

School official finalist for top job in Ferndale

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STAFF WRITER

First time was the right time for Farmington Public Schools employee relations director Sue Zurvalec.

She never applied for a superintendent's job before, but now finds herself one of three finalists for the Ferndale School District post.

"In the last few years, it's become a long-range goal of mine," Zurvalec said. "... I'm humbled. It's quite an honor."

Zurvalec, 42, interviewed with the Ferndale Board of Education Wednesday. A new superintendent is expected to be named by the end of the month.

Current superintendent William Coyne is retiring after more than 20 years on the job.

Other finalists are Marcee Martin, assistant superintendent for instruction at Royal Oak Schools; and Sandra Johnson, area superintendent for Detroit Public Schools. There were 32 applicants.

Ferndale Board of Education president Deborah Williamson said Zurvalec's credentials are impressive.

"She's very outstanding in the field," Williamson said, "and is very highly regarded within her profession and the district."

Though Zurvalec's background has been in labor relations, she was a teacher and a union consultant in the Lansing School District for 10 years. She has a master's degree in kindergarten through grade reading instruction as well as one in labor and industrial relations.

She has worked in labor relations positions for the Michigan Association of School Boards and Lansing Schools as well as Farmington Schools.

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Sue Zurvalec

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employee relations director
Farmington Public Schools

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The board is looking for a community-oriented superintendent, Williamson said. The district is faced with the need for building improvements and the infusion of technology.

Williamson said it's a coincidence three women are finalists.

"We did not go in saying we were only going to look at women or we were going to look at women more heavily than men," Williamson said. "It just fell down that way."



SHAWN LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Off to Chelsea?: Jim Myers, Farmington High School principal, is being considered for superintendent of the Chelsea Schools.

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are superintendents from other state districts.

"I feel honored and lucky to get this far in the process," Myers said.

Chelsea board president Jane Diesing said Myers' resume stood out, citing his strong academic background.

Other candidates include: Edward Richardson, superintendent of Olivet Community Schools; David Feden, superintendent of Fowler Elementary Community Schools; Craig Douglas, superintendent of Ocedo Area Schools; Richard Tait, superintendent of Quincy Community Schools; and Shari Hogue, superintendent of Northport Public School.

Diesing said they're looking for someone to fill the role of a strong educational leader, possessing good personnel and communication skills and a person whose vision is in the community.

'I don't want to say I'm not up to the task, but I think there are some things you have to consider when going into that situation.'

James Myers

Farmington High principal

A new superintendent, though, will step into a district that is still dealing with the tragedy. A teacher is charged with murder in Joseph Pinecki's slaying.

Myers said the situation did enter his mind when applying.

"I had some real funny feelings about it," Myers said. "It would be real difficult to go into a situation like that and replace someone like him. Just from the newspaper articles and what you see on TV he was quite a nice person."

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situation."

Said Diesing: "There still remains the trial to go through. We're very concerned about that."

"I think someone who will come in here and at least be sensitive to the situation that occurred here will help us move through that. I think we've done a lot of healing in the last few months. ... I think at this point we're very receptive to having a new superintendent in here."

Myers said the size of the district is one appealing factor. He did not apply for the Farmington Schools superintendent position last year.

He said a smaller district with 2,600 students and 130 teachers suited his background.

"You're a little closer to the kids and the action," Myers said, "and that was something I really wasn't quite ready to leave yet. It seems like a good fit for what I'm interested in."

Myers has been principal at Farmington High since 1991, replacing Jerry Potter, who retired.

He has a Ph.D., and also has a law degree. He worked as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Washtenaw County before returning to education.

Prior to joining the Farmington district, Myers worked as a teacher and administrator for Wayne-Westland schools.

"If I don't get this job, I'm not going to be terribly upset," Myers said, "because I have a wonderful job here in a wonderful school."

POLICE/FIRE CALLS

Below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, arrests and court cases reported during the past week.

