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*April 14, 2022
Vol. 3, Issue 15*



Photo by Matt Trucks

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DMV-ON-WHEELS



FUNDING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES



INSIDE THE CIRCLE

Photo credit: Mt. Cuba Center

Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





IS THAT THING REGISTERED? DELAWARE ROLLS OUT DMV-ON-WHEELS

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles has launched its “DMV On the Go” mobile DMV trailer. The handi-cap-accessible trailer allows customers to perform all the same transactions as they would at a traditional DMV location, except for inspections, driving exams, driver improvement services and uninsured motorist fees.

At the DMV on the Go, customers can renew their driver’s licenses and state IDs, update their addresses, process or transfer titles and registrations and more.

This alternative to brick-and-mortar DMV locations is designed to allow customers who may not be able to travel to traditional locations to complete necessary services right in their neighborhoods.

“Not everyone has the means to simply get in their car and drive to a DMV location when they need to renew their driver’s license, change their address or complete another transaction,” said Delaware DMV director Jana Simpler. “With DMV on the Go, we can bring these

services to our residents. We are literally bringing the DMV to them.”

DMV on the Go hours through Oct. 31, 2022:

- Tuesdays from 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
DART First State of Delaware, 119 Lower Beech Street, Wilmington, DE 19805
- Thursdays from 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Big Lots Plaza, 820 Norman Eskridge Highway, Seaford, DE 19973

“Our new and improved DMV on the Go will provide a convenient way for residents to take care of their DMV needs without traveling to one of our four primary facilities,” said Secretary of Transportation Nicole Majeski. “This new mobile facility will allow us to continue visiting locations across the state for years to come.”



BOOST YOUR PROTECTION!

All Delawareans 12+ should get a COVID-19 vaccine booster.

COVID-19 vaccines are incredibly effective against death and hospitalization. But due to new and existing variants, as well as decreasing effectiveness against the virus over time, it may be time to boost your protection. **Find out if you’re eligible and schedule your COVID-19 vaccine booster.**

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Received both doses of Pfizer	Yes, if you are 12+ AND it has been five months since your second dose.
Received both doses of Moderna	Yes, if you are 18+ AND it has been five months since your second dose.
Received Johnson & Johnson single dose	Yes, if you are 18+ AND it has been two months since your first dose.

If you are 50 or older, or have a weakened immune system, talk to your health care provider about whether you should get a second booster dose of the vaccine.

 de.gov/boosters





TOUR NEW CASTLE'S HISTORIC BUENA VISTA MANSION, GROUNDS

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Buena Vista, one of Delaware’s most historic estates, will welcome visitors for a one-day-only spring event on Saturday, May 14.

The event, which will take place between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., will feature outdoor children’s games, nature walks, guided tours of the grounds and mansion, and educational programs by the Sunshine Plein Air Artists and Bluebird Society.

The main section of the Buena Vista mansion was built between 1845 and 1847 by John M. Clayton, a United States senator and secretary of state under presidents Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore.

The home later became the residence of C. Douglass Buck, governor of Delaware from 1929 to 1937 and United States senator from 1942 to 1948.

The Buck family donated Buena Vista and its grounds to the state in 1965. It now serves as a conference and event center.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public but reservations are required for some of the activities due to space limitations.

In a press release announcing the event, the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs encouraged guests are to bring picnic lunches and cameras “to capture the glories of spring at one of Delaware’s most historic estates.”

For reservations, call 302-323-4430. For additional information, go [HERE](#). In case of inclement weather, the event may be postponed to the following day, Sunday, May 15, during the same hours.

Schedule of activities

- **10 a.m.–3 p.m.**
Self-guided walks in the gardens and through the estate property on a paved trail; children’s games on the lawn; and craft activities including the building and painting of bluebird boxes. Guests are also invited to take photos at their leisure and to bring a picnic lunch. Free, no reservations required.
- **10:15 a.m.–11 a.m.**
Guided tour of the gardens. Limited to 20 participants. Free, reservations are required.
- **10:30 a.m.–11 a.m.**
Guided tour of the Buena Vista mansion. Limited to 20 participants. Free, reservations are required.
- **11 a.m.–12 p.m.**
Guided tour via the paved trail that crosses Buena Vista’s agricultural fields and natural areas. Limited to 20 participants. Free, reservations are required.
- **11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**
Outdoor painting session led by the Sunshine Plein Air Artists. Limited to 20 participants. Art supplies are provided but participants must bring their own chairs. Free, reservations are required.
- **12 p.m.–1 p.m.**
Lecture on bluebirds by the Bluebird Society. Free, no reservations required.
- **1:15 p.m.–2 p.m.**
Guided tour of the gardens. Limited to 20 participants. Free, reservations are required.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



WILM. CITY OFFICES CLOSED ON GOOD FRIDAY, NO TRASH COLLECTION

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Wilmington’s government offices will be closed on Friday, April 15, in observance of Good Friday.

As a result, the Department of Public Works Sanitation Division will collect recyclables on a modified holiday schedule, as follows:

- Monday, April 11: East of I-95 trash collection
- Tuesday, April 12: West of I-95 trash collection
- Wednesday, April 13: NO COLLECTION
- Thursday, April 14: East of I-95 recyclables collection
- Friday, April 15: HOLIDAY/No collection
- Saturday, April 16: West of I-95 recyclables collection

Follow this [link](#) for more information about trash and recycling in the city. To report issues about trash and recycling collection, please dial 3-1-1 or visit www.WilmingtonDE.gov/311.



