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## Speech, drama class to be added to Eldorado High School

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*During Thursday's meeting guidance counselor JoAnna Lane described the \$20,000 Horatio Alger scholarship awarded to high school senior Carla Collins. Collins, a babysitter, holds her 2-year-old nephew, Gabriel.*

In a light agenda with few action items the Eldorado school board made a few personnel decisions and decided to offer a speech and drama elective at the freshman level.

Guidance counselor JoAnna Lane said teacher Thomas Bradley has proposed the speech and drama elective to the high school's English department.

"We had one years ago and did away with it," Lane said.

"It's a freshman level class and we're basically short electives at the freshman level. That's the bottom line."

Superintendent Gary Siebert said offering new electives in the years ahead could be a bit of a challenge. In the short term the district will probably see a large amount of money come in due to the income tax increase. However, the state has imposed a spending cap of 2 percent related to the increase in income tax. Siebert said he is optimistic the income tax increase will restore education funding losses, though legislation to borrow nearly \$9 billion to pay all money due from last year failed. He said he hopes the district can also offer an alternative math class such as agriculture math at the middle school level.

During the meeting the board voted to extend the contract of elementary school principal Steve Nelson by two years. Nelson's contract was to expire at the end of the 2011 to 2012 school year, but Nelson decided he is happy and not quite ready for retirement.

The board voted unanimously to extend Nelson's contract to the end of the 2013 to 2014 school year with his pay frozen at the amount he is to receive for the 2011 to 2012 school year.

Board member David Bartok had the first vote on the issue and produced a coin, flipped it, shrugged and voted yes. Board member Larry Parks then asked to borrow Bartok's coin.

The board congratulated high school senior Carla Collins who arrived at the meeting with her mother and holding her 2-year-old nephew, Gabriel. Collins was awarded a \$20,000 Horatio Alger scholarship and plans to study elementary and early childhood education at St. Stephen's College in Columbia, Mo.

"I want to give credit to the teachers who do this. It's not a guidance thing," Lane said.

She said teachers Teresa Boulds, Miranda Cain and Lori Quigley all had roles in Collins' scholarship acceptance.

Siebert gave Collins his nod of approval.

"She babysits for our two grandsons and no one would babysit for our grandsons if we didn't think she was really good. But one thing I didn't do was bring her check," Siebert said.

"I'd like to say we're really, really proud of you and of the teachers," Bartok said.