

# District intervention teams to help failing schools

BY RACHEL WEINSTOCK  
Copy Editor

Guilford County Schools Superintendent Dr. Terry Grier announced on Feb. 6 the district would implement "intervention teams." The aim is for these teams to provide additional support to 18 schools not performing well academically, several of which have not met requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the past four years. Eight additional schools will receive "targeted" resources.

Eighty-four staff members from District Office and 20 curriculum facilitators are now deployed two to three days per week until the administration of End-of-Grade and End-of-Course examinations. Teachers in these failing schools often do not have adequate experience with these tests, so intervention teams will collaborate with them to achieve success. One issue of concern is teachers tend to seek jobs in prospering schools, so the turnover rate is higher in low-performing

schools, thus compounding the problem.

"Members of the team will work with particular teachers to help them assess their kids, focus on good instruction, and look at where extra help is needed," said former principal Rob Gasparello.

Floating employees must balance time spent between their home schools and those buildings receiving their assistance. Consequently, District Office and curriculum facilitators' home schools must devise plans to keep up with work since less staff members will be available. Dr. Grier does not expect student-to-Central Office staff ratios to drop below state average; however, critics still worry Central Office staff and curriculum facilitators, such as Bud Harrelson, will be spread too thinly.

"When he comes to something he does not have time to do, he will pass it on to me. I am doing more staff development planning and helping with the organization of the curriculum fairs," said curriculum facilitator Kay Miller.

Testing coordinator Linda

Sullivan will also feel the pressure.

"Bud's knowledge of the master schedule, of the faculty and what they teach, of the 'gotcha' issues that have arisen in the past, are all invaluable when planning for June EOCs. While he will be here three days a week, the demands on his time will be many. Tracking him down to go over things with him will be challenging. I have some concerns about this, especially since we will be dealing with a totally new exam schedule," said Sullivan.

Critics are also apprehensive of the plan because members of intervention teams may interfere with teaching rather than improve it. Only time will tell if this plan will decrease productivity at Central Office or cause conflicts in schools no longer having full-time curriculum facilitators.

"We recognize that this is not a long-term solution to low performing schools, and that not everyone will be pleased with this decision, as change is discomforting for many," said Grier in his Feb. 6 online announcement.



Madrigals visited Central Park in 2006 before singing at Lincoln Center. Bottom row: Megan Henley, Blair Kraus, Anthony Harrison, Eoghan Hayes, Haley Simmons, Olivia Harris, Kathryn Valchar, and Katherine Galloway. Top row: Costen Warner, Hannah Harrill, Eric Speckhard, Jacob Hasz, Will Smith, Nathan Milholin, Taylor Vancil, Meghan Parrish, and Michael Betts.

## Choir sings way to beach

BY LEIGH JOYCE  
AND BLAIR BLOOMQUIST  
Staff Writers

Grimsley's chorus classes await the departure of their musical expedition to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where they will perform from March 8 to March 10, under the direction of Marshall Johnson.

Traveling with eight chaperones, about 50 of Johnson's students will entertain diners at The Medieval Times dinner theatre. With an audience from all over the country, the show is said to be quite an experience. Other than singing, the

students will have an opportunity for beach time and will also attend a performance at the Carolina Opry.

Although past trips included more extravagant places, such as New York City, San Francisco, France, and Italy, Johnson chose Myrtle Beach because of the low cost.

"We have taken several big, long expensive trips in the past, but I wanted to make the trip accessible to more students this year," said Johnson. Unlike last year, this year's trip is open to any student enrolled in a choir, not just the Madrigal singers.

## Well-loved PE teacher leaves after 33-year career

Dear Grimsley Staff,

After graduating from Grimsley High School and Elon College, one of my goals was to teach and coach at Grimsley. Jane Teague gave me that opportunity ten years ago. I have worked with and taught some wonderful people during that time. I already knew several of you because we taught and coached together during my fourteen years at Dudley. I attained my goal, and I hope I was able to give something back to GHS.

When I attended Grimsley back in the dark ages, females were not allowed to set foot on the main gym floor, the library was located in the main building, and there were two clay tennis courts behind the cafeteria. We were ALL allowed to leave campus for lunch, the upper parking lot was gravel, there was no pool, no new science building, no elevators, and no air-conditioning (except for the music building). There were 2,000 of us, and we got three minutes to change classes. The grove was gravel, and everyone was allowed to smoke on campus. The auxiliary gym classroom where I teach was the girls' shower and dressing room. I'm OLD!!

I began teaching 33 years ago. I have had a wonderful career in both teaching and coaching.

My parents live in Greensboro and will soon turn 85 and 89 years old. My father had a stroke in September, and since I am their primary caregiver, it is time for me to be available for them 24/7. Therefore, I will be retiring Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2007.

I'm not sure what I will do in my spare time; however, I know for sure I will not be checking to see if school is delayed Thursday because of snow! I know I will miss you, but I'll drop in for a visit every now and then. Please help maintain the high academic standards for which Grimsley is synonymous.

I hope you have a great semester!! Thanks for all you do!! Keep in touch.

Take care,

Jeanne Perkins

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