

Salisbury Academy names former banker head of school

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Diane Fisher is the new head of Salisbury Academy. photo by Wayne Hinshaw, Salisbury Post

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As a child, Diane Fisher attended a private school in Burlington. When she grew up, moved to Salisbury and had kids of her own, she wanted them to have the same kind of educational experience.

So when Salisbury Academy formed in 1993, Fisher, a former banker, was excited. She enrolled her son in the school's first first-grade class.

Back then, the school had only 13 students in grades 1 through 3. Classes were held at

Haven Lutheran Church.

Fisher volunteered her time as a parent at the school.

Today, though, she has a different role at a very different kind of Salisbury Academy.

The native of Burlington was recently named head of school by the academy's board of trustees.

Fisher, 48, is the new leader of the school on Jake Alexander Boulevard that serves 160 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grades.

So far, she says, things are running smoothly.

"It's just such a positive environment around here," Fisher said.

Fisher graduated from Meredith College in Raleigh in 1982. She earned a bachelor's degree in business management.

After graduation, Fisher went to work in Durham in Wachovia's sales finance department.

Her husband, Luke, is a Salisbury native, and the couple moved here in 1984.

Fisher worked for a while at a Wachovia branch in Salisbury, but she put her career on hold to have children.

The small-town environment Salisbury had to offer was an adjustment for Fisher.

"I thought, I could complain about all the things I don't like about Salisbury, or I could work to make it a better place," she said.

So Fisher began volunteering with her church, the symphony and Waterworks Visual Art Center.

She said she encouraged the founders of Salisbury Academy to open a school.

Greg Alcorn, chairman of the school's board of trustees, said Fisher was an easy choice for the job.

Fisher, a former board chairwoman at the school, has been serving as the interim acting administrator since June. The former administrator, Sal Trento, had resigned.

"(Fisher's) the perfect choice for us," Alcorn said. "... Nobody knows as much about that school as she does."

Fisher said her son had such a good experience at Salisbury Academy, she decided to send her other two children there, too.

Fisher wants other kids to experience the school, where she says kids enjoy learning.

"I would love to reach as many families as we can to give them this great opportunity," she said.