

Trail board approves contract with Scranton

ROBERT BAKER / Published: October 18, 2017

The Lackawanna Trail School Board approved a contract last Tuesday (Oct.10) with the Scranton School District for transportation shared services for 2017-2018.

The measure is for transportation mostly of special needs individuals, and administrators were reluctant to go into much detail for privacy concerns.

The contract is comparable with previous years, superintendent Matt Rakauskas said, with a flat \$165 paid per trip.

Board member Joe Strauch voted against the contract, noting it had some deficiencies, such as only one way trips were covered.

The measure passed 6-1 with Karl Beichler and Adrian Bianchi absent.

The board also approved filling vacancies for boys and girls junior high basketball coaches, each to be hired at a stipend of \$3,550. Christopher Loman was named boys' coach, and Marissa Ryan was named girls' coach.

The board also approved the hiring of Tara Crum as the confidential administrative assistant to the superintendent per the contract.

Stacy Stuenzi was also hired as a part-time paraprofessional at four and a half hours a day, at \$14.38 an hour.

The board also gave a green light to an E-Rate Program proposal of services for 2018-19, and also gave a first reading to school policy #918 addressing parent and family engagement.

Curriculum director Tania Ross said the policy issue came up as a response of being more accountable to families and parents in the wake of a response to No Child Left Behind.

She said there would be a meeting on Oct. 25 at 6 p.m. to talk about how "we as a district can better serve families."

In the superintendent's report, Rakauskas acknowledged spirit week, with some new safety procedures put in check for the high school bonfire set for Thursday. He also said the wellness committee was set to meet toward the end of October early November addressing food options as well as taking a look at physical activity of students.

High school principal Mark Murphy also spoke to Spirit Week noting an emphasis to make the bonfire and other homecoming activities more community minded with an emphasis on greater public safety.

He also gave a shout out to Mrs. Powell who will be directing a play in the spring. He noted that three options had been presented to students who were overwhelmingly in favor of one of them. He held back from announcing saying he didn't wish to steal her thunder.

Elementary center principal Brian Kearney acknowledged that his students had raised \$800 for the Red Cross to go to flood relief in the wake of two hurricanes.

He noted that representatives from local fire companies would be in the playground behind the school on Wednesday (Oct. 11) to share lessons about fire safety.

He noted there would be a trunk or treat activity in the LTEC parking lot on Friday, Oct. 27, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. He said there would be a Halloween parade in the school Oct. 31. He also noted the annual Veterans Day program this year would be on Friday, Nov. 10.

Special education coordinator Amy Talarico spoke of her work on a local task force.

Transportation director Rick Kordish spoke to National Bus Safety Week coming up on Oct. 18, noting there would be a ROAR program on bus safety. He also noted that on Oct. 25, the district would begin implementing new computer software to keep tabs on transportation routes.

Curriculum director Ross talked about the district's comprehensive plan and said at the Nov. 13 she would be making a presentation to the school board about standardized tests with info shared from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Business manager Keith Glynn said he was preparing an audit that reflected procurement rates. He also noted that the free breakfast program has been quite successful.

The school board next meets on Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m.