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Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



MIDDLETOWN RESIDENTS FIGHT TO STOP WAREHOUSE CONSTRUCTION

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

More than 1,000 people have signed a [petition](#) to halt the development of a 1.8-million-square-foot warehouse complex next to The Village of Bayberry North, a residential community in Middletown.

They're angry because the warehouses will go up in a spot that had been approved as a business park with offices, restaurants and a daycare center. Instead, they'll end up with four massive distribution centers—and all the traffic that comes with them.

Residents say developers are violating the spirit of the original plans, but New Castle County zoning officials say they're well within their rights and there's nothing the county can do.

The proposed Scott Run Commerce Center sits at the intersection of U.S. Route 301 and Jamison Corner Road just west of Biddles Corner.

Bayberry North resident Kevin Caneco started the petition because he fears projects like the one at Scott

Run jeopardize the character of his neighborhood.

"This is our first home," Caneco said. "My wife and I set out to build a life here. We have a six-year-old daughter and we're here for the long haul. I think of my daughter growing up here and I think, 'What will this place look like 10 years from now? Twenty years from now?'"

The site was approved by New Castle County in 2005 as a business park. It would have had a gross floor area of about 1.8 million square feet divided among numerous different buildings. That never panned out, and the land sat vacant for years.

Now, real estate developer [EQT Exeter](#) is planning on taking advantage of the previously approved business park application to build its logistics center without the need to go through public hearings or planning board approval.

EQT Exeter did not respond to requests for comment.



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The company is able to build warehouses on the lot because county land-use officials say their development plans only constitute a "minor change" from the previously approved plans.

The lot is zoned for a business park, which most consider to be a collection of office buildings. In New Castle County, though, business park zoning allows for manufacturing, light industrial or warehousing uses, too.

"I think they are wrong," said Councilman David Carter, who represents the area where the warehouses will be developed.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BILL TO CUT PREMIUM CIGAR TAX IN HALF SAILS THROUGH COMMITTEE

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The House Revenue and Finance Committee on Wednesday voted to release a bill that would reduce the tax on premium cigars from 30% to 15%. **Senate Bill 131**, sponsored by Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, aims to make Delaware's tax on hand-rolled cigars consistent with the tax rates in surrounding states. The tax rate in Maryland is 15% and there is no tax on premium cigars in Pennsylvania.

Under the bill, premium cigars are defined as rolls for smoking that:

- Are made entirely of tobacco, including the wrapper, binder, and filler;
- Hand-rolled; and
- Contain no filter, tip, or any mouthpiece consisting of material other than tobacco, or any additional flavoring.

Sturgeon said the bill is necessary to help businesses in the industry that suffered economically during the pandemic. Because all Delawareans live in close prox-

imity to states with lower or no tax on premium cigars, many users opt to drive out of state, she said.

Opponents argued the bill is a step in the wrong direction. The 30% tax, which the legislature passed in 2015, serves as an effective deterrent to what they characterize as a dangerous health risk, they said. If the tax is reduced, they argued, Delawareans will be at higher risk for disease, including throat and lung cancer.

Proponents responded that premium cigars are not inhaled, targeted toward children, or smoked when the weather is not conducive to relaxation. Cigars are most often used as a means of celebration for graduations, birthdays and promotions, they said.

If passed, the bill is expected to save business owners \$627,000 per year. That loss for the state is not accounted for in the governor's proposed fiscal year 2023 budget.

The bill will now advance to the House floor for consideration.



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Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



MIDDLETOWN STORE ILLUSTRATES CONTINUED POPULARITY OF WINE BOUTIQUES

BY PAM GEORGE

Hospitality veteran Eric Tuverson dreamed of owning a business. Certainly, he has the pedigree. He spent 10 years at Le Bec-Fin, the venerable French restaurant in Philadelphia, and 22 years with **Moore Brothers Wine Co.** in Wilmington's Trolley Square area. When the oenophile's youngest son became a college senior, the timing was right.

In November, Tuverson opened **Adventure Wine, Beer and Spirits** in Middletown. "I find Middletown primed and ready...with its breweries, encouraging demographics, good restaurants and, [now], a new wine shop specializing in small farm-produced wines," he said.

Tuverson isn't the only one proving that wine boutique stores are still going strong in Delaware. Riley Quinn and Derrick Kelley recently purchased **Bin 66**

from Tom Bachmann and Tom Poor, owners of the Rehoboth Beach shop since 2003.

In Lewes, Kevin and Catherine Hester sold Teller Fine Wine, Beer & Spirits to Mit and Ayan Patel, who own two Dos Locos restaurant locations, Cape Wine & Spirits, and the convenience store Bodie's.

The Hesters bought the wine store in 2013 from founder Steve Kogler. (Kogler also started Old World Breads in Lewes, which Keith Irwin now owns.)

The grapes of growth

Many get into the business because, well, they love wine. Kogler named his company "Teller" because he wanted to tell everyone about wine. Wines are organized by color, flavor profile and price.

In Delaware, the doyenne of wine shops is Linda Collier. The owner of **Collier's of Centreville** blazed the path for wine boutiques when she opened her Little Italy store, Collier's Wine Cellar, in 1981.

The straight-talking entrepreneur opened the shop primarily because she couldn't find what she wanted. Fresh from spending years in Europe, she had entered a Delaware liquor store to find a complement to veal in an herb-cream sauce. The selection, she recalled, was terrible. Within the week, she had a storefront. She later moved to Centreville.

Bin 66, meanwhile, started in a down-on-its-luck shopping center along Route 1's Forgotten Mile. A second location followed in downtown Rehoboth Beach. However, the owners consolidated operations in a building facing Route 1, where the business still resides.

