

January 12, 2005

Board approves new courses

Monday night the board of education approved 23 new courses, 19 for 2005-2006 and four for 2006-2007. Not only do the course additions support the District Strategic Plan but also support more student course choice as graduation credit requirements move from 21 to 26 for next year's incoming freshmen.

The approved courses are part of a three-year Academic Excellence Plan for Arkansas City High School, passed unanimously by the board at the Dec. 13 meeting. The plan addresses specific goals of the District's Strategic Plan. The major goals of the plan are to increase student achievement and the graduation rate.

More information about the High School Academic Excellence Plan is available online at http://www.arkcity.com/b_briefs/11232004.pdf.

Citizen addresses board about lack of handicap accessibility at Central Office

Bill Vardy, president of the Parents Native American Title VII committee, told the board the district needs to make the Central Office handicap accessible. District officials admit the administration building is not handicapped-accessible, but that this is a facility to be studied under the District Strategic Plan.

"We are aware of the problem and are working on a solution," Kristen Martinez, director of public relations, said. "Of course, money is a big problem, but it shouldn't stand in the way of having a handicap-accessible administration facility."

Vardy said a meeting originally scheduled to take place at the Central Office had to be moved to the high school so that he could attend, because ACHS is accessible by wheelchair.

He said the district is a model for other school districts.

"This is one of the greatest school districts in Kansas," he said. "And yet you have a dinosaur building. The issue of handicap accessibility needs to be addressed."

In other business the board:

- Approved the resignation of Kim Coulter, High School FACS teacher.
- Approved the hiring of Shawna Buercklin, Middle School Native American tutor, and Barbara Fry, computer/noon aide at Roosevelt Elementary.
- Declared the designated wrestling pads/mats to be surplus and that they be given to the Fraternal Order of Police to use in the community service effort to start a boxing/activities club for kids in Arkansas City.
- Accepted and approved the lease-purchase proposal (subject to final legal review) submitted by Union State Bank. Interest rate of 3.25% and total note (if carried through 36 months) of \$136,799.85 to purchase two busses already approved by the board.

- Discussed the middle school HVAC project. Jan. 12, USD 470 personnel will meet with the architect and engineer to review the project. The architect requests input and planning assistance regarding the strategic approach to address and complete this project in a reasonable time frame and not disrupt the educational process, if the project is approved by the BOE.
- Had a discussion only, not a first reading, of board policies chapter G – personnel. Dr. Perkins indicated that he is in the process of collecting input from the BOE, administrative council, the leadership team and the board-teacher panel. He said administration hopes to have the first reading in one month.
- Had an executive session to discuss negotiations in order to protect the public interest in negotiating a fair and equitable contract.

The next regular meeting of the board will be Jan. 24, 2005, at 7 p.m., at IXL Elementary School. All meetings of the board are open to the public.