

Salary increases range widely

The list of salaries that accompanies the new contract between the Dallas School District and its teachers reveals a wide range of increases. The highest paid teachers, who were earning \$43,675 in salary, will receive raises of 3.83% in the first year of the contract and 3.87% in the second. Fifty-eight of the district's 142 teachers are at the top salary level, which will be \$47,105 during the 1992-93 school year. The largest raise will go to a teacher who presently earns \$25,785. She will get a 13.37% raise the first year and 9.67% the second.

Generally, teachers who now make between \$30,000 and \$39,000 will receive the largest percentage raises; from 10% to nearly 12% the first year and 8% to 12% the second. Those at the low end of the scale will get a little over 5% each year. The lowest paid teacher on the scale, who is now paid \$16,493, will receive 5.24% and 5.27% raises in the two years covered by the contract.

Here are a few selected salary levels and the projected increases.

| 1990-91 SALARY | 1991-92 SALARY | DOLLAR INCREASE | % INCREASE | 1992-93 SALARY | DOLLAR INCREASE | % INCREASE |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| \$16,493 | \$17,358 | 865 | 5.24 | \$18,273 | 915 | 5.27 |
| 22,615 | 23,793 | 1,178 | 5.21 | 25,038 | 1,245 | 5.23 |
| 28,615 | 30,022 | 1,407 | 4.92 | 31,509 | 1,487 | 4.95 |
| 30,425 | 33,791 | 3,366 | 11.06 | 37,791 | 4,000 | 11.84 |
| 36,045 | 40,045 | 4,000 | 11.10 | 44,045 | 4,000 | 9.99 |
| 43,675* | 45,348 | 1,673 | 3.83 | 47,105 | 1,757 | 3.87 |

* Top salary level

5% Raise

(continued from page 1)

continuing to work well past the date when their contract expired on September 1, 1991.

"I'd like to remind everyone that not one child missed a day of school, not one senior had their college plans interrupted, not one parent missed a day of work," said board member John Cleary.

Board member John George noted that 104 of the district's teachers will have only a 3.83% raise the first year, and a 3.87% raise the second year.

"Negotiations are not an easy task, there must be concessions on both sides. We realize that this is not going to meet with 100% approval by everyone," said Ashbridge. "I'd like to thank the teachers for their cooperation, the taxpayers for their support of us."

After the meeting closed, the board members were questioned by some people on details of the contract, but congratulated by many more.

When asked if the board's negotiators considered a merit pay program that the Dallas Taxpayers Forum had demanded, Richardson shook his head.

"The taxpayers group has a plan they say will work, we don't know how it will work," said Richardson.

Even though the Dallas Taxpayers Forum has been calling for a two-year salary freeze and implementation of a merit pay program, Forum president Joe Kunec was obviously pleased with the contract.

"The agreement that resulted tonight, we feel has been a moral

victory for the Dallas taxpayer," said Kunec. "We feel it will set a trend in many surrounding school districts and set a benchmark in the state."

Kunec promised that the Taxpayers Forum, formed in September of 1991 to protest what members believed were unreasonable teacher salary requests, would not disband now that the negotiations are finally over.

The Forum will turn its attention next to Act 195, which gives teachers and other public employees bargaining rights, Kunec said.

William Wagner would not comment on his personal feelings about the settlement, but wore a stony expression on his face.

Though the district's teachers accepted the contract, Eleanor Buda, vice president of the Dallas teachers' union said that no one really liked it.

"We're going to be working now to restore some dignity to this place," said Buda.

Joseph Oravitz, executive director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, said that the Dallas contract sets a precedent in lowering the range of salary hikes. Oravitz said there are about 130 school districts across the state coming up for bargaining this year, and 32 districts are still negotiating contracts which already expired. "It's the largest number of carry-overs for the longest time that we've seen in the 22 years of Act 195," said Oravitz. "In my judgment it's going to be an extremely difficult year in terms of labor negotiations."

Oravitz said that many districts which were discussing contracts with salary increases in the 7% range before Governor Robert Casey announced he would reduce school subsidies, are now talking about increases in the 5% range.

Negotiations began in Dallas more than a year ago with the teachers asking for an average 9.85% raise. In December, a state fact-finder recommended an average raise of 8.75% for three years. The teachers accepted the fact-finder's report, but the school board rejected it.

Benefits are deferred, but still in the contract

The contract accepted by the Dallas School Board and the district's teachers contains some of the same increases in benefits offered by the board in February. But instead of going into effect in the current year, many of the benefit increases will take effect in two steps starting next year.

The first year of the contract is the 1991-92 school year, already half over. The second year is the 1992-93 school year, and the third is the 1993-94 school year.

These benefits include:

- Home school and summer school rates, as well as unused sick leave pay will be increased beginning next year, but less than the previous offer.
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield major medical coverage will be increased from \$250,000 to \$500,000 for the second year of the contract, and to \$1 million for the third year.
- Coverage for mental and nervous sickness will be increased from \$2,500 to \$25,000 the second year of the contract, and to \$50,000 the third year.
- Life insurance will be increased from its current \$34,000 to \$40,000 the second year, and \$43,000 the third year.
- An extra personal day will be added in the second year of the contract, making it a total of two for the school year.
- Reimbursement for graduate school credits will be increased from \$90 a credit now to 50% the first year, 60% the second year, and 70% the third year for graduate credits. Undergraduate credits would be reimbursed at 10% less each year and in-service courses would be paid for entirely by the district. The most the district has reimbursed for tuition in a year was \$16,000, but with many teachers at the top of the educational scale, the cost is expected to be below that.

