

March 1, 2021

SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

The Scranton School Board of Directors held a regular Board Meeting on Monday, March 1, 2021 at 7:00pm prevailing time via Zoom.

1.Call to Order

President Gilmartin called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

2.Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call-By the Secretary.

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

Absent: Director Dempsey.

4. Motion to Approve Agenda

Director McAndrew made a motion, seconded by Director Hume and duly passed 8-0.

5. Communications to the Board: Mrs. Virginia Orr announced executive Sessions were held on February 8, 2021, February 22, 2021, February 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. McTiernan reported the following:

- Scranton High School Basketball and they will be playing for a league title at Abington Heights on Tuesday evening and will be televised by Fox and also live streamed by Abington Heights School District.
- PIAA West Scranton High School diver Victoria Watkins is now a two time District champion, moving on to State Diving Championships and also named Scranton Times Athlete of the Week.
- West Scranton High School Wrestling champs Cam Butka and Austin Fashour
- West Scranton High School 2nd place – Tyson Cook and MJ Turi
- Cam Butka, Austin Fashour and Tyson Cook have all qualified to move on to PIAA Wrestling Super Regionals

Mrs. McTiernan congratulated all athletes and wished them good luck.

Mrs. McTiernan announced the district received the new Lead in Drinking Water Report on February 24th. The Operations Department will be posting the report on the SSD web page and submitting the report information to PDE. Mr. Paul Dougherty will present the results of the report at the next work session on Monday, March 29th.

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Mrs. McTiernan now asked Mr. John Castrovinci to update the board on staffing challenges as the district prepares for in person instruction.

Mr. Castrovinci reported that 76 teachers to date have submitted medical documentation and/or a request for work place accommodations under the ADA or FMLA leave. All requests are due to concerns of either their personal health and/or the health of family members they reside with. Mr. Castrovinci said it is quite a big number to try to provide coverage should all those individuals need time off from work adding that the number does not include the daily absences that occur under normal in person instruction and it's been difficult under the best of times to fill in for daily substitutes.

Mr. Castrovinci said another concern is contractual obligations for the teachers as we have class size limits and it's not always possible or feasible or in the best interest of children's education to put them all in one classroom.

Mr. Castrovinci said there are also certification issues and legal concerns with special education and case loads.

8. PSBA Report - Director Jim Malloy reported in the absence of Director Dempsey.
[PSBA Report - March 1 2021.pdf](#)

9. Summary of Draft GPI Ventilation Study - Presented by D'Huy Engineering, Inc.

10. Public Comment

Vivian Williams, parent, spoke about reopening plan, need for better communication, hybrid reentry, teacher shortage and lack of a plan, transparency, lack of trust in the SSD and the need of a reopening committee.

Erin Harris, spoke of ventilation problems, trust and communication needs to be reestablished and to stop putting blame on the teachers. Ms. Harris suggested housing K-5 students at Scranton High School.

Tara Hamilton-Fey, resident and parent, spoke of recent comments made by Rosemary Boland regarding the black and brown students in the district and the negative impact her comments made, appreciates the statement made by the school board.

Erica Tosh, parent, spoke of the racist comments made by Rosemary Boland recently and the petition Ms. Tosh created urging the resignation of Ms. Boland. Ms. Tosh said all should be treated equally and she is concerned by the silence of the teachers regarding Ms. Boland's comments.

Michael Kane, parent, spoke of recent comments made by Rosemary Boland regarding students of color and the damage caused by her comments.

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Jill Sweeney, parent, orchestrated the march at the Administration Building, spoke of reopening, the difficulties during virtual learning, recent comments made by Rosemary Boland and implored the board and administration to get kids back to school.

Lynn King, teacher and parent, spoke of the reopening plan, in person learning is far better and the mental health and well being of the students.

Suzanne Furey, teacher, spoke of the need for better communication, concerns of lead in the water and families and teachers need to be told what is going on.

Ryan Hnat, Art teacher, shared student accomplishments, upcoming exhibitions, the reopening plan and the need to work with teachers and move forward and the need to settle the teacher's contract.

Jennifer Telesco, teacher, spoke of reopening, the full report of ventilation systems, inoperable windows in her classroom and does not feel her building is ready for reopening. Ms. Telesco also spoke of the blame being put on teachers for not reopening.

Sandra Burgette Miller, spoke of the recent racial comments made by Rosemary Boland and feels her comments were insensitive and Ms. Boland is out of touch with today's times.

President Gilmartin now called for a three minute recess. (9:08pm)

At 9:11pm President Gilmartin called the meeting back to order. All board members present.

Patricia Carr, teacher, spoke of the lack of mechanical ventilation and the importance to return to safe schools. Ms. Carr said not all classrooms have windows and not all windows have screens if the windows do open. Ms. Carr asked for building walk throughs with teams comprised of ventilation experts and parents and teachers who are familiar with the buildings and traffic flow.

Christina Smolley, teacher, is concerned about the safety of her students and coworkers, students with sensory issues and proper sanitization.

Lynn Cawley Harding, teacher, parent, resident and taxpayer, thanked the board for making the ventilation study public and asked for committed walk throughs with teachers who have a better perspective of the buildings, spoke of windows and the lack of windows, filter upgrades and asked to always keep in mind the ongoing health issues of students and staff.

Pat Festa, teacher at McNichols Plaza, spoke of the recent vote to reopen schools and then the delay of that reopening due to unfinished ventilation upgrades and false blame solely on the backs of teachers with health conditions. Mr. Festa asked for walk throughs of the buildings and said the issue of safety for the students and staff is a priority and safety should be about transparency and mitigation.

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Andrea Wharton, spoke of the ventilation report and the need for children to return to the classroom. Ms. Wharton began to spoke of Ms. Boland's practices as a teacher and ended her public comment when reminded she could not air personal comments.

