

# Baldwin-Whitehall committee to review district grading system

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For The Corridor

Baldwin-Whitehall school board agreed Oct. 17 to form a committee to consider revising the district's grading system to make it similar to nearby school districts.

At prior meetings, PTA members asked the district to use a grading system where an A grade equates to 90-100 percent, a B to 80-89, a C to 70-79 and a D to 60-69. Under the current grading system, 93 to 100 is an A, 83 to 92 is a B, 70 to 82 is a C and 60 to 69 is a D.

Nancy Crowder and Cindy Depretis told the board that student could benefit from the change via improved self-esteem and more academic scholarships.

Both women and five other PTA members are part of the 39-member committee, along with 10 administrators and teachers from each of the district's five schools.

When board member Jane Hunnewell noted that the committee seemed rather large, Assistant superintendent John Wilkinson explained that the group would be divided into subcommittees that would perform a lot of work.

In other business, during

an informal dialogue with the board, high school principal Todd Keruskin, the board learned that a \$30,000 state grant will pay for the cost of a teacher substitute while chemistry teacher John Tietz performs the duties of technology coach for other teachers.

"How is the construction going?" board members asked Keruskin.

The principal pointed out that there were 150 cars in the parking lot for a recent open house — the largest attendance ever at the school for such an event.

"It's going well but it wears us down at times," Keruskin said.

School Director Ed Moeller asked about having a student representative join the board for discussions.

"There are students who would love to do it," Keruskin said.

"When student council goes to conferences, they hear about other schools who do it and they ask me about it."

Moeller said it might not be too late to implement the idea during this school year.

The board voted to add electronically activated security doors with video monitors to the Head Start wing at the

former Wallace School. The cost will be paid by Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

The board also recognized student Keri Hartman, of Whitehall, who had perfect SAT scores and is a 2008 National Merit semi-finalist.

Also, the board agreed to pay Burt Hill Co., of Butler, \$8,100 to develop specifications regarding replacing the boiler at Wallace School.

Board member John Schmotzer said the superintendent search committee asked principals and board members to suggest reasons why a superintendent would want to come to the district.

"We need to sell the district," he said.

The board discussed having the schools or a professional videographer produce a video about the district and its communities to distribute to area realtors.

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