

ATTACHMENT X-C:	Blended Pre-School Programming
Suggested Motion:	Move to approve the Blended Pre-School Program beginning in August 2014
Recommended Action:	Approve as presented

RELATED INFORMATION:

Currently the district operates a Pre-K program under the ISBE Pre-school for All Grant along with an early childhood program for special needs three and four year olds. Although, separate programs, we have integrated some of their programming as both are housed at Capron. We remain one of the few public school pre-school programs in the area.

The need for effective pre-school programming is easily identifiable after reviewing the following statistics provided by the Illinois Governor's Office. At-risk children who don't receive early childhood education are:

- 25% more likely to drop out of school
- 40% more likely to become a teen parent
- 50% more likely to be placed in special education
- 60% more likely to never attend college
- 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime

In the fall, ECRA helped to review our long term data to see if there was a significant difference between those students who were involved in the district's Pre-K program v. those students that were not. We had previously done some minor review of the data in the spring of 2010, but the data was not complete. Based on the data showing only small differences, it was determined to review the curriculum used by the pre-school program. I asked Melissa Geyman and Bridget Belcastro to review the curriculum and make recommendations to improve it. The blended pre-school program will promote learning that is child-centered, developmentally appropriate, and aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. The program will also use instructional approaches that engage play, learning and belonging.

Blending, an inclusive practice, supports the education of both children with, and without, disabilities in the same classroom. The Americans with Disability Education Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports equal educational opportunities and requires schools to support the inclusion of children with disabilities through the least restrictive and natural environment. Illinois State Board of Education reviewed North Boone CUSD 200's Indicator 6 data in regards to the percent of children aged 3 through 5 with IEP's and their placement in the educational environment. In 2012, 54.55% of children with disabilities were in a separate class which included a majority of the children with disabilities. The state performance plan target is 31.10%. The percent of students with disabilities in 2012 that were included in a regular early childhood program was 0% and the Illinois State Performance Plan

Target is 32.3%. In working with ISBE and Starnet, providing a blended pre-school program will make North Boone in compliance with Indicator 6.

The blended pre-school program model will combine children from our current Early Childhood program with those from the Pre-school for All classroom. There will continue to be two classrooms with a total of four pre-school sessions.