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Flooding caused \$80,000 in damage at Wright school

By John Kelleher - Managing Editor

DeKALB - The gymnasium floor at Malta's Wright Elementary School sustained \$80,000 in flood damage due to heavy rains over Memorial Day weekend, and school officials are working to get repairs made as quickly as possible.

The DeKalb School Board on Monday declared the situation an emergency, meaning the district doesn't have to go through the entire bidding process.

Instead, said Les Shaw, superintendent of building and grounds, the district sought quotes from several contractors. Work will start soon.

The district's insurance carrier paid \$25,000 to get work started. The money for repairs will not come from the Education Fund, which provides money for classroom activities, school officials said. The money will come from the Life Safety Fund.

The floor had 3 inches of water after the Memorial Day downpour, Shaw said.

Shaw said he believed that construction work at the school may have caused some of the water to flow into the gymnasium.

Shaw said the district saved \$14,000 by having district workers remove the old floor.

The building - the old Malta High School - is undergoing extensive repairs as the district converts it to the Wright Elementary School, a partnership school between the district and Northern Illinois University.

Students from throughout the district will attend the school, which will offer special programs in technology and music.

In other business at Monday night's school board meeting:

--The school district will consider the possibility of moving DeKalb High School graduation ceremonies to another location.

Board Vice President Suzanne Lambrecht made the suggestion after she learned that Northern Illinois University charged \$6,000 for use of the Convocation Center.

"It's great, it's air-conditioned," she said. "But ...

"It's a tremendous facility, but \$6,000 is a lot of money," she added.

--The board appointed Sheila Conrad as the new principal at Clinton Rosette Middle School.

Conrad is now assistant principal at East Aurora High School. Board member Tia Robinson voted against the appointment but declined to say why.

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