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USD 480 School Board Approves School Improvement Plan

The USD 480 Board of Education had a busy meeting Monday. They approved a School Improvement Plan that includes the Literacy First Program. The program will consist of hiring instructional coaches and appointing Interventionists in the schools to help improve test scores so the district can have a higher success rate and meet AYP. The cost of the program is $900,614. However the district will not have to pay for it out of their own funds as they will be given $660,000 in Title I Stimulus money, and the rest will be paid for from a School Improvement Grant from the state. The plan passed 6-0 with one member absent.

The board also added to the agenda and approved expanding the Dual Language Program to grades 4-6 at Sunflower Intermediate. The program is currently just in place at McDermott for grades K-3. The added cost will be $18,000 per grade level for the materials. The district will also have to find teachers after the 2009-10 school year to teach the fifth and sixth grades. The motion passed 6-0.

The hot topic of the meeting was the action item to have the group Patron Insight who was recommended by the DLR Group to do a telephone survey of 400 registered voters about why they voted yes or no on the $61 million bond issue that failed last Tuesday. The cost of the survey is to not exceed $14,300. Vice President Cheryl Louderback and President Dan Diepenbrock traded disagreements over the idea of the survey. Louderback stated that the people spoke and that to spend that amount on a telephone survey is "absurd." Diepenbrock disagreed saying it does cost a lot but is a way to find out why people voted the way they did so the board can know which direction to move in. The motion passed 5-1, with Louderback voting against it.

Board member elect's Nick Hatcher and Reid Petty were in attendance but will not take office until July.

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