

February 1, 2021

SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

The Scranton School Board of Directors held a regular board meeting on Monday, February 1, 2021 via Zoom immediately following an Operations Committee meeting.

1. Call to Order – President Gilmartin called the meeting to order at 8:34PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – conducted prior to Operations Committee.

3. Roll Call – By the Secretary

Present: Directors Cruz, Dempsey, Fox, Hume, Malloy, McAndrew, Welby, Yanni and President Gilmartin.

Absent: All Present.

4. Motion to Approve Agenda

A motion to amend the Consent Agenda to add an additional settlement agreement to Item 11.15 {H-2} was made by Director Malloy, seconded by Director Yanni and duly passed 9-0.

Director Dempsey now made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Director Malloy and motion duly passed 9-0.

5. Communications to the Board:

Secretary Virginia Orr announced that Executive Sessions were held on January 5, 2021, January 14, 2021, January 25, 2021 and this evening to discuss personnel, negotiations, real estate and litigation.

6. Solicitor's Report - Attorney John Audi

No Report.

7. Superintendent's Report - Mrs. Melissa McTiernan

Mrs. Melissa McTiernan recognized and thanked Mr. Kevin Kearney for building a Transportation Informational site on the district's webpage that will be introduced tonight. It will include information such as state guidelines, Scranton School District policies and a new Appeal Form encouraging any parent or guardian who believes they received a Walk Zone letter in error to fill out the form. This appeal form will be reviewed by members of the Transportation Department and they will receive a letter in return after their appeal is review. Mrs. McTiernan now asked Mr. Kearney to share his screen so the public will know how to find this information.

Mr. Kevin Kearney explained the site and instructions for parents and guardians and the public. The information is available in English, Spanish and Nepali and we will continue to update the information in other languages.

Director Yanni asked if this form is if they believe they are further than the 1.5 or 2 mile distance but this form is not for hardships. Mrs. McTiernan agreed it is for distance and hazardous road and does not include hardships. Director Yanni asked who will be reviewing that information. Mrs. McTiernan responded the Transportation Team will be working on it and making a determination whether the student qualifies or not.

Director McAndrew asked if we are doing any bussing surveys. Mrs. McTiernan said not to her knowledge but if the board wants a survey sent out they could do that. Director McAndrew questioned whether cyber students will continue cyber instruction rather than coming back to Scranton because they don't qualify.

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Mrs. McTiernan said the only thing they are taking into consideration right now is following policy and she understands there may be some reaction to us following policy but she will continue to say that right now we're following the policy that is in place.

Director McAndrew asked that if the board could update the policy. Mrs. McTiernan said they would have to update the policy at the policy meeting and the board has to understand what the consequences are in regards to subsidy.

Director Cruz inquired what is considered hazardous roads. Mrs. McTiernan deferred to Mr. Bob Schoch who is present at this meeting because he would explain better what is determined a hazardous road.

Mr. Bob Schoch explained the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has a whole process and it considers everything from the existence or lack of sidewalks to the width of roads, travel speed, the ability of oncoming traffic to see pedestrians and the existence of some kind of traffic signals including stop signs or flashing lights and crossing guard locations among other things. Mr. Schoch said the district since 1973 has had approximately 15 determinations of hazardous situations and those circumstances could have changed in the 40 some years since these decisions were made such as sidewalks could have been built, new roads could have diverted traffic elsewhere off these roads so this is something that really needs to constantly be reviewed but they have an extensive list of considerations and they also look at the number of vehicle accidents particularly pedestrian and vehicle accidents so there are many things they can look at.

Director McAndrew asked if all members of the transportation committee be at the meeting next week.

Mrs. McTiernan said yes, although there are some members that are not part of the SSD so she can't speak for them but they can reach out to them to see if they are available.

President Gilmartin asked Director Dempsey, chair of the Policy Committee if she is comfortable with that. Mrs. Dempsey said yes.

Director Yanni asked if she has concerns about the policy and state guidelines that were developed in the 1970s-90s that are incorporated into this policy, would she give those to Director Dempsey to bring up at the meeting. Director Dempsey said yes.

