

New superintendent saddles up for the job

By Emma Burgin
Reporter

Starting May 1, Guilford County Schools will have a new superintendent. Dr. Terry Grier is not only an experienced man, but he also enjoys country music and can't resist a good James Patterson murder mystery.

The Guilford County School board ended their search for a new superintendent Thursday, February 17 after a four-hour closed-door meeting. The vote was 6-5—in favor of Dr. Grier.

Dr. Grier was one of two candidates in the running. The other was Gene Denisar, a Florida school superintendent. Mr. Denisar was recently stripped of his duties in Florida, five months before his contract expired. Board members looked more closely at Grier because he is the "clear favorite of the community," says the Board of Education Chairwoman, Susan Mendenhall.

The board wanted someone who could manage a large school construction program, narrow an achievement gap between majorities and minorities and improve relationships with parents, county, government, and the community. When Dr. Grier heard this he said, "Hey, this is me! This is what we've done for the past four years."

"The 6-5 vote was an expression of the desires of the board," says Vice Chairman Calvin Boykin. "I wanted someone who was truly superior to the situation we have currently," referring to Lillie Jones, the interim superintendent. Boykin says, "I didn't feel [Grier's record] was clearly superior." Many wanted Ms. Jones to be appointed to the position, but she was not named as one of the six semi-finalists.

Five board members voted against Dr. Grier because of the board's decision not to interview Ms. Jones, the lack of community interest in either finalist, and the fear of an outsider coming in and upsetting the system's newly settled foundation (Guilford County Schools was created out of a merger between three separate school systems in 1993).

Dr. Grier will take control of 96 schools, 62,000 students, over 600 running buses, and an annual budget

of \$451 million. Currently, in Franklin, Tennessee, he is superintendent of Williamson County, which has 19,000 students. In Guilford County he will be paid \$155,000 per year—a 59 percent pay raise from his current \$97,000 per year.

The superintendent must meet with the board annually to set his goals for the coming school year. The board will provide Dr. Grier with a cellular telephone and pay up to \$50 per month for basic fees. He will receive \$750 per month for travel expenses, and he will get 25 days of vacation each year.

"I'm looking forward to the job," says Dr. Grier. "I'm going to work for the majority of the board, and I know and hope that we share the goal of improving Guilford County Schools. I'm looking at this place to make a long-term commitment, a place you could come and live and be happy. This feels

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- Dr. Terry Grier

right. This feels good."

Dr. Grier has hit some rough spots in his past 15 years of superintendence. In Williamson County Dr. Grier discontinued a program called prefirst, a longstanding program in the community that served as a stepping stone for kids not quite ready for the challenges that first grade provides. He thought that he could find a better use for the resources being consumed by the program.

His cancellation of the program paid off four years later. School test scores rose due to the cancellation of prefirst. Scores on the state's required exams in reading, writing, mathematics, and other subjects have risen well above national averages. The number of Advanced Placement courses has nearly doubled, and the number of dropouts has decreased significantly.

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Sullivan sweeps debate tournaments

