

Officer could be added at Hiawatha schools

**(KNZA)--The Hiawatha school district is looking at adding a school resource officer.**

**The USD 415 Board of Education Monday evening approved a memorandum of understanding between the school district and city of Hiawatha that would allow a 4-year federal grant to be sought to help fund the position.**

**If awarded, Hiawatha Police Chief John Defore says the grant would pay 75 percent of the salary and benefits of the officer over a three-year period. The grant requires a 25 percent local match, which would be split between the school district and city.**

**In the fourth year, the school district and city would have to pay the entire cost, with the school district paying 70 percent and the city 30 percent.**

**Defore says about 70 percent of the officer's time would be spent working in the school.**

**He says he feels a school resource officer would bridge the gap between the police department and school, facilitating better communication.**

**Defore says the school resource officer would take all calls within the district and could teach classes, among other potential duties, which would be at the district's discretion.**

**USD 415 Superintendent Lonnie Moser says he previously worked in a school district with a school resource officer and feels they are beneficial.**

**The district last had a school resource officer in the 90's.**

**If the grant is awarded, the school district would still have the option whether to accept the grant or not.**