

# Turmoil in Greece

- Board must move swiftly to clear decks on teacher complaints.

Public participation in school policy-making was quite impressive last week when more than 600 people showed up for a hastily called meeting of the Greece school board. Too bad hearsay and fear were responsible for the huge turnout.

Now it's critical that the board move expeditiously to allay public concern that Superintendent Margaret Keller-Cogan is being unfairly treated. More than a few teachers, administrators and parents believe Keller-Cogan's job is at risk. After all, she wasn't appointed by the current board.

Ken Walsh, the new board's president, insists that Keller-Cogan "has been extremely cooperative and helpful." Walsh noted that of a list of 41 issues the board presented to Keller-Cogan, she agreed to 39 of them and that the board accepted two of her recommendations.

Tensions, nonetheless, mounted last week when Walsh called a board meeting with just 30 hours notice. Phone trees were activated after the leader of the district's parent group, alluding to the superintendent's possible firing, forecast "the meeting of the year."

Walsh said he called the meeting with short notice because he wanted to quickly get the ball rolling on sensitive personnel issues before the superintendent left for a weeklong conference. The issues involved five teachers' charges that could result in federally authorized lawsuits against the district.

Consultants hired last week are expected to advise any day now how best the district should proceed. Whether Keller-Cogan should remain in charge while an independent assessment is made of teacher-evaluation policies that she once directly supervised is on the table as it should be.

The sooner consultants and the board act, the better. There's been enough hearsay and fear.