Holly Meade, teacher at Northeast Intermediate, spoke of broken windows and pictures and emails sent regarding the windows. Mrs. Meade said in 2016 an award was made for window replacement and asked why the entire job hasn't been completed in four years. Mrs. Meade said year after year it has been brought to administration to fix and at the last meeting an administrator said the buildings were ready to go. Mrs. Meade said communication is the biggest problem in the Scranton School District and administration must be 100% honest with everyone.

Kathleen Beckwith, teacher, spoke of the reopening statement made regarding understaffing and the prime reason for keeping the schools closed was the teachers but everyone knows it was the lack of preparedness although an administrator assured the board that there were no issues with ventilation safety or the reopening plan and once again the teachers were used as scapegoats. Ms. Beckwith also spoke of the distribution of chromebooks, the difficulty for parents to obtain them and the little to no communication to parents. Ms. Beckwith asked the board to listen to union leadership and parents so that their decisions can be based on the truth and not mislead the public.

Vince Wojnar, teacher, acknowledged student athlete Victoria Watkins and recent diving championship. Mr. Wojnar also spoke of the need of the assurances of neutral third parties that air, lead, asbestos and mold levels are acceptable in all school buildings. Mr. Wojnar asked to wait to bring students and staff back to classrooms until more vaccines have been administered. Mr. Wojnar is glad to see the school district finances are turning the corner and we are saving a lot of money since last March because of Covid, spending less on transportation, utility costs and paying substitute teachers and according to the newspaper district money is coming in at a higher rate which may be why some administrators have received raises recently. Mr. Wojnar spoke of the Frontline contract to recruit teachers to the district and thinks that money should be put into a new Professional and Paraprofessional contract. Mr. Wojnar expressed fear of synchronous learning and believes they need more information about it and also said he hopes to see the board meeting in person before returning students and staff to school.

Hope Polishan, student at South Intermediate, is concerned and exhausted with the current situation, shared her and siblings disappointment of not being in the classroom and said the students need and want to be back in the classrooms.

Michael Faris, teacher, feels that because other districts are open doesn't mean that Scranton is ready due to issues with asbestos, lead and now ventilation. Mr. Faris shared concerns of ventilation at West Scranton High School, it is very poor, and temperatures rise to 90 degrees on some days. Mr. Faris said solutions that have been given are poor and also spoke of Merv 13 filters and bipolar ionization. Mr. Faris hopes to be back in the classroom as long as everyone is safe. Mr. Faris spoke of a recent school shooting and urged the use of metal detectors at schools.

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President Gilmartin now called for another three minute recess. Upon return all board members present.

Matt Barrett, parent and resident, thanked the board for their service to the Scranton School District. Mr. Barrett thinks the board and administration should consider an education consultant as they had for the environmental issues last year and thinks an education consultant should look at every student, classroom and work assignment to figure out if students are getting the education they deserve. Mr. Barrett mentioned there are schools in surrounding districts that are open and it is just a matter whether Scranton is creative, willing and capable of providing education in person. Mr. Barrett said he isn't clear of the administration's recommendations but Mr. Dougherty said the HVAC systems are working as designed and the experts this evening said the systems are working as designed and there may be an issue here and there that can be dealt with on a daily basis so why not return to school adding that no one has pointed to any guidelines or regulations that you cannot provide in person instruction. Mr. Barrett inquired if there is an actual number of students who would return if offered hybrid instruction and it's not clear how many staff you would need, he assumes the teachers would step up and work with the district in order to make sure staffing needs are met, he can't imagine they would not step up. Mr. Barrett said there should be a plan than if certain buildings cannot be used then alternative buildings are used.

Mr. Barrett also spoke of Northeast Intermediate that closed in January 2020 and finds it shocking that the HVAC system is still not up to speed. Two years ago the State placed the district in recovery, Dr. Finan took control, and said she intends to be very involved in the process and the State has an obligation to ensure the effective delivery of educational services to every student in a district in recovery. Two years and there are still facilities that are apparently not up to snuff and apparently the teaching staff is reluctant to returning to the classroom. Mr. Barrett thinks it's time that if they want to exercise local control that they actually exercise local control.

Ruth Wisenburn, Hispanic teacher at Bancroft, thinks the recent comments and the message Ms. Boland was trying to convey was misinterpreted. Ms. Wisenburn said in her experience with Ms. Boland, she has always treated her with professionalism and respect and has never felt any racism or bigotry from Ms. Boland. Ms. Wisenburn also spoke of against the closing of Bancroft School and feels it would be hurtful to the Bancroft Hispanic community.

Bridget McAndrew, teacher and resident, is concerned about returning to school and relies on the administration and board to bring everyone back safely. Ms. McAndrew is thankful to the union for asking for walk throughs of the buildings and also spoke of the lack of windows in her building and windows in other buildings that do not work properly. Ms. McAndrew urges temperature checks and parent surveys to be sure no one has traveled out of the area or has been exposed to Covid.

Rosemary Boland, SFT President, reiterated everything said this evening from administration, parents and teachers and its obvious people are very scared to return to school because of the virus and the unknown. Ms. Boland spoke of reopening and said we need to make this right, she thinks everyone needs to sit down together calmly and make a plan of action so students and

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teachers can return safely and right now there is a big question mark whether it is safe. Ms. Boland believes it can work but they have to do this as a team. Teachers with health issues are scared to enter buildings when they are unsure if the buildings are safe. Ms. Boland said she is positive reopening will work but it's going to take a huge team effort and trust needs to be a part of it. Ms. Boland is aware that surrounding districts have done it but they are not Scranton, they're smaller districts and many of their teachers have been vaccinated. Ms. Boland said they have talked enough about this, let's get it done, sit down calmly, use the science and make it happen.

