

Grayson County schools to receive money from economic stimulus funds

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HERALD DEMOCRAT

Good news might be on the horizon for Grayson County school districts. Thanks to President Barack Obama's nearly \$800 billion economic stimulus plan he signed into law this week, Grayson County schools are expected to receive more than \$6 million of that stimulus money.

According to a press release sent by Strategic Partnerships Inc. (a government consulting agency) "some of the money is allocated by a formula and other funds will come down to local school districts in the form of grants. School districts, receiving money to be directed to special programs, are expected to spend a large amount for technology, equipment, energy enhancement and construction."

[Recovery.gov](#), a Web site posted by Obama's recovery accountability and transparency board, details information on how the stimulus money will be spent -- \$53 billion will be headed to school districts within the next several months.

A timeline posted on the Web site indicate that recipients of the federal funding will begin reporting on their use of funds by July 15.

Out of the \$6 million awarded to Grayson County schools, Sherman ISD will receive more than \$2 million. Superintendent Al Hambrick said SISD has been notified of the stimulus amount but guidelines have not been sent on how the money needs to be spent. "We are waiting for guidance from our Texas agency," Hambrick said.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance Bruce Barnett agreed with Hambrick and said no other details are available. "It's pretty preliminary for now, surely within the month the state education agency will give us some guidance."

The additional \$2 million will not effect the personnel cuts the district has taken within the last month to balance their budget, said Hambrick and Barnett, due to the fact that the \$2,033,000 is a one-time payment. Hambrick said using the money for salaries would be difficult because of the reoccurring costs associated with payroll. The first year the money would be there, he said, but not during year two and three.

As information about the stimulus package is preliminary, Denison ISD has no specific information about where the money will be applied. The press release indicates that the district could receive \$1,709,000, but the majority of that money is earmarked, meaning that it must be spent in specific ways in order to satisfy the terms of the stimulus.

President Obama specified five objectives federal agencies need to me in order to ensure that recovery funds are awarded and distributed in a prompt, fair, and reasonable manner; the recipients and uses of all recovery funds are transparent to the public, and that the public benefits of these funds are reported clearly, accurately, and in a timely manner; recovery funds are used for authorized purposes and every step is taken to prevent instances of fraud, waste, error, and abuse; projects funded under the recovery legislation avoid unnecessary delays and cost overruns; and programs meet specific goals and targets, and contribute to improved performance on broad economic indicators.