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Lackawanna Trail School District approves first reading of new graduation policy

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The Lackawanna Trail School District Board of Education approved the first reading of its new graduation policy at its Monday meeting, according to Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas. The main changes to the policy, he said, relate to standardized testing requirements and the graduation ceremony dress code.

Rakauskas described the new dress code as “classed up a little bit...to make it a more formal event.”

The previous policy was adopted five years ago. The new policy will be on the agenda in August for a second reading, then again in September for a third reading and final approval.

Page two of the draft states, “All changes to graduation requirements shall be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians, and made available in each high school building or on the district’s website immediately following approval by the Board.”

The board also accepted a retirement letter from Christine Wagner, a teacher’s assistant.

“She has been with the district for 25 years,” Rakauskas said, “so she will be missed.”

The board approved a list of about 17 tuition waiver students, who live outside the district but whose parents work for the district, many as teachers.

Rakauskas said some discussion from the community was heard regarding the board’s decision at last month’s meeting to not replace a third grade teacher who resigned. He said some parents were upset that there will now be only three third grade classrooms, rather than four, taking each classroom size up to about 25 students. He believes, however, the decision was financially wise and will not have negative effects on the students.

“We’re very confident that we still have enough high-quality teachers and supports in place to still deliver top-notch education to those students in third grade,” Rakauskas said.

The meeting also included a settlement agreement with a student and parents, the details of which the Superintendent said the district is not at liberty to discuss.