Mike Frounfelker, said students need to go back to school immediately, the CDC guidelines call for it; athletics are already taking place in a lot of the buildings and since Chromebooks have been distributed synchronous instruction should begin immediately with students attending live classes. Mr. Frounfelker added that the board has already voted on returning and they need to stay true to their vote.

Maria Hurst, teacher, still has questions about returning to school and believes there is a great divide about what actually goes in the district and what the board knows. Mrs. Hurst spoke about synchronous learning and how she doesn't think it will work with the lack of proper bandwidth in homes and feels that attendance is going to "tank". Mrs. Hurst said to let the teachers who do this every day do their jobs, listen to them and stop listening to the people who don't.

Maureen Maher Gray, Executive Director of NEPA Youth Shelter, spoke of the 95% of teens her organization supports are of color and immigrant families and the recent comments made by Ms. Boland were very insensitive and racist and believes they were deliberate. Ms. Maher Gray said there is no excuse or defense for her words and they were incredibly disappointing and unprofessional for her to single out people of color and immigrants as unclean and Covid spreaders. Ms. Maher Gray believes Ms. Boland owes an apology and should meet with families that she insulted and that proactive outreach on her part would go a long way and deepen the understanding of everyone involved. Ms. Maher Gray also said that failure to impose some consequence on Ms. Boland tells the community that racism is not only tolerated but espoused by the union and its membership as Ms. Boland is supposed to care for all students regardless of race, creed or color and Ms. Boland should be held accountable for her remarks and she should step up and make the situation right.

Adam McCormick, teacher, quoted the mission statement from the SSD handbook and spoke of the blame being put on teacher for the delay returning to school as stated in the press release. Mr. McCormick said teachers and staff look forward to returning to school safely and the board and administration should stop pointing the finger and prepare a plan.

Brandi Solomon, parent, spoke of the recent comments made by Ms. Boland and that teachers are misrepresented by her and are unable to speak out against her. Ms. Solomon also spoke against synchronous learning; the parents have nothing more to give and suggested sending elementary students to Scranton High since the high school students are not returning yet. Ms. Solomon also spoke about the difficulty parents have picking up computers and food during the limited time slots.

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Mrs. Orr announced that written comment was received from Elizabeth Zoccola, Allison Murray, Kim Gnall and Nicky Petrillo.

[Written Public Comment 3.1.21meeting](#)

End Public Comment

11. Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2021, January 14, 2021 and February 1, 2021.

Director Cruz made a motion, seconded by Director McAndrew and duly passed 8-0.

12. Motion to Approve CONSENT AGENDA - One Roll Call to Approve Items. Please announce if any items(s) removed prior to vote.

Director Malloy made a motion, seconded by Director Yanni; Consent Agenda passed unanimously on roll call.

The following items were approved under the Consent Agenda:

12.01 {B-1} Approve Bill List

[B-1 Bill List 3.1.21.pdf](#) **\$2,180,077.44**

12.02 {B-2} Approve Exception Bill List

[B-2 Bill List 3.1.21.pdf](#)

Bill Payments:

February 5, 2021 \$1,487,424.80

February 19, 2021 \$1,399,466.07

February 26, 2021 \$ 718,880.52

\$3,605,771.39

Payrolls:

February 5, 2021 \$2,197,394.64

February 19, 2021 \$2,225,326.16

\$4,422,720.80

12.03 {B-3} Approve December 2020 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for period ending December 31, 2020 as prepared by the Business Office and confirmed by First National Bank.

Opening Balance: \$30,871,022.58

Monthly Revenue: \$12,877,640.65

Transfers and Refunds: \$ 780,704.61

Total Available \$44,529,367.84

Total Disbursements \$28,108,042.13

Balance in General Account \$16,421,325.71

12.04 {B-4} Approve January 2021 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for period ending January, 2021 as prepared by the Business Office and confirmed by First National Bank.

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Opening Balance:	\$16,421,325.71
Monthly Revenue:	\$ 4,580,925.28
Transfers and Refunds:	<u>\$ 188,567.59</u>

Total Available	\$21,190,818.58
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ 7,060,875.21</u>
Balance in General Account	\$14,129,943.37

12.05 {B-5} Approve Repository Sales

The Lackawanna County Tax Claim Bureau has approved the following repository sales and in accordance with the Real Estate Law any property not sold at Judicial Sale shall be listed in a Repository of Unsold Properties to be placed for bid and if sold will return to a tax paying status with the Tax Claim Bureau.

- 717 Harrison Ave., Map #15706-030-033
in the amount of \$1,610.00 to Jamell Isidor (JGI Realty Holdings LLC)
- Theodore St., Map #13411-050-001 in the amount of \$4,507.00 to Peter Gvazdauskas
- 2711 Frink St., Map #14402-050-017 in the amount of \$2,100.00 to Steven Creary & Wendy Williams
- 617 Rear Prescott Ave., Map #15706-020-042 in the amount of \$1,557.49 to Ark Holdings LLC
- 1628 Price St., Map #14513-080-025 in the amount of \$2,334.52 to Billy Osgood

12.06 {B-6} Approve Capital Improvement Bill List

Approve Capital Projects Bill list as attached. \$88,424.60

[Capital Project Bill List 3.1.21.pdf](#)

12.07 {B-7} January 2021 Delinquent Tax Report

Delinquent Tax Report for the month of January, 2021 as collected by the Lackawanna County Tax Claim Bureau.

