

Elementary life skills class OK'd at Trail

C.J. MARSHALL

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The Lackawanna Trail School Board approved Monday night the addition of an Elementary Life Skills Class beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

The program had been discussed at the previous week's work session.

Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas explained why it was not expedient at the time, however, to begin a new Life Skills Automotive Technology shop, to be located at a garage on the high school campus.

He said that the building needs more adjustments and alterations, and recommended that the project is tabled until a later date.

A motion was made by Kevin Mulhern and seconded by Joe Strauch to table the motion to approve the addition of the High School Automotive Tech Shop for the 2017-2018 school year, through a one year lease agreement with NEIU 19.

The board did agree to maintain the current Tax Collector Compensation Rates at \$3 per bill mailed, \$7 per full bill and first installment collected, \$2.50 per second and third installment collected and 5 percent of Per Capita tax collected. The rate will remain in effect for 2017-18 through 2020-21 School Years.

A second reading of a school policy on Bullying/Cyberbullying was approved by the board.

Elementary principal Brian Kearney reviewed the progress of a new 2017-18 Elementary School Curriculum Guide which the board approved unanimously.

The board also approved unanimously the changes to the Athletic Department's awards policy beginning with the 2017-18 school year. As discussed at the Feb. 6 work session, this policy has remained unchanged for decades and states the standard for which participants may earn a varsity letter. Modifications were made to Cross Country, Track and Field were added, and Marching Band is now considered eligible for varsity status.

A list of standardized tests for the 2017-2018 school year was approved, which included two more tests on the recommendation of curriculum director Tania Ross.

The board approved the budget for the Northeastern Intermediate Unit #19 for the fiscal year July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018. The Lackawanna Trail School District contribution is estimated at \$22,227.52, which amounts to a \$360.24 increase from the previous fiscal year.

The board approved President Philip Stark as the representative from Lackawanna Trail School District on the NEIU board from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2020.

"I will continue to do my best," Stark responded.

The board also approved:

*Kelly Buck as the Assistant Field Hockey Coach for 2017-18 at a stipend of \$4,100;

*Benjamin Simons as the Assistant Football Coach for 2017-2018 at a stipend of \$4,000;

*Mark June as a Volunteer Assistant Jr. High Baseball Coach for 2016-2017;

*Diane Dalton as a Volunteer Band Assistant for 2016-2017;

*Stacy Edwards as a Volunteer Band Assistant for 2016-2017;

*Jenna Alderman as the Percussion Instructor for the Marching Band, effective at the end of 2016-2017;

*JoAnn Wright of Factoryville as a Secretary Substitute;

*An AP US History field trip to experience Colonial America in Lexington, Concord, Boston and Salem, Mass., May 11-13, 2017, at no cost to the district;

*A grade six field trip to Dorney Park on May 31, 2017, at no cost to the district.

It was announced that a Feb. 17 Dance for the elementary center would benefit the Ganley and Swift families who have recently lost a family member. Students can bring an adult to the dance who is a role model for them.

Lackawanna Trail Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas presented results of a wellness survey to the school board Monday which seem to indicate that students and their parents are more or less satisfied with the school's cafeteria food and the opportunities for health education and physical activity available there.

From the survey, Rakauskas noted that regarding emotional health, 45 percent of the parents of students said that bullying and cyberbullying were problems at Lackawanna Trail. Some 55 percent of those surveyed said that the school addresses bullying concerns properly.

Although there was no discussion about the Lackawanna Trail school calendar at the school board meeting Monday, as it had been the previous week, the district's www.ltsd.org website notes: "As a result of our fourth weather cancellation, April 13th, June 1st, 2nd, 5th, and June 6th will now be used as make-up days. June 6th is a half day of school. Graduation has been moved to June 9th."