Mrs. McTiernan thanked Mr. Kearney and Mr. Schoch, moved on with her report and called on Mrs. Ann Grebeck to acknowledge some of the PTA Reflections Elementary Winners.

Mrs. Grebeck reported on the following:

The following students earned placements in the District's Reflections Contest from the Pennsylvania PTA-Regional 16 Division:

In the categories of:

Primary – Visual Arts

1st Place – Aarya Hemachandra – Neil Armstrong

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3rd Place – Smitri Viswanathan Devarajan – Neil Armstrong

4th Place – Dominique Fernandez – Neil Armstrong

5th Place – Antoinette Diwa Fernansez – Neil Armstrong

Intermediate – Visual Arts

3rd Place – Yovana Maneva – John G. Whittier

4th Place – Kellen O'Connor – John G. Whittier

5th Place – Mia McCracken – Neil Armstrong

Primary – Literature

1st Place – Gianna Zippitelli – Neil Armstrong

Intermediate – Literature

1st Place – Mia McCracken – Neil Armstrong

5th Place – Madysen Pastora – Fances Willard

Intermediate – Dance

1st Place – Mia McCracken – Neil Armstrong

Primary – Photography

1st Place – Sagan Suda – George Bancroft

4th Place – Smitri Viswanathan Devarajan – George Bancroft

Intermediate Photography

4th Place – Emauella Schwartz – John Adams

STUDENT OR GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Neil Armstrong – Smirti Devarajan – recognized as Elementary Art Education Student of the Month for the State of Pennsylvania and will be recognized by the Pennsylvania Art Education Association.

PTA Reflections Winners:

John Adams

2D Visual Arts – Primary

1. Evelynnn Brunson
2. Caitlyn Moneyay
3. Rosalita Decker

2D Visual Arts – Intermediate

1. Olivia Geissman
2. Emman Schwartz
3. Olivia Geissman
4. Kyla Brunson
5. Adrian Lockner

Photography

- Emmanuela Schwartz

George Bancroft

Visual Arts – Primary

- Michael DeJesus
- Adrianna MacGregor
- Lelilani Gamez Torres
- Sagan Suda
- Rayanika Pethu

Visual Arts – Intermediate

- Rosa Garcia-Chavez

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- Haley Passero

Photography – Primary

- Sagan Suda
- Rayanika Pethu

Isaac Tripp

Liam Manley, a 3rd grade student was recognized for his interview that aired on BBC on President Biden's Hometown.

Frances Willard

PTA Reflections Winners:

- K, 1, 2-Visual Arts
 1. Carter Jackson
 2. Maylen Haffner
 3. Carmelia O'Hora
- 3,4,5 – Visual Arts
 1. Chiara Pugliese
 2. Laylannie Sanchez
 3. Andrew Galante
- Photography
 1. Mark Novak
 2. Antonio Fiorillo
- Literature
 1. Madysen Pastora
- Literature – Intermediate Level
 - 5th Place – Madysen Pastora

Mrs. McTiernan announced meal distribution for the week and recognized School Board Member month and thanked all board members.

8. PSBA Report - Director Michelle Dempsey

Director Dempsey reported on the following:

[PSBA Report - February 2021.pdf](#)

9. Public Comment

Vivian Williams, parent, spoke of administrator's raises, fair salaries for teachers, her support if the SFT chooses to strike and the need to develop a Parent Advisory Committee.

Colleen Perry, parent, spoke about the letter she received regarding bussing, concern of her children's safety and pay raises for administrators but there's no money for bussing.

Brandi Solomon, parent, spoke of the need of a solid plan to bring students back to school when surrounding districts are doing it, the loss of good teachers, the need to advocate for the students and teachers and would like to know where the \$17 million dollars in CARES Act money is being spent.

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Mollie Cosgrove, parent, feels the district should have returned to a hybrid setting in August when many other districts have successfully implemented this plan but moving forward the students need to be back in school. Ms. Cosgrove suggested keeping a virtual option available for those who choose to keep their students home, teachers that have medical documentation can teach virtually, and asked what the district is doing to address students' mental health. Ms. Cosgrove believes that since accommodations and guidelines were put in place for sports the same should be implemented in classrooms.