Penalty	\$234,118.28
Interest	\$ 25,844.69
Total	\$ 21,712.42
Commission	\$ (14,084.16)
NET TO DISTRICT	\$267,591.23

12.08 {C-1} Approve Fidelity Bank's Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) to Benefit Dual Enrollment Programs at Scranton High School and West Scranton High School
Approve the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program from Fidelity Bank to benefit Dual Enrollment programs at Scranton High School and West Scranton High School. Each high school will receive \$9,375.00 for low to moderate income families. Total \$18750.00

12.09 {C-2} Approve Donation of \$1,190 for Uniforms for Students

Approve donation of \$1,190.00 from NET Bank for the purchase of 35 uniforms from STARR Uniform.

12.10 {D-1} Approve Permissions to Attend

Approval of staff attendance to conferences and meetings contingent upon the required approval of all supervisors, principals or administration. Per the attachment.

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[Permission to Attend 3.1.21.pdf](#)

12.11 {F-3} Approve Telework Contract

Approve the Telework Agreement for Joan M Sunday as attached pursuant to School Board Telework Policy No. 309.1

[Telework ContractJSunday.pdf](#)

12.12 {F-4} Approve Employee Settlement Agreement

Approve Employee #1081 Settlement Agreement.

12.13 {G-1} Second Read Policies 103 - Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students, 218.3 - Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault and 252 - Dating Violence

12.14 {H-1} Approve Special Education Settlement Agreements

Approve Special Education Settlement Agreements:

CE-ODR#23411-19-20, JM-ODR#22710-19-20, HR-ODR#24085-20-21, LM, ET and KV.

12.15 {I-1} Approve Mom and Pop Contract

Approve transportation contract:

Julie Powell, 1420 Schlager St.

.58 per mile

Total: \$292.32/126 days.

13. NON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

14. BUDGET AND FINANCE

14.01 {B-8} Motion to Approve Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust for Investment of Bonds Proceeds:

Approve the investment of the 2020 Capital Project Bond proceeds in a PLGIT, Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust and the utilization of a rebate eligible procurement cards for capital expenses as allowable by Board Policy 609 and 625.

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

16. EDUCATION

16.01 {D-2} Motion to Approve the Development of a Reopening Educational Advisory Committee:

Motion to create an Advisory Committee of interested stakeholders to study specific school issues pertaining to a hybrid model of education. The committee would be beneficial to engage parents, educators and mental health experts to monitor the transition and its educational and emotional implications per the attached.

Director Welby made a motion, seconded by Director Cruz; duly passed 8-0.

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16.02 {D-3} Motion to Approve Purchase of SmartZone Controllers to Upgrade Wireless Infrastructure through eRate.

Approve the purchase of Smarzone controllers, licenses, and support from Dauphin DataCom/Ruckus Wireless. The purchase is contingent upon receiving eRate funding. Gross cost of the purchase is \$46,584.60. The district receives an 85% discount through eRate. The cost to the district is 15% of the total, \$6,987.69.

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

16.03 {D-4} Motion to Approve Continued Participation in Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Wide Area Network.

Approve attached resolution in support of continued participation in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional Wide Area Network per the attachments.

[Northeastern PA Reg Wide Network 3.1.21..pdf](#)

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

16.04 {D-5} Motion to Consider Synchronous Virtual Learning

Approve motion to reconsider the Board motion of February 8, 2021 regarding in-person education and approve this motion to begin synchronous virtual learning for grades 6-12 on March 15 and grades 3-5 on March 22nd. Grades PreK-2 will transition on March 22nd to live virtual lessons daily. The district will continue developing a timeline for in-person hybrid education. All teachers may remain teaching remotely during synchronous lessons.

Director Hume made the motion, seconded by Director Welby.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Malloy mentioned that this is about the language of the motion – “Approve motion to reconsider the Board motion of February 8, 2021 regarding in-person education”. Director Malloy said he is not reconsidering the Board’s motion of February 8, 2021 regarding in-person education. Mr. Malloy said he voted to return to in-person instruction as soon as it was safe to do so and he is relying on federal, state and local officials and the administrators for guidance as to when that is and that remains his vote, he can’t vote yes on the motion as it is stated but he did hear earlier that the Bancroft and Whittier Annex situations and the yellow areas that were pointed out during the presentation are going to necessitate more time so he is making a friendly amendment as follows: Approve motion to reconsider the board motion of February 8, 2021 regarding in-person education, his suggestion for is for the motion to read: Approve motion to reconsider the board motion of February 8, 2021 regarding the timeline for in-person education. And in making this friendly amendment he sincerely hopes that the adjusted timeline is only a few weeks.

Director McAndrew seconded the friendly amendment.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:

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Director McAndrew agrees with Director Malloy, he thinks they need to do everything in their power to get these buildings up and running, they heard a lot of sides tonight and he understands all the sides but they have to try and get kids back n school as soon as possible but they have to make some improvements. Mr. McAndrew still thinks the goal is the same but they need to start right away to open up these buildings and if they have to do some “out of the box” thinking they’ll have to do that and he agrees with Director Malloy’s friendly amendment.

The motion for the friendly amendment passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION OF AMENDED MOTION:

Director Yanni mentioned that some people asked if sending some children to alternative buildings is an option and asked how administration feels about that and could we staff that starting at the March 15th date.

Mrs. McTiernan thinks they have to go back now based on the decision that the board makes and if they’re just looking at Pre-K – 5, looking at staffing, where we are with just Pre-K-5, and then the board would have to make a decision. There’s a lot of factors here; is the board going to consider bringing in Pre-K-5 teachers and let 6-12 teachers work from home and are those 6-12 teachers going to be resent their ADA and FMLA, that’s something to consider, and there has been discussion of moving kids to other buildings but what she needs is the board’s decision and then they need to start tomorrow what the options are. The board will also have to factor in all situations and for every action there’s a reaction so if they decide to move students to a different building then they may not all qualify for transportation. Is the board going to allow transportation for all of those students and pay for that and financially, is that something Dr. Finan is going to allow. Every situation now there’s going to be a reaction. We’re going to lay everything out and then we will come back with a plan, once the final decision is made by the board tonight.

