

School board decides against snow guards for gym roof

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 17 December 2009 14:37 -

Gutters damaged in last storm.

Heavy snow that fell in October damaged rain gutters on the east side of the new gymnasium at the Brady school when giant sheets of white slid from the roof.

It wasn't the \$1,000 in repairs that caused concern for superintendent Bill Porter, though. He is worried a student may walk under the eave the next time weighty snow drops.

Porter proposed installing guards on the roof to block the snow from avalanching off.

At Monday's school board meeting, he said \$5,256 would cover the cost of putting the guards on the roof.

But school board members weren't convinced that is the best use of their money.

Harry Haythorne, a member of the board's building committee involved in the construction of the new gymnasium, said snow guards were proposed during the building process.

At that time, the committee decided against them.

Porter called it a Catch 22. If heavy snow is held on the roof, it could damage the structure. If allowed to slide off, it could hurt someone walking below.

"I'd rather repair a roof than a kid," said board member T.J. Walker. "Five thousand dollars sounds pretty cheap compared to the cost of a child."

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Board members discussed other options, such as setting up barricades should another wet snow occur and allowing students to enter the north end of the building rather than pass the gym on the east side.

With a 5-1 vote, the board refused to purchase the snow guards. Walker was the only one voting in favor.

In other business, the school board heard a request from junior student Erin Smith to consider again adding wrestling as a school-sponsored activity.

Smith said she has spoken to several students who would be interested in participating.

Board president Lisa Diehl explained to Smith that cost has been the deterrent to adding wrestling because it would not be a one-time expense but a long-term budget item for equipment and coaching.

Diehl said the board will consider the idea again in the spring.

In other action, board members:

- approved the purchase of a mat to be placed under the bench chairs in the gymnasium during athletic contests for up to \$530.
- approved Bob Fattig and Robert Fredrickson as local substitute teachers.
- gave final approval to a long list of board policies associated with support staff work agreements.
- discussed the senior citizen Christmas dinner and technology tour, expressing appreciation to the staff for work involved and agreeing it was a worthwhile event.
- learned Robbi McKenney has been awarded a \$2,300 grant from the John R. Applegate Fund through the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation for additional student-held technology devices.
- heard from principal Jerry Wallace that all 21 teachers now have school-issued laptop

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computers.