

West Virginia Schools' Recovery

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PHILADELPHIA – On Monday, April 10, 2017, Dr. Bob Henry Baber, Mayor of Richwood, WV, issued a press release highlighting a campaign to send letters to state and federal officials, concerning the use of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding for potential consolidation of schools in Nicholas County.

FEMA, in response to the campaign, provides this statement to address FEMA's roles and responsibility for selecting eligible projects for funding.

FEMA has been on the ground supporting state and local officials, communities, and individuals in responding to and recovering from the June 22-29, 2016 severe flooding that resulted in a federal disaster declaration for the State of West Virginia June 25, 2016.

A key part of our work has been to support the state and local communities as they identify grant projects to repair, restore or replace flood-damaged facilities that best support their communities' needs. At the same time, decisions are being made that will protect residents against future risks. Under the Public Assistance program, FEMA provides the federal cost share of federal funding in accordance with our statutory authorities to help communities rebuild and recover from disasters.

With respect to schools recovery, Governor Tomblin designated the West Virginia School Building Authority the lead state agency. The School Building Authority and the Nicholas County Board of Education, the legal entity responsible for schools in Nicholas County, determined the best potential site for the schools. So long as those selections meet FEMA's Public Assistance program requirements, FEMA determines the project is eligible, but does not require the demolition or relocation of any school construction.

At this time, FEMA has not received a proposed project from the State of West Virginia concerning the schools. Once a scope of work and project work sheet is submitted, FEMA will review for compliance with state and federal regulations,



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

environmental and historic preservation laws, and applicable Executive Orders.

FEMA will continue to work closely with the State of West Virginia and our partners to help West Virginia recover and will continue to stay engaged in school recovery.

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Page 2 of 2