

Rawdin hired as PBL High School's principal

By Will Brumleve

PBL Junior High School Principal John Rawdin was named principal of the high school during a special school board meeting Tuesday night.

The board voted 7-0 to hire Rawdin, effective at the start of the 2006-07 school year. The board also set Rawdin's annual salary at \$75,000, plus benefits.

Superintendent Cliff McClure said the board will fill the to-be-vacated junior high principal position this spring.

"That search will begin immediately," McClure said. "We'll start (Wednesday) putting some materials together to advertise his position."

Rawdin was selected as high school principal from among 18 candidates who submitted applications upon the Dec. 31 retirement of Principal Jim Flaherty.

McClure said five candidates were selected to be interviewed by McClure, high school faculty and one school board member before three of those candidates were chosen for final interviews in front of the full board.

"As it turned out, we felt that John was the best one of the candidates, and we were very happy he was will-

ing to accept the job and was excited to move on up," said Board President Mike Short. "I think probably the bottom line was (Rawdin's) dedication to the students. He just has very positive feelings about all the kids in this building. We think that positive influence and that positive nature he has will carry over to the high school as well."

Rawdin has touted PBL Junior High School as "the best junior high school in the world" since he began serving as principal in July 2003, and Rawdin said he expects no less of the high school.

"Yes, I believe the same thing will carry over into the high school," Rawdin said. "Coming into a new position, why not be the best? The students at Paxton-Buckley-Loda deserve the best, and our surrounding communities — the taxpayers here — deserve the best."

Rawdin: 'Very excited'
Rawdin said he is "very excited" to begin his duties as principal of the high school — a position held by Flaherty for the past 13 years.

Flaherty announced in November he would be resigning due to personal and professional reasons, and former PBL Superintendent John Perkins has

been serving as interim principal since Flaherty retired.

"I'm very excited about being here and taking on a new challenge — a new opportunity in my life to work with kids I've already had an opportunity to work with," Rawdin said. "I'll have known three grades (of students) at the high school next school year. I'm excited about seeing the culmination of some things I've helped start."

Rawdin, 46, also said the new job will enable him to continue working toward his career goals.

"It is going right along with the goals I set when I started this process at 32 years old," Rawdin said. "I wanted to teach for 10 (years), be a principal for 10 and be an administrator for 10 — and then retire in 20 years."

"I want to retire from PBL," Rawdin added. "I love the district; I love the people here; a great school board; I think Mr. McClure's leadership is outstanding. This district is on the cutting edge of something great, and I'm just happy to be a part of that."

Prior to working at PBL, Rawdin spent seven years as a teacher at Lincoln Trail Elementary School in the Mahomet-Seymour School

especially interacting with his students and attending extracurricular activities.

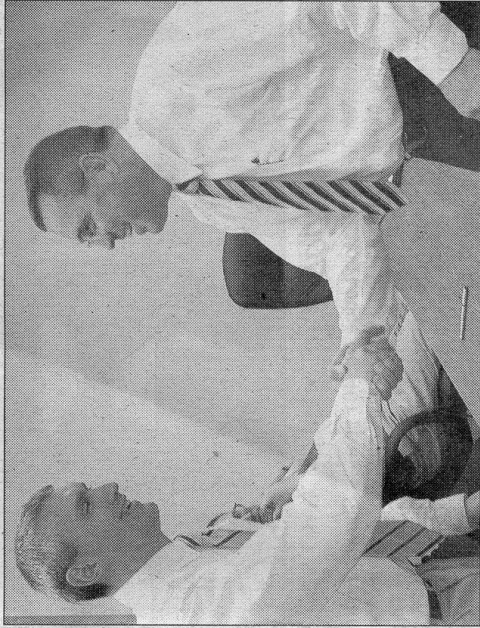
"Those kinds of things just keep me young, keep me thriving, and it just excites me to be able to have an opportunity to be there," Rawdin said. "It's just fun to have students see me in a different light."

When Rawdin is not at school, he spends time hunting, training dogs and with his "best friend" and wife, Lisa, at their Fooseland home.

Other business

Also Tuesday, the board accepted:

- The retirement of Pat Prina as junior high physical education teacher, junior high athletic director, eighth-grade boys basketball coach and varsity baseball coach, effective at the end of the 2005-06 academic year. Prina has served the school district for 37 years. Prina was unavailable for comment by press time.
- The employment of Carol Thilmony from two-eighths to seven-eighths assignment;
- The employment of Sandy Ecker as Clara Peterson Elementary School custodian.
- The employment of Amy Teske as records custodian for \$14 per hour.



John Rawdin, right, and PBL Superintendent Cliff McClure shake hands following the PBL School Board's decision Tuesday night to hire Rawdin as principal of the high school. Rawdin, who will begin his duties next school year, has been principal of the junior high school since June 2003. McClure said the board will fill the to-be-vacated junior high principal position this spring.

District, teaching fifth-grade for six years and fourth-grade for one year.

He had no previous administration experience. Rawdin said he "absolutely" loves his administrative duties at PBL —