

4 Greece teachers can sue

• EEOC gives green light to lawsuits in discrimination cases.

VICTORIA E. FREILE

STAFF WRITER

GREECE — Four teachers have been given the green light to sue Greece Central School District for discrimination after mediation efforts failed to move forward. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which determined that the teachers had been discriminated against, sent the teachers a "notice of a

right to sue" last week. It is unclear whether all four of the teachers plan to sue.

Conciliation efforts have also failed with a fifth teacher, but the EEOC has not issued a "notice of the right to sue" on that teacher's behalf.

If "conciliation," or forced mediation, fails, complainants have the right to pursue civil lawsuits against their employers, according to the EEOC.

It is unclear why the mediation ended, or whether any mediation even took place, but the decision doesn't mean that the EEOC has changed its determination that the teachers were treated unfairly.

The EEOC did not return calls seeking comment.

Three Greece school board members reached Monday did not know whether any attempts at mediation took place. Board member Bill Russell said that, under mediation, the district's attorneys

would sit down with the teacher and the teacher's attorney.

Board president Ken Walsh said the board decided that it would wait for the results of its own investigation of the teachers' charges before deciding how to proceed with mediation. He said the EEOC may have considered the board's position when issuing the notices.

The board's probe is not expected to be completed until Dec. 1.

Each teacher has 90 days to file a lawsuit in federal

or state court, said David Kresock, a partner with Harter, Secrest and Emery, the Rochester-based law firm representing the school district.

Mary Donlon, 54, one of the five Greece teachers who filed an EEOC complaint, plans to file a lawsuit against the district.

"She hasn't come this far to back down now," said Mary Donlon's husband, Bill Donlon. "Nothing is going to make Mary quit."

He said that representatives from the district never sat down with his

What's next

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has determined that the Greece school district discriminated against five teachers. Last week, the EEOC cleared the way for four of the teachers to sue the district. The teachers have 90 days to file suit in federal or state court.

wife for mediation.

Donlon has taught in the district for more than 15 years, a

VFREILE@DemocratandChronicle.com