

NESHAMINY

Superintendent won't be leaving

Paul Kadri said he still believes Neshaminy is a “remarkable place with outstanding students, staff and community.”

By RACHEL CANELLI COURIER TIMES

Neshaminy Superintendent Paul Kadri won't be leaving the district for the Plymouth-Canton Community School District in Michigan.

Kadri was a finalist in the search to replace the retiring superintendent there.

But Tuesday night, that board decided to move forward with efforts to hire Craig Fiegel, superintendent of Evergreen Park Elementary School District 124 in Evergreen Park, Ill., according to , a Web site affiliated with Gannett Co. Inc. newspapers.

Unlike in Pennsylvania, the search process in Michigan is open to the public, so the media there has been covering every aspect of the search.

Plymouth-Canton board members said they'd visit Fiegel's suburban Chicago district within the next few weeks to further research the top candidate before offering him a contract, the online report said. In that report, board members described Fiegel's strong instructional and financial background and collaborative leadership style as being what the district needs now.

They said Kadri was creative and innovative, but his strength was turning around a struggling district. On Wednesday, Kadri confirmed he hadn't been selected.

“I very much appreciated their process and wish them continued success in their district,” Kadri said. “I had an emotional connection to that opportunity because it was around the area where I grew up. So I am slightly sad at the decision.”

Kadri said his interest in Michigan in no way deviates from his belief that Neshaminy is a “remarkable place with outstanding students, staff and community.”

But he and the Neshaminy school board have had some differences on how to attain academic and financial goals.

“Rather than struggle between those philosophies, it would be better for me to find a place more aligned with my strengths,” said Kadri. “I'm not saying that as long as I'm here I can't get things done.”

Kadri said he's not actively pursuing another job now, but he'd be open to a better fit. He didn't provide specifics on the issues between him and the board.

He has publicly expressed frustration with the Neshaminy board for not outlining specific goals for him to meet, such as a target amount for the budget. And the board's rejection of the administration's recommendation for a high school athletic director was seen by some as a slap at Kadri.

Board member Joseph Blasch said he'd like to see Kadri stay in Neshaminy.

“He has gained a lot of support in the community but, unfortunately, there is too much opposition on the board to overcome,” Blasch said. “If he decides to stay, I will support him as much as I can.”

Despite his comments Wednesday, Kadri hasn't publicly stated that he's leaving Neshaminy.

Kadri was hired in June 2006. He received a four-year contract at \$165,000 a year, officials said.

“I wish nothing but the best for Mr. Kadri,” board President Richard Eccles said. “Neshaminy needs to draw on [his] experience in finance ... to curtail the runaway [more than \$15 million] increase in the budget and make it palatable for the taxpayers in this district.”





Superintendent Paul Kadri will remain at Neshaminy School District after losing out on a job as superintendent of a school district in Michigan despite praise from the school board there.

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