Mike Frounfelker, parent, thanked school board members for their hard work and volunteering their time and also expressed he thinks it is time to get the kids back in school. Mr. Frounfelker spoke of accommodations being made for sports and believes if accommodations can be made for sports then accommodations should be made for students in the classrooms and the children need to be the focus.

Ella Frounfelker, student, expressed her wishes to go back to school in person. Ms. Frounfelker currently takes AP and Honors courses and sometimes feels as though she is on her own. Ms. Frounfelker said both her parents work in other districts and has been working directly with students in person since the fall and wonders why our district has found it impossible to do the same with proper safety precautions. Ms. Frounfelker asked to please reconsider and reopen schools.

Frances Regan, teacher at Bancroft, spoke of closing Bancroft and suggested waiting one more year to allow the pandemic to hopefully end next year and you would be better prepared with the data to make an informed decision about the exact needs of the district post-pandemic. Ms. Regan also spoke of the undue hardship of moving North Scranton students to a West Scranton community. Ms. Regan suggested for board members to take the journey and walk from Bancroft to Tripp, listen to the educators and parents, and reexamine the need to close Bancroft at this time.

Holly Meade, teacher at Northeast Intermediate, applauded the parents coming forward to speak, spoke of money being spent on buildings, recent raises to administrators, asked where the priorities of this district and what action are they going to take to help the students.

Rosemary Boland, SFT President, acknowledged the passing of longtime English teacher Mrs. Carol Conaboy and her service to the district. Ms. Boland announced that several members of the SFT have Covid and they still have been working virtually from home. Ms. Boland spoke of the impact this disease and the children in our community who are underserved by the medical community. Ms. Boland said what other districts are doing won't work in our district and they expect to return to a safe and healthy building and the teachers should have at least one of the vaccines before going back to the buildings. Ms. Boland knows there is no easy solution and they cannot expect it to happen overnight. Ms. Boland also mentioned the suffering of parents and students as well as the teachers and paraprofessionals.

Suzanne Furey – was not available to make comment.

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Written Public Comment received by: Roseann Polishan, Julie Ferguson, Samantha Senecal and Joseph Murray.

[Written Public Comment 2.1.21.pdf](#)

10. Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes – No minutes to approve.

11. Motion to Approve CONSENT AGENDA

One Roll Call to Approve Items. Please announce if any items(s) removed prior to vote.

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Director Dempsey, seconded by Director Yanni and passed unanimously on roll call.

Action (Consent): 11.01 {B-1} Bill List

List of Bill Payments: \$1,042,184.34

[2.1.21 Bill List](#)

Action (Consent): 11.02 {B-2} Exception Bill List

Exception Bill List:

Bill Payments: \$3,051,592.75

Payrolls: \$6,645,677.11

Bill Payments

December 25, 2020	\$1,225,745.64
December 31, 2020	\$ 171,660.95
January 8, 2021	\$ 733,072.52
January 22, 2021	\$ 660,947.53
January 29, 2021	\$ 260,166.11

[Exception Bill List 2.1.2021](#)

Payrolls

December 23, 2020	\$2,216,142.66
January 8, 2021	\$2,177,046.73
January 22, 2021	\$2,252,487.72

Action (Consent): 11.03 {B-3} November 2020 Delinquent Tax Report

Delinquent Tax Report for the month of November, 2020 as collected by the Lackawanna Tax Claim Bureau.

	\$227,044.15
Penalty	\$ 17,401.10
Interest	<u>\$ 17,311.80</u>
TOTAL	\$261,757.05
Commission	<u>\$(13,088.37)</u>
NET TO DISTRICT	\$248,668.68

Action (Consent): 11.04 {B-4} December 2020 Delinquent Tax Report

Delinquent Tax Report for the month of December, 2020 as collected by the Lackawanna Tax Claim Bureau.

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	\$167,953.41
Penalty	\$ 17,889.26
Interest	<u>\$ 18,161.00</u>
TOTAL	\$204,003.67
Commission	<u>\$(10,200.42)</u>
NET TO DISTRICT	\$193,803.25

Action (Consent): 11.05 {B-5} November 2020 Treasurer's Report
Treasurer's Report for the period ending November 30, 2020 as prepared by the Business Office
and confirmed by First National Bank.

