

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Four new teachers will join the staff at Chase County Schools this fall.

On Tuesday, members of the Chase County Schools board of education hired Kim Bubak, Lisa Krutsinger, Renee Hamilton and Amy Walworth for teaching assignments for the 2009-2010 school year.

Bubak, Krutsinger and Hamilton were hired as elementary teachers. Walworth will be the new music teacher, filled after the retirement of Dr. J. Gordon Christensen.

The music position has been the subject of some lengthy discussions at two previous board meetings, and likely within closed session of the board as they discussed personnel.

Supt. Matt Fisher said Walworth's position will be fulltime, primarily for the elementary vocal classes, but "we may also do some other things" with the position.

"We're still working on that," Fisher said at Tuesday's meeting.

Board President Sheila Stromberger reiterated her dismay with the administration's recommendation to hire a fulltime music teacher.

She said Tuesday that she wants the board to be thinking about reduction in force (RIF) in the future related to the school's music staffing.

She noted the past year's schedule showed two music teachers with a combined six open periods or study halls.

Stromberger voted with the rest of the board members to hire Walworth Tuesday, she said, because she did not want a "no" vote to appear she voted against Walworth.

She said she continues to ask why the administration, including Supt. Fisher and Principal Mike Sorensen, was able to combine two former industrial arts teachers classloads into one staff member's assignments after the other retired this year, with no less offerings for students.

"We did that without hiring another industrial arts teacher," she said.

She asks why that couldn't be done in the music department, as well.

The two industrial arts teachers, Ed Fisher and Lynn Rinehart, had five study halls between them last school year.

It is beyond the deadlines now to reduce any certificated teachers' contracts, Stromberger said. She indicated they will be looking at that next year.

Walworth, who currently lives in Kearney, has a K-12 music education degree from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn., earned in December, 2005.

She is now working on her Master's Degree in music education at the University of Nebraska-Kearney, which she expects to finish in May, 2010.

Since August, 2006, Walworth was employed at Sumner-Eddyville-Miller Public Schools in Sumner, Neb., as a K-12 music specialist, teaching both vocal and instrumental students.

Other new staff members

Kim Bubak of Imperial isn't really new to the staff.

She taught K-8 physical education at Imperial Grade School from 1992-95, and has been a substitute here since 1996. She also has teaching experience in Kearney and Minden.

Bubak earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in education with endorsements in health and K-12 P.E. from Kearney State College in 1991.

Renee Hamilton, now living in Chico, Calif., has a California teaching credential in multiple subjects, and has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in liberal studies, with a concentration in English as a Second Language from California State University.

Since 1998, she has been employed as Thermalito Union School District as an English language development teacher/Title I reading teacher and in other language areas.

Lisa Krutsinger has been employed at Dundy County Public Schools the past year as a fourth grade teacher, and the year before as a developmental preschool and sixth grade teacher.

She also taught in Benkelman from 1992-97, with a stint in Kimball between the Dundy County positions. She has other previous elementary teaching jobs in Farnam and Elm Creek.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Kearney State College in K-6 elementary education and K-6 special education, earned in December, 1990.