Director Yanni asked if it is a either/or, so if they pass this motion tonight and go into synchronous learning, that is to start March 15th?

Mrs. McTiernan responded that March 15th is grades 6-12 students and the reason they did that is because they know this is something new for our district so we are going to have challenges and obstacles and as we work through those they thought it would be easier to work with one cohort of students which they decided would be 6-12 to work through those obstacles and challenges we have before we would move forward with synchronous learning for our grades 3-5 students, which she stated the goal is to get kids back into building, that’s the number one priority, they want kids back face to face so as they work through some of the obstacles heard tonight, they want to move toward synchronous learning though timing isn’t perfect, they decided on March 15th, that would give them a week with some of our elementary students in grades 3-5.

Director Yanni asked when Mrs. McTiernan would have a plan that she could give to the board if they move ahead with this, we start the synchronous learning on March 15th, at what date does Mrs. McTiernan think she could have those questions just proposed, have those answers put together to present to the board so they could consider going back in person.

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Mrs. McTiernan said they are going to start planning tomorrow and this will affect transportation so they have to look at transportation, all of those issues, we're definitely going to have a plan for you, we'll also have some answers from our experts which we heard from tonight, as far as if there are easy solutions or how we're going to move forward with those yellow spaces which we still have to get answers for because, are we going to close them off or are we going to try to fix them. She would say by the next work session you should definitely have a timeline and we should also have an answer for some of those situations with regards to ventilation that we heard tonight. Her hope is if they learn some of those things earlier and we put that plan together and we have to call for a special meeting that may be something we'll have to do also adding they need to work through some of this, they'll keep the board posted on a weekly basis in the Friday packet so they'll be well aware where we are with planning and where we're at and they'll also keep them posted from Mr. Fazil and GPI and Paul Dougherty will keep them posted on all of those updates and hopefully it will all come together and we'll be able to move forward with this. She thinks one thing for certain is that we all know from tonight is that Bancroft and Whittier Annex will not open so she needs to find a space if the intention is to bring everyone back and not just elementary, then she needs to find a space for those students if the intent is to just bring PreK-5 back, then they may be able to use some of those secondary buildings at this time but again for every action there's a reaction so if they do that then there's going to be other things that they have to bring to the board such as transportation and another thing is if they put elementary kids at Scranton High there will be a lot of movement of furniture, there is a lot of moving parts right now and the easiest is to get elementary students in elementary buildings and we also know that with hybrid its 50%, and maintaining 6 feet apart and all of those obstacles and if she has two buildings that she's not opening it's a math problem.

President Gilmartin asked to clarify, does this motion require further action or are they making this motion saying we know we will begin synchronous learning on March 15th and March 22nd, but we are still moving forward with a return to in-person at the earliest date possible or are we going to have to come back and reaffirm that as well.

Attorney Audi believes that the motion would not have to come back, most specifically after the friendly amendment because it's talking about a timeline. He thinks once the timeline is met, we've already said that you'll do that; it's just a matter of notifying the community when that happens.

Mrs. McTiernan said, with regards to buildings is that our experts are answering the questions with regards to buildings so they're going to have to come back and give an update on the progress and the work that has been done as far as what was discussed today and where we are on our next meeting, that's not something she will ever speak to because that's not her background, she wants the experts in front of the board telling them the scenario and then she has to figure out the student's educational model.

Director Hume said obviously they planned to bring back PreK-2 then grades 3-5, her concern is the load on the teachers, with going full synchronous learning that they will be putting in a lot of effort in getting that ready, the sooner we can work out getting the PreK-2 back the better.

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Mrs. McTiernan agreed that synchronous learning for PreK-2 isn't fair and any research about that, sitting for six hours is not conducive to learning so she agrees and the reason they rolled it out that way is they wanted to make sure they were introducing synchronous learning with the older students and also the hope is still to turn around and get our PreK-2 students for in-person learning first.

Director Hume appreciates the transition all the teachers and students are going to go through and applauds the administration that they can now take on bigger challenges.

Mrs. McTiernan said the teachers have risen to the challenge every time and this is a new challenge for us, we believe we have to move forward with this for our kids and she knows the teachers will rise to the occasion as they always do.

Director Welby asked to confirm, a lot of speakers asked for walk throughs of the buildings and that is how the questions of ventilation came about by experts walking through the buildings.

Mrs. McTiernan said yes, they are a third party and she thinks it is a good thing, to have the experts go through the buildings.

Director Cruz asked, if they move to synchronous learning, she is assuming that the need for teachers would increase even more and asked Mr. Dougherty, now that we do have the chromebooks that we ordered, has the demand met that supply, are people coming in to pick up the equipment.

Mr. Dougherty said they have not been leaving as quickly as he anticipated, we have chromebooks ready to go and our buildings are open every day for parents to come and secure a device for their children but we're not having as much success as he anticipated. He knows the principals have been reaching out to families multiple times per week, both personal and through social media and the demand is not what he would have expected.

President Gilmartin thinks if the principals are reaching out personally they certainly are making good efforts but thinks one of the points as Ms. Solomon indicated is that these are day time hours but if that were a challenge could they look into making arrangements for an evening or weekend pick up time.

Mr. Dougherty said absolutely, he can't imagine one of our administrators telling a parent they would not make arrangements for them to secure a device.

Mrs. McTiernan said they will make sure to address that with the principals.

