

April 22, 2004

BOARD DELAYS RAMOS DECISION

COEURD 'ALENE -- The State Board of Education voted 5 to 1 to take the Dr. Angel Ramos matter under advisement and delay action on determining the fate of the superintendent for the Idaho School of the Deaf and the Blind.

Ramos was put on paid administrative leave July 30, 2003, for allegations that include financial mismanagement, inappropriate hiring practices, and retaliation against staff who provided information to or cooperated with State Board of Education staff.

Prior to the meeting, Board members were given extensive background on the case including findings by hearing officer Charles McDevitt, responses by the deputy attorney general for reconsideration and arguments for and against the termination of the superintendent's employment. Ramos' attorney, Keith Roark, and state attorneys were given 20 minutes to present oral arguments. Board member Laird Stone made a motion to delay the decision because Ramos' attorneys handed Board members last minute materials just prior to the hearing.

"No matter what the Board decides, there is an emotional component," said Stone. "As a Board, I believe we are anxious to get this matter resolved so the school can move forward. However, it would be unfair to consider this issue fully when we just received, due to the illness of Dr. Ramos' counsel, their final legal brief this morning. The Board needs to consider this document before making a decision."

Board members Laird Stone, Milford Terrell, Paul Agidius, Rod Lewis and Marilyn Howard voted to delay, while board member Blake Hall voted against. Under the Administrative Procedure Rules, the Board has up to 56 days to make a decision on the case.

For nearly eight months, Board staff has conducted an extensive investigation of all aspects of the fiscal, managerial, and educational operations of the campus in Gooding and statewide activities of the agency under the Superintendent's control. In January, the Board appointed McDevitt to hear oral arguments in the case and produce findings of fact. McDevitt said in February that Ramos' conduct did not justify "adequate cause" for dismissal.