

Mark Cappel brings wide knowledge of Alton School District as new interim superintendent

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - An interim superintendent has been named in the Alton School District after the departure of former superintendent, **Dr. Kenneth Spells**.

Spells took a position at the South Bend School Corporation in South Bend, Indiana. He will be replaced, at least temporarily, by retired Alton School District Human Resource Director **Mark Cappel**.

Cappel can only perform in this part-time function for a maximum of 100 days under the teacher retirement policy. Cappel was appointed by the Alton Board of Education Tuesday evening after a discussion lasting approximately an hour and a half.

"It's a common practice for school districts to appoint an interim superintendent in situations like this," Cappel said. "A typical and thorough search for a new superintendent could last as long as six to nine months."

During his time as acting interim superintendent, Cappel said his priorities are finance, and Red Bird Pride.

"I would like to continue Red Bird Pride and make sure parents are happy with the education their children are getting, while making sure their children are getting the best education we can give them. I would also like to make sure our staff has Red Bird Pride and are committed to the school district and community."

Cappel spent Thursday afternoon in meetings with administrators in the district's central office. He spoke to Alton School District Financial Director Christopher Norman as well as the district's human resource officer **Sonja Ptah**.

"I met with administrators to see where we are," Cappel said. "I wanted to make sure everything was being funded properly. We're really hoping the state can pass a budget soon."

Cappel said Ptah, who replaced him as human resources director after his retirement on June 30, 2015, has a "good grasp on vacancies and the best ways to fill them."

Curriculum and test scores were also part of Cappel's briefing upon taking the position.

In the future, Cappel said he would be very open to accepting a multi-year contract for the district, or assisting in a search for a new superintendent. Ultimately, he said, that decision would be dependent on what the Alton Board of Education believes is best for the district and its students.

In the meantime, Cappel said he would work for the district on his own time as well as office hours, and continue to groom current administrators and give them opportunities they need, so they will be able to participate in the district regardless of who the next permanent superintendent may be.

Cappel has worked in the field of education for more than 36 years, 29 of those were spent in Alton. During his tenure in the Alton School District, Cappel has worked as a seventh-grade math teacher, an assistant middle school principal, an elementary school principal, a baseball and softball coach and the director of human resources.