[November 2020 Treasurer's Report 2.1.21](#)

Opening Balance	\$27,973,256.14
Monthly Revenue	\$11,072,746.22
Transfers and Refunds	<u>\$ 21,629.19</u>
Total Available	\$39,067,631.55
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ 8,196,608.97</u>
Balance in General Account	\$30,871,022.58

Action (Consent): 11.06 {B-6} Approve Settlement Agreement
Approve Settlement Agreement 2020-CV-3140-BM

Action (Consent): 11.07 {B-7} Capital Improvement Bill List
Approve Capital Projects Bill List \$124,015.00
[Capital Project Bill List 2.1.2021](#)

Action (Consent): 11.08 {C-1} Approve Toy Drive for Willard, Sumner and Tripp

Action (Consent): 11.09 {C-2} Approve Parker Hill Monthly Food Distribution at Sumner.
Action (Consent): 11.11 {C-4} Approve Monroe County Grant for Playground at Whittier

Action (Consent): 11.12 {C-5} Approve Donation for West Intermediate Basketball

Action (Consent): 11.13 {G-1} Second Read Policy 214 - Class Rank

Action (Consent): 11.14 {G-2} First Read Policies 103-Discrimination/Title IX Sexual
Harassment Affecting Students, 218.3-Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual
Assault, 252-Dating Violence

Action (Consent): 11.15 {H-2} Approve Special Education Settlement Agreements
JC and JS-ODR#24162-20-21KE

12. NON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

13. BUDGET AND FINANCE (Budget, Real Estate and Leases) - Directors Yanni, Dempsey &
McAndrew

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13.01 {B-8} Motion to Award Contract for the 2019 and 2020 Audit of the Scranton Single Tax Office.

Award the contract for the 2019 and 2020 Audit of the Scranton Single Tax Office to Robert J Rossi and Co. Total cost of the 2 year agreement is \$23,000 to be split between the Scranton School District and City of Scranton.

Director Yanni made a motion, seconded by Director McAndrew and passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION:

President Gilmartin understands this is a bit of a savings from previous years.

Mr. Pat Laffey responded that it is a significant decrease in prior years; the budget this year was \$12,000 and was based off of prior year expenditures.

President Gilmartin added this is contingent upon the pending award by Scranton City Council.

13.02 {B-9} Motion to Approve Real Estate Assessment Appeals

Approve Real Estate Assessment Reductions (3). Estimated total loss of all three over the combined appeal period of approximately \$173,750.

[Tax Assessments 2.1.21](#)

Director Yanni made a motion, seconded by Director McAndrew and passed with eight (8) affirmative and one (1) negative. Director Gilmartin voted in the negative.

13.03 {B-10} Motion to Approve Disposal of Assets [Motion - Approve Asset Disposal.pdf](#)

Fixed Assets Disposals forms request assets that are no longer in working condition or able to be repaired be disposed. Upon disposal inventory records will be updated.

Director Yanni made a motion, seconded by Director Hume and passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Yanni asked Mr. Laffey if he would like to elaborate on the disposal of assets. 4

Mr. Laffey responded that the majority of what they're approving is food service related equipment that over the course of many years has accumulated at South Scranton Intermediate School and has been determined un-repairable or is cost prohibited to repair as well as some technology items that the IT Department has reviewed and also determined they are not working. Mr. Laffey said the inventories will be updated to reflect the disposals.

15. EDUCATION (Education, Technology and Vocational Ed) Directors Welby, Yanni & Cruz

15.01 {D-1} Motion to Approve Student Expulsion Waiver

Approve expulsion waiver #1 of 2021 – (2402149). Conditions of the waiver previously provided to the board for review.

Director Welby made a motion, seconded by Director Malloy and duly passed 9-0.