Director Hume noted that Ms. Solomon has in fact been driving people to and from schools to collect chromebooks and gives much credit to her. Ms. Hume also announced that an Act has been passed, separate from the CARES Act that is offering subsidies for internet and up to \$100 for the one time purchase of a tablet or computer and that anybody that is eligible for the free lunch program would be eligible and she will email the details to Mr. Dougherty.

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Director Fox asked for a brief explanation of what synchronous learning means.

Mrs. McTiernan said that she first wants to say they understand and have received many emails regarding students in the high schools that have obtained a job and are very concerned they're going to have to quit their job in order to participate in synchronous learning. They are going to be making accommodations for those students and this is not going to be a one size fits all, they understand that, these are some of the obstacles and challenges they need to figure out.

Mrs. McTiernan explained that synchronous learning will look like a typical student schedule, they will log on in the morning, they will go through their periods and the teacher would be live with them and the teacher would be teaching just as if they were sitting in front of their class but will be on camera rather than in front of them and the students will go through their typical day of what they would do if they walked into school and went through periods 1-10 and that's what the students would do. She understands there are a lot of reservations but she has nieces and nephews that are doing this, she knows other districts have been successful doing this and she's not going to listen to "we're not them"; she understands we're not them but we can do it; if they can do it, we can do it, saying "we're not them" is not good enough, we can succeed doing this, our students need it and need to be engaged more with our teachers and she believes this is something we need to move forward with and the teachers will have their lunch and their preps. Synchronous learning would be live with teachers and students just like we are now during this meeting.

The motion now passed unanimously on roll call.

17.01 {E-1} Motion to Approve West Scranton Little League Agreement

Approve West Scranton Little League Agreement for a five (5) year agreement commencing on April 15, 2021 and ending April 14, 2026 per the attached.

Director Hume made a motion, seconded by Director Malloy.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Yanni announced she will be abstaining because her husband is a longtime volunteer and on the Board for the West Scranton Little League so she will be abstaining.

Director Malloy said he has looked over the agreement and it looks alright to him with indemnification and insurances.

Motion passed with (7) seven affirmative and (1) abstention. Director Yanni abstained.

17.02 {E-2} Motion to Approve Parking Agreement for Northeast Intermediate

Motion to approve parking agreements with Bethel AME and Premier Parking of Pennsylvania (PGI) for staff of Northeast Intermediate School. Approval is contingent upon staff returning to their buildings and Solicitor review of the agreements. The term of the agreements will be for months that staff is in their building and school is in session. Per the attached agreements.

Director Hume made a motion, seconded by Director Cruz. Motion passed unanimously on roll call.

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18. PERSONNEL (Human Resources and Labor Relations)

18.01 {F-1} Motion to Approve Personnel Report

Recommended Action: Motion to Approve Personnel Report

Director Cruz made a motion, seconded by Director Welby.

BOARD AGENDA FOR MARCH 1, 2021							
NAME	POSITION	LOCATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	REPLACED	NEW	SALARY	
A. PROFESSIONAL RESIGNATION							
1 Christopher Lazor	Principal	Armstrong Elementary	2/12/2021				
2 Margaret Duffy	Principal	Summer/Adams	T. B. D.				
3 Kathleen Scanlon	English Teacher	Scranton High School	T. B. D.				
4 Courtney Blaney	Sp Ed Learning Support	Scranton High School	T. B. D.				
5 Brianna Kasper	Grade 1 Teacher	Isaac Tripp Elementary	3/5/2021				
6 Alycia Grottola	Family Consumer Science	Northeast Intermediate	2/24/2021				
B. PROFESSIONAL RETIREMENTS							
1 Kathleen Bevilacqua	Director of Transportation	Administration Building	2/26/2021				
2 Judy Hopkins	Business Teacher	Northeast Intermediate	end of the 20-21 school year				
3 Maria Lozada	Art Teacher	Scranton High School	end of the 20-21 school year				
C. PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENT							
1 Kevin Kearney	Asst Supervisor Transportation, Operations/Asset Mgmt.	Administration Building	3/2/2021			\$93,458.00	pro-rated
2 Julie Maloney	Supervisor of Technology and Transportation	Administration Building	3/2/2021			\$99,739.00	pro-rated
3 Alycia Grottola	Grade 6 Math/Social Studies	West Intermediate	2/25/2021	X. M. DeAntona		\$38,377.00	pro-rated
4 Heather Shaw	Family Consumer Science	Northeast Intermediate	2/25/2021	X. A. Grottola		\$46,971.00	pro-rated
5 Ann Conway	Grade 5 Teacher	Prescott Elementary	3/3/2021	X. A. Curtis		\$45,348.00	pro-rated
D. PROFESSIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE							
1 Stephanie Giancini	Guidance Counselor	Isaac Tripp Elementary	FMLA 2/11/2021-5/12/2021				
2 Amy Cortazzo	English Teacher	West Scranton High School	FMLA 3/8/2021-5/7/2021				
E. RECOMMENDATION FOR LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE POSITION							
1 Emily Hart-Sanko	Sp Ed Life Skills	Scranton High School	3/1/2021	X. E. Pelt			
2 Angelica Hinton	Kindergarten Teacher	Isaac Tripp Elementary	3/1/2021	X. S. Mancus			
F. NON-PROFESSIONAL RETIREMENT							
1 William McHale	Maintenance	Floater	1/29/2021				
2 Eileen Hayes	Confidential Sec.-Payroll Dept	Administration Building	6/1/2021				
3 Diane Kahanic	Maintenance	Isaac Tripp Elementary	3/10/2021				
G. NON-PROFESSIONAL RESIGNATION							
1 Kayla Chudzinski	PCA	Kennedy Elementary	2/25/2021				
H. RECALL TO EMPLOYMENT							
1 Lisa DeRobertis	PCA	Scranton High School	2/2/2021				
2 Margaret Flynn	PCA	Northeast Intermediate	1/25/2021				
3 Kathleen O'Malley	PCA	Kennedy Elementary	2/8/2021				
I. POSITION ELIMINATION							
1 Two (2) positions	Instructional Support Specialist II	Monticello	3/1/2021				
J. COACHING RESIGNATION							
1 Jack Lyons	Head Coach Boys Basketball	West Scranton High School	2/5/2021				
2 Chad Pettus	JV Basketball Coach	West Scranton High School	2/8/2021				
3 Carm Saita	Head Baseball Coach	Northeast Intermediate	2/17/2021				
K. COACHING APPOINTMENT							
1 Michael Fazzi	Interim Head Coach	West Scranton High School	2/6/2021	X. J. Lyons			
2 David Burnside	Interim Ass't Coach	West Scranton High School	2/6/2021	X. C. Pettus			
3 Brad Turi	Head Track and Field Coach	West Scranton High School	2021 Spring Season Only	X. S. Greece			

