts to help the entities address some of the serious – and costly – needs they face. An additional \$4 million and \$6 million, respectively, will be distributed in 2020.

“Schools and townships are an integral part of our county, and our taxpaying base, and well worth the investment” said Montgomery while presenting his plan, which took a year to construct, to the Commission.

Township officials will have the opportunity to apply for a total of \$4 million in grants using the same method they currently use when applying for Frost Law Grant funds each spring to help pay for road maintenance and improvement projects.

The \$6 million will be proportionally distributed among Williams County’s public school districts based on enrollment numbers reported on September 10, 2018. The Commission hopes to alleviate some of the burden to school district taxpayers with this distribution as the funds can only be used to pay down bond debt or contribute to payments for construction projects; costs that have likely been incurred due to overcrowding in schools and increased enrollment numbers. Distribution of another \$6 million in 2020 will be determined based on enrollment numbers reported on September 10, 2019.

The County will be reaching out to the school districts and townships with more information on how and when the funding will be distributed.

Additionally, the Commission formally approved funding to conduct an external study that will collect and analyze data and information about public school districts with a goal of issuing recommendations for ways to provide adequate, safe, and accessible school facilities for students across the County. A kick-off meeting to develop the full scope of the study with Williams County public school district officials will be hosted by the Governor’s Office at the Mountrail Williams Electric Cooperative building on August 12th at 1:30 pm; the meeting will be open to the public. Williams County is pleased to be working in conjunction with the Governor’s Office and the Department of Public Instruction on this effort.

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