TRICK
A man and a woman tricked a woman, 71, into withdrawing \$554 from her account at Michigan National Bank and River in Farmington April 1 and giving it to her part of a scheme to split the man, described as standing 6 feet and weighing 200 pounds, was wearing a brown suit and hat and a black, 5 feet 4 and 1/2 inch heavy makeup, helped them. They met the victim as she was coming out of the Kmart and River in Redford and they needed her to add money to theirs and then transfer Bank, the man and ask for the manager, "Goldstein." The woman into the bank, but there was no named Goldstein there. She came out and told that the two con men had left with her money.

COPIES
A deposit bag with \$194 in cash was stolen from J and W's Saloon on Main Road April 12.

SAFE
A \$150 in cash was stolen from a safe at the saloon on Main Road.

WATER
A Farmington Hills man, 61, was taken to the hospital after he fell into his kitchen at his home on April 29.

WORK
The work was never done on a house on April 29, the man said he had the check and spent the money on a house on April 29.

WINGS
Red Wings playoff game (1,000) were stolen from a house on April 12.

LOVE
A man with an attached love letter was stolen from a house on April 12.

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JEWELRY
A diamond ring (1,500) was stolen from a bedroom at a residence on Lancaster in Farmington Hills April 12.

COMPUTER
A laptop computer (\$6,500) with the words "property of Alza Corp." was stolen from a phone booth at the Shell station on 10 Mile in Farmington Hills April 14.

PURSE
A purse with a watch, identification and \$250 in cash was stolen from Winkelman's on Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills April 14.

BREAK-INS
Three gold Kruggerands (\$1,000), two pair of diamond earrings (\$750), a mini-camera (\$500), a Nintendo game (\$200), a 35mm Canon camera (\$500) and a Panasonic cordless phone (\$100) were stolen from the basement of a residence on Horton in Farmington Hills after the basement door wall had been forced open, April 12.

BREAK-INS
An attempted break-in at a residence on Gloucester Circle in Farmington Hills April 12 caused \$200 in damage to a wooden door.

BREAK-INS
A break-in at the Mid Nine Party Store on Middlebelt in Farmington Hills April 12 resulted in \$300 in damage to a door window, but nothing was stolen when the alarm sounded.

BREAK-INS
A break-in of a red 1992 Pontiac Bonneville parked at the Bonaventure Skating Rink on Holsted in Farmington Hills April 12 caused \$100 in damage to the driver's side door lock and resulted in the theft of a \$200 stereo AM/FM.

BREAK-INS
A desk lock was pried open causing \$25 in damage and 18 papers (\$1,800) were stolen from Ameritech on Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills, April 11-13.

BAD CHECK
A woman, described as white, in her mid-30s, 5 feet 4 and 190 pounds, wearing a pink sweater, opened an account at the Covenant Credit Union on 13 Mile in Farmington Hills. She presented a Texas driver's license and deposited a check for \$1,897, asking for \$897 of it in cash. She then told the teller she

wanted an additional \$500 of it in cash to pay some bills. She left in a green 1990 Ford Festiva. The check turned out to be altered.

AUTO THEFT
A black and red Kawasaki EX-250-E motorcycle worth \$1,100 was stolen from a residence on Wildwood in Farmington Hills April 6.

AUTO THEFT
A beige 1989 Nissan Sentra worth \$7,000 was stolen from the Target store on Grand River in Farmington Hills April 13. The driver had left the keys in the ignition.

FIRE
Farmington Hills firefighters from Station 4 put out a second floor fire that started in a sign at Harry Miller Florist on Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills at 5:09 a.m. April 13. An electrical arc caused the fire to the illuminated sign. The power was shut off. Damage to the property was estimated at \$2,000.

VANDALISM
The radiator and driver's side front tire of a blue International Harvester tractor parked at Anderson and Associates on Indoplex in Farmington Hills were punctured April 14 causing \$1,500 in damage.

VANDALISM
A rear window was broken on a 1992 Ford Aerostar van parked on Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills April 12, causing \$780 in damage.

EMBEZZLEMENT
Merchandise worth \$397.92 was taken from cartons and showed up in a short inventory April 14 at the Kmart on Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills.

FRAUD
A company credit card belonging to Theratamps on Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills was used without permission to pay for \$2,000 in goods and services between November and December of 1993.

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