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## SP preschool funding awarded after being previously unsuccessful

After four years, the South Page School District was finally awarded a grant for its preschool program through Governor Chet Culver's preschool initiative.

South Page Superintendent Gregg Cruickshank said he believes the district was rejected in previous years because they already had a preschool program in place, and it was a quality program.

"We're very happy to receive the funding," said Cruickshank. "It's been kind of frustrating getting rejected three years in a row, but it's kind of a compliment."

The district will receive \$35,000 to support its preschool program, which is housed at the school.

The first year, 2010-11, the district will receive \$35,000, however, after that, they will be funded based on the state funding formula, which is how each district receives state funding he described.

"Each district will get credit for 3/5 of a student for every four-year-old in the program times .6 and then that number times the per pupil funding in the state," he explained.

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Informational meetings will be held later this month and next month to go over requirements to receive the funds, as well as information on exactly what the funds can be used for he added.

"I hope we can use it to pay for salaries, supplies, benefits, and I also hope we are able to reduce tuition payments on parents."

The cost to send a child to preschool at South Page is \$60 to \$70 per month said Cruickshank, contingent upon whether it is the three-year-old, or four-year-old program.

"I believe the earlier we can get kids ready and prepared for school, the better."

Other local districts that also received preschool funding were Farragut, Sidney, and Fremont-Mills.

In other news, the board:

■ Agreed to explore sharing options for high school band with Shenandoah High School.

Cruickshank explained there were only seven high school band members last year, which is not enough for a marching or concert band. Cruickshank added the partnership, if agreed upon by Shenandoah, could start as early as this fall.

■ Agreed to share a Spanish instructor with Baxter Community School District utilizing the ICN (Iowa Communications Network). Cruickshank said Bedford High School has been using the ICN with Baxter for its Spanish classes and said it was a quality program with a quality instructor.

■ Approved the purchase of a 2008 Grand Caravan and a 2008 Town and Country van for their transportation fleet. Cruickshank explained the funds to pay for one of the

vans will be from the special education funds, Medicaid revenues, and will be used for its special education program.

The other van will be paid out of state penny revenues, meaning both vans are being paid for through federal revenue and state revenue and not out of the general fund said Cruickshank. The cost of both vans was approximately \$35,000.

■ Approved a contract with Denise Green as technology coordinator and pre-kindergarten through 12th grade principal.

■ Agreed to move the August board meeting to Aug. 16 because Cruickshank will be on vacation.

■ Awarded the property casualty insurance bid to Murphy Insurance Services for \$31,300. Cruickshank said that price is a 20 percent reduction over the 2009-10 school year.