

## **Supt. Rivera's big pay day Life is good, if you're Pedro Rivera, the School District of Lancaster superintendent. For the rest of us, not so much.**

*Editorial*

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Rivera recently signed a five-year contract extension that will pay him more than **\$200,000 in salary and benefits.**

In the first year, he will get a 6.8 percent bump -- \$11,200 -- in his base salary of \$164,800. (Subsequent pay raises to be determined by the school board.)

SDL taxpayers also will pay up to \$16,000 toward Rivera's state pension contributions, \$5,000 for a personal-retirement fund and a \$600 per month car allowance.

Rivera also will get **five weeks of vacation** per year, plus **12 paid sick days**. He can **accumulate up to 60 vacation days and 100 sick days**. (He can cash in up to 10 unused sick days each year at his per-diem salary of \$675 per day.)

**School board members say** the salary and perks are in line with what other superintendents are getting in similar-sized school districts.

But that's an excuse, not an explanation for awarding a generous contract to a public employee (Rivera) at a time when the people who pick up the tab -- taxpayers -- are struggling to pay their bills.

**A nearly 7 percent pay hike is unheard of in the private sector** these days. Many good, decent, dedicated and hardworking employees have had to endure pay cuts or freezes, if they have a job at all.

Need school board members be reminded that the economy remains weak and there doesn't seem to be a political consensus in Washington to effectively deal with it?

The salary and perks for Rivera are considerable, but **he is not alone among superintendents** in the county. In fact, superintendents in two other districts -- Hempfield and Manheim Township -- are paid more.

Rivera no doubt feels he earns his pay, and it's hard to disagree. SDL, with 11,000 students and a \$171 million budget, is the largest district in the county. It's an urban district, too, one that faces the challenge of a diverse student population and poverty.

But it's also a district with a **declining tax base**, and that means less taxpayer money to go around for employee salaries, among other things.

**The SDL school board majority either failed to recognize this fact or they ignored it.**

Either way, SDL taxpayers are taking it on the chin.

Rivera recently signed a five-year contract extension worth more than \$200,000 annually.