Like Collier's, Bin 66 has a faithful fan base. "It's hard to think of anything that didn't appeal to us about Bin 66," said Kelley, who met Quinn while working for importers. However, they became friends after taking their sommelier exam at the same time.

A tight market

Initially, the partners were looking to open in northern New Castle County. It isn't easy.

Just ask Tuverson, who had trouble locating a space that met state restrictions. In unincorporated areas, liquor stores must be three miles apart.

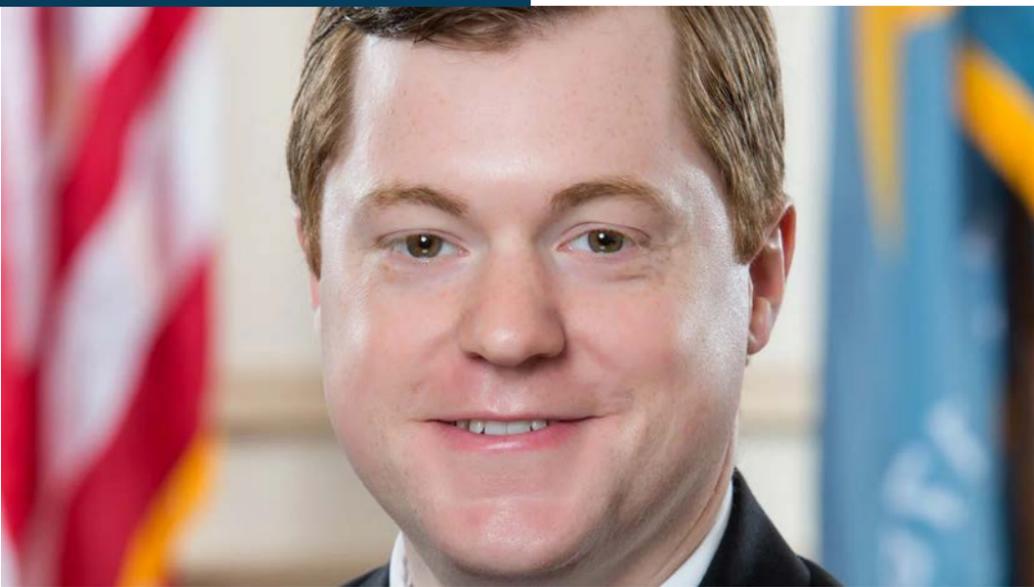
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Photo from Getty Images



Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



BENTZ REVERSES COURSE: POT BILL TO GET FULL PUBLIC HEARING

That didn't happen after the lawmakers walked out. By Wednesday afternoon, a spokesman for the House Democratic Caucus announced that the bill would be reconsidered by the committee and people would be given a chance to be heard.

"**HB 371** has been reported released from the Health Committee," said Drew Volturo, communications director for the House Democratic Caucus. "Tomorrow, the bill will be...reassigned back to the Health Committee to allow the chair to hold a full hearing on the bill with public comment. That likely will take place after the spring recess."

Volturo said Bentz would issue a statement on the matter from the House floor during session Thursday.

Rep. Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown, called the situation a "flagrant violation of the rules."

She said after the hearing Bentz personally apologized to her and her colleagues, and House Speaker Pete Schwartzkopf, D-Rehoboth, assured her the bill would receive a full hearing.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Concerned citizens will have a chance to offer public comment on a marijuana legalization bill after all.

Multiple lawmakers walked out of the House Health and Human Development Committee Wednesday after the majority of the committee's members voted to release the bill without first hearing public comments.

During the meeting, a House attorney said rules do not specifically require the committee to hear public comment, but she believed it was implied and suggested that the motion be withdrawn.

The committee's chair, Rep. David Bentz, D-Christina, said a motion had been made and seconded and would need to be resolved before the question of allowing public comment or not could be answered.

"I'm going to move forward with a vote on the motion and then we will come back to the bill if we can find some sort of resolution," he said.

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BENTZ, DEMS REFUSE TO ALLOW PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARIJUANA BILL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Multiple lawmakers walked out of the House health committee Wednesday in protest of a vote to release a marijuana legalization bill without hearing public comment.

After facing backlash from Republicans, House Democrats announced the bill will be reassigned to the committee and members of the public will be permitted to provide comments after the legislature returns from recess in May.

House Bill 371, sponsored by Ed Osienski, is just one-half of the latest attempt to end cannabis prohibition in Delaware. The bill would make it legal to possess up to one ounce of weed, but would not allow it to be grown or sold. That will require a second bill, **House Bill 372**, which was being heard in a different committee later

Wednesday.

After Osienski introduced the bill to the House Health and Human Development Committee, Rep. Melissa Minor-Brown, D-Delaware City, immediately made a motion to release the bill and send it to the House floor.

The motion quickly earned a second before Rep. Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown, made a point of order. She argued the committee would be in violation of House Rules by releasing the bill without hearing public comment.

Committee chair David Bentz, D-Christiana, asked a House attorney to come forward to clarify whether the committee could bypass that portion of the meeting.

