

NEWS RELEASE
GOVERNOR STEVE BULLOCK
STATE OF MONTANA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS

Dave Parker, Communications Director, Governor's Office, 444-9844

Ronja M. Abel, Communications Director, Department of Commerce, 841-2557

Governor Bullock Announces Grant for Kitchen Facility Upgrades at Fairfield Elementary School

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock and Department of Commerce Director Meg O'Leary today announced a grant of \$596,379 to be awarded through the Quality Schools Grant Program to Fairfield Elementary School.

Fairfield Elementary School's kitchen has not been upgraded since 1955. The current facility does not have enough space to allow adequate food preparation. The lack of space has contributed to a number of workplace injuries. The constrained work areas and resulting injuries have been a contributing factor towards increasing worker compensation claims and liability for the school. In addition, there have been numerous reported health and safety concerns with the kitchen and location of the current food storage area.

"Ensuring students have access to nutritious lunch and breakfast options is an important part of helping them reach their full potential," Bullock said. "With this grant, Fairfield Elementary School will be able to upgrade their outdated kitchen facility to better provide meals for their students."

"We're thrilled to receive this grant. With these funds we'll be able to better provide nutritious food options for our students, and create a safer work environment for our staff," Principal Courtney Bake said.

The Quality Schools Program funds awarded to Fairfield Elementary School will leverage district funds to expand the kitchen and allow for secure food storage, enclose and replace the outdated freezer and cooler, make ergonomic improvements for kitchen staff and construct ADA-compliant bathrooms for the facility.

The Quality Schools Grant Program was created by the 2009 Legislature as part of the State's long-term funding program for K-12 public school facility needs. The program prioritizes funds that are allocated to school facility improvements that create jobs, protect the health and safety of Montana's students and reduce maintenance and operation costs.

For more information regarding the Quality Schools program, please contact Community Development Division staff at (406) 841-2770 or e-mail DOCQualitySchools@mt.gov.

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