

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

School board members voted to utilize federal stimulus money to install new playground equipment that will be handicapped accessible.

The vote came at the July 13 school board meeting, which also included action on setting school lunch prices, hiring coaches and an aide, roof repairs and changing the name of the Imperial Grade School Foundation.

The board also discussed GPA credit for successive music classes and a school van replacement.

Regarding the playground equipment, Supt. Matt Fisher said Chase County Schools is able to access \$133,000, which includes the stimulus money, this year and next, earmarked specifically for special education (SPED) or handicapped accessibility projects.

He suggested the playground equipment purchase, but noted it would probably not be a project he'd recommend if there wasn't the additional stimulus money available.

The equipment will allow wheelchairs onto some of the structure, but will also be usable by other students. One of the features is a climbing wall, he said.

Board members approved the playground equipment bid from Sterling West for \$29,403.

Installation will be in mid-August, and local volunteers will be used to set it up with a professional installer on site, according to Fisher.

The \$133,000 in funds will double what the school normally has received for special education, Fisher noted.

Some of the SPED funding was recently spent on purchase of a new handicapped-accessible bus.

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