

# Cody resigns as education superintendent

BATON ROUGE (AP) — The state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Thursday scheduled a special meeting for Jan. 14 to discuss who will succeed Superintendent Wilmer Cody.

Cody handed in his letter of resignation Wednesday, saying he plans to step down Jan. 12 when his contract expires.

BESE President John Bertrand said the board chose Jan. 14 because it is the day after Gov.-elect Edwin Edwards is inaugurated. Bertrand said he expects Edwards' four appointees to the board to be on hand by then.

Edwards, however, has nobody in mind as

of yet to appoint to BESE, said Amie Kozan, a spokeswoman for the governor-elect's transition team.

Mentioned as possible successors have been state Sen. Cecil Picard, D-Maurice, Sally Clausen, -former higher education commissioner, West Feliciana Superintendent of Schools Patrick Cooper and Winston Riddick, chief assistant to retiring state Attorney General William Guste.

Picard and Clausen have said they are currently not interested in the post.

In his letter, Cody said, "I wish to express my appreciation to you for the opportunity to serve the board and the citizens of

Louisiana. I am confident that you will continue to move education forward."

Cody's resignation leaves BESE in a bind because it is unclear whether the current board can even hire a permanent superintendent.

BESE attorney Bruce MacMurdo said he does not think it can.

MacMurdo said state law prohibits the board from signing employment contracts that extend into the terms of a new board.

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