

Kearney new Lackawanna Trail track coach

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It's official. Lackawanna Trail Assistant Principal Brian Kearney is the new track and field coach at the high school.

The 7-1 vote Monday night was nearly unanimous, with board president David Thorne absent.

Board member Joe Strauch said that while he wholeheartedly endorsed the man who was twice named Lackawanna League Coach of the Year at Valley View, he could not support the stipend of \$3,450.

Strauch has consistently voted against any budgetary allocation where money has been attached ever since a music teacher was not replaced for the 2015-16 school year.

Superintendent Matt Rakauskas reminded Strauch that Kearney was under a contract that in principle was approved by the board for future hires and had to be honored.

Furthermore, board vice president Ned Clarke noted as he has seen with other coaches, "the money he will be getting is minimal compared to the hourly investment he will put into coaching."

When at the end of the meeting, the board also approved Christian Crinella as a volunteer track coach, and Brad Higgins as a volunteer assistant baseball coach, Clarke added, "Our good athletes this spring will be under some fine tutelage."

In other business, the board gave a first reading to a policy from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding its Division of Federal Programs. The policy was broken into five parts: allowability of costs, cash management, conflict of interest, procurement and travel reimbursement.

In the administrator's reports:

*Superintendent Matt Rakauskas congratulated assistant principal Kearney on his new appointment as coach and noted it was rare for an administrator to do so.

*Business Manager Keith Glynn said that the district to date had received \$4.5 million in state funds, and was expecting about the same amount still to come for the 2015-16 year. He also noted that PDE had notified the district regarding its request for an exemption to possibly raise taxes more than a PDE index allows. He said the district could raise taxes as much as six percent when summer comes, but it will probably be something under that.

*Elementary Principal Brian Kelley noted that on Thursday LTEC female students would be having a dance and were inviting their dads from 6 to 8 p.m. He also made note that a positive behavior program continues to be in force and the school had 98 percent participation at a recent event.

*High School Principal Mark Murphy made note of music teacher Jodi Rinehimer's recent investment of time to have Trail host the PMEA District 9 music festival, and said she did a splendid job. He also noted that of Feb. 29 would be a winter sports award program.

*Curriculum Director Tania Ross addressed a recent newspaper article about SATs and said there was more than meets the eye. She also explained that on Feb. 3 the governor passed a moratorium on the Keystone Exam, which will keep it from becoming mandatory for two or three more years. She also noted a grant of \$25,000 from PDE which will help pay for surveillance cameras put in during renovations last summer.

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