

New Concordia Principal familiar face in education

Former school chief coming out of retirement for school he attended

By Jennifer Towery – *Peoria Journal Star*, August 14, 2008



PEORIA—Concordia Lutheran School is beginning its 50th school year with one of its own at the helm.

R. Scott Russell, who retired a year ago as superintendent of Morton schools, started as interim principal at Concordia Aug. 1. He replaced longtime Principal Roger Sprengel, who took the position of schools and general executive of the Southern Illinois District—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Though Russell has never worked at the school before, he started there as a third-grader the year it

first opened in 1959. “I’ve come out of retirement because I’m an old Concordia grad,” Russell said. “I have two children who graduated from here. And I have a granddaughter who is about to start here.”

The chance to help a school that has meant so much to him over the years was too great a lure to turn down, he said.

Russell’s contract with the Concordia School Board is for a year. But he’s already considering staying on a more permanent basis if the board were to make that offer.

“I’ve been thinking about all the things I wanted to do,” he said. “Concordia has always been a great school. But I want to make it even greater.”

If he were to remain at the school beyond this school year, he would return to school for a religious training certificate because he’s always worked at public schools, he said.

Russell began his career as a teacher in Peoria District 150. He’s been an administrator in District 150 and at Limestone Community and Illinois Valley Central high schools. His last position before becoming superintendent in Morton was as assistant superintendent in District 150.

Concordia has a number of events planned this school year to commemorate the milestone.

In October, faculty and staff will be recognized on consecutive Sundays at each of the three churches that support the school, Mt. Calvary, Redeemer and Trinity Lutheran churches.

Next June 13, there will be a 50th anniversary celebration at the Peoria Civic Center. And on Aug. 23, 2009, the school will have a re-dedication ceremony.