

# Chief of Schools

## denies rumors

### Greece's Keller-Cogan insists she is staying

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GREECE — Superintendent Margaret Keller-Cogan insists she's still on the job and will continue her duties, despite rumors and speculation about her future with the Greece Central School District.

During a hastily called board meeting Friday, members voted to hire an educational consultant to evaluate the merits of discrimination charges against the district, which are pending with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Because many residents weren't clear about what would be discussed Friday and why it needed to be addressed in such an urgent manner, many residents assumed the worst — that the board planned to replace Keller-Cogan just months after hiring her for the district's top job.

But Keller-Cogan said Sunday that she plans to be back in the district office on Oct. 3, after previously scheduled business trips to conferences in Saratoga County and New York City this week.

"At this point, it would not be a problem if she came in to the district," school board President Ken Walsh said Sunday.

Kim Bellavia, the district's chief communications officer, said the school board's attorney and Keller-Cogan's attorney are discussing her intention to return on Oct. 3.

In the past two months,

the director of the EEOC's Buffalo office determined that the district didn't act properly in its treatment of five district employees. As a result, the school system could face five lawsuits that could each cost the district hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"The federal government has determined that we've been discriminatory in our practices," Walsh said. "We need to find out, from an educational standpoint, if these claims have merit. And we need to get this study started before we can understand the scope of these determinations."

Walsh repeated that the board has not taken any adverse action against anyone in the district, including Keller-Cogan. He also said he's not sure what the study will take and what it could mean for Greece's superintendent.

Greece resident Gerry McElhatten, 61, who attended Friday's meeting, said he doesn't think the board is being open and honest with taxpayers.

McElhatten said he agrees that the EEOC issue is important but doesn't understand why board members are moving so rapidly, without disclosing much about the timing of the study and what it will cost the district.

Keller-Cogan said she told Walsh that regardless of the school board's desire, "district business must go on."

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Keller-Cogan



Walsh