

'It leaves us in a lurch. And I guess we don't appreciate that.'

Big Foot shaken by principal's departure

By Scott Williams

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WALWORTH — Members of the Big Foot High School community are expressing shock and disappointment at the new principal's abrupt resignation three months after accepting the job.

Heidi Deininger, who was scheduled to start July 1 as principal, announced May 23 that she would not be coming to Big Foot after all, and instead would take a higher-paying job else-

where.

Deininger had accepted the Big Foot job in March at a salary of \$105,000 a year.

Her change of heart has stunned Big Foot insiders and created a sense of uncertainty, as students and staff begin summer vacation not knowing who will be there to lead when the new school year begins.

"My main concern is: Where does that put us?" said Michael Manghera, president of the Big Foot teachers union.

School board members are scheduled to meet June 25 to consider naming an interim principal to serve during the 2018-19 school year while officials conduct another search for a permanent hire.

Superintendent Doug Parker said he has heard from people in the community who are understandably disappointed by Deininger's unusual resignation. But many people,

Parker said, can understand her being lured away by a bigger paycheck to support her family.

"What it comes down to is the color of money," he said. "It's a dog-eat-dog world in education."

Deininger, who currently works at the school district in Rockford, Illinois, was among 30 applicants after Big Foot



Deininger

High School Principal Mike Hinske announced his retirement last year. She became the Big Foot School Board's first choice, and by early March she had agreed to become the school's next principal.

Big Foot officials said they spelled out the salary and benefits clearly for Deininger, and they even gave her a couple of extra weeks to think it over before she made her decision.

Board member Kim Arntz said Deininger wanted time to consider her

financial situation, to discuss the career move with her family, and to look around the Walworth area.

"She did all that. And she accepted," Arntz said.

Although he was shocked three months later to learn about the new principal's turnabout, Arntz said he does not believe the school board made a bad choice. And he holds no ill feelings toward Deininger.

"She's a good person," he said. "Something just happened."

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