

USD 415 Board Hears Proposal for High School Baseball

(KNZA)--The Hiawatha Board of Education Monday evening heard a proposal for the addition of a high school baseball program beginning in the spring of 2015.

District Patron Paul Mendez made the proposal to the board. Also on hand were several members of the Hiawatha American Legion.

Mendez said he feels it's time for Hiawatha to begin a high school baseball program, adding there's a lot of interest in the sport.

Mendez proposed a 100 percent self-funded program. He says a goal has been set to raise \$20,000 by February 1st of next year, which would allow High School Activities Director Andrew Gaddis time to plan and schedule for a two year commitment to the program.

Initial start-up costs were estimated at nearly \$13,000.

Mendez noted that Hiawatha is among only two schools in the Big 7 League who currently don't have the sport, and said it would provide scholarship opportunities for students.

Although school board members were supportive of the proposal, they tabled action pending the development of a policy on the acceptance of donations for extra-curricular activities.

Superintendent Penny Hargrove was given permission to work with the Kansas Association of School Boards in developing the policy.

In other business, Gaddis presented a proposal for the addition of an assistant football coach that would be split between the middle school and high school programs for as long as funds are donated to cover the cost.

Gaddis said the district currently has the fewest football coaches in the Big 7 League. He said donors have expressed interest in providing funds to cover the addition of the position.

The board tabled action on the proposal pending the development of the donation policy. However, they gave Gaddis permission to advertise for a potential additional coach.

Many Signals Communications