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16. OPERATIONS (Buildings & Grounds, Health & Safety and Athletics & Stadium) Directors Hume, McAndrew & Yanni

16.01 {E-1} Motion to Authorize D'Huy to Proceed with Capital Projects as Indicated. Authorize District Administration and D'Huy Engineering to proceed with the attached Capital Projects based on estimated budget attached. The School Board approves the Administration and D'Huy engineer to proceed with the attached Capital Projects based on the estimated budgets attached. Final bids for construction costs will be presented to the Board for approval and award. [02-01-2021 Priority Summer 2021 Projects v03 REV.pdf](#)

Director Hume made a motion, seconded by Director Yanni; motion passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Hume, for those who were not at the Operations Committee meeting earlier, D'Huy presented a very detailed and comprehensive analysis of the projects that we're approving believes the proposal will be available on the website.

(Inadvertently out of order)

19.01 {H-1} Motion to Approve NEIU Budget July 1 2021 to June 30, 2022

Recommended Action: Motion to Approve Settlement Agreement

Director Malloy made a motion, seconded by Director Welby; motion passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Cruz indicated F-1 was overlooked. Director Gilmartin confirmed. Attorney Audi clarified for the record that the vote is for H-1.

17. PERSONNEL (Human Resources and Labor Relations) Directors Cruz, Malloy & Fox

17.01 {F-1} Motion to Approve Personnel Report

Recommended Action: Motion to Approve Personnel Report as attached.

[Personnel Report Motion and attachment 2.1.21.pdf](#)

Director Cruz made a motion, seconded by Director Malloy.

A. Professional Resignations

Christopher Lazor	Principal	Armstrong Elem	Effective: TBD
Brionna Kasper	Grade 1	Isaac Tripp Elem	Effective: TBD

B. Professional Retirement

Susan Mancus	Kindergarten	Isaac Tripp Elem	Effective: 1/29/2021
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C. Professional Appointment

Kathryn Wynn	Life Skills	Willard Elem	Effective: 1/11/2021 Replacing L. Baracaia
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Salary: \$38,377 – pro-rated

D. Recommendations for Long Term Substitute Positions

Laura Trotta	Learning Support	SSIS	Effective: 1/7/2021 Replacing M. Zagorski
Melissa Pekarski	English	WSHS	Replacing A. Cortazzo
Anne Conway	Kindergarten	Tripp	Replacing S. Mancus
Rebekah King	English	WSHS	Replacing J. Kilmer

E. Professional Leave of Absence

Maura Zagorski	Special Ed	SSIS	2/9/2021-end of 20/21 school year
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F. Non-Professional Retirement

Judy Luciani	Administrative Asst.	ECA	Effective: 6/30/2021
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G. Non-Professional Resignation

Jeana Gatelli	Transportation Clerk	Ad. Bldg.	Effective: 1/22/2021
Stacy Huyser	Paraprofessional	Tripp	Effective: 1/11/2021
Ashley Selige	PCA	Bancroft	Effective: 1/12/2021
Colleen Kelly	Paraprofessional	Willard	Effective: 1/19/2021

H. Recall to Employment

Carrie Newcomb	PCA	NEIS	Effective: 1/6/2021
Ellen Pocius	PCA	NEIS	Effective: 1/11/2021
Justyna Chorba	PCA	Prescott	Effective: 12/18/2020
Joseph Barbuti	PCA	Tripp	Effective: 12/8/2020
Sasha McLain	PCA	NEIS	Effective: 1/11/2021
Robin O'Hearn	PCA	ECA	Effective: 1/11/2021
Amanda Palmere	PCA	ECA	Effective: 1/25/2021
Maureen Talerico	PCA	SHS	Effective: 1/21/2021
Margaret Flynn	PCA	NEIS	Effective: 1/26/2021
Joshua Dainty	Intervention Specialist	Monticello	Effective: 2/2/2021

I. Coaching Resignation

Kraigen Rasalla	Asst Var Baseball Coach	SHS	Effective: 1/12/2021
Joseph McGuire	Softball Coach	SSIS	Effective: 1/12/2021

J. Coaching Appointment

Mary Swift	Asst. Swim Coach	WSHS	Effective: 11/9/2020
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K. Salary Adjustment

Dr. Sharon Baddick	Dir. Special Education	Ad. Bldg.	Effective: 1/1/2021 From \$110,000 to \$116,150
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L. Recommendations for Winter School

