

School board names acting district superintendent

Christy Cugini says he'd like to keep the job permanently

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The Staten Island Community School Board named Christy Cugini as the acting district superintendent during a discussion meeting last night at district headquarters in Tompkinsville.

Cugini, district deputy superintendent for 20 years, replaces Louis DeSario, who retired Jan. 1.

"I've dedicated a lot of years to what I consider to be an excellent district and I want to be a part of it as long as possible," Cugini said after the meeting.

School board members, who are

up for election in May, are only permitted to appoint a temporary superintendent for six months.

However, Board Chairwoman Olivia Brennan said the board would like Cugini to take over DeSario's \$102,000 contract, which expires June 1993. The board will seek a waiver from Schools Chancellor Joseph Fernandez to extend Cugini's term, she said.

The board will formally vote on the appointment at its public meeting Monday.

Although it is up to the next elected board to appoint a su-

perintendent for a three-year term, Mrs. Brennan appointed a committee last night to begin the search. Cugini said he will throw his name in for consideration.

In other business, Cugini announced that the district will host a citywide job fair Feb. 27 to attract minority applicants to supervisory jobs in Island schools. But the plans rang hollow to board member Jeffrey d'Auguste, who noted that 12 of the 19 principal vacancies will be filled by that time.

D'Auguste said the chancellor's

office has suspended the hiring process at two schools — Egbert Intermediate School in Midland Beach and Laurie Intermediate in New Springville — because there were not enough minority applicants. Those are the only schools still accepting resumes, he said.

"It's a tradeoff," d'Auguste said. The chancellor's office "will release the schools if we have a job fair. If the board really wanted to do it they would've done it in September for all the schools. But why do it now?"

Cugini said he did not know why the chancellor suspended the hiring process at the two schools.

Jerry Cammarata said the fair

would help dispel the perception that Staten Island is a closed district to minorities.

In other business, charges that PS 42 PTA officers had rigged elections and misappropriated funds were brought to light, as Grievance Committee Chairwoman Eleanor Conforti found the PTA officers not guilty.

Joseph Tricarico, a parent and an attorney who filed the grievance against the Eltingville PTA in September, said the PTA had reported to its membership that it donated \$17,000 to the school. However, the school board had only approved a \$14,000 gift.

Tricarico also complained that

there was a separate voting process for teachers and parents during the elections last year.

Mrs. Conforti said a second audit, paid for by the PTA, found that the budget was balanced.

"I cannot believe there was an intent to defraud," she said.

Mrs. Conforti, who said PTAs have become "big business," warned the PTA officers to publicize monthly information about the budget and bylaws for its membership.

After the meeting, Tricarico said he will review the auditor's report before he decides whether or not he will appeal to the chancellor.