

Trail school board shares NEIU concerns

C.J. MARSHALL / Published: February 14, 2018

Concerns were expressed by members of the Lackawanna Trail School Board on Monday about services provided to the district by the Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unit 19.

The board voted 5-3, with member Adrian Bianchi absent, to approve the district's contribution of \$15,051 to the IU for 2018-2019.

David Thorne, who voted no, said he disagrees with contentions made that services from the IU will remain unchanged from this year.

Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas said Monday he had spoken to IU 19's executive director Robert McTiernan and received assurances that services will be unaffected.

Thorne said he found the IU to be 'overbloomed.' He also pointed out that even though \$15,051 may not seem like much, the IU oversees certain federal funds earmarked for the school districts, of which it takes 8 percent off the top before distributing the money.

The board voted to approve Policy 202 concerning the eligibility of non-resident students attending classes at Trail but board member Michael Mould voted against the proposal because he felt it placed a financial burden on the district that would not be fair to taxpayers.

The board approved high school and elementary curriculum guides for 2018-19.

Rakauskas reported the district will have to make up extra days due to the recent winter storms. Classes will be held on March 29 - Holy Thursday - as well as June 4, 5, and 6. This means graduation will be moved to June 8.

Rakauskas recommended the district pay \$6,600 to the Pennsylvania School Board Association to review and make recommendation of the school board's policy manuals.

The review was last done in 2000-01, he said, and the PSBA will perform a thorough overview to make certain the manuals are brought up to date. No action was taken by the board.

Strauch reported that the Wellness Committee met on Jan. 22. Among the recommendations was that underclassmen be encouraged to eat breakfast provided by the school.

Beichler reported that the next major task of the Comprehensive Planning Committee will be laying out the district's goals and forums for the next four years. The committee's next meeting will be in March and include teachers and administrators. A plan is expected to be available to the public in September, and submitted for board approval in October.

Elementary principal Brian Kearney reported that students Nora Evans and Emmy Jones recently went to a 4-H Club event at State College, and had a teleconference with NASA representatives.

Kearney also informed the board a mobile agricultural science learning lab provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture will be available at the elementary school on March 26-29.

Rakauskas said an old district map - 50 to 60 years old - has recently been donated to the schools.

The board also

*approved a list of standardized tests for 2018-2019 ;

*approved leave requests for Rachel Becchetti and Karen Brown;

*approved a request for sixth graders to go to Dorney Park, Allentown, on May 25;

*approved the resignation of Benjamin Simmons as an assistant football coach.

*approved the following coaching appointments: Bill Burnell as a volunteer track and field coach (2017-18); Benjamin Simmons, Jeffery Stage and Brett Stage as volunteer assistant football coaches (2018-19); Mark June as volunteer assistant jr. high baseball coach (2017-18); and

*approved Mason Stiver's resignation request from the Percussion Instructor position for 2018-19.