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Annapolis Area Christian School superintendent steps down

Three former employees have sued, accusing him of sexual harassment and retaliation

By [Joe Burris](#), The Baltimore Sun

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Annapolis Area Christian School officials said Monday that they are looking for a new superintendent after George J.W. Lawrence Jr. stepped down amid a lawsuit brought by three former employees accusing him of sexual harassment and retaliation.

In December, former employees Sharon Finecey, Lynne George and Anthony Masevice sued Annapolis Area Christian School's association, accusing Lawrence of making sexual remarks. They allege that school officials were aware of such incidents but did not protect the three against them.

The school's board of directors announced Lawrence's resignation Jan. 13 and said that it had formed a transition leadership team made up of principals of its three Anne Arundel County campuses and the school's business manager. The four are carrying out the superintendent's duties on an interim basis, school officials said.

Finecey, a former director of human resources; George, a former assistant to the dean of students; and Masevice, a former finance director, filed the lawsuit in Anne Arundel County District Court, claiming that the incidents occurred between 2009 and last year. They said they faced retaliation in their efforts to end the alleged harassment and were forced to resign.

"The board and former Superintendent Lawrence are in agreement that the interests of our students, parents, faculty and staff cannot be best served by the distraction of his on-site presence in light of the lawsuit filed on December 27, 2011, and therefore he is immediately retiring," board of directors president Michael Edmonds said in the Jan. 13 statement.

Lawrence had already announced last summer his plans to retire when his three-year contract expired at the end of the school year. At that time the school retained a firm to help select his replacement, school officials said.

Lawrence said in the Jan. 13 statement, "When you all honored me by appointing me Superintendent, I saw Annapolis Area Christian School as a school with a great deal of unrealized potential. The school is moving forward. It is realizing its potential."

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Edmonds added in the Jan. 13 statement that the school "generally denies" the allegations in the lawsuit against the association and added, "We are highly confident that AACCS will be cleared of any wrongdoing once all of the facts of this matter are brought to light."

On Monday, Edmonds said in a statement that the search firm has found several candidates who meet the school's qualifications. After those qualifications are reviewed by the school's search committee, the applicants will meet with the board of directors, senior staff, parents and other groups.

School officials said the new superintendent should be in place for the 2012-2013 school year.

The independent Christian school serves students from pre-K to 12th grade at two campuses in Annapolis and one in Severn.

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