January 11, 2025

Dear Members of the Montana Historic Preservation Committee,

I am writing to express my full support for the Lavina School Historic Preservation Grant. As a proud member of the Lavina community and a graduate of Lavina School, I am deeply invested in preserving this significant landmark that has served as the heart of our community for over 106 years.

The Lavina School has stood as a symbol of the unity and resilience of our community since its establishment. In 1919, when the railroads brought homesteaders to our area, a determined group of local citizens worked to create Golden Valley County, elect county officials, and build thriving businesses. At that time, our county was home to 78 schools. Unfortunately, over the years, many businesses failed, and our county faced hardships such as the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. Today, our population is just under 900 residents, with less than one person per square mile according to the 2020 census.

The Lavina School is the only remaining original county school, and it has played an enduring role in connecting generations of families. I graduated from Lavina 53 years ago, and since then, I have watched countless alumni go on to become successful and contributing members of society. Even today, the school continues to unite the community through ball games, concerts, reunions, and other social events. It is a vital part of the educational foundation that continues to benefit Lavina's students.

I respectfully ask for your consideration in approving this funding to help preserve Lavina School. By supporting this grant, you will ensure that this historic building continues to serve as a reminder of our county's rich past and as a vital space for future generations to gather and learn.

Thank you for your time and for considering this important request.

Sincerely,

Janet Garfield Jansen