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SMS to Restructure; LHS to Utilize Planning Year

The USD 480 Board of Education met Monday at noon at the Education Service Center. The board heard a presentation by Julie Ford from Topeka who works for the state of Kansas and helps with the restructuring of schools. Ford and the USD 480 administration recommended that South Middle School who is just one of five Tier I schools in the state restructure using the transformational model.

The recommendation stated that, "The transformation model allows the district to continue to execute and enhance the strategic plan that was initially implemented in August of 2009. However, the strict guidelines that serve as parameters of the transformational model ensure that all school staff members are held accountable for students making AYP."

Ford also mentioned that the transformational model allows South to retain first year principal Gib Rito and that him and the new program Literacy First goes toward the transformational model. By restructuring South, the school will receive extra funds from the state that can be used for a wide variety of things to help improve the school.

The administration and Ford also recommended that Liberal High School participate in a planning year rather than restructure. Ford said it would be almost impossible to have two schools in the same district restructuring at the same time.

The administration's recommendation for LHS taking part in a planning year stated that, "The district recommends that the 2010-2011 school year be utilized as a planning year to conduct a thorough needs assessment that is required by KSDE before selecting an intervention model. USD 480 will apply for grants that could pay for an outside team to come to Liberal and conduct the required needs assessment. A team consisting of teachers, administrators, site council members and community members will serve as a committee that will correspond with the outside agency to complete the needs assessment.

After the presentation the board asked Ford several questions and then voted on the matter. The board voted 6-0 with Nick Hatcher absent to restructure South Middle School using the transformational model, and for LHS to have a planning year to conduct a needs assessment.

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