



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **2010-11 Class Completes Superintendents Academy**

The list of qualified individuals ready to assume the demanding position of school superintendent grew by nine names this month with the successful conclusion of the fourth Prospective Superintendents Academy hosted by the Tennessee Schools Boards Association (TSBA), the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS), and the Niswonger Foundation.

Those who successfully completed the 2010-11 Prospective Superintendents Academy are:

- Dr. Greg Carter**, Principal of West Middle School, Tullahoma City Schools;
- Dr. Damon Cathey**, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Kingsport City Schools;
- Mr. Dennis Neel Durbin**, Asst. Superintendent, Dyersburg City Schools;
- Mr. Scott Avery Gaines**, Elementary Supervisor, Maury County;
- Dr. Gerald G. Miller**, Principal of Nolachuckey Elementary School, Greene County;
- Mr. J. Brian Norton**, Principal of Scotts Hill High School, Henderson County;
- Mr. Gary Lynn Ray, Jr.**, Coordinator of Academic Coaches/T-eval program, Campbell County;
- Mr. Michael B. Shuran**, PreK Supervisor, Tullahoma City Schools;
- Mr. Keevin Woody**, Principal for Midway Elementary School, Roane County

According to TSBA, which conducts more superintendent searches in Tennessee than any other organization, our state faces a shortage of candidates who are prepared to lead school districts. Tennessee has a critical need for a preparatory program for prospective superintendents.

Created in 2007 to address this need, the Academy provides 16 days of training designed to help those with experience in such fields as education, business, military, government or public service acquire the unique knowledge and skills necessary to manage a school system. Courses were taught by top educational leaders from across Tennessee, and sessions covered subjects including school finance, school law, board relations, technology, personnel, and facilities management.

*(continued)*

*“We are extremely pleased with the continuing interest we have received concerning the Prospective Superintendents Academy, and we are even more pleased with the quality of the candidates who completed the course this year,” said TSBA Executive Director Tammy Grissom. “A dynamic, innovative and highly-skilled superintendent is crucial to the success of any school system, and based on what we have seen over the past year, we believe these nine individuals have the tools to meet that challenge.”*

Primary support for the Academy comes from tuition and from the Niswonger Foundation. Candidates who are currently Tennessee educators and are recommended by their employing school board are given preference for the annual training, but anyone may apply for admission. Up to 12 candidates will be accepted each year.

Upon successful completion of the program, candidates receive certification from the Academy’s independent review board consisting of educators and business leaders. Evaluation of candidates was based upon work product, portfolios, class participation, and a final oral presentation and interview.

The Tennessee School Boards Association, a statewide nonprofit organization founded in 1939, is a federation of the state’s school boards. It serves as an advocate for the interests of Tennessee’s public school students and school districts and provides in-service training and technical assistance for the more than 950 board of education members in Tennessee.

The Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents is a leading advocate organization for public education in the State of Tennessee. Since 1975, TOSS has been progressing public education and addressing the needs of the state’s school administrators.

The Niswonger Foundation is a catalyst for educational improvement in Tennessee. The primary focus of the Foundation’s work is education and its mission is to create opportunities for individual and community growth through education and other charitable activities.

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