

Schools meeting sensitive

Board likely to act on superintendent status

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GREECE — Greece Central School District's Board of Education will hold a special meeting tonight, and this time audience members won't have the chance to speak out.

The meeting, at 7:30 at Apollo Middle School, is the board's third special meeting in the past 10 days. If audience members shout out questions or disrupt the meeting, they'll be asked to leave, said board President Ken Walsh.

The meeting will begin with an executive session, behind closed doors, "to discuss the employment status of a specific employee," Walsh said.

Although Walsh wouldn't name the employee, it likely is Superintendent Margaret Keller-Cogan. She has come under intense scrutiny since last week, when the board made public that five recent teacher complaints lodged with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission were found to have merit.

The district is now doing its own investigation of those complaints and some board members have said that allowing Keller-Cogan on district property during the study could be problematic.

Walsh said the nine-member board will not act today to terminate Keller-Cogan's four-year contract. Rather, he said, he expects that "the board will consider if any employee needs to be removed from (his or her) position while the study takes place."

Once board members finish discussing the issue in executive session, they will reconvene in the school's auditorium to vote publicly on any decisions



Ken Walsh
Board president says unruly residents won't be tolerated

If you go

What: A special Greece school board meeting.

When: 7:30 p.m. today.

Where: Greece Apollo Middle School, 750 Maider Lane. Board members will meet in executive session in room E-50 and then move to the auditorium.

Background

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has determined that Greece Central School District didn't act properly in its treatment of five teachers, three of whom no longer work for the district. As a result, the school system could face five lawsuits that could each cost the district hundreds of thousands of dollars. Greece's school board has hired an educational consultant to review the cases and determine whether the district acted improperly. With about 13,600 students and about 1,100 teachers, Greece is the eighth-largest school district in the state.

made during the closed discussion.

Keller-Cogan was out of town on business Wednesday and could not be reached for comment.

Board member Bill Russell said he's worried about tonight's meeting because he thinks the board isn't equally considering the interests of all the players in



Moscato



Hauer

Greece

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this saga.

"What really upsets me about all this is where is Meg's representation in all of this," he said.

Community members will not have the chance to ask questions tonight, as they sometimes can during the public forum at regular board meetings.

"There's a way to behave and not to behave," said board member Joe Moscato. "Last week's meeting was out of control. We don't want another scene where it could get ugly and people could get hurt."

More than 600 people packed the Apollo auditorium last Friday, when the EEOC determinations were first made public. Many stomped and shouted in favor of Keller-Cogan.

Greece parent Carolyn Hauer, 44, doesn't want to hear the latest rumors. She's heading to tonight's meeting to learn the facts.

"People are very concerned. There's a vast feeling of disappointment in the school board and people aren't gung-ho about the administration, either," she said.

"Something's not working," said Lisa Trapani, 36, of Greece. Trapani said she thinks school board members are on the right track and appreciates that they're trying to learn more about alleged discriminatory practices in the district.

"We need to find out if we have a problem," she said. "And if we do, determine how we can fix it and go from there." a

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To speak out

The next public forum will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 11, at Greece Apollo Middle School. To sign up to speak, call (585)966-2311.