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Seventeen Andover seniors graduated from Merrimack Valley High School on June 21. Erin Frost received an award for participating in three sports for all four years. The Principal's Award for Academic Excellence went to Katelyn Ashburn and Rebekah Stearns, both of whom were also recognized for being in the top ten scholars.

Front: Emily Lance, Rebekah Stearns, Devynne Dlubac, Skyler Smith, Erin Frost, Haley Adams, Brooke Ellis, and Katelyn Ashburn. Back: John Bates, Seth Newton, Logan Donovan, Kyle Smart, Kyle Keller, Jacob Chaplain, Kody Keller, Sam Bentley, and Ian Corey. Photo: Katherine Stearns



David Miller takes over as MVHS principal on July 1. He is shown here with his son Liam.

David Miller is New Principal at MVHS

Replaces Mike Jette,
who leaves for Bedford

By Iain Wilson
Concord Monitor staff

Like its search for a new superintendent, the Merrimack Valley School Board's efforts to find a new principal [for Merrimack Valley High School] ended in the Kearsarge Regional School District. The school board recently unanimously approved the hiring of David Miller, assistant principal at Kearsarge Regional High School, to replace Michael Jette, who will be the assistant superintendent in Bedford next year.

Earlier this year, the board hired Mark MacLean to replace outgoing Superintendent Michael Martin. MacLean is currently assistant superintendent in Kearsarge.

"I think most impressive to me was what I heard from a variety of people and teachers who knew him," Assistant Superintendent Chris Barry said, referring to Miller. "We heard about his relationship building and the fact that he is a very collaborative person and a good listener."

A committee made up of teachers, support staff, students, parents, and administrators met and vetted candidates then gave feedback to the full board

before the final vote. The board conducted six screening interviews from an applicant pool of about two dozen candidates.

"His intellect, his calmness, and his delivery – people thought overwhelmingly that he should continue further into the interview process," Martin said.

The final stages of the hiring process included three phases: meetings with faculty and building staff, meetings with community members, and tours of the high school. Merrimack Valley leadership also visited Kearsarge. The decision was made on May 28.

Jette's last day is June 30, and Miller will begin July 1. Tasks for the summer will include making sure the school's faculty is fully staffed and confirming that all school materials are ordered and received. Miller will also work on resolving any student scheduling issues with classes before the school year starts.

Starting in July will allow Miller to become familiar with the new situation. "It requires meeting with people and getting familiar with the people and how the building functions," Martin said.

During interviews, the search committee noted Miller's skills in building relationships with parents and students.

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AE/MS 6th and 7th graders spent the day at the Polar Caves exploring glacial boulder caves. Students were able to explore glacial caves, make observations of post glacial landforms, identify plants, and have fun with their peers. Most everyone attempted the famous "lemon squeeze" cave and nobody got stuck this year. The trip ended with a visit to Profile Falls on the way home. Photo and caption: Ryan Murphy

Dear Andover Community,

History was made on June 18 when the 32 students in our first full-day kindergarten class graduated and moved on to first grade. We remain very grateful to the Andover community for voting for the full-day kindergarten in March of 2012. The implementation of full-day kindergarten will have a positive effect with ramifications to be evident up through the grades at Andover Elementary/Middle School.

The 32 kindergarten graduates have an insatiable appetite for learning and have maximized the opportunities afforded within their seven hours in which to learn, play, and grow. Throughout this first school year, we have witnessed the benefits of full-day kindergarten on countless occasions. First grade teachers are planning to have higher expectations in the fall, and the first grade curriculum will be accelerated.

I had invited Governor Hassan to participate in this historical and meaningful graduation, but the date conflicted with her trip to Turkey. This is unfortunate, because AE/MS kindergarten graduation was the place to be! I would like to thank New Hampshire State Representatives Mario Ratzki, Lorrie Carey, and David Karrick and Senator Andrew Hosmer for their help in encouraging the governor to attend.

Kindergarten graduation is all about celebrating our children. They will sing I'm a Little Graduate; First Grade, First Grade, Here We Come; and an all-time favorite, Tony Chestnut. The short graduation will be followed by cupcakes, juice, and lots and lots of photos.

AE/MS educators Laura Witt, Putnam Kidder, Cathy Fadden, Stacey Rowe, and Mariah DeMello can be proud of their students and the amount of growth (educationally, socially, and physically) that we have witnessed this year. Of course, it takes a village, and that includes parents, grandparents, siblings, and other AE/MS staff members who have played key roles in the success of our full-day kindergarten students.

While we celebrate the kindergarten students as they move up to first grade, it is important to also take the time to celebrate our community. We are very fortunate to live in a community where support for children and education is demonstrated on a regular basis.

Appreciatively,

Principal Jane Slayton and the AE/MS community