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Moscow Region Governor Resigns From University Post, Avoiding Plagiarism Charges

By The Moscow Times

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Though Andrei Vorobyov was listed as a professor at the Higher School of Economics, an investigation is unlikely to be opened. **Denis Abramov**

Governor of the Moscow region Andrei Vorobyov resigned from his position at the Higher School of Economics two days before an investigation into allegations of plagiarism was set to begin.

Vorobyov's resignation from the position, which reportedly has only nominal duties, made it unlikely that the university would be able to pursue charges of plagiarism, one of the school's professors told plagiarism investigation group Dissernet in a letter posted Sunday on journalist Sergei Parkhomenko's blog on Ekho Moskvy.

Vorobyov, who was elected governor last month after nearly a year as acting chief of the

region, cited his political workload as the reason for stepping down from his academic post, an unidentified professor wrote in the letter.

Scandal broke out last summer when Dissernet published photographs comparing pages from Vorobyov's doctoral thesis with earlier works by other scholars, highlighting long passages that appeared to be lifted directly from previous research and passed off as Vorobyov's own work.

According to the report, 107 of the 165 pages of the thesis contained plagiarized material.

After the publication, the economics school's professor Ilya Shchurov sent a letter to the dean's office saying Vorobyov appeared listed as a professor in the school's faculty directory and asking the administration to look into the charges.

Several professors also urged the school's administration to form a commission to investigate the plagiarism charges. Those plans have become moot since Vorobyov's resignation took effect on Oct. 16 — two days before the university's academic board was expected to convene and push for his dismissal, Sunday's Dissernet letter said.

The incident is the latest in a series of academic plagiarism allegations against Russian politicians. President Vladimir Putin has been accused of lifting much of his economics dissertation from a work by University of Pittsburgh academics published nearly 20 years earlier.

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