

Super Ready for Permanent Vacation

Coventry's Convery closing book on career

Began as teacher in 1991 before moving through ranks; last day Thursday

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COVENTRY — School superintendent Mike Convery was very relaxed in his Hawaiian shirt Monday as he had some final meetings with school administration personnel and prepared his notes for the council meeting to be held later that night.

After 25 years in education, Convery is ready to retire from being active in the school district and spend more time with his family.

His last day is Thursday, June 30.

He began his career as a seventh-grade math teacher in 1991, teaching for five years until 1996, when he was asked to fill a guidance position, which included, in part, running students' schedules because he was knowledgeable with computers.

"I was only expecting to do that for four to six

weeks, but then it turned into Dean of Students then Assistant Principal at what was the former Coventry Middle School, now the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School," he said. "In 2001, the Superintendent left and the principal left, both at about the same time, three weeks into the school year. I found out the next day that the town council approved me for a two-year contract as principal. That was my position until 2007, before I came to central office."

In his time as Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent, there are two things that he is proud of — the recent budget approving all-day kindergarten and the approval of the \$8.5 million bond for school improvements.

One of the main changes he has seen through the years is the digital age.

"In 1995-96, every school had a computer system but none was connected," Convery said. "We had in-

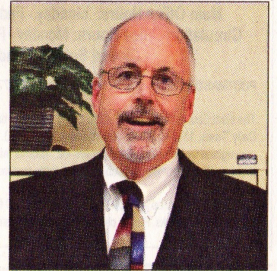
house report cards on a floppy disk in the guidance office. Now, every student in the state has a nine-digit code which follows them throughout their K through 12 career so they can't be enrolled at more than one school. That level of tracking didn't exist years ago and is a part of No Child Left Behind."

Another aspect that has contributed to a better school district is a higher level of collaboration.

"Each grade is using computers more and more, both teachers and students, so people can connect all the time and teachers don't have to leave a classroom to talk to another teacher," he said.

Over the years, along with the constantly-changing waves in education, Convery said he has also learned a lot about people.

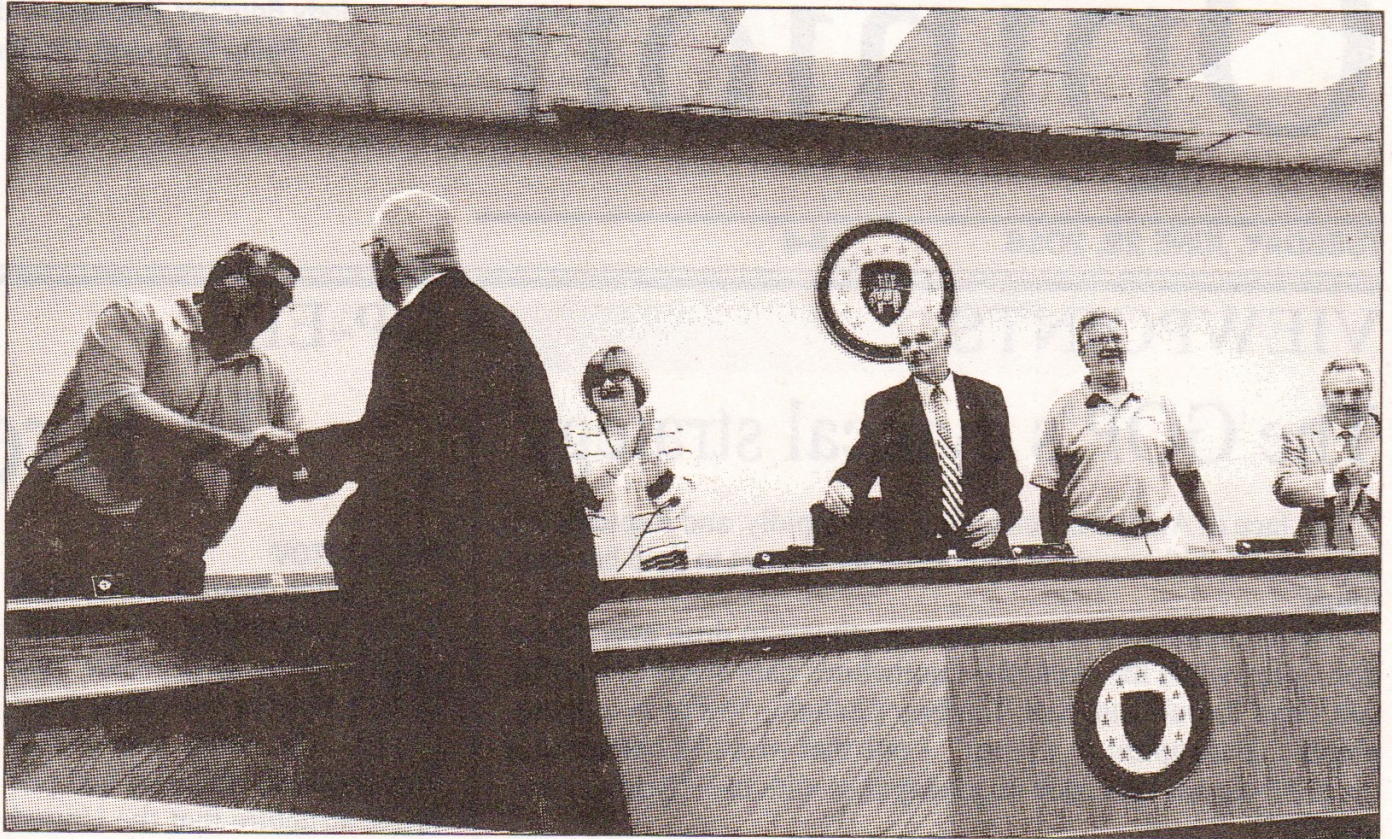
"One of the most important things I've learned is



Daily Times file photo

Coventry Assistant Superintendent Mike Convery will say goodbye to the district on Thursday after 25 years there.

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Kendra Leigh Miller • Daily Times

Coventry Town Council Vice President Kerry McGee (far left) offers a handshake to outgoing Assistant School Superintendent Mike Convery at last night's Town Council meeting.

Convery retiring after 25 years with Coventry

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that you can tell a table of people to do something and they'll do it, but the idea is to get them to understand it and get them just as excited about implementing it as you are," he said. "Sometimes that first step can take time, but when they do,

they run with it."

He said it's been interesting to see things change over time.

"The things we did in the '90's, we don't do anymore, just like the times before that," he said. "What it all comes down to is when that teacher faces those kids in that classroom, that's what matters, not the peo-

ple who are meeting around that table but the teachers and the students and we support them the best way we can."

Laurie Weber, the former principal of Chariho High School, will be the district's new Assistant Superintendent.