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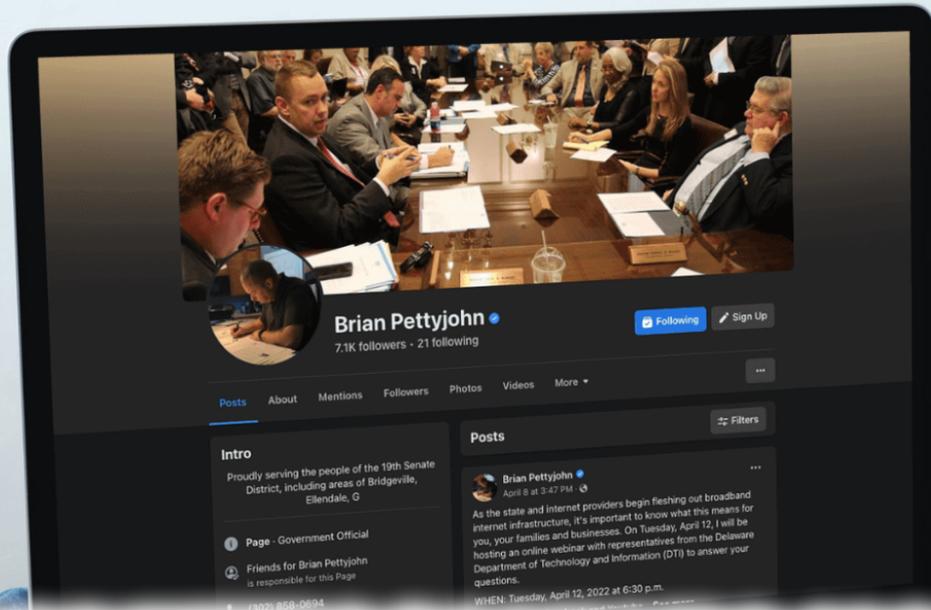


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SEN. BRIAN PETTYJOHN TO HOST WEBINAR ON BROADBAND INTERNET

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A webinar focused on the expansion of broadband internet access will give Delawareans a chance to ask questions and learn more about the state’s investment in hardwired internet infrastructure. On Tuesday, April 12, Sen. Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown, hosted the webinar for interested members of the public.

Panelists included representatives from the Delaware Department of Technology and Information, who were available to provide specific details and answer questions about the state’s efforts to expand hard-wired broadband internet infrastructure throughout the state.

“Access to reliable, hard-wired high-speed internet is vital in today’s always-connected world,” Pettyjohn said

in a press announcement Monday. “From education and business operations to general family entertainment, broadband internet plays an important, necessary role in our lives.”

In September, Gov. John Carney announced a \$110 million investment to make Delaware the first state to provide hard-wired broadband internet access to every home and business. The funds were made available through the American Rescue Plan Act which was passed by the United States Congress and signed into law in March 2021.

“As someone who has worked in the information technology field for much of my professional career, I am

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excited that every Delawarean who wants broadband internet will soon be able to access it,” Pettyjohn said. “I want to give Delawareans the opportunity to have their questions answered by experts in this field.”

To watch a replay of the webinar:
Click [HERE](#) to watch on Facebook.
Click [HERE](#) to watch on YouTube.





CARNEY NOMINATES BLACK WOMAN TO NEW CASTLE SUPERIOR COURT

BY BETSY PRICE

Gov. John Carney will nominate a black lawyer to the Superior Court in New Castle County, one day after the first Black woman was confirmed for

the U.S. Supreme Court.

Patricia A. Winston, a partner at Morris James in Wilmington since 2017, focused on a range of corporate and commercial issues. The Delaware Senate is expected to consider her nomination next month.

“Patricia has the experience and good judgment necessary to serve on the Superior Court,” Carney said in a press release. “I know she will serve our state well and look forward to the Senate considering her nomination.”

Winston has litigated breach of contract cases, fraud disputes, stockholder litigation and business dissolutions. A University of Delaware graduate, she earned her Juris Doctor degree from Widener University School of Law, now the Delaware Law School, in 2008. She has worked at Morris James since 2008.

Her bio on the Morris James site says she’s argued cases in the Delaware Court of Chancery, the Delaware Superior Court’s Complex Commercial Litigation Divi-

sion and the Delaware District Court. It also said she is the past chair of the Delaware State Bar Association’s Litigation Section and has held various offices in the DSBA’s Multicultural Judges and Lawyers’ Section.

She is on the executive committee of the National Bar Association’s Commercial Law Section and chair of the Continuing Legal Education Planning Committee for the Commercial Law Section’s Annual Corporate Counsel Conference. As chair, Winston and her committee are in charge of CLE programming for the annual Corporate Counsel Conference.

Winston also is a former executive board member of the Wilmington Chapter of The Links Inc., a service organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the residents in the Wilmington community.

Her nomination for the court came a day after Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson became the first-ever Black woman confirmed to serve on the Supreme Court.

Chris Coffey, campaign manager for Citizens for a Pro-Business Delaware, seized on the opportunity to once again call on Carney to nominate a Black candidate for the vacant seat on the Chancery Court.



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HOUSE OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVES \$300 RELIEF REBATE BILL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The Delaware Relief Rebate Program, which will use state surplus funds to offer every Delaware resident taxpayer a one-time direct payment of \$300, passed in the House of Representatives April 7.

House Bill 360 will result in the issuance of a one-time payment to every Delaware resident taxpayer who filed personal income tax returns for tax year 2020. It also will be paid to adult residents who did not file a 2020 tax return, including those who are on Social Security and disability.

Sponsors say the bipartisan bill is designed to help offset residents' recent hardships and ease the financial burden many are facing in light of record inflation and rising gas prices.

Payments to the 600,000-plus tax filers could be distributed as soon as six weeks after the bill is signed into law and will be made to each taxpayer, including those who jointly filed.

No action on the part of a taxpayer will be required to receive the \$300.

The bill also requires the Department of Finance to establish a process to provide the relief rebate to resident adults who did not file a 2020 state income tax return by identifying adult residents through existing databases held by other state agencies, such as the Division of Motor Vehicles.

The Department of Finance will then work with the Department of Technology and Information to implement a process by which eligible residents who have not been identified by other means can apply for and receive the relief rebate, subject to verification of their identity and eligibility.