Laura Pavlowski	English Teacher	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021
Michael Faris	Science Teacher	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021
Scott Grecco	Social Studies	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021
Fred Falbo	Math Teacher	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021
Cheryl McDonald	Technology Coord.	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021
Gail Rozelle	Secretary	WSHS	1/19/2021-2/24/2021

M. Professional Contract

Megan Owens	Grade 4 Teacher	Adams	1/4/2021
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ON THE QUESTION:

Director Yanni would like to divide the Personnel Report and separately vote on item K – Salary Adjustment. Director Yanni made a motion, seconded by Director McAndrew. Director Welby questioned to be sure they are voting on Director's Yanni's motion. President Gilmartin confirmed it is to divide the report. Director Malloy asked what the division is. Director Yanni said she would like to divide the Personnel Report and separately vote on item K, the Salary Adjustment. Director Dempsey noted it is for Dr. Baddick's salary adjustment. Motion to separate failed with three (3) affirmative and six (6) negative. Directors Dempsey, Fox, Hume, Malloy, Welby and President Gilmartin voted in the negative.

ON THE QUESTION OF ORIGINAL MOTION:

Director McAndrew referred back to when the budget was passed and back to the last two administration raises that he wouldn't be in favor because of the timing. Mr. McAndrew thinks leadership should always be rewarded last, especially when the engine in the district is the maintenance, teachers and other employees and right now it's timing and unfortunately he doesn't want to vote no to the whole Personnel Report but unfortunately right now he will have to.

Director Yanni asked Attorney Audi how she would be able to vote yes to recalling the PCAs and no to a salary adjustment when they're combined if the motion won't allow her to do that.

Attorney Audi said there's no way as that is the report and the motion was made and failed to separate it and she will have to choose how she votes.

Director Yanni asked why this salary adjustment is included in the Personnel Report and the other administration adjustments were voted on separately.

Mrs. McTiernan responded that the other two were contracts and this is a salary adjustment they were asked to put on the Personnel Report.

Director Yanni asked by who.

Mrs. McTiernan said it is per the Act 93 Agreement, they agreed all salary adjustments would go on the Personnel Report and they voted on the two contracts previously which were not per the Act 93 Agreement.

Director Yanni asked if she can make a motion to separate item H (Recall to Employment) since she would like to vote yes to that. Attorney Audi said she could make that motion.

Director Yanni made a motion to separate item H from the Personnel Report. Director McAndrew seconded. Motion failed with three (3) affirmative, six (6) negative. Directors Cruz, Dempsey, Fox, Hume, Welby and Gilmartin voted in the negative.

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Director Yanni expressed this is very frustrating for her because she doesn't understand why they can't separate this so she will have to vote no which makes no sense to her because she absolutely does not want to vote no to recalling the PCAs but she wanted to vote no to another salary increase because she feels that the City didn't raise taxes, the County didn't raise taxes but the Scranton School District raised taxes 3.9% and we have home owners who are struggling to pay this tax increase.

Director Yanni asked Superintendent McTiernan for her justification why at this time we're increasing an administrator's salary that is already making six figures.

President Gilmartin doesn't want to speak for Mrs. McTiernan but they have discussed this over and over again, this is a budgeted expense, and we have explained the issue of the Act 93 Contract.

Mrs. McTiernan said this is consistent with the Director's pay and the Act 93 Agreement which is set forth and approved by the Scranton School Board, not necessarily this group of individuals but previous individuals that have approved an Act 93 Agreement.

Director Yanni asked Attorney Audi if they may state what this salary is and what it is going to be.

President Gilmartin said yes, it is public and is also on BoardDocs.

Director Yanni noted they are raising a salary of an administrator making \$110,000 to \$116,500 and that is why she will be voting no. (*Correct salary adjustment is \$116,150, not \$116,500*)

Director Cruz congratulated all new hires and appointees and thanked the individuals who are leaving for their dedication and service to the students of the district.

Motion passed with seven (7) affirmative, two (2) negative. Directors McAndrew and Yanni voted in the negative.

21. NEW BUSINESS

Director Hume reminded board members, administration and anyone interested of the webinar with Dr. Kilpatrick and anyone who would like more information on Reading Science to please email her and she will gladly forward the information.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:52PM.

By: _____