Kingston Twp. protests cable price hike

By ERIC FOSTER Post Staff

The Kingston Township supervisors passed a resolution at their March 11 meeting protesting Tele-Media Cable Television's planned rate increase due to take effect April 1.

The rate will go from \$16.50 a month to \$18.50 a month for basic service. Other charges will remain the same.

"It's our annual Easter present from the cable company," said township manager Jeffrey Box.

Benjamin Franklin, chairman of the supervisors said that a new Federal Communications Commission ruling may allow a municipality to regulate cable television rates if there are less than six over-the-air channels available.

The supervisors believe that there are only five over-the-air channels: 16, 22, 28, 44 and 38. The new ruling allows municipalities in areas with few over-the-air channels to hold cable rate increases to 5% a year.

The resolution urges residents to write to U.S. Rep. Paul Kanjorski, and Senators Arlen Specter and Harris Wofford in support of legislation which would regulate the cable industry. The resolution also urges residents to write to the Tele-Media Company to protest the rate increase.

This is the fourth straight year the cable rate has increased according to the supervisors. Tele-Media has a 13-year franchise agreement with the township which began in 1987.

Tele-Media also serves Harveys Lake and Dallas boroughs, and Lehman, Dallas, and Franklin townships.

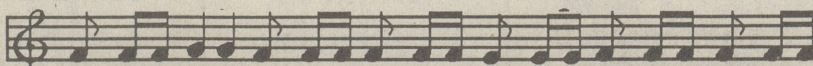
In other business, the supervisors:

- Assumed ownership of Bramblewood Drive in the Parkhurst subdivision.

- Approved the Hagen Minor subdivision.

- Revoked the previously granted subdivision approvals for the Sleepy Hollow subdivision because of failure to maintain a letter of credit or bond.

- Scheduled spring clean-up for May 11 to 16.



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Lehman supers ok fair traffic plan

By GRACE R. DOVE Post Staff

Lehman Township Supervisors approved the traffic control plan submitted to PennDOT and the permit for the 1992 Luzerne County Fair at the regular supervisors' meeting Monday, March 16.

Approval of the traffic control plan stipulated that "No Parking" signs be posted along Route 118 and that 28-inch traffic cones be placed every 50 feet down the center of the highway for safety. The supervisors also requested that the fair committee indemnify Lehman Township and PennDOT in case of any accidents.

In other business, the supervisors accepted the resignation of Jon H. Rogers from his position as Township auditor, commending him for the fine work that he has done in that capacity.

The position of township secretary/treasurer formerly held by Alvin Cragle was split into two positions; Cragle will remain township treasurer, while Jon H. Rogers was appointed township secretary. Rogers said that the secretary/treasurer's position was split due to growth in the township, and

the increasing responsibilities of both offices.

The supervisors said that Chuck Rogers of the Department of Environmental Resources filed a complaint against St. Stephen's Church in Plymouth because the church has not taken any action to date on an illegal landfill behind its cemetery on Outlet Road.

Property owners near the cemetery have been questioned, but so far the illegal dumpers have not been caught. The supervisors noted that burned construction debris has also been found in the dumping area.

All neighboring property owners have been asked to cooperate with the investigation so that the illegal dumping can be stopped.

Attorney Eric Dingle represented Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Carkhuff, who have requested that the township grade and spread gravel on a section of Township Route 712, which they claim belongs to the township.

Supervisors denied the request until Mr. and Mrs. Carkhuff can prove that this road is township property. According to a township map, Bryant's Road has also been designated Township Route 712

and has been recorded as township property.

The township engineer has not been able to find any record in the Luzerne County Courthouse of the section of roadway off Red Barn Road. Carrhuff contended that he was told at the supervisors' meeting on April 13, 1981, that the road belonged to the township.

No record of that meeting is available because all township records were destroyed in a fire at the municipal building in 1984.

Supervisors also voted to:

- permit the Wyoming Valley Striders to hold their 12th annual run Sunday, March 22, on township roads.

- renew the existing mutual aid agreement between Lehman and Ross Township Police Departments.

- renew the joint paving and road materials agreement with six neighboring municipalities.

- meet with Jackson Township officials before entering into a feasibility study of combining the police departments of Dallas Borough, Jackson Township and Lehman Township into a regional force.

Lake-Lehman school board commends wrestlers

By GRACE R. DOVE Post Staff

Lake-Lehman Superintendent Nancy Davis commended the high school wrestling team for its performance in the recent district wrestling competition, at the school board's regular meeting Tuesday, March 10. The team received the District Team and Coach of the Year awards, as well as having seven first-place and four third-place winners.

The board also received a report from high school home economics teacher Jerris Baranowski on a new cooperative learning project which she has started in her classes.

In other business, the board took the following personnel matters:

- Sabbatical leaves for travel during the second semester of the 1992-93 school year were approved for Charles James and Jane Ann James.

- Accepted the retirement of senior high school guidance counselor Sylvia Bator and senior high school English teacher Francis Wilczewski, both at the end of the 1992-93 school year.

- Appointed substitute teachers Karen Zapotok, art; Dawnell Glunz, mentally and physically handi-

capped and David Orohutsky, English.

The board also voted to apply to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for technical assistance in food service and for a mini-grant

in the amount of \$4,816 for curriculum development.

The next regularly scheduled school board meeting will be Tuesday, April 14, at 8 p.m. at the Lehman-Jackson School.

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