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N. Andover board pays school chief to go away

By **Sarah Wolfe**/ North Andover Citizen
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North Andover School Superintendent Harry Harutunian is quitting - with a \$187,000 settlement in hand - after admitting to having an affair with a school secretary.

The school board stated in a release this week they weighed the cost of a legal battle or a settlement and opted for cashing out of the controversy.

As part of the pact, the School Committee agreed it would not comment about any of the specific incidents that led to the settlement, citing "personnel matters, which are protected by privacy rights."

"He doesn't want a lot of this stuff released," said School Committee Chairman Al Perry in reference to the investigation's details.

Harutunian has publicly acknowledged having an affair with secretary and gymnastics coach Brenda Shea. He volunteered to take vacation time after a private investigator was hired by the School Committee to look into whether the two were romantically involved last summer when he gave her a 29 percent raise.

Perry said the settlement would come from the School Department's 2006-07 budget.

Former longtime School Committee member Diane Huster said many parents were angered by the decision to pay Harutunian the \$187,000.

"However, the School Committee absolutely did the right thing . . . It's settled," she said. "He's going out the door and we can move onward."

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