Only one lawmaker spoke critically of the bill. Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Clayton, who ultimately voted to pass it, said he would prefer to see a proposal to automatically return excess funds to taxpayers when the state has surpluses over a certain amount.

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CONTENTIOUS RIGHT-TO-KNOW SCHOOL BILL LIKELY TO FAIL IN COMMITTEE

BY JAREK RUTZ

For a hot second, it looked like a bill that would require schools to tell the public exactly what materials are being used for teaching, among other things, was going to be released to the House floor.

After a contentious hearing in the House Education committee April 6 on House Bill 326, sponsored by Rep. Charles Postles, R-Milford, it looked like the committee votes were enough to send it through. Eight of those present voted for it and seven voted against what is being referred to as a parents' right-to-know-bill. It would require teachers to publish a briefing of textbooks, resources and other materials they are using an online portal that any member of the public can see.

But the bill probably will not pass.

Committee Chair Kimberly Williams, D-Newark, said the bill didn't have enough votes to be released. House rules say that votes must be a majority of the committee—not just those present in hearings.

Three of the 18-member committee—Rep. Nnamdi Chukwuocha, D-Wilmington; Rep. Sean Lynn, D-Dover and Rep. Stephanie Bolden, D-Wilmington—were absent. Based on their voting records, the bill is likely to die in committee. The results of the vote were not posted as of late April 7 on the General Assembly [website](#).

It was the second time April 6 that a committee chair said a committee vote would not stand because the full committee needed to be consulted and counted.

The Paid Leave bill seemed to fail to pass the Health and Development Committee. Then Rep. David Bentz, D-Christiana, who chairs the committee, said he wouldn't let the bill languish and would walk it to members who were absent for a vote. That bill, a Democrat darling, seemed likely to pass once three missing committee members voted.

Both committee chairs are relying on House Rule 35a, which requires a majority of the committee—not just those present—to vote to release a bill. It was unusual to see that cited, much less cited twice in one day.

In the school bill hearing, Postles acknowledged that many of the things he wanted already exist, but said they need to be streamlined so that parents can have easy access to the information. While many hearing participants kept talking about parents, the bill would require the information to be available to any member of the public.

Postles said he wanted a “one-stop-shop” that would include:

- Course syllabi
- A general description of the materials, textbooks and resources
- A policy on how schools will communicate any violent occurrences in their building to parents
- Health care services offered at the school as well as guardian consent instructions

Rep. Rich Collins, R-Millsboro, said schools should evolve like the Delaware General Assembly site has. It used to simply provide the bill text and the votes surrounding it. Today, it goes a lot further.

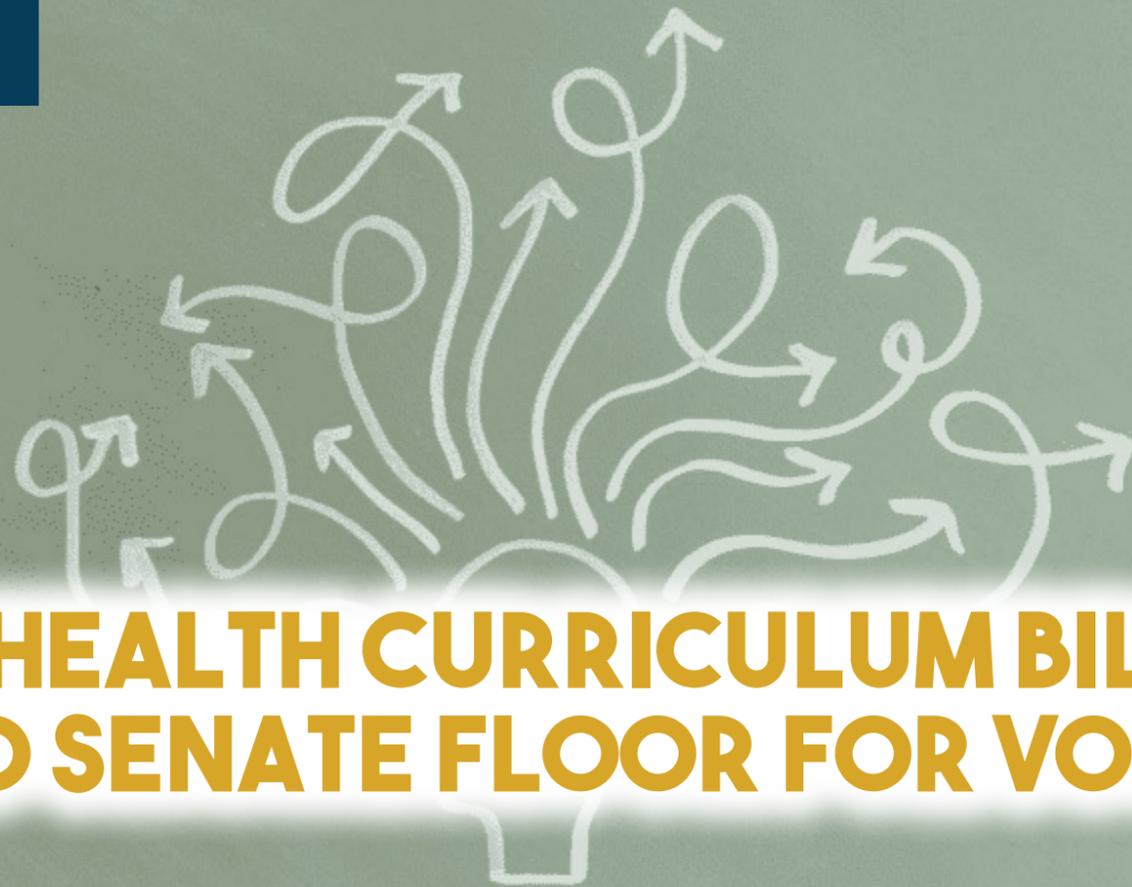
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Photo by Rafael Cosquiere for Pexels

Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





MENTAL HEALTH CURRICULUM BILL HEADS TO SENATE FLOOR FOR VOTE

BY JAREK RUTZ

A bill that will require the state to provide mental health education in every grade level passed through the Senate Education Committee and will now go to the Senate floor. If it passes there, it will go to Gov. John Carney for his signature.

