

BACK TO CLASS

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Miss Sapack and her kindergarten students were prepared and ready to start their first day of school at Elm Street Elementary School in Laconia Thursday morning. (Karen Bobotas/for The Laconia Daily Sun)

Students start school with new teachers, new principal at Laconia High School

By RICK GREEN, LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — School district administrators were busy over the summer finding more than a dozen new teachers to replace instructors who left after last school year.

There was a full complement of teachers on hand when students returned to class Thursday, Assistant Superintendent Amy Hinds said.

“We did have some staff that chose to go to other school districts and a number of faculty retired,” she said. “We did have openings at all levels and we were able to fill all those positions.

“The new contract helped in recruiting.”

That 5-year contract, which went into effect July 1, included significant raises for teachers. By the end of the pact, their salary is expected to be at or above compensation levels in most other districts in the area.

One of those who left was New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Tate Aldrich, who earned \$39,700 annually as chairman of the English department at Laconia High School. He took a position at Kingswood Regional High School in Wolfeboro paying \$51,500.

The district had hoped to hire a new teacher who would allow Laconia High School to reopen its wood shop and offer woodworking as an elective course for students.

However, no appropriate candidate for the position was found, Hinds said. Schools offer fewer such classes than they used to, and it is difficult to find a qualified teacher to run a woodshop course, she said.

“We had a few candidates but they just weren't a good fit or didn't accept the position,” Hinds said.

She said there has been demand for such a class, which could also prove valuable for students wishing to get early exposure to building trades. Students who had signed up for the class were shifted to other courses.

There is a new principal at the high school this year. Michael Fredericksen was hired at a salary of \$108,500 to succeed David Bartlett, who left to become an assistant principal at Rundlett Middle School in Concord. Fredericksen was an interim assistant superintendent in the Nashua School District.

The high school has about 570 students this year, which is part of an overall student population in the district of about 2,000, including children attending pre-kindergarten.

That's about the same number as a year ago, but is down about 300 students from a decade ago.



Mitchell Day is all smiles with his mom, Sarah Lamontagne. Day began his first day of kindergarten on his 5th birthday. (Karen Bobotas/for The Laconia Daily Sun)