

# Webster schools to pay Gumina \$166K to settle

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The Webster Central School District will pay former superintendent Carmen Gumina \$166,000 to settle a dispute regarding the circumstances of his resignation.

The school board approved the agreement Wednesday morning, then provided the agreement itself Thursday in response to a Freedom of Information request. It includes a \$156,000 lump sum plus \$10,000 in cashed-out vacation time and retiree health benefits.

The board also waives its contractual right to recoup \$22,000 because Gumina did not provide sufficient notice of his departure.

Gumina resigned April 29, just days after former Webster teacher Kali Watkins sued the district in federal court. Watkins, who was acquitted of charges that he raped a student, accused the district, and Gumina in particular, of orchestrating the investigation out of personal animus because both men were sleeping with the same district employee.

Gumina announced his “intent to retire” in an email to district staff April 29, and the board that morning passed a “resolution for the retirement for the purposes of (Gumina’s) retirement.”

In May, though, the district said it did not have a letter of resignation from Gumina. Former school board member Sue Casey said a settlement was in the works.

The settlement was necessary, the parties said in the agreement, because “there is a legitimate dispute as to the acceptance of that resignation and the circumstances regarding the same.”

It is not clear where exactly the dispute lies;

the agreement bars the two parties from commenting further.

In a statement, the school board said: “In an effort to put the school community first, the Webster Central School District and Superintendent Gumina agreed to part ways under mutually agreeable terms.”

In his April 29 letter to staff, on the other hand, Gumina wrote: “I notified our board of my intent to retire.”

The school board passed the settlement resolution unanimously with Shanna LaDelfa abstaining. Gumina had sought to thwart LaDelfa’s board candidacy in 2020 by threatening to pull district contracts from La-Bella Associates, her employer, if she were elected.

Brian Neenan is serving as interim superintendent.

“We appreciate Mr. Neenan’s service,” the board said in a statement, “and look forward to continuing Webster’s tradition of excellence under Mr. Neenan’s leadership.”



**Gumina**

