

Gobles school board chooses Jeffrey Rehlander of Granger, Ind., as superintendent



By [Rod Smith](#) | Special to the Kalamazoo Gazette [Follow on Twitter](#) [Print](#)

on March 27, 2012 at 9:13 PM, updated March 27, 2012 at 9:18 PM

GOBLES, MI -- Gobles Public Schools Board of Education has chosen a new superintendent: Jeffrey Rehlander, of Granger, Ind. The school board voted 5-0 to hire Rehlander during a special meeting Monday.

Board President Bonnie Miller said Rehlander's contract is still to be negotiated, including his salary and start date. The hope is to have him on board by spring break, which is next week.

"It's exciting to have the opportunity to provide leadership for K-12 public school education in Gobles," Rehlander said when contacted by telephone Tuesday.

He said he likes the small-school, family atmosphere of Gobles, as well as its caring, student-focused staff and strong community support. He noted that the district has in place a pre-kindergarten program, all-day kindergarten, a literacy program, online learning and schools of choice, and that it has met its annual yearly progress.

"There's a lot of good things that are already going on and I'm excited to become part of the culture that's already there of leaders and learners as we face the challenges and opportunities of going from good to great," Rehlander said.

Rehlander and William Stitt, superintendent of the Waldron school district, south of Jackson, were the two finalists from a pool of six semi-finalists and about two dozen applicants.

Miller said a delegation had gone to visit the schools of both Rehlander and Stitt. "They were both very good," Miller said of the two finalists.

"We all felt that Jeff Rehlander would be better for our district," she said. "It was unanimous."

Miller pointed to Rehlander's strength in finances as one reason he was chosen.



Rehlander has run his own bookkeeping and tax preparation business in Granger since 2007. From 2003-07 he was junior-senior high school principal at Lakeville-based Union-North United School Corporation. School districts are called "corporations" in Indiana.

For 15 years before that he worked for the Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation of Mishawaka as teacher, building principal and assistant superintendent.

He has a bachelor of science degree from Purdue University, a master's degree in public school administration from North Texas University and an educational specialist degree from Indiana State University.

Rehlander will succeed Tom Saylor, who is on his second term as superintendent in Gobles, having coming back on an interim basis when Brenda Wilson left last year.

Saylor retired in 2005 after 34 years at Gobles. He was high school principal from 1971 to 1991, when he became both principal and superintendent when Superintendent Anthony Topoleski left.

Later a principal was hired and Saylor worked solely as superintendent.