House Bill 301 asks the Department of Education to establish and implement mental health educational programs for each grade level in each public and charter school. Supporters say students need help recognizing mental health issues and knowing how to ask for help, if they need to. It's particularly important now, those in favor say, because so many students struggled during the pandemic.

Sen. Sarah McBride, D-Wilmington, said at the hearing that many schools and educators have already implemented mental wellness education, and that the legislation is not intended to alter or replace any of that.

"This legislation ensures that content is more universally adopted and that it's informed by evidence and database approaches," she said.

Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Greenville, a former teacher, said she wants students to feel able to speak up and vocalize their struggles. She added that she's had her own mental health challenges throughout her life.

It was not easy as a 17-year-old to seek help, she said. "There was nobody speaking about mental health in

those days, she said. "I'm really grateful that that's changing."

Three of the four public commenters supported the bill, but Robert Overmiller didn't.

"I believe that this legislation will result in the opposite effect of what you're all hoping for, just in the way it's designed and engineered," he said. He did not elaborate.

Sen. Ernesto B. Lopez, R-Lewes, said he supported the bill but questioned the Department of Education's role in implementing the curriculum and what it will look like in the classroom.

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REDDING CONSORTIUM FOCUSES PROPOSED FUNDING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES



BY JAREK RUTZ

Last year, the Redding Consortium for Educational Equality wasn't included in the governor's budget recommendations for this year. But they are for fiscal year 2023, which starts July 1.

Gov. John Carney plans to allocate \$12.8 million to the consortium, which co-chair Matt Denn said is exactly what it wanted to expand early childhood education and wraparound services, such as after school care.

The Redding Consortium was founded in 2019 to recommend policies and practices to the governor and legislators to improve education equity and outcomes in the city of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

It defines educational equity as "safe, secure, and student-focused learning environments where every

student is intentionally provided access to the support, resources, and opportunities they need to reach their full academic and social potential, in and out of the classroom."

In the short-term, said Denn, the consortium is prioritizing laying the foundation for expanding existing programs in areas such as pre-K, wraparound services and home visitation services for infants and toddlers.

This year, the consortium has successfully implemented preschool programs at Kingswood Community Center, Latin American Community Center, A Leap of Faith Child Development Center and St. Michael's School and Nursery.

Through the consortium's recommendation, the Department of Education awarded the Delaware

Wraparound Services Initiative grant to The Bancroft School, The Bayard School and Kuumba Academy Charter School. Wraparound services are support programs offered before school, after school and during summer months that also include health services like emotional wellbeing care and behavioral health assistance.

After a pilot program this year, the consortium realized that people providing extended services needed longer contracts that would enable them to feel secure about renting larger spaces and hiring more staff to take care of children.

Carney has recommended \$7.1 million for wrap-around services in the state's operating budget for 2023. If the budget is passed, it will make wraparound services part of the long-term budget and will be allocated year after year.

"If you're a pre-K provider or are a school looking to add wraparound services, you are much more inclined to seek out those funds and make real investments if you know that it's going to be an ongoing program, and that it's not going to disappear after a year or two," said Denn.

The purpose of these services is to help children with serious or complex needs succeed in their school, home and the community around them.

This month, Kuumba Academy was awarded a one-time grant of \$1.42 million to expand their afterschool and summer enrichment program housed in the Wilmington Community Education Building.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



BY JAREK RUTZ

While students at Blades Elementary get the traditional reminders to continue reading during the upcoming spring break, their reminders have a twist.

About 35% of the 400 students in that Seaford School District school come from homes in which English is not the first language spoken. So Blades recommends the entire family read as a way to improve literacy among students, but also parents.

“If a child spends time reading each day, it can open many opportunities—and reading bilingual books is also a fun way to continue practicing language skills as a family,” said Kelly Carvajal Hageman, director of curriculum and instruction for Seaford.

Seaford students—and many in the rest of the state—will be on break April 15-22.

Part of the district’s request reflects the science of reading—a hot topic in educational and political circles now. That science is based on studies about how the brain learns to read.

SEAFORD TEST SCORES IMPROVE WITH FOCUS ON SCIENCE OF READING

Reports show that since adopting the Science of Reading in 2015, district test scores have improved, with Seaford students consistently rising until the pandemic hit.

However, while Hageman and Blades Principal Kirsten Jennette believe in the science of learning, they question whether it needs to be formalized by making it law. They fear that will stop schools from being able to quickly adopt new methods and techniques, should they arise.

Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Greenville, said a science of reading bill she’s sponsoring won’t stop a school from pivoting, but it will provide training to all teachers so the curriculum is effectively used.

Learning phonics—the sounds of words—is one of the basic points in the science of reading.

Regardless of a book’s language, the hour of reading per day during spring break provides cognitive benefits universally, Hageman said.

Helping family

Jennette said a lot of Blades families were concerned about their children’s reading capabilities if the parents weren’t literate in English and their child was still in the process of learning English, said Jennette.

“We promote that parents, regardless of language, can read to their child and expect increased literacy for that child.”

