

Superintendent Interviewed

Dr. Currin Enjoys New Position

Editors note:

The following interview is with the new superintendent of City Schools, Dr. Benjamin Currin. At 34, he is perhaps one of the youngest men in the school system. He confesses that he does not feel uncomfortable as far as age goes. His thinking seems to reflect a bit of "youthful" enthusiasm and optimism. Dr. Currin seems to be quite interested in RMSH and its students. His comments on drugs and long hair were frank, interesting, and sincere. I believe we are indeed fortunate to have as the head of our school system a man concerned for us and about us. He's young and he'll take time to listen.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ROCKY MOUNT SO FAR?

"I've been impressed with the spirit. "All-America City" decals are everywhere, you've got a winning ball team, and the stadium stays packed. The spirit, that's what I've noticed the most."

HOW ABOUT RMSH?

"I've only visited Senior High twice so far. From what I can tell, you've got an outstanding school. Judging from your ball team, and the wonderful turnout at that Wilson ball-game you've got an outstanding school, and your annual and paper."

WHAT WERE YOUR FEELINGS WHEN YOU FOUND OUT YOU WERE COMING TO ROCKY MOUNT?

"Well, I knew of the trouble that happened here last fall. This may sound a little bit funny, but I think that having had that outbreak reduces the chance of another such episode.

A lot of underlying problems have been worked out. I doubt that type of thing will happen again."

WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HERE IN ROCKY MOUNT THAT YOU HAVE WORKED IN OTHER SCHOOLS?

"I can't really say right now exactly what we'll try to do. I haven't had time yet to see how receptive the Board of Education is. I think that there are several courses I would like to see installed here. Since they're beneficial to the school system, I don't foresee any big problems getting them started. I can't spell out anything really definite for you at this time, however."

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF TODAY'S SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, PARTICULARLY PRINCIPALS?

"The principal has probably had to make more change than anyone else. His job has changed 100 per cent. He's got to deal with different standards and merge two cultures--black and white together. Much progress has been made, but it hasn't been easy."

The principal used to take action and expect from 70-100% support.

Now, he's glad to get 50% and probably he'll have to just go with a plurality from anyone. The parents want more discipline, but the students are demanding more freedom at the same time. "Wishy-washy" is a term used to describe administration figures, from your principal to the president. Actually, I would say that the people who make these claims are suffering from a misunder-

standing of pressure. Principals and nothing they do is going to be satisfactory to everyone.

ABOUT STUDENT DEMANDS --DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS FOR DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH THE STUDENTS IN YOUR SYSTEM?

Definitely, there is a need for communication between my office and the students. I'm going to look into the situation. It may be that you students have lines of communication open to you, but you just don't use them. If you don't have channels that you can use to complain about problems, then I'm all in favor of getting a system for you. A student should be able to make a legitimate complaint without fear of intimidation or a loss of class standing. The students are supposed to come up with the problems, we're paid to come up with the answers."

How do you feel about hair? "I figured that question was coming. Well, to be trite, it doesn't turn me off; as you say. It's an individual matter. There are three reasons for long hair, I think. First, it's the current fad, and also it attracts attention, and on some people it's actually attractive. I noticed when I visited Senior High that your president has long hair. He's obviously in a position of leadership. It's a symbol and recognition. Every generation has its own symbol. Anyway, there are a lot of things worse than long hair.

ABOUT DRUGS . . .

They're definitely a problem, but not as great a one as some people would believe. Yes, many older folks would like to think that every youth has experimented with drugs. This just isn't so. But by saying that every student at a college is on dope, it's a little bit easier to turn a deaf ear to their protests. Drugs are being used to discredit youth in general. We've magnified the problem. We've even given publicity, though not intentionally, to marijuana, and stirred up a great amount of interest in it.

What Environment Means To Me And My Country

By DOUG COLE

The environment of a society has always influenced that society's development and strength. Because of this country's vast resources, it has been economically possible for the United States to have developed into such a powerful nation. However, today the United States' public is just realizing that the exploitation of our nation's environment can possibly result in a serious downfall of the United States' strength as a country.

The pollution of this country's environment has certainly become a nationwide problem already, although often it has not been recognized as a threat to the United States' future in the smaller, less industrialized communities. These blind communities have not taken the action to preserve their environment. Indeed, in many cases the larger and obviously polluted cities of the United States are not taking a proper course of action in fighting pollution. The public at large has not taken an active role in fighting for the life of our environment, mainly because it has failed to sense the actual threat pollution poses. Without a healthy physical environment how can Americans expect a healthy social or economic environment to carry on productive lives? These facets of environment deserve to be recognized. They rest on the foundations of a sound physical environment.

As the United States

gradually opens up new environments such as space, it must also strive to correct the earth's environment. So far, this environment has supported mankind. Now, mankind needs to support this life-giving environment.

Just as the environment influences the United States' development and strength, it determines the entire world's progress and results. Nations with larger resources in their environments are usually the more progressive and eager countries. Although the people of the United States do not seem to think of the other nations of the world as being polluted, the entire world is being influenced by pollution, directly or indirectly. Other nations of the world are gradually building up industrialized societies, which are often main causes of air and water pollution. The more advanced societies with industrialization beginning to take form often do not realize the potential dangers of these industrial factories in causing pollution. Because they have not been exposed to pollution, the young industrialized countries do not know of pollution, and therefore are not trying to prevent it.

With the United States helping, these countries should be informed about the dangers of pollution in order to realize that they must prevent it at all costs. If pollution is prevented in other countries, it may be stopped as a major problem of today's world.

English Teachers Travel To Greensboro Convention

Have you heard? RMSH is planning to reorganize the English department so that all courses are on an elective basis. Because RMSH is planning to make this move, Mr. Larry Tucker of the State Department suggested that representatives of our English Department attend a high school where this method is already in practice.

Thursday November 12 Miss Murchison, Mrs. Pace, Mrs. Armstrong, Mrs. Collins, and teachers from Northern and Southern Nash traveled to Greensboro Page High School to observe the new English curriculum.

The new course of study in English at Page High School is entirely elective for the Juniors and Seniors, whereas the Sophomores have to follow the Introductory Language Arts courses. The many courses include Shakespeare, Drama as a Study in Depth, Ethnic Literature, Journalism, Composition, and Myths and Legends --the only requirement is that the student elect at least six courses to the year.

A two hour briefing for teachers was held and the remaining time was spent observing English classes.

This trip proved very educational and encouraging and will surely help in determining our courses of study in English in the future.

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