

Trail revisits calendar

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Examiner

The Lackawanna. Trail School Board is considering additional snow days on its calendar, should the need arise the rest of winter.

During a work session of the board Monday night, Superintendent Matt Rakauskas said the district has used up nine snow days, and also taken one early dismissal day so far this winter.

He said he would be recommending for the board's consideration at its meeting next Monday that the current calendar add the following days, if necessary: June 13; the day of gradation; May 2, an Act 80 day that could be returned for instructional use; April 21, Easter Monday; April 18, Good Friday; and then start adding June 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, with graduation for high school seniors to be moved from Friday, June 13, to Monday June 16, and then for each day after that is used as a snow date, the graduation date would be extended a day

"We hope, however, that the weather cooperates, making none of this necessary" he said.

Next week the board will also consider adopting revised school policies on 'Acceptable Use of the Internet' and 'Electronic Devices,' which in their present form will allow students, grades K-12, during the 201415 school year to not only bring devices such as smart phones, 1-pads and tablet computers to class but use them as integral parts of the learning environment.

Owls O'Hara, the father of a first grader; said he had serious concerns about the policy

He said he could imagine a scenario of child just getting the hang of taking pictures with a cell phone, and capturing something that happened at school that was better left undocumented, but then it got disseminated.

O'Hara asked the board, "How do we know they know how to use it appropriately?"

Elementary school principal Tonia Stoker said there would be guidelines.

Then, O'Hara's wife asked about discipline regarding devices use.

"My concern is their possibly getting in trouble (and being so young) that they might not know they are doing wrong"

Stoker said her concerns were valid, and "We'll need to be sure parents know the limits and age-appropriate uses as well"

She said the results of a survey soliciting input from parents about the new policies would be disseminated at next week's meeting

Some likely appointments were also floated Monday night as coming up for vote next week, including Kevin Dikeman as marching band director, Eric Green as asst. track coach, and Brink Powell as special education secretary

The appointment of Dikeman was a concern of at least one taxpayer in the audience, who said she had heard he was not interested in the marching band's involvement in competitions and thought that might not be fair to students or the school

Board president Mark Lombardi said that he considered her comment hearsay, and solicitor John Audi interjected it was a personnel matter

Lombardi said he likened Dikeman's appointment to a football coach, "and we don't ask whether he's going to implement a winged-T or whatever"

However, board member Michael Mould, who said he empathized with the public comment, but was speaking for himself, noted, "This is not a matter of what offense you're playing, but it gets down to the heart of whether you're in the game."

Audi said before a vote, the board would likely get more information to help with making a decision.

The board also expects next week to ratify the NEIU operating budget for next year with Trail's share fixed at \$21,813.52.

It was announced during the meeting that assistant principal Mark Murphy was not present because that day his wife had given birth to a 7.2-lb. baby girl, named Ella

High school principal John Rushefski said, "Everyone is healthy"

Rushefski also noted the passing this week of Sam Rosen, who two years ago next week had provided a riveting assembly to Trail High School students about his time in Nazi concentration camps during World War II.

Rushefski said that in his time as principal he had not remembered anyone getting the rapt, focused attention that the holocaust survivor received that day

During his talk, Rosen said that he had lost six brothers five sisters, and both parents to the Holocaust; 195 family members in all He told the students to be thankful for the privilege of living in the Unit ed States "where you can go anywhere you want, do anything you want" without fear of the kind of persecution he faced..

"But, don't ever take anything for granted," he said.

Rosen died Friday at the age of 92. Funeral services will be held at Temple Israel in Scranton today at 11 a.m.