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ON THE QUESTION:

Director Yanni made a motion to separate section C of the report and also separate numbers 1 and 2 of section C to be voted on separately. Director McAndrew seconded.

Motion to separate failed with two (2) affirmative and six (6) negative. Directors Cruz, Fox, Hume, Malloy, Welby and Gilmartin voted in the negative.

ON THE QUESTION OF MOTION:

Director McAndrew asked Superintendent McTiernan why we're not posting these positions.

Mrs. McTiernan responded that these two individuals have been working in this capacity during the pandemic and their interview, her recommendations, has been the work that they have been doing.

Director McAndrew referred to the policy for job creation, asked if we are following that and it says initial salary range is determined by the board, by the recommendation of the Superintendent. Mr. McAndrew asked where we came up with the salary range for these two positions because if you look at the personnel report we have the Director of Transportation as retiring who he believes was making far less than the Supervisor of Transportation/Technology and he is wondering what documentation we have to support the salary range.

Mrs. McTiernan said the supervisor position is a position in Act 93 so you just have to go to the document and look at it, it's under Supervisor 1st Step. The Assistant Supervisor as you are aware we're working on in the Act 93 Agreement, so this is a scale that we have come up with that will be implemented into the Act 93 Agreement as we're working on now and as you know it's a meet and discuss; how the supervisor salary came to be, Mrs. McTiernan asked Mr. Laffey to generally give an overview of how we came up with that salary for that position.

Mr. Pat Laffey said as Superintendent McTiernan said, we're currently working on incorporating the current Act 93 Agreement, the basis for that salary was driven from the current supervisor step scale that's already in the Act 93 as compared to a vice principal, we took the difference in those two rates and used that as an average to determine what that starting salary should be and what it would grow to over the life of the step movement so it was finding a middle ground between two existing Act 93 salary schedules as they exist currently in the current agreement.

Director McAndrew commented that they received the packet on Friday with the Personnel Report and then they finally saw the job descriptions but they didn't get to see the resumes until the weekend because they had to be updated and to him the job descriptions were very vague and seemed to be tailored to the resumes and he thinks what they need to be looking at to hire right now is a Director of Operations, he doesn't know why it keeps being put on the back burner, we all see what's going on, the biggest issue is getting back into school safely, our buildings are crumbling and he thinks that is who they should be hiring right now, that's who they should be posting and interviewing for but he is also going to say that everything should be posted, he's heard these individuals have done a great job, it's nothing personal but he will always be in

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support of being fair and transparent but unfortunately he will be voting no on the whole personnel report.

Mrs. McTiernan understands and said the Director of Operations is going to be a discussion and obviously she is working in phases with the needs of the district and that is something that will be coming before the board and with the changes they're making everything is within their budget and this move she believes would save us approximately \$13,000 and Dr. Finan has stated numerous times we have no middle management so we're beginning to move forward with that plan. Mr. Laffey agreed regarding the savings.

Director Hume commented that administration is merely shuffling around duties where needed and Mr. Dougherty has been handling much of the duties.

Mrs. McTiernan agreed adding that one person handling all these responsibilities is not effective in a district of this size and we need to move forward with these roles and the Director or Operations is next to come.

Director Welby asked to clarify that we have tried to hire a Director of Operations twice and failed because we don't have qualified applicants.

Director Fox thanked for hiring from within as she believes it's a good business practice and we have wonderful administration who we don't want to lose.

Director Yanni said she is struggling with combining Technology and Transportation into one title because she thinks they are two very separate department, thinks the community needs to know that the staff running the transportation department has the skill set and the full knowledge of safety, laws, codes, regulations, rules policies procedures, all relating to pupil transportation. She doesn't believe attending meetings with a transportation expert or learning routing software would qualify someone to be the supervisor of our student's safe transportation. Mrs. Yanni said regarding the Assistant Supervisor of Transportation, she believes this candidate would better serve our students in our schools and on this same report we're approving the resignation of Mr. Lazor and Ms. Duffy who are two great principals so this is a huge loss to our district. Mrs. Yanni agrees that this candidate has stepped up, taken responsibility of the transportation department and she's grateful for that however her opinion, our pupils would be better served by this candidate working in our schools as his background is in education and that is where his skill set is sorely needed. We're about to consider a motion to engage a vendor to assist with recruiting qualified individuals to our district so let's see if we can find a qualified Supervisor of Transportation that has the skill set to help us with all these problems and issues that we're trying to address with the public. Mrs. Yanni thinks that by appointing someone to this position without advertising or interviewing is not going to move our district forward. She thinks we need to learn from past mistakes of assigning too many titles to Supervisors and Directors when they don't have the qualifications to effectively do the job. Mrs. Yanni said both candidates said they've been involved and when we asked about the walker letter that went out we were told that you, Superintendent McTiernan, weren't aware that it went out, so nobody was aware that it went out or the people that sent it out are now gone, so if they've been involved for three months, did they know why the letter went out.

