

EGF School Board OKs computer-aided design class

The East Grand Forks School Board on Monday night authorized the addition of a computer-aided design class to the high school's curriculum, made possible by software donations.

The school will get 300 copies of a Pro Engineering software program free of charge to use for the class. The software eliminates hand sketches of engineering components, instead creating them on a computer screen to be printed from a 3-D printer. Many schools in Minnesota will receive the software through a program designed to develop science, technology, engineering and math skills in schools and better prepare students for careers after high school.

The cost to the district will be about \$31,200, mostly for the printer, to be paid for by additional referendum dollars, which total about \$700,000.

The project coincides with an unrelated upgrade to the school's computer lab, and the newer computers with more memory will support the software.

Toyota and other large corporations use the Pro Engineering software to build engines and other car components, according to high school Principal Steve Heyd. It also will be useful to shop class students, School Board member Don Partlow pointed out.

Interest in the class has been high, Heyd said, and preregistration suggests the class will be a popular addition to the curriculum.

The class will fill a half-credit of the high school's art requirement and will have about 15 to 20 students in each section. While using the software, the screen shows operators a 3-D image of what they are creating. The program takes a couple of hours to complete before the product can be printed.

"I'm really excited about this," Partlow said of the software. "It's amazing that they can sit down and dream this thing up and have it in front of them."

Other items

- The state has approved \$5.9 million in bond sales to fund the School Board's air ventilation project, but bids for the project came in \$1.6 million below that figure.

Energy Services Group, the company managing construction on the project, presented the board Monday night with more than \$3 million worth of other air projects that could be done. The list includes ventilation in the gym and locker room area, shop area, senior center and kitchen and cafeteria. The board will choose which of these areas will receive ventilation upgrades with the \$1.6 million.

The project will be funded through bond sales, to be repaid through local tax levies and state funds, Superintendent David Pace said. The end of two other levies coming this year should balance out the addition of the air ventilation levy, Pace said, meaning taxpayers will not have to pay much, if any, more for the project.

- The board also approved the purchase of security cameras from Reliance Telephone Systems Inc. The cost to the district for the cameras will be \$45,900.

A total of 29 cameras will be installed in the high school, 26 in the middle school and five in the senior center.

- Senior high gym floor: The board also briefly discussed plans for a new gym floor in the senior high school. It was decided that the district will seek bids for the project, which will consist of replacing the current gym floor with either a free floating or anchored maple floor.