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For Immediate Release

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Baesler: Districts Receiving \$5.93M For Student Mental Health, Security

BISMARCK, N.D., May 5, 2023 – State School Superintendent Kirsten Baesler said 13 North Dakota school districts have been awarded \$5.93 million in federal mental health and school security grants.

North Dakota was allocated \$4.83 million for the grants by the federal [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#). Because of strong grant demand from North Dakota schools, the Department of Public Instruction supplemented that amount with other federal funds that are intended for learning loss initiatives, Baesler said.

[The money was awarded](#) using a competitive process that used districts’ percentages of students living in poverty, chronic absenteeism rates, and high rates of students who were disengaged to identify which districts were most in need of the funds.

The money will be used for a [variety of mental health and school security purposes](#), including school mental health services; prevention of violence, suicide and bullying; training for building relationship skills; conflict resolution and crisis management; and child sexual abuse awareness and prevention.

Baesler said North Dakota has won national praise from education officials for its speed and efficiency in awarding the funds.

“The need for this money is significant,” Baesler said. “We were able to set up the application process quickly to distribute these funds as Congress intended, thanks to the great work of our team at NDDPI.”

The Dickinson school district received the largest grant -- \$1.1 million – while six districts were awarded between \$400,000 and \$800,000. The money will be distributed to schools over three years, beginning with the 2023-24 school year.

School District	Grant
Dickinson	\$1,108,789
Grand Forks	\$793,045
Devils Lake	\$759,002
Rugby	\$529,000
Drayton	\$458,667
North Sargent (Gwinner)	\$450,367
Divide County (Crosby)	\$418,960
Ellendale	\$366,791
Grafton	\$300,372
Solen	\$279,945
St John	\$233,899
Midway (Inkster)	\$121,778
New Rockford-Sheyenne	\$110,100
Total	\$5,930,715

(Continued)

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Mental Health Grants

In March, U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said only a fraction of states had begun a process to distribute the money. “That’s unacceptable,” Cardona said. “We’re in a mental health crisis, and we need it to happen.”

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act was signed into law on June 25, 2022, a month after an 18-year-old former student at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, fatally shot 19 students and two teachers at the school before he was himself killed.

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