

**June 17, 2004**

## **STATE BOARD, RAMOS SETTLE EMPLOYMENT DISPUTE**

MOSCOW - The Idaho State Board of Education and Dr. Angel Ramos jointly announced that they have settled pending administrative proceedings regarding the status of Dr. Ramos' employment as superintendent of the Idaho State School for the Deaf and the Blind in Gooding. Although the financial terms of the agreement were not disclosed, Ramos resigned as superintendent as of the agreement date.

"I'm pleased we could reach a settlement that is in the interests of both parties," said Rod Lewis, State Board of Education President. "The State Board is committed to academic excellence at the School for the Deaf and the Blind. Throughout this process, our number one focus has been the students. We are fortunate to have dedicated teachers and administrators working at the school, and the Board looks forward to attracting new leadership."

"I have full confidence that, under Rod Lewis' leadership, the State Board of Education will not settle for anything less than academic excellence at ISDB," said Dr. Ramos. "My decision to step down as superintendent allows Mr. Lewis and the members of the State Board of Education to get ISDB focused on providing its students with a quality education. My decision also allows me to turn my attention to OptiSchool, the technology we designed to bring instructional lessons to students throughout the state via the Internet. With OptiSchool, I will be working in the private sector to realize my goal of improving the educational skills of deaf, hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired students in Idaho and throughout the country. This is a win-win situation for the state and for myself."

Gary Stivers, the Board's executive director, placed Ramos on paid administrative leave July 30, 2003, and initiated disciplinary action.

Ramos contested the proposed disciplinary action in a contested case proceeding held before former Idaho Supreme Court Justice Charles F. McDevitt, who was appointed by the Board as the hearing officer. Judge McDevitt recommended that Ramos be reinstated after finding that there was not "adequate cause" for dismissal under Board rules and regulations. Attorneys for the State appealed McDevitt's recommended decision, contending the hearing officer had made errors of fact and law. At the April Board meeting, the State Board voted to take the matter under advisement. Final action by the Board was pending when the settlement was reached.