

## School board approves after-school program

Written by Deb Egenberger  
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Brady school officials hope an after-school program aimed toward at-risk students will not only help them succeed in the classroom but build responsibility as well.

School board members approved, during their regular monthly board meeting on Monday, the addition of an after-school program to begin this semester.

Superintendent Bill Porter told the board that he feels requiring students to spend time after school to complete work will not only improve their classroom grades but it will make for better students in the long run.

“Most of these kids just have bad habits,” Porter said. “It’s been proven that once we hold them accountable, they will change some of those habits. Kids don’t really want to stay after school. They’ll start getting their work done.”

With several four-day school weeks, the district had been relying on extra instructional time for those at-risk students on the Mondays or Fridays when no classes were scheduled.

Porter said transportation became an excuse and the students who really needed to show up never did.

With the after-school program, he said transportation will be provided by the district and hopefully students who miss too much school or simply don’t turn in work will get the added attention they need.

By keeping the students after-school for an hour twice a week, Porter believes they will get the instruction they need and structure to build better study habits.

Board member Matt Hatch questioned the approach, saying if students are being held

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accountable during the school day they may not be after school either.

Principal Bruce Hird said teachers have attempted to reach these at-risk students in several other ways.

“They are chronic cases and we need to try a different approach,” Hird said.

Porter assured board members that parents of the at-risk students would be contacted in advance.

Hatch also asked about programs provided to students who excel in school.

Hird said the district has added a junior high quiz bowl and is in the process of building a Science Olympiad program for students in fifth through eighth grades. Elementary students are challenged with enrichment programs through the Response to Intervention system.

In other action, new school board member Bryan Franzen and re-elected incumbents Marge Spencer and TJ Walker took their oath of office and were officially seated on the board for four-year terms.

The board also re-elected Lisa Diehl as president with Spencer remaining in the vice chairman position and Matt Hatch taking the secretary spot. Committees were also assigned.

In other district business, school board members:

authorized the superintendent to advertise again to attract additional option enrollment students. The district currently has 42 students who have opted in from other districts.

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discussed a request from Darrin Messersmith, a registered sex offender, to attend school activities his children are involved in. Porter told the board that school attorney Tim Thompson suggested the request be denied since Messersmith is only allowed supervised visits with his children. The board agreed.

approved contracts with Educational Service Unit 16 for the 2013-14 school year for distance learning services, early childhood special education services, school age special education services and network support with computer repair. The total for all four contracts is \$131,794.

accepted a three-year auditing contract with McDermott and Miller CPA.

agreed to pay Rebecca Stearns \$8.75 per hour as a full-time para-educator. The position was added to accommodate a new student who enrolled for the second semester.

discussed in closed session the superintendent's response to his evaluation and later approved offering Porter a contract for the 2013-14 school year with a salary of \$75,000.