

'We'll be ready'

Fritz Busch

SLEEPY EYE - Sleepy Eye Public School Nurse Tina Cunningham is smiling these days after the school was recently awarded a \$44,392.50 Cardiac Emergency Response Plan grant.

Cunningham said the Minnesota Department of Education (DOE) grant will be used to train students and staff and purchase more AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) and related equipment.

"Of course we hope we never have to use the AEDs, but we will be ready in the event of a cardiac emergency in our school and on our athletic fields," she said.

Cunningham said the school will be able to purchase the latest AED models and cabinets to store them in at common places in school.

"It is also a top priority that our faculty members are properly trained how to use the equipment and be CPR certified," she said.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is an emergency procedure used when an individual's heart stopped beating or they are no longer breathing. CPR helps maintain blood flow and oxygen to the brain and vital organs until professional medical help arrives. The process typically involves chest compressions and rescue breaths to revive an individual.

Cunningham said cardiac emergency training will take place during staff orientation before school starts in August.

"We hope to have a Student Cardiac Team with the knowledge to properly use AEDs and administer CPR," she said. "We plan to send five staff cardiac team members for training in Marshall April 20. We plan to train five students for our cardiac response team. We plan to purchase a medical trauma kit, update our walkie-talkie radio system and update our cardiac response plan."

Cunningham learned about the DOE Cardiac Emergency Response Plan grants last fall, applied for one and got it.

"Plans are to get five new AEDs. One will be outside (behind the school), in between the football fields and tennis courts. Other ones will be placed in the school," she said. "We hope to use three older AEDs to be placed on buses with our athletic team road games."

Other schools receiving Cardiac Emergency Response Plan grants included Truman Public Schools.

The Minnesota Department of Education is partnering with the Minnesota Children's Project initiative to offer grantees regional training including sessions on developing, implementing and evaluating a cardiac emergency response plan.

For more information, visit <https://www.education.mn.gov>.