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(Neb)-School Board Says No To \$ For National Qualifiers [Listen](#)

By: John Axtell Posted at: 05/16/2018 11:38 AM

CHADRON - On a pair of 3-3 tie votes, the Chadron School Board Monday night rejected applications for financial support for 5 students and 1 advisor attending national competitions this summer. School district policy allows up to \$100 per student and \$500 per advisor to be decided case-by-case.

Board members Boone Huffman, Gary Hoffman, and Jim O'Rourke all emphasized they applauded the determination and success of the students who'd qualified for National History Day and the national Future Business Leaders of America national convention, but felt the district had greater needs that should be higher priorities.

Hoffman, Huffman, and O'Rourke also pointed out that last year, the district had approved funds for FBLA and History Day but not for students going to the FFA National Convention.

Hoffman said when the policy was first adopted, the district had very few students qualifying for national events. As the number grew, the \$100/\$500 cap was imposed but Hoffman said they're continuing to grow - which he characterized as saying great things about Chadron students but putting more financial pressure on an already-strapped budget.

Board President Tom Menke, who joined Sandy Roes and Amanda Bannan in voting for the requests, says he knows it was a tough decision by the other three because he understands their concerns.

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Roes admitted spending money for things that aren't priorities is a hard decision, but also said the small amounts given to students who qualify for national events gives the district "a good bang for the buck" in part because it encourages students to set and achieve high goals.

FBLA advisor Brenda Budler worried that denying the money sent the message to the student that there was no need for them to strive for excellence because it obviously wasn't important to the school board.

President Menke hopes Budler, the 2018 Nebraska FBLA Advisor of the Year, is wrong about how the students perceive the board action because he knows all 6 members strongly support them and celebrate their achievements.

Chadron students who qualify for national events raise the vast majority of the funds needed for their trips themselves.