

Shakeup at administrators union

ASAR relationship with district chilly; two sides failed to negotiate a new contract

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The Rochester School District's Association of Supervisors and Administrators of Rochester (ASAR) has new leadership following a vote of its members.

The new president is Tim Cliby, the executive director of the district's instructional technology department. His top deputy will be Monroe High School principal Vicki Ramos.

They replace Sandy Jordan and First Vice President Rebecca Boyle. Jordan stepped in for former president Deb Ryder after Ryder retired, and was running for a new two-year term of her own.

Jordan said Friday she didn't have a good idea of why the union members voted for Cliby instead of her. Cliby and Ramos could not be immediately reached for comment.

In the last year, ASAR's relationship with the district has gone from chilly to frigid. Its members voted no confidence in Superintendent Bolgen Vargas in January 2014.

Since then, the two sides have sparred publicly while failing to negotiate a new contract. Vargas said the union is handcuffing him in his attempt to run the district more efficiently, mainly by refusing to make concessions regarding vacation time cash-outs and other things. He has granted tenure at a lower rate than his predecessors and asked the state Legislature this winter to give him greater authority over the administrators.

The union in turn, with Jordan as its enthusiastic spokeswoman, has accused Vargas of providing poor leadership and failing to communicate with them. Its members protested when he clumsily removed Armando Ramirez as principal at Monroe.

At the heart of Vargas' recent dispute with the school board is the extent of his power to assign toplevel employees to his non-union inner circle; in many cases, those employees would otherwise be in ASAR. In April, the district filed a complaint with the state Public Employment Relations Board accusing the union of failing to negotiate in good faith for a

new contract. District spokesman Chip Partner said Vargas hopes for a good relationship with Cliby and the new leadership team.

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Tim Cliby

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