

### USD 377 Upgrading District HVAC Systems

(KAIR)--The USD 377 Board of Education has started the process of upgrading the heating and cooling systems in both of their schools after securing funding for the project.

Superintendent Steve Wiseman says a majority of the project costs will be provided through a Qualified Zone Academy Bond from the state Department of Education that he had applied for nearly a year and a half ago. "Basically it's a debt instrument through the federal government where they allow schools to borrow money at zero interest or close to zero interest to do refurbishments and energy efficiency projects. The way it works with the state of Kansas in the past, they were allocated about \$3million for the whole state over the last few years, so we were waiting on the Congress to re-allocate those funds and in the meantime, I submitted an application to the State Department."

The district was approved for the bond back in February of this year, and Wiseman says the school board has spent the past few months finalizing the details, though some work remains to be done. He says "we were fortunate, we were able to get a zero interest loan, which will be paid back over seventeen years...and so, going forward, the project we are trying to complete right now is about \$3.4 million, so the board is going to have to come up with about \$430,000 in addition to the \$3 million loan."

The district will pay approximately \$176,000 a year towards the loan.

Wiseman says the renovations are extensive. "Basically at the elementary, we are going to do away with the old steam heat systems and window air units, and replace them with new classroom units, and rooftop units for the gymnasium so that we can have a quality heat and air system at the elementary....we are going to be replacing the old windows and upgrading the lighting to new lighting systems."

Work at the Junior/Senior High School includes replacement of air filters and replacement of chilled water piping, fittings, and valves near air handlers, in addition to other related upgrades.

Wiseman says the majority of the work should be completed by the time school starts next month, though some will not be finished until the middle of the school year. However, the board is already making accommodations to classrooms that will be having windows replaced.