

The Perquimans Weekly 35¢

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Perquimans County
an
All of Us
Community

September's theme:
Do
Your
Best

Incorporate these Healthy HABITS into your daily life and help make our community a better place to live!

For All of Us Care information, contact
Sandra Williams Smith
Perquimans County Chamber
426-5657

Henion acted properly in Tice case

Attorneys say superintendent followed policy, state law in case

By **SUSAN R. HARRIS**
Editor

The July 31 suspension without pay and later resignation of Hertford Grammar School principal Bill Tice has some local residents questioning the authority of schools superintendent Randall L. Henion.

Under the general statutes of the state of North Carolina, school boards are given the authority to hire and fire employees, according to Bob Joyce, an attorney with the North Carolina Institute of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill. The school board may delegate its hiring and firing authority to the superinten-

dent, he added.

During its August 18 meeting, Raleigh attorney Richard Schwartz of Schwartz and Shaw, the firm representing the school system in the Bill Tice case, said that the Perquimans County School Board has the ultimate authority to hire and fire employees. The school system's policy manual outlines that authority.

The policy manual under article 8150 No. 8 states that one of the duties of the superintendent is to "report to the Board the case of any employee whose service is unsatisfactory and recommend appropriate action." When asked how Henion could make the decision to suspend Tice without pay and begin dismissal proceedings without first consulting the board in light of the board's policy, Schwartz said that in the case of a tenured employee, laws must be fol-

lowed. He said the superintendent first gives notice to the employee of intent to initiate dismissal proceedings. The board is notified later.

Donna Rascoe, an associate with the firm, was asked last week to clarify that position. She, too, said that the board's policies must be used in conjunction with general statutes when dealing with tenured personnel. Rascoe added that the rights of employees at every stage of the dismissal process must be protected.

Rascoe said both Tice and the board were aware of his unsatisfactory performance at the time the action was taken by Henion. To have involved the board in the decision to begin dismissal proceedings could have affected its ability to be a fair and impartial hearing panel later in the process, had Tice opted to fight Henion's decision, she said.

When a tenured employee is

suspended incident to dismissal, Schwartz said the employee has the option to request a hearing before a Professional Review Committee. The committee is composed of principals and superintendents from across the state and is chosen by the state board of education. That body hears evidence from both the administration and employee. The committee is asked to determine if the employee was recommended for dismissal because one of the 15 reasons for dismissal of a tenured employee set in the general statutes exists. The committee makes a recommendation back to the local school board. The local board is not bound to accept the decision.

The tenured employee has the option of requesting a second hearing before the local school board. That body then makes a determination of whether sufficient reason

exists to dismiss the employee under general statute.

Tenured employees also have the right to skip the review committee and request a hearing before the local board first.

While the local board has retained its authority to hire and fire, Rascoe said Henion's decision to suspend Tice incident to dismissal was made in accordance with law. She added that it was not made hastily or without significant forethought.

The attorney said that the superintendent is the chief administrator in a school system, and must make some very difficult decisions, especially regarding personnel.

Rascoe said that as a former teacher herself, her first priority in any personnel case in which she is involved is protection for the employee. That, she said, is fundamental to the whole process.

PAYING RESPECTS



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPH

People from around the world united in sorrow this weekend upon hearing of the traffic accident that took the life of Great Britain's Princess Diana, her companion and the driver of the vehicle in France. Floral tributes, photographs and cards have been laid at royal palaces in London and the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. Princess Diana has been called a queen in the hearts of the people worldwide. Investigation into the tragic accident continues.

Three local boards deal with resignations

By **SUSAN R. HARRIS**
Editor

The county board of commissioners, school board and Hertford Town Council are all looking to fill positions created by recent resignations.

Hertford Town Manager John Christensen said last week that he received the resignation of police chief Bennie Murphy effective Sept. 10.

Murphy, who accepted the chief's position in March 1994, said Tuesday that he resigned to pursue other interests.

Meanwhile, the county commissioners are in the market for a parks and recreation director. Todd Hunter, who has held the position for a little over a year, was recently courted by officials in Dare County to join the recreation staff there. He will leave Perquimans County later this month.

Hertford Grammar School guidance counselor Diana Brock has also resigned.

SAT scores up here

Perquimans high in area scoring

By **SUSAN R. HARRIS**
Editor

Perquimans County High School students performed well compared to the Albemarle area as a whole on the SAT, according to figures released by the state last week.

Perquimans' students averaged 953 on the test, up one point overall from 1996.

Dare County led the area with 1028, followed by Tyrrell with 1027 and Currituck with 979. Chowan, Pasquotank, Gates, Camden, Bertie and Washington all had averages lower than Perquimans'.

The statewide average was 978, compared to the national average of 1016.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Ward said that overall, high-

er scores were related to the number of higher-level courses taken. Students who had taken four years of high school-level mathematics earned an average score of 1003, 81 points higher than the average score for students who took only three years of mathematics. Students are only required to take three years of mathematics for high school graduation. Coursework in geometry, trigonometry and calculus boosted scores significantly.

This relationship of coursework to performance held up in other subject areas also, Ward said in a news release.

Ward said that details of the SAT report showed the importance of good study habits, of taking advanced courses and of taking a balanced, rigorous selection of courses.

The difference between the national and state scores was the lowest since 1972.

Festival to feature new events

Kid's IDs, Kids Olympics and dance contest set

The Indian Summer Festival is right around the corner, and Chamber organizers are excited about additions to scheduled events.

Hertford Savings Bank will host the KidCare Photo ID booth, part of a national campaign by The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to increase awareness about missing children and to educate families about the steps they can take to help protect their children.

The purpose of the KidCare Photo ID event is to provide parents with a free, standardized, high quality instant photo of their child in an ID booklet where they can maintain statistics. The ID provides parents with information necessary to have handy if their child is ever lost or abducted.

The KidCare booth will be

open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. during the festival. Parents can receive a free ID and booklet for each child from age 6 months to 10 years.

Students from Perquimans High School's office administrations and health occupations programs will assist in the booth. Volunteers from the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department will be on hand to fingerprint each child.

The Family Support

Partnership will sponsor a Kids Olympics from 10 a.m.-noon.

A dance contest has been scheduled for the street dance featuring Bill Deal and the Original Rhondels, 8-11 p.m. at Missing Mill Park.

The Indian Summer Festival is organized and promoted by the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce. For information, call the Chamber at 426-5657.

Outside

THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
High: 70s	Low: 60s	High: 70s	Low: 50s	High: 70s	Low: 50s
SUNNY		SUNNY		SUNNY	