

O'Hearn shows up to work

College president then leaves, but says he's still in charge

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VICTORVILLE • After requesting a leave of absence last week, Victor Valley College President/Superintendent Dr. Christopher O'Hearn showed up to work Wednesday and then suddenly left — and no one at the school would explain why he was there or who was in charge of the campus.

Reached by phone Wednesday evening, O'Hearn said he would return to work again Thursday. He said he chose to leave Wednesday but did not offer any further details of why he was there.

"I left because I felt it was the right thing to do," O'Hearn said. "I will be in the college (Thursday). I'm still the Superintendent/President."

Last week, O'Hearn requested a leave of absence until June 30 — the day his contract expires.

The college's Executive Vice President Peter Allan was officially introduced as the school's interim president/superintendent at a public forum Monday.

O'Hearn said Wednesday that he's still in charge of the college.

Asked if Allan was still the interim president, O'Hearn said "not unless somebody else is giving him that power."

VVC spokesman Bill Greulich confirmed that O'Hearn was at work Wednesday morning. Greulich declined further comment, refusing to confirm how long O'Hearn was on campus, what he did while there, or why he left.

Others close to the school also said they could not comment and referred questions to Greulich. Board of Trustees President Lorrie Denson called it a confidential personnel matter.

O'Hearn has come under fire from staff and faculty members, including California School Employees Association Chapter 584 President Fred Board, who spoke out at Tuesday night's Board of Trustees meeting.

"To move forward with excellence we need a new, more effective administration," Board said at the meeting. "Now is the time for change. Now is the time for a new coach, a new quarterback, to ensure that our college does not go backwards again."

Neither O'Hearn nor board vice president Michael Krause were present.

Krause also missed a special meeting held earlier this month. Krause was criticized by American Federation of Teachers President John Reid during the meeting. Reid suggested to the board that Krause be censured for his comments on the Daily Press website criticizing the union.

Reid also criticized Krause's lack of attendance at recent board meetings.

In an interview after the meeting, Trustee Joseph W. Brady also criticized Krause's absences.

"The voters that voted him in want representation here," Brady said. "We've got huge issues at this college and we need a board member that can be here, one that is going to participate in a healthy manner and not tear this board apart."

Krause did not return repeated messages left Tuesday and Wednesday.

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