

# Times Chronicle

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Methodist Women of the Old South United 50th anniversary at a dinner put on by the United Methodist Church. (l-r) Margaret Queen, Barbara Boucher, Fran Johnson, Carla Johnson, Thelma Blanchard, (back, l-r) Ann Evensen, Evelyn Corkum, Anita Murray, Ann (Don Young photo)

## D.A.'s office says Superintendent's evaluation process violated Open Meeting Law

### Comments must be released to public by October 31

READING - As a result of an investigation following a complaint by a local resident, the Middlesex District Attorney's office has determined that the School Committee violated the Open Meeting Law by using a written process to consider and prepare its evaluation of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Harry Harutunian outside of a public meeting, according to a letter from Assistant District Attorney

Catherine E. Sullivan to School Committee Chairman Tim Twomey.

The result is a statement from Sullivan that written comments made about Harutunian's performance as Superintendent of Schools must be made available to the public and appended to the minutes of the committee's March 24 meeting, and a copy must be provided to her

Continued on Page 2

## 'River' this weekend

...ver from Wilmington ...bers to get a first hand look at the dried up river. Walks will be ...

## Police know of no connection in

## Evaluation...

Continued from Page 1

office, by October 31.

The investigation came as a result of a complaint to the District Attorney's (D.A.'s) office from Kendra Cooper, and was conducted by former Assistant District Attorney Carlene A. Pennell, who was recently appointed a staff attorney for the Supreme Judicial Court.

The letter also states that no action is warranted by the D.A.'s office, because of the committee's good faith efforts and that the violation was unintentional.

The evaluation of Superintendent Harutunian had been scheduled to take place at a retreat the committee held at Endicott College on March 22, 1997, (which was also found to be in violation of the Open Meeting Law, as reported yesterday), but tabled the discussion until a meeting held in Reading on March 24, 1997. As

in the past, a questionnaire was handed out to each Committee member, on which he or she made written comments about Harutunian's performance through the year. Those comments were given to then-Chairman Sue Cavicchi at the retreat, but according to Sullivan's letter they were not discussed.

Over that weekend, Cavicchi reviewed the evaluations and compiled a summary, which was discussed at the March 24 meeting. The written comments from each individual member, however, were not made available to the public, although they were handed over to Harutunian himself.

According to the Open Meeting Law enacted by the state legislature, an executive session may take place to "discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the profes-

sional competence of an individual". The D.A.'s office has also historically taken a position that evaluations of high level officials, such as superintendents, town managers, etc., should be conducted in an open session.

★ According to Sullivan's letter, in this case the major part of the evaluation of Harutunian was conducted using a written process, and then released a summary of the answers to the public.

The letter states, "Although all members of the Committee participated in the deliberations via their questionnaires, the use of a written process deprived the Committee of the advantages of a contemporaneous exchange of views, which can influence and enlighten the thinking of all members. Additionally, the public was not made privy to the full comments and evaluation of the Superintendent, which were provided to him along with the summary prepared by the Chair. That the Committee discussed the summary at an open meeting, each making additional comments, did not repair the loss to the public of its right to monitor the Committee's full deliberative process."

Continued from  
delivery room nur-  
cases that have b  
her life.

Much talk has ce  
the fact that Donah  
of four and wife  
Road resident Edw  
worked in the pa  
Linda Goudey of St  
Goudey, an obstetri  
ed with the Bosto  
Medical Center, wa  
dered on October 4.

"I don't know at  
any connection (l  
two cases)," Polic  
Lieutenant Kevin  
said. "We haven't d  
information thus fa  
the two."

Donahue said, "I  
together. I don't be  
any direct con  
them."

He noted that l  
one of several ma  
employees who had  
tact with Goudey ar  
tioned in the case a  
tal condition.

"She was asked  
questions I am l  
now," Donahue said

He expressed his  
the Goudey family's  
release of evidence  
and the fact that  
sary of the case is  
a total coinciden  
wife's disappearance

"It is a string  
dences," Donahue s

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