

Another Great Superintendent - Passing Through

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As I [read](#) about Terry Grier's ongoing 'impressive' career, I gave 'thanks' that there are still people with his determination and talent willing to do their best under the very difficult – [unnecessarily difficult](#) – circumstances created by the governance and funding policies responsible for the [roots](#) of traditional public schools' typical, persistent low performance problem. Superintendents' typically huge paychecks help a lot. Superintendent pay is typically way more than mayors and governors.

Let me explain why I put 'impressive' and 'thanks' in single quotes. Because of his track record for achieving significant improvement, Superintendent Grier has no trouble finding another job after losing his job because of what it took to pursue significant improvement. He's been the superintendent of a lot of districts, no doubt with more to come. Even after he secured significant improvements, he left behind situations with much room for further improvement; much like lionized former Boston Superintendent [Tom Payzant](#). Superintendent Grier knows what it takes to significantly improve the performance of the current system, but the ability of anyone to improve its outcomes [without systemic change](#) is very limited, hence the remaining room for major improvement each time he has moved on.

I put 'thanks' in single quotes because our current K-12 system largely squanders the considerable talents of educators like Terry Grier. So, I give thanks for the Terry Griers of the current K-12 system with regrets and apologies for severely under-utilizing them, and for mostly keeping them from enjoying the benefits of a long tenure in a place they want to call home. We have a public school system that can't keep good people or fully exploit their talents; another powerful sign of the need for transformational systemic change.