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By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader

Upon meeting someone in a business situation, etiquette speaks volumes. A firm handshake and eye contact spells out confidence.

That is the idea behind Chris Perkins and Ashley Kappelmann's Team Leadership class. The semester-long class is teaching high school students how to behave in a business atmosphere.

Perkins and Kappelmann, along with several students, addressed USD No. 480's board of education during Monday evening's board meeting.

Since 2008-'09 was the first year of the program, the teachers and students wished to inform the board of the success of the class and what they have learned since the first of the year.

According to Perkins, the class is a spin off from another program LHS had several years ago called Capturing Kids Hearts. That particular class was to teach teachers and students how to interact with one another. Team Leadership not only teaches students and teachers how to interact with each other, the program gets students ready for future business situations.

"Both programs were designed by a guy named Flip Flippen," Perkins said. "Team Leadership is a program designed to teach kids public speaking and business interactional skills.

"Every one of my kids knows how to give a very good business handshake," he added. "We had to teach them that, kids don't know it."

Perkins doesn't like calling what he does with his Team Leadership class teaching, he likes to call it facilitating.

"The kids do a lot of the teaching," he said. "It is about how to interact appropriately to become a good leader."

Perkins teaches Team Leadership first hour while Kappelmann teaches third hour. It is a semester long program that students are basically selected for.

"The freshman we get are recommended by their eighth grade counselors," he explained. "The other kids have counselors talking to them and it is kind of word of mouth now. We sit down and visit with them in a very informal interview process.

Perkins has approximately 20 students in his class and Kappelman has approximately 14. Team Leadership recommends no more than 24 students per class.

In other business, an item was added to the board's agenda after an executive session. A motion was approved to sign a contract with DLR Group, the contractors who will be doing the renovations to USD 480.

"The motion is basically to approve the contract upon advice from legal counsel," said business and finance director Jerry Clay.

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