



## U.S. Department of Justice

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April 16, 2009

### NEWS RELEASE

#### **FEDERAL OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE THE FILING OF CHARGES AGAINST THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PITTSTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Martin C. Carlson, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, announced today that Dr. Ross Scarantino, age 64, of Duryea, Pennsylvania, Superintendent of Schools for the Pittston Area School District, has been charged in a criminal complaint with allegedly accepting cash in connection with the award of contracts by the Pittston Area School District. Scarantino appeared today in federal court and was released on bail pending further proceedings in this case.

According to U.S. Attorney Carlson, today's announcement is the first charge in an on-going investigation into allegations that teachers and contractors were required to provide money or anything else of value in connection with being hired or obtaining a public contract. On April 8, the FBI issued a statement requesting the public's assistance in this on-going investigation. Anyone with information is asked to contact Special Agent Richard Southerton or Special Agent Joseph Noone in the FBI's Scranton office at 570-344-2404.

If convicted, Scarantino faces a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment, up to a \$250,000 fine and a maximum three years of supervised release.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and prosecution is being handled by a team of federal prosecutors led by Senior Litigation Counsel Gordon Zubrod and includes Assistant U.S. Attorneys William Houser, Michael Consiglio, Amy Phillips and Criminal Division Chief Christian Fisanick.

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*An Indictment or Information is not evidence of guilt but simply a description of the charge made by the Grand Jury and/or United States Attorney against a defendant. A charged Defendant is presumed innocent until a jury returns a unanimous finding that the United States has proven the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt or until the defendant has pled guilty to the charges.*