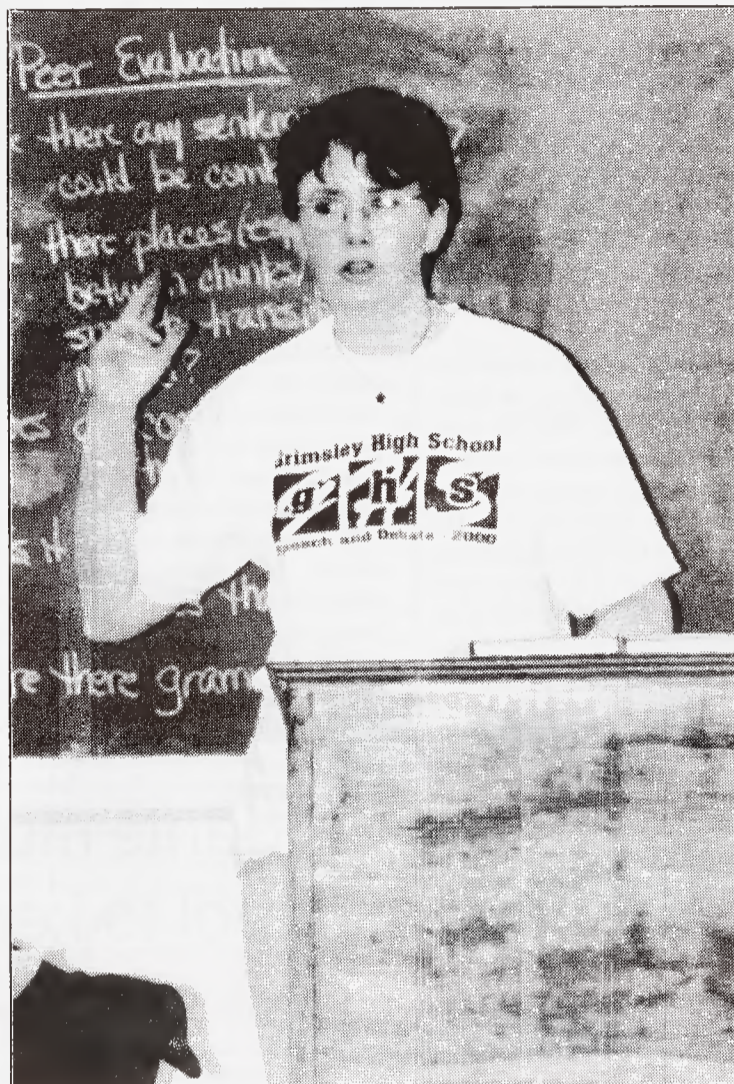
By Emma Burgin
Reporter

She is a sensation among the Grimsley student body. A junior, she has won over 15 awards in debate competitions and has received the Degree of Excellence from the National Forensics League—she's Meghan Sullivan.

Sullivan just returned from her first national tournament, the Berkley Forum at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. There she took fifth place, which she says is the highest honor she has won. She has attended about 18 additional debate tournaments throughout North Carolina in two years and has received about ten first place trophies. She has also received six lower awards. The National Forensics League, a national organization that sponsors tournaments and debate programs, has recently recognized Sullivan.

Sullivan competes in Student Congress, which is a mock version of the United States Congress. They follow all the procedures and rules for the real Congress and are graded on the speeches they give and how well they debate bills and resolutions. The bills and resolutions are based on realistic situations such as whether or not the U.S. should provide AIDs relief funds to Africa or whether or not the federal income tax should be replaced with a retail sales tax.

Sullivan has also performed in



Bass photo

Junior Meghan Sullivan gives one of her many speeches during a meeting of Grimsley's debate club. According to Sullivan, the club has helped her become the accomplished debater she is today.

Original Oratory, which involves a prepared, 10-minute speech, but Sullivan prefers mock Congress. "I've done better in Congress than in Original Oratory. In both events you get ranked on quality of speeches

and speaking ability," says Sullivan.

Sullivan is very interested in pursuing a career in law and politics. "I want to take debate

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New schedule makes for early morning

By Lauren Marker
and Regina Sechter
Reporter and Staff Writer

Rise and shine. After more than two full weeks out of school, students are now setting their alarms even earlier to prepare for the 15 minutes added on to their mornings and an agonizing 15 minutes added to their afternoons.

After all the snow days, the fear of losing spring break loomed large in the minds of most students. That's when the idea of adding a full half-hour on to each day bloomed. Now students

taking a zero period begin their day at 7:15 and for the rest of the students, school assemblies at 8:20.

"We've lost days of instruction. We're meeting the letter of the law by giving our students 1,000 hours in class," says Mrs. Teague. The new schedule wasn't the only idea for making up the state requirements of time. There was large debate over no spring break, adding 30 minutes to one class per day on a rotated schedule, and even going to school on Saturdays. Mrs. Teague said, "I had a lot of kids and parents with some

really great ideas. Unfortunately, it is easier to add the five minutes to each class. It just tends to work out efficiently. This way it doesn't mess up Weaver classes."

Though students have differing views on the new schedule, it seems that there is a consensus among the student body. Most people are glad to have spring break back. "I think it's good because we get to have spring break. If we didn't have that time in the spring the year would be so

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This year's baseball team has practiced hard in preparation for a very promising season.

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