

KENT COUNTY
DAILY TIMES



SPORTS

Coventry boys'
and girls'
basketball teams
claim CCU title

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2010 VOL. CXVIII NO. 304

WWW.KENTCOUNTYTIMES.COM

50 CENTS

Looking back- the year in review



Times File Photo

L-R: Retiring superintendant of schools in Coventry Kenneth DiPietro, James Erinakes, assistant superintendant and Michael Convery, newly appointed superintendant.

Stories that affected Coventry schools

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF MAY 13

HANNAH PIECUCH
hpiecuch@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — A plan to reduce the school budget by \$1 million was approved by the school

committee on Tuesday night. Anticipating level funding from the town and a reduction in state aid, Superintendents Kenneth DiPietro, Michael Convery and James Erinakes II

went back through the budget to look for additional reductions. The cuts also address a debt-reduction plan in response to the cumulative deficit highlighted in the town's annual audit.

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF JUNE 17

ANGELENA CHAPMAN
achapman@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — The public came out in support of sports Tuesday night as the school committee met to look at the proposed budget. Among other cuts, it recommended shifting the

middle school sports program to intramurals and losing the junior varsity high school sports program. The committee decided to hold off on making any decision.

The committee did not vote but instead came to a consensus that the proposed cuts should be plugged into the fiscal year 2010

to 2011 budget, but only to see what they would look like, School Committee Chairperson Katherine Patenaude said.

"We weren't prepared to take any vote," she said. "We don't really have to make a decision until July 1."

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF JULY 13

ANGELENA CHAPMAN
achapman@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — Three months ago the American Civil Liberties Union sued the state's truancy court system and the school districts in six communities including Coventry.

Rhode Island's American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) executive director, Steven Brown, confirmed that Coventry

had been sued as a part of the class action lawsuit brought March 29 that claimed the state's "truancy court system is devoid of due process protections in violation of state and federal law."

Brown said the ACLU was challenging Coventry's participation in the truancy court system.

He also said the suit raised a number of claims that the ACLU sees as "infringements on consti-

tutional and statutory rights."

Of the six school districts that were a part of the suit, three others have already entered settlement agreements and Brown said an agreement with Coventry looks very close. The ACLU's attorneys have been working with the attorneys from the town of Coventry, Brown said, to reach an agreement.

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF JULY 23

ANGELENA CHAPMAN
achapman@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — Town officials want to make the issue of the "line of credit" clear to the public.

The school department has agreed to a debt reduction plan of \$75,000 a year for five years to pay the town back for a \$363,540 accumulative deficit

discovered by independent auditors early this year.

Former School Superintendent Kenneth DiPietro had stated that the \$363,540 was overspent as a result of a "line of credit" offered by the town council to the school department in order to keep the Flat River Middle School open in 2004-2005.

Town Council President Ray-

mond Spear said that the way he understood it the town council had asked the school committee how much money they needed to keep the school open and had been told \$400,000.

Current Town Manager Thomas Hoover said, however, that after discussions with the town solicitor, a line of credit is "really not a legal instrument."

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF AUGUST 5

ANGELENA CHAPMAN
achapman@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — Students in Coventry will no longer be sent to the truancy court.

The school committee voted at their Tuesday, July 27 meeting

to approve the Truancy Consent Order. This order settles a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) against the town and school superintendent concerning their participation in the Rhode Island Family Court's Truancy Court program.

The order was signed into effect on Tuesday, August 3.

Rhode Island ACLU executive director Steven Brown said that as long as the Coventry School Department complies with the consent order, they are out of the lawsuit.

THIS STORY FIRST APPEARED THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 14

ANGELENA CHAPMAN
achapman@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — The school department told the town council that they are asking for \$1.6 million in additional aid for the next fiscal year at a budget workshop

held this Monday night.

The school department presented first, outlining all projected increases for fiscal year 2011 to 2012.

The town then presented on projected revenues, showing a projected \$10 million loss in tax

revenue due to declining property values.

Superintendent of schools Michael Convery and director of business and finance for Coventry Public School Robin Reasor presented to members of the town council and the public.



Times File Photo

Students gather outside Black Rock school on the first day of classes 2010 looking for old friends they haven't seen all summer.