

Online program could get kids back on track

Written by Deb Egenberger
Friday, 15 February 2013 15:07 -

School board votes to buy credit recovery

Once high school graduation credits are lost, they are quite difficult to make up.

In a mobile society in which young people often graduate from a different high school than they started, chances of finding a way to gain back credits after failing a required class can be slim to none.

Brady High School has at least four students in that situation, who face an extra year of high school just to make up for lost time.

An online credit recovery program could make a difference, allowing those students to graduate with their intended class.

The Brady school board approved spending \$2,000 during Monday night's regular monthly meeting to purchase the Aventa Learning credit recovery program.

Aventa offers online courses, including a teacher, to help students recover lost graduation credits in math, science, social studies and language arts, among others.

For instance, if a student failed a sophomore English class at another school before transferring into Brady as a junior or senior, it could be difficult to make up that required course in the traditional classroom.

The online recovery program is available beyond the school day and allows students to work toward recovery of prior credits while earning current credit.

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“If we don’t offer this program, what will happen?” asked board president Lisa Diehl.

Principal Bruce Hird said for some, it would mean spending an additional year or even two in school beyond a student’s original graduation date.

The program is sold in blocks for 10 students meaning up to 10 people can be logged into the online program at any one time.

Another advantage, board members agreed, is that Aventa offers advanced placement courses as well that could be used to enhance offerings for high ability learners.

The \$2,000 cost makes the program available for Brady students through the end of the 2013-14 school year.

In other business, school board members discussed two calendar proposals for the next academic year, both using a modified four-day schedule.

One option would include 168 classroom days and the other is 170, both with school beginning Aug. 14 and ending May 16.

Board members questioned the continuation of a partial four-day schedule in consideration for the more traditional five-day week.

Superintendent Bill Porter said the four-day schedule was originally intended to save the district money with fewer bus routes, meals and para-educator hours but those savings have not been significant.

The calendar will be on the agenda again for discussion in March with approval set for April.

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In other action, school board members:

discussed discontinuing the mailing of a monthly school newsletter to parents and patrons with Internet access and offering an e-mail version instead.

approved renewing annual membership in the Nebraska School Board Association at a cost of \$2,043.

authorized spending \$1,577 on television advertisements soliciting additional option enrollment students.

accepted a bid for \$3,923 from JAZMat Inc. to refinish the new gym floor.

voted to make a loan payment of \$5,854 from the depreciation fund for the activity bus. The bus will be paid off in the fall.

learned students in grades 5-8 will participate in the first Science Olympiad competition next month sponsored by Educational Service Unit 16.