Seaford sent parents a list of suggested bilingual books to parents of Spanish speaking students or students trying to learn English:

Sulma Arzu-Brown’s “Bad Hair Does Not Exist!” After being told she had “pelo malo” as a child, Arzu-Brown wrote a book highlighting the hair of Black, Afro-descendent and Afro-Latinas that celebrates their differences.

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READING BILL SAILS THROUGH SENATE, HEADS TO HOUSE

to brain systems for the coding of speech sounds, which the brain puts together to determine what the word means.”

If passed, SB 4 would require the Department of Education to curate and maintain a list of recommended resources and materials related to the science of reading. By the 2027-28 school year, districts and charters would be required to create a curriculum from that list and make sure all reading teachers are trained to teach it.

Schools will be required to submit an annual report to the Department of Education about the implementation of their new curriculum. The department will be responsible for publishing a summary of these reports.

Sponsor Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, said on the Senate floor April 7 that professional development is a crucial part to the implementation. The materials don't mean much if teachers don't know how to effectively use them, she said. The bill calls for around 10-20 hours of professional development to train reading teachers, depending on their familiarity with the material.

Someone with some background in the science might need less training, while another unfamiliar with the science is going to need about 20 hours of training, said Sturgeon, a former teacher.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY JAREK RUTZ

A bill that requires the state to establish a curriculum aligned with the science of reading is on its way to the state House after being unanimously supported by all 21 senators. Senate Bill 4, which passed out of the Senate Education Committee April 6, will now move to the House Education Committee.

Not only did all 21 senators vote to pass the bill, they all sponsored or co-sponsored the bill.

During the April 7 session, Sen. Colin Bonini, R-Dover, shared a letter written by his wife, Melissa Harrington. She is a neuroscientist with a PhD in neurobiology from Stanford University—and she fully supports the legislation. Her letter said research shows our brains are hard-wired for spoken language, but reading language is a relatively new phenomena in mankind's existence.

“The most effective way to teach children is to help their brain connect letters with the way they sound—phonics,” Bonini read, “which then connects the words

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Health

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

The cost depends on where you go. Sometimes, a lot.

CostAware
Delaware's State Health Care Costs

Emergency Department Visits | 2019

BY BETSY PRICE

A new state website compares the average costs for different kinds of services at Delaware hospitals, based on actual medical claims. But don't get too excited about the comparisons on [CostAware](#).

None of the information is tagged to a specific hospital, although in a few cases, it's easy to guess which institution the information came from. Without any IDs, it's hard for the average consumers to use the data to make decisions in their own lives.

Molly Magarik, secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services, said in a press release she hopes that information will be included in future versions of the website. That's not mentioned on the brand-new site unveiled April 7.

In a Frequently Asked Questions section, one question asks, "Why can't I see the names of hospitals or providers?" The answer said the point of the initial version is to increase transparency in the performance of the state health care system.

"It is anticipated that future versions of CostAware will include more detailed cost, utilization and quality information," it says, but does not include revealing hospital names. The site also says it hopes to include hospitals in neighboring states.

Created by the Department of Health and Social Services and Delaware Health Care Commission, CostAware compares costs for five kinds of care at six state hospital systems: cardiac procedures, C-section birth, emergency department visits, knee and hip replacement and vaginal delivery.

NEW COSTAWARE SITE COMPARES BILLS FOR STATE HOSPITAL SERVICES, STAYS

CostAware also shows info about the costs of a basic blood test, colonoscopy, doctor visits, hemoglobin A1c, head CT, lumbar spine MRI and screening mammography gleaned from five accountable care organizations. Those are groups of doctors, hospitals and other health care providers who ban together, usually by institutional affiliation, to create right time, right place services that can earn them more Medicare bucks. The rates on the site are based on 2019 medical claims in the Delaware Health Care Claims Database and reflect the cost that consumers and their insurers actually paid for the care.

The site includes readmission and utilization rates, as well as patient satisfaction scores, from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Each episode of care and service can be filtered further by the type of insurance: commercial, Medicare Advantage and Medicaid.

"This kind of transparency and public awareness of health care spending is important for everyone in the system—consumers, health care providers, taxpayers, insurers and businesses," Magarik said in the press release. "We all want good value for the health care dollars we do spend. CostAware offers a glimpse into the actual costs that Delawareans and their insurers are paying, and the quality measures associated with that care."

The site also breaks down the average monthly cost of care for each member of an accountable care organization and the top procedures for several age and gender groups based on overall volume and dollar volume.

Work on comparing costs because in early 2020, when DHSS and the Delaware Health Care Commission began working with the Delaware Health Information Network to develop and implement various health care cost and quality analyses.

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Photo by Nick Halliday



Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

INSIDE THE CIRCLE: SOFTBALL MID-WEEK RESULTS 4-12



BY GLENN FRAZER

Top ranked Caravel improved to 5-0 with an impressive 11-3 road win at No. 10 Smyrna Tuesday. The Bucs had 14 hits in the game including two home runs from Brooke Holdsworth, accounting for her five runs batted in. Mikayla Walsh and Haley Grygo also went yard for Caravel. Meghan Shirey homered for the Eagles. Brooklyn Richardson held Smyrna through four innings to two runs on four hits to pick up the win. The Eagles fall to 4-2 and will face Indian River Thursday.

No. 2 Sussex Central winners of five straight, faces (2-2) Delmar Thursday after having a postponement against Laurel last week. The Wildcats have won two straight over Laurel and Newark Charter.

