

Kump wins praise as he juggles high-profile posts

■ Health official/school board chief center of probe into cancer at Southside.

By MARGARET COSTELLO
Star-Gazette
mcostello@stargazette.com

True to his engineering background, Thomas G. Kump loves to solve puzzles.

As director of environmental health at the Chemung County Health Department, Kump tackles problems ranging from sanitizing swimming pools to serving up safe sub-

marine sandwiches to keeping the West Nile virus at bay.

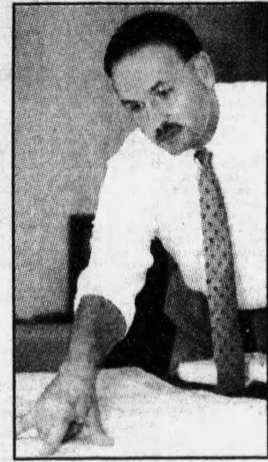
As president of the Elmira school board, he will lead the eight other board members and the district toward solving some tough problems, such as helping students meet higher academic standards, reaching a contract with the teachers union and making \$88 million worth of school repairs without disrupting the learning process.

But perhaps the scrutiny will be most intense as Kump helps resolve another major issue: the concern among parents at Southside High School that environmental contamination is causing current and former students to develop cancer.

At a public meeting sometime in mid-August, state officials from the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Conservation expect to present results from soil and air samples taken at the school. No date has been set, but state officials intend to hold the meeting before school opens in September.

Kump, 38, said handling the cancer investigation has been tough because the concern surfaced during the spring, the busiest season of the year for the environmental health office. The office inspects all public swimming pools, restaurants and food booths at

See KUMP/5A



MARIA STRINNI/Star-Gazette

Thomas Kump, director of environmental health at the Chemung County Health Department, looks over plans for a new hotel Thursday at a department office in Elmira.

Clipped By:



apatros

Sun, Apr 14, 2019