

School board approves grade rearrangement

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 10 May 2012 17:12 -

By Diane Stamm

The Wauneta Breeze

Twenty-three members of the public and school staff met Monday night with the Wauneta-Palisade school board to discuss rearranging grades.

The meetings, held in both Palisade and Wauneta, dealt with moving the Kindergarten through second grade to Palisade and fifth and sixth grades to Wauneta.

After public discussion ended the school board held a special meeting where the board unanimously approved the rearrangement.

With this set up, pre-kindergarten through fourth grade will be in Palisade and fifth through 12th grade will be in Wauneta.

Discussion of the move has been going on for some time. The evaluation of the External Visitation Team in April spurred the board into action.

In its recommendations the External Visitation Team said the school would benefit from the move, especially the teachers.

The school board and staff believe fewer transitions throughout a student's education would lead to better stability and better learning opportunities.

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In Palisade, Superintendent Dr. Stan Sibley mentioned a clause in the merger agreement between Wauneta and Palisade.

According to Dr. Sibley the clause said that “changing grade assignments of the two buildings needed to receive an affirmative vote of the residents of both original districts.”

The school district’s legal counsel, Rex Schultze, said that provision has been struck down by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

In Wauneta the discussion included upgrades to the Palisade Attendance Center.

Dr. Sibley said the Palisade building is “on its last leg.”

He said that while the building will work for the upcoming 2012-2013 school year a change will be needed in the next year or two.

Board member Bill Bischoff said with a decision to reorganize the grades it will allow the board to move forward with changes to the Palisade facility.

Possibilities in Palisade include pods or adding a Morton building, such as the new Chase County Clinic building in Wauneta.

Dr. Sibley said pods would not be a permanent solution.

One pods building would house two classrooms connected by a hallway and restrooms.

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The board is optimistic that the rearrangement will lead to savings for the school.

Two elementary libraries would be combined into one.

Plans had been made to make improvements to both playgrounds over the summer. With the change, only the Palisade playground would need improvement.

The board will meet again Monday, May 14. Members plan to vote on moving the final day of elementary classes from Thursday, May 24 to Friday, May 18.