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He wants her job back now

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UNION CITY — Until six months ago, a Union City man was a woman.

The person who is now Steve Dane, was Doris Richards, the only woman physical education teacher in the Emery Unified School District in Emeryville.

Dane underwent a sex change and hormonal operation at Stanford University after being granted sick leave from the district.

Apparently, no indication was given at the time that the P.E. teacher would return as a man.

But he did, and he wants to keep his teaching job.

District officials don't really know what to do about the situation. A closed session of the school board Thursday night resulted in no decision on the matter.

Emery High School faculty members who have seen Dane report that he now is a 5-foot 3-inch man weighing about 145 pounds and sporting a beard. It was also reported that the formerly slim, sandy-haired Miss Richards now has a voice that's a couple of octaves lower than it was prior to the operation.

As Miss Richards, Dane was a fully tenured teacher with 10 years experience at Emery High.

Parents in the school district have reportedly expressed some concern over the type of assignment Dane will receive when he returns to school — they wonder if he will remain a P.E. teacher or be assigned to a classroom.

Males are prohibited by the state education

code from being in women's locker rooms, but, in the Emery district, matrons are assigned locker room jobs such as distributing towels.

Lewis Stommel, Emery superintendent of schools, is unsure about any decision in Dane's case.

"This is a very sensitive personal matter," he said. "I don't know if there's a decision to be made."

One teacher reported that Miss Richardson was a "good looking woman," and now is a man with a "thick and beautiful beard."

"A lot of men couldn't grow a beard like that," the teacher said.

Male teachers on the high school staff may have some difficulty adjusting to their changed colleague, the teacher said.

"She was very well liked by the men here. One used to joke with her and put his arm around her," the teacher said. "There was a lot of happy male and female horseplay, you know."

The teacher said Dane was happy to be back at school, and was quite open about his operation.

"She asked me if there was anything I wanted to know about the operation — any personal specifics," a teacher said. "We talked a while in the multipurpose room and boy, was my face red when I left."

Dane did not attend the Emery school board meeting Thursday, and the Review was unsuccessful in attempting to contact him in Union City.