

Curriculum director at Trail resigns

ROBERT BAKER / Published: December 6, 2017

The Lackawanna Trail School Board accepted the resignation of its curriculum director Tania Stoker following the board's reorganization meeting on Monday night, Dec. 4.

Stoker, a 10-year employee of the district where she previously served for two and a half years as elementary principal and before that three and a half years as high school vice principal, was appointed last week as assistant to the superintendent of the Northern Lehigh School District with its offices at Slatington.

Her effective date of resignation from Trail is Jan. 1.

During its annual reorganization meeting, board president Phil Stark was reelected, and Dave Thorne was elected vice president replacing Ned Clarke who retired.

Filling Clarke's board position in Region 3 (Dalton, LaPlume and West Abington Twp.) where she was duly elected in November was Deborah Naylor.

Naylor and three board members (Adrian Bianchi, Kevin Mulhern and Stark) reelected last month had the oath of office administered by Magisterial District Judge David Plummer.

The board adopted a schedule of meetings and work sessions for 2018 with work sessions typically the first Monday of the month and regular meetings the second Monday, except for those days when Monday is a holiday and also the December meeting is a combined work session/regular meeting.

In regular business, director Joseph Strauch was selected to serve as the district's Pennsylvania School Boards Association representative. Strauch spoke to a 2-day PSBA seminar he recently attended.

The board approved a textbook addition for English Language Arts in the Elementary Center, Grades K-6, from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, at a cost of \$ 67,793 over a 6-year period.

It also accepted the retirement request of Debbie Ross from her cafeteria management position; the resignation of Ryan Laubach as girls' head volleyball coach; the resignation of Jason Fauquier as boys' assistant basketball coach and appointment of Michael Sunseri to that post at a stipend of \$4,100; and also granted unpaid leave requests of JoAnne Wright and Tiffany Carpenter.

The board voted to approve three field trip requests: for third graders to go to Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, N.Y., next May; for the high school Ski Club to go to Stowe, Vt., in February; and for selected students to go to New York City's Broadway in 2018-19 and see musicals 'Dear Evan Hansen' as well as 'Hamilton.'

During his superintendent's report Matt Rakauskas congratulated Stoker on her new assignment and announced a change in webmasters for the district's website from Kelly Hopkins to IT specialist Kristin Kurpis. He also reviewed some advertising opportunities for area businesses in both the high school and elementary center gymnasiums as well as a naming rights opportunity for the high school library.

High school principal Mark Murphy wished Stoker well and announced upcoming holiday concerts for the band on Dec. 19 and the chorus on Dec. 21. He also announced that Keystone Exams were underway this week in the areas of Algebra, Biology and Literature. He noted that the basketball teams were having a Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 17 at Gin's.

Elementary principal Brian Kearney announced that representatives from the Bethlehem Area School District visited Nov. 16 to look at Trail's positive behavior program.

He also noted a fifth and sixth grade concert Tuesday (Dec. 5) in the First National Bank Auditorium at the High School, and a Children's Produce Market at the elementary center on Dec. 12 at 3:45 p.m.

Special education director Amie Talarico reviewed programs and noted that as the district's homeless and foster care liaison, she would be doing a training in May.

Business manager Keith Glynn wished Ross well in her retirement and noted in transportation director Rick Kordish's absence that the district was working with new transportation software that goes into effect next year but is training now. He said it necessitated pinpointing places of residence for the district's students and parents might get notes brought home requesting info that was only to ensure the students' public safety.

The board's next scheduled work session is Tuesday, Jan. 2, at 7:30 p.m.