No. 3 Appo is on a roll at 7-0 on the season including a 5-1 victory against conference rival William Penn on Tuesday. The Jags received another stellar performance from pitcher Savannah Laird as she struck out 16 and allowed just one hit (a first inning homer to Madison Perry). Offensively, Appo was led by Hailey Watlington with two hits and three RBI, and Julia Weglarz with two hits and two runs scored. The Jags host Delmarva Christian Thursday in a key Top 10 matchup.

No. 4 Delmarva Christian lost to Stephen Decatur (MD) 4-2 on Monday before bouncing back with a close 2-1 win over Indian River. Lily Hutt led the Royals going 2-for-3 at the plate against the Indians. Kinsley Hall suffered a tough loss in the circle for IR as she recorded 14 K's while getting two hits at the "dish."

Fifth-ranked DMA improved to 4-1 with a 9-1 win Tuesday against Conrad. Emily Trzonkowski tossed a two-hitter and struck out four for the win. Lexi Delcollo led the Seahawks with three hits, three RBI and two runs. Marisa Edevane and Lindsey Henn also had multiple-hit efforts for DMA. The 'Hawks travel to Smyrna for a top-10 game Saturday at noon.

No. 6 Laurel fell to unbeaten Caesar Rodney Tuesday 2-1. It's the second straight defeat for the Bulldogs as they are now 2-3 on the season. Alyssa Brittingham doubled and scored the lone run for Laurel. The Riders were led by pitcher Peyton Shields with seven strikeouts. Stacy Deputy tripled to knock in the winning run in the bottom of the eighth. The Riders tied the game in

the sixth inning on an RBI hit by Kaitlyn Horton. CR will face Seaford Thursday then meet No. 9 Middletown next Tuesday at home.

No. 7 RLCA came from three runs down to get a 7-3 victory over Milford on Monday. The Lady Lions scored all their runs over the final three innings as Alayna Griffing homered, and Kimorah Neal tripled. Morgan Lieske went 3-for-4 with two runs batted in, while Peyton Pusey and Angelina Edwards had two hits each. The Lions take a 5-1 record into Wednesday night's game against St. Marks.

No. 8 St. Marks improved to 6-1 with a 4-0 win versus Archmere. Ryleigh Thomas recorded a no-hitter, striking out 17 for the win. The game was scoreless until the Spartans plated four runs in the bottom of the sixth. Archmere's Tory Connor held the Spartans without a hit until the fourth inning. St. Mark's traveled to No. 7 RLCA Wednesday night for a game that was broadcasted by Delaware Live.

Finally, ninth-ranked Middletown won its sixth game in a row by knocking off Mount Pleasant 13-0 on Tuesday. Reese Founds pitched a "perfect" game with 13 K's to get the win. Summer Montgomery, Jacquelyn Hackett, Becca Maiorano and Kaylee Stenvik all recorded multiple hits for the Cavaliers. Middletown will have a week off before traveling to unbeaten Caesar Rodney next Tuesday.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



SPARTANS' BIG FIRST INNING TOO MUCH FOR THE COLONIALS

knocked him in with a single to right field. The Spartans led 6-0 after two innings.

The Spartans then added two more runs in the bottom of the fifth inning. Reader collected two more RBI after he doubled to left field driving in Tyler Satterfield and Quinn. After five innings the Spartans led 8-0.

William Penn would finally get on the scoreboard as Hasson Turner led off the sixth inning with a solo home run to left field.

Quinn got the win for St. Mark's on the mound. He struck out five batters allowing no hits or runs over five innings.

The Spartans collected 12 hits in the game. Frame and Reader each added three hits a piece to lead St. Mark's.

St. Mark's will head down state to play Delmar Saturday at 1 p.m. William Penn will play host to Caesar Rodney Saturday at 2 p.m.



BY NICK HALLIDAY

St. Mark's victory over William Pen was keyed by a big first inning. The Spartans were able to send five runners across the plate in the bottom of the first inning Friday night.

Garrett Quinn and Kyle Reader both knocked in two runs in the inning. Quinn hit a double down the right field line and Reader hit a single to left field scoring two. Hayden Fauerbach then capped off the inning with a double scoring Reader giving the Spartans a 5-0 after one inning.

James Baffone led off the second inning for St. Mark's with a double to left field. Zach Frame eventually

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DELAWARE **LIVE** SPORTS TOP 10 RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

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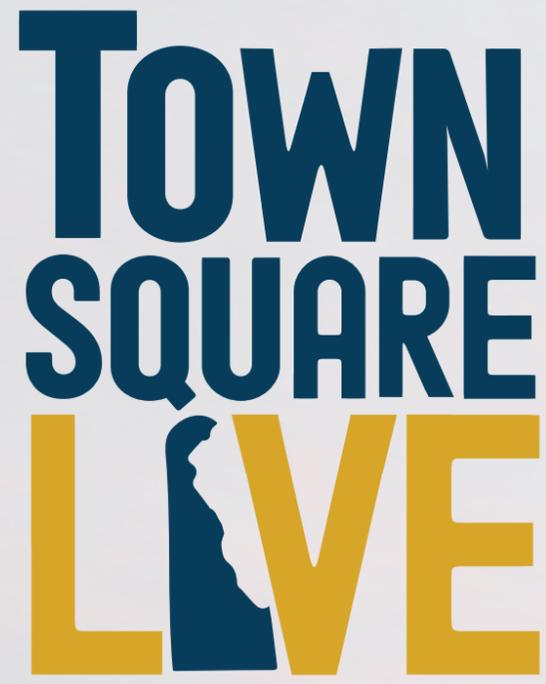


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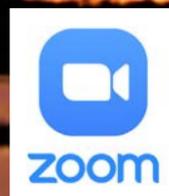


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