By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor

School board members spent some time Tuesday discussing the possibility of making community service hours a high school graduation requirement at Chase County Schools.

It's a great idea, and one that should receive a close look.

Many of our students are already involved in service clubs inside school and out, but maybe for those who aren't, it will provide the incentive to do so.

As we all know, especially in small towns, a volunteer force is necessary to make things happen. Imperial is a great example of volunteerism, and has been recognized at the state level for some of the projects that happened because of volunteers.

This idea at CCS would build on that volunteerism.

At Tuesday's school board meeting, Supt. Brad Schoeppey said it's not unusual for high schools to require some amount of community service to graduate.

A number of colleges require it, as well.

Some good points were brought out during the discussion Tuesday about the value of community service.

Supt. Schoeppey said his support of such a requirement is a desire to help students realize the importance of giving back to a Chase County community that gives much to the school.

We have a great group of students who do that already. The FFA is a good example—they started a community service project last year of painting house numbers on the street curbs with reflective paint so they can be seen at night by emergency personnel.

But there are some students not involved at school or in the community much at all. They might, at first, see this as forcing them to volunteer, but once engaged, it could change their opinions about community service.

And, that is good for our community and country.

It appears a committee of students, teachers and possibly parents will be formed to set up some recommendations on number of hours (they discussed 40 over a four-year period), how hours will be tracked and what qualifies.

In my mind, it's a great concept. I'm sure the school board and administration would welcome input.