



Education Stimulus Dollars Headed To West Virginia

Story by Gil McClanahan

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The total for the state is \$417 million dollars.

CHARLESTON -- Zander Holstein, 4, is legally blind, but he'll benefit from West Virginia's \$417 million education stimulus package. More than \$75 million has been earmarked for education for the disabled.

"It's great that somebody actually does more than just say something about it. They're actually doing something about it," says John Holstein, Zander's father.

However, the state's educational needs stretch across all 55 counties. For example, a couple of schools in Putnam County are in need to be replaced. The package sets aside \$156 million in school construction bonds.

"It will also address some of the school buildings, some of the need for better facilities, better technology in the different areas that we have. All those types of things that really enhance a child's learning experience," says Dale Lee, President of the West Virginia Education Association.

At this point officials don't know what strings will be attached to the money, worried about what will happen when the money runs out.

"This is only a 2 year plan, and we have to be very careful about that that at the end of 2 years if the economy doesn't get better and the stimulus money is gone, then what do we do with all the programs or the people we employed over that two year period," says Dr. Ron Duerring, Superintendent of Kanawha County Schools.

School systems are still excited about getting the money, wondering how it will trickle down to the local level.

In 30 days the state is expected to know what strings and conditions go along with the education stimulus money.

According to Senator Jay Rockefeller's office, funding highlights for West Virginia include:

\$417 million estimated for education funding

\$266 million for the New Education Stabilization Fund

\$156 million in School Construction Bonds

\$61 million for Title I

\$75.9 million for IDEA –education for the disabled

\$3.6 million for IDEA – grants for preschool

\$2.1 million for IDEA – grants for infants and toddlers

\$4.3 million for Vocational Rehabilitation Grants

\$3.9 million for Education Technology Grants

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