

Wednesday, August 20, 2014

'Next stage' career move



Greg Kreller/IPT

Endeavor Elementary first grade teacher Valerie Riley ties the shoe laces of Richie Olvera during the first day of the school year for the new teacher Monday afternoon at the Nampa school. Riley went back to college to fulfill her dream of becoming a teacher.

Former business manager starts teaching job at elementary

By **KELCIE MOSELEY**
kmoseley@idahopress.com

© 2014 Idaho Press-Tribune

NAMPA — For more than a decade, Valerie Riley was all business. Now she's turning to something she always felt would bring her pleasure — teaching.

Riley, who is a Vallivue High School graduate, began her first year of teaching this week at Endeavor Elementary School in Nampa as a first-grade teacher. Though she is new to this role, she is not new to the district. Riley was the office manager at Nampa's Centennial Elementary School for eight years, while she took night classes at the College of Western Idaho and then studied at Northwest Nazarene University for the past five years. After graduating with her teaching degree from NNU in May, she accepted the position at Endeavor. Though she applied for teaching jobs in Boise and Meridian, this was her ideal scenario.

"I was hoping to get Nampa because I live here, and I think it's important to live where you work," Riley said.

Riley, 42, has four children, three of whom are in college and



Greg Kreller/IPT

Riley prepares her students for the end of the day during the first day of the school year for the new teacher Monday afternoon at the Nampa school.

one who just graduated college. That helped influence her decision to go back to school as well, now that her children are grown.

One of her major goals as a teacher is to instill a passion for reading in her students — something she did with her own children, as well.

"I have a deep passion for reading," Riley said, which she shows off with a large library in the corner of her classroom. "I think if (students) know how to read from a young age, it sets them up for success."

Please see **Teacher**, A10

Teacher

Continued from A1

Though she is making a mid-career move at a time of big change in education with the implementation of the Idaho Core Standards and new statewide assessments, Riley said she actually has an advantage that way because it's the

only way she's known. She came into her teaching education when the Common Core standards were just being introduced.

"I feel like even though I'm in my 40s, I know how to implement Common Core more than some," Riley said.

The first day of school Monday went well, Riley said, and she looks forward to the rest of the year. One student already brought her a shiny red apple.

"I'm taking that 'next stage of life' career move," she said. "... It's exciting."