

# Rain doesn't stop school



Angelena Chapman-Daily Times

Students seemed eager to begin school as they arrived at Hopkins Hill Elementary School in Coventry on Tuesday. See more photos on Page A-8.

## After a five-day delay, Coventry starts school

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COVENTRY—Raindrops, no matter how big, didn't keep kids from starting school in Coventry on Tuesday morning. School started five school-days late after Tropical Storm Irene left some roads impassable and some schools without power in Coventry.

Yesterday morning, it was a sea of festive and multi-colored umbrellas outside the doors of most Coventry Public Schools.

The rain poured at times and students and teachers rushed inside, not stopping outside to chat with old friends like they might normally do.

Superintendent of Coventry Public School Michael Convery paid a visit to each school in the district on Tuesday. By noontime, Convery had only one school left to visit.

He had started around 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday at the high school.

In his fifth year as a part of the main office in Coventry, "I don't remember it ever being this calm," Convery said.

The district has new buses on the road as well this year, he said.

"There will be some issues with buses not being exactly on time," Convery said, "That's not unusual." He said they may have to [adjust] some stops a little bit.

"Everything seems to be going very well," he said.

"We are having a wonderful start," Dr. Donna Raptakis, the principal at Washington Oak Elementary School, told the Times, "Even with the rain."

Students had indoor recess due to the rain, but Raptakis visited each classroom and the lunchroom on Tuesday.

Raptakis said they had spent the morning making sure that every student knew how to get home at the end of the day.

The students need to know both their bus number coming in and also the number of the bus they will ride home on, Raptakis said.

Their enrollment is at 680 this year, Raptakis said.

One change they made at Washington Oak this year is to their dismissal policy.

All children who are walkers or who will ride in daycare vans will be dismissed through the cafeteria, Raptakis told the Times.

"Parents have been notified,"

she said, through the list serve, which she said is very active.

"The students," Raptakis said, "are practicing responsible, safe and respectful behavior"—part of Coventry Public School's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program.

At this Thursday's open house at Washington Oak, there will be informational sessions on PBIS.

Open houses will be held at all seven schools over the next four weeks.

This Thursday, Sept. 8, Washington Oak Elementary School will hold the first open house from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry will hold open houses on two days. Tuesday, Sept. 13 by at 6:30 p.m. and is for grade six and Wednesday, Sept. 14, also at 6:30 p.m. is for grades seven and eight.

Monday, Sept. 19, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Western Coventry Elementary School will hold their open house.

On Wednesday, Sept. 21, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Tiogue Elementary School will hold their open house.

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## “Sea of festive and multi-colored umbrellas” as kids return to school

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Coventry High School's open house is Thursday, Sept. 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Hopkins Hill Elementary School will hold their open house on Monday, Sept. 26, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Blackrock Elementary School's open house is the last

one and will be held Tuesday, Sept. 27, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Four of the seven schools in Coventry lost power as a result of Tropical Storm Irene.

One question that quite a few people have had for Convery is what they are going to do about the five days of instruction that were lost due to the storm.

Convery said he has some suggestions, but said it is the school committee's decision.

He plans to bring it up at the Coventry School Committee meeting next Tuesday, Sept. 13.

“We are not done with hurricane season, much less winter,” Convery said, “We're going to take it one step at a time.”