

Three new members join USD 415 Board

(KNZA)--Three new members joined the Hiawatha School Board when they held their first meeting of 2024 Wednesday evening.

The meeting was moved from Monday due to the inclement weather.

Board President Ian Schuetz welcomed new board members Mitch Brown, Griff Howard and Ryan Patton, who were elected last November.

Following discussion, the board on a 6-1 vote approve a resolution to move the board officer elections to the June board meeting as has been the practice. Board member Jim Robidoux cast the lone dissenting vote.

Hiawatha Police Chief Micky Gruber appeared before the board to provide an update on the school resource officer grant awarded in 2020. Officer Brandon Lowe, who serves in the role, was also on hand for the discussion.

The grant paid for 75 percent of the salary and benefits of the officer for a three year period, and requires that the position be maintained for a fourth year.

Beginning April 1st, Gruber said the position will be 100 locally funded, with the school district responsible for 70 percent of the cost and police department 30 percent.

He said a decision will have to be made whether to continue the position beyond next year.

Schuetz said he feels having a school resource officer has been very beneficial for the district and would like to pursue continuing the position beyond 2025.

Also High School Principal Lori Fordyce reviewed new graduation requirements that will take effect with the class of 2028 .

Fordyce said the new requirements, approved by the state Board of Education, will require changes to what students are taking in the classroom.

The new requirements are designed to better prepare students for higher education or the workforce.