

# Trail looks at jr. high wrestling

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Lackawanna Trail school board directors discussed the possibility of reviving the junior high wrestling program in an executive session prior to the board's work session on Monday night, Nov. 4.

"We've agreed to post for a coaching position for junior high wrestling," superintendent Matthew Rakauskas stated in the public meeting, "with the thought of restoring the program based on student interest."

According to principal John Rushefski, the program was "suspended" during the last few years because of the low students interest.

"We only had about two or three students sign up," Rushefski told the board. "But a list was circulated recently, and we have the names of 16 or 17 junior high boys this year who expressed an interest in wrestling."

He explained that although the varsity wrestling program is strong, with about 26 participants set for this school year, the few junior high students interested in past years could not be included in varsity practices because of their size, considering the "physical contact" aspect of the workouts.

Lombardi also said that in the executive session before the public work session, several important issues were discussed, such as safety, personnel and legal matters, including a review of the Sunshine Law.

"We also heard a very detailed review of the superintendent's goals," he said. "It was a very enlightening, in-depth discussion."

During the work session, the board also heard details of an upcoming Veterans Day program which will offer students the opportunity to learn about the life and heroism of World War II hero Gino Merli, a Scranton native.

"We're very pleased to be able to host this presentation for our students," stated Trail high school principal John Rushefski. "Scranton Public Theater is bringing the program to us, and has provided a study guide for students to help enhance the performance."

Merli was a recipient of the Medal of Honor in June 1945, as well as two Purple Hearts, the Bronze Star, the Battle of the Bulge Medal, and the Humanitarian Award of the Chapel of Four Chaplains. Following the war, he served the needs of veterans in northeast Pennsylvania. He died in 2002.

"The Last Thoughts of Gino Merli," by Scranton playwright Tom Flannery, will be presented in the Trail high school auditorium on Monday, Nov. 11, at 9:30 a.m., with members of local veterans groups in attendance.

For the board's regular monthly meeting set for November 11, the tentative agenda will include the appointment of a long-term elementary substitute, Rachel Becchetti will be considered as volunteer cheerleading coach, and the approval of several names to the substitute teacher list.