

The Post Star

## **Superintendent choice says no thanks to South Glens Falls**

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SOUTH GLENS FALLS -- Michael Piccirillo, who on Monday was hired to become the next superintendent of the South Glens Falls Central School District, has turned down the job.

On Wednesday, Piccirillo said he decline the position because some members of the school board were uncomfortable with the contract.

"My feeling was, if they weren't comfortable with that, we probably should not proceed forward," Piccirillo said.

On Monday, the board voted 6-2 to hire Piccirillo.

Board members Larry Chapman and Timothy Dalaba said they supported Piccirillo, but voted against hiring him because they had issues with the contract.

Dalaba said the contract was changed about two hours before Monday's meeting.

Jeff Riggi, school board president, said Tuesday the only change was to a date and an error in the benefits section of the agreement.

But Dalaba also had issues with Piccirillo's starting salary of \$155,000 and the payments the district would have made for the candidate to continue his education while on the job. He was concerned about these features in the contract during tough financial times.

After Monday's meeting, Dalaba said the board had authorized a lower starting salary than the one that was approved.

Neither Chapman nor Dalaba could be reached for comment Wednesday.

Piccirillo said any issues with the contract should have been addressed while the agreement was being negotiated.

"These are things that are ironed out beforehand, usually through the negotiation process, through their own discussions. Apparently it wasn't. It was on my end. I was fine with what we agreed upon. There were a couple of board members who were uncomfortable with the contract," Piccirillo said.

Riggi could not be reached for comment on Wednesday. But in a press release, he said: "Even though we are disappointed, we understand that if there are questions about the relationship, that now is the time for Mr. Piccirillo to withdraw from the process.

"Not all of our board members were comfortable with the contract the board approved, and Mr. Piccirillo indicated that it may not be in the best interest of either party to proceed," he said.

Piccirillo said he has not accepted a job elsewhere. He will stay at his current position as the assistant superintendent for secondary education at the Saratoga Springs City School District, where he has been for three years.

"I'm not looking right now for another position," he said. I'm very happy here at Saratoga Springs. The only reason I looked at South Glens Falls is because it was very close by. I would have been able to live in Saratoga Springs and still be their superintendent. It's a good school district. It was a great opportunity. Other than that, I love Saratoga Springs. It's a great place to work. I look forward to being here."

The board will meet next week with James Dexter, the local BOCES district superintendent, to figure out what to do next.

The board has a regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday.

Jean Tedesco, the assistant superintendent, will remain as the interim chief.

Piccirillo was one of two candidates for the job. The other was Leslie Goldring Ford, superintendent of the Onteora Central School District in Ulster County.

Board members spent five months searching for a superintendent after they let James McCarthy leave when his contract ended in June. McCarthy spent 19 years at the district, but did not receive a contract extension.