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Mrs. McTiernan said she doesn't think it's a matter of why the letter went out, the question the board wanted to know is why they didn't know about the letter but the letter had to go out.

Director Yanni said they were told at a past meeting that it went out in error, that it wasn't supposed to go out and the Superintendent wasn't aware of it going out.

Mrs. McTiernan said that the timing is what she thinks they were talking about but as far as them working on walking letters and students receiving letters if they didn't qualify for transportation, they have been working on that and individuals who had been in those meetings day after day could talk about it more but the letter had to go out, there were people getting transportation that weren't allowed to so that letter had to go out. And absolutely the board should have known about it, she agrees. Mrs. McTiernan added that they had 3,000 letters that went out and had 30 some appeals which tells her there was a serious problem with transportation and that issue had to be addressed because we were not following policy, transportation is all technology now, the data is all in Transfinder, the problem previously is we were not using that program so now she has individuals that are highly trained in technology that are now overseeing a program because that program is how we build our routes and how we build capacity within our buses and how we maximize buses so she disagrees but she is not trying to change Director Yanni's mind, she's just giving her the facts, that transportation is all technology right now and communication skills which she believes the individuals before them today have taken over this department, changed it and transformed it over the past couple months. Mrs. McTiernan said the decision is their vote but that is her recommendation.

The motion now passed with (6) six affirmative and (2) two negative votes. Directors McAndrew and Yanni voted in the negative.

18.02 {F-2} Motion to Approve Frontline Contract

Approve Frontline Education Contract as outlined in the attached. Segment 1: Human Capital Management - Recruiting & Hiring Bundle – Start Date: 4/30/2021. End Date: 6/30/2021.

Segment 2: Human Capital Management – Recruiting & Hiring Bundle – Start Date: 7/1/2021. End Date: 6/30/2022. One-Time Fees: \$10,700.00. Annual Recurring Fees: \$29,602.50. (Initial Term Prorated Fees): \$5,028.37.

Director Cruz made a motion, seconded by Director Welby.

ON THE QUESTION:

Director Cruz thanked Mr. Riley of Frontline for the presentation at the last Personnel Committee Meeting.

Director Malloy spoke about the annual fee noting that it is not like a gym membership that you might forget to cancel adding that the gentleman from Frontline agreed it was not but Mr. Malloy asked for a friendly amendment to say Annual Recurring Fees (pending board approval).

Director Malloy made a motion to include pending board approval, Director McAndrew seconded.

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Director Hume asked if that means it would have to be voted on every year. Mr. Malloy said that was the idea.

Ms. Gilmartin indicated there is an end date referenced also.

The friendly amendment passed unanimously on roll call.

ON THE QUESTION OF AMENDED MOTION:

Director Hume spoke of the district finally coming into the 21st Century and this will be very helpful to Human Resources.

President Gilmartin, with regards to the 120 day implementation period and it references that if there is any delay on the district's part we would incur additional fees and asked Mr. Castrovinci if he feels he is prepared to implement this within 120 days. Mr. Castrovinci said definitely, they are going to get started immediately and Mr. Riley knows the timeline and that Mr. Castrovinci wants this in place before our summer hiring.

President Gilmartin asked if he feels confident that our staff is either skilled or able to be trained to manage this technology. Mr. Castrovinci said yes, most definitely.

President Gilmartin asked if there were other companies considered and why does he feel strongly about this platform.

Mr. Castrovinci responded he has personal experience with this platform and this is the only platform he is aware of that encompasses all the different components that it could potentially offer our district.

22. NEW BUSINESS

President Gilmartin spoke about comments heard about the state of our district and one thing is clear is that we can do better and plans to use the resources of PSBA in the fields of diversity and equity and discussion have been had with the SFT regarding professional training and will be worked into In-Service days.

Director Cruz announced there will be a panel discussion on March 15, 2021 at 7:30pm focusing on diversity training and racial sensitivity courses within the Professional Development program as well as effective ways to attract and retain teachers of color to the district. Speakers will include Holly Meade, Phil Odom and Robert McLeod with additional details forthcoming.

Director Welby asked if they may share their response to the situation with Rosemary Boland as there were a lot of speakers that commented that they were curious to know what the board's position was and what their response was.

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President Gilmartin responded that they did make a public statement and she would yield to Attorney Audi on the other correspondence.

Attorney Audi clarified the question is if they can share our correspondence or can you share the correspondence that was received.

President Gilmartin supposed either.

Mr. Audi thinks at this point they certainly can if they choose to; everybody has their right to share their correspondence as far as he is concerned.

President Gilmartin doesn't think this is a necessary step at this time but she yields to her colleagues on that.

Director Hume thinks they are taking so many positive steps forward, that their correspondence was fruitful, very productive, they sent a letter to the union asking for clarification on certain issues, they received clarification on their position and they came back agreeing to the board's request and for them to move forward with diversity training; Ms. Hume thinks it is all incredibly positive and feels we're taking so many positive steps moving forward at this time they may risk blowing dust in the eyes of people who would focus on the letter and responses rather than the positive outcomes that came from it. Director Hume thinks we're in a good place after productive dialog and doesn't want to obscure the fact that we're in a good place with the commitment from the union and the board and the administration; that's positive and that is where she would like to stay.

Director Welby said the board made a strong stance without giving too many details, but the board's position was strong, she won't comment how the union responded but the board did have a very strong response.

23. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Gilmartin thanked everyone for their support; they are moving forward and asked for adjournment.

24. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Director McAndrew, seconded by Director Malloy, all in favor and the meeting adjourned at 11:30pm.

By: _____
Secretary