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KIDS CAN BE KIDS AGAIN



HOW TO VOTE IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS



NEWARK CHARTER EXPANSION

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

Photo link: Delaware Art Museum



Community

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FINALLY! BROADWAY'S BRIAN STOKES MITCHELL TO PLAY DELAWARE

ognized Mitchell, but couldn't call to mind his name. As promised, Mitchell told them at the end of the line and jogged off toward his plane. Then the parallel dawned on him.

"Oh my god, I had become the person that my acting teacher told me about, that person that's had a career," Mitchell told Delaware LIVE Monday. "And it was like the happiest moment in my life.

"If I weren't late for my plane, I would have gone back and told him, 'You guys just made my day, you just made my week, you just made my year.'"

Unfortunately, though, he couldn't tell Krill, who had died a few weeks before.

DELAWARE CONCERT

Mitchell will come to Delaware for the first time Sept. 10 to star in the joint arts season opening concert sponsored by the Delaware Symphony Orchestra, OperaDelaware and The Grand.

The program, delayed from its original New Year's Eve schedule because of COVID-19 will feature a first half of the symphony and opera stars in traditional concert music and a second half of the symphony and Mitchell performing Broadway standards.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY BETSY PRICE

When acclaimed Broadway star Brian Stokes Mitchell was in high school, his drama teacher told the class to notice the actors and actresses whose faces they recognized in television and movies.

"You may not know their names, but they've been working for years," Anne Krill said. They had built a careers that lasted, she said, and anyone who wanted to go into acting should try to follow that model.

Flash forward 50 years, and Mitchell is standing in an airport TSA line when one of the officers gets all excited. "I know you! I know you!" the officer said, then admitted he couldn't remember Mitchell's name or what he'd been in.

"Tell you what," Mitchell told him. "Let's see if you can tell me by the time I get to the end of the TSA line."

The guy enlisted his coworkers, who agreed they rec-

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HERE'S WHY STATE WANTS ADVICE ON SCHOOL FUNDING

BY JAREK RUTZ

The Delaware Department of Education announced last week it has hired a Virginia consultant to study the state's public education funding system. As today's wisecracker would say: Good luck with that.

How the money trickles down to the classroom is complex, and it follows a funding system established in the 1940s. The state's population then was 286,000, compared to today's 967,679, and that was 27 years before Delaware schools were desegregated, shoving Wilmington students into districts that are largely suburban.

"It's a complicated topic that not many people understand," said Neil Kirschling, director of policy and advocacy at [Rodel](#), an organization focused on educational equity and excellence.

Delaware public schools rely on money from a combination of state, local and federal allocations. Its unique funding formula also essentially follows the teacher

rather than the student, paying more to a district for experienced teachers, who are attracted to newer schools and suburban schools. As a result, students who have special needs or are learning English have received the same amount of funding as a traditional student, and the funding often punishes city and rural schools while rewarding suburban ones.

The funding has been a sore subject for decades on a variety of fronts, including advocates for the poor or high-need families as well as Republicans who believe the state should provide vouchers that allow parents to choose where to send their children.

The way schools are funded sparked a far-reaching [lawsuit](#) that resulted in more state funding for poor and special needs children and also triggered a statewide property reassessment.

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I-95 LANE CHANGES COMING THURSDAY NEAR U.S. 202

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware's Transportation Department has announced a modification to the I-95 northbound traffic pattern near the U.S. 202 exit near Newport.

Beginning Thursday, Aug. 25, the left shoulder of I-95 northbound will be closed, the left lane will be for through traffic and the right lane will be for traffic exiting at US 202. The temporary change will allow for traffic barrier work in the median and left shoulder.

The traffic pattern is expected to remain in place through the end of September 2022.

The change may increase traffic congestion in the area during peak travel periods, according to a DelDOT news release. Motorists are encouraged to use I-495 to travel around the construction zone.

Motorists should use caution and expect minor delays in the area.

For more information and updates on the [project](#), please visit www.restorethecorridor.com.



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SCHOOLS START TUESDAY, AND 'KIDS CAN BE KIDS' AGAIN

BY JAREK RUTZ

Caesar Rodney School District students will be the first to return to school this fall, headed back on Tuesday. Others such as Colonial start next week, but the majority head back after Labor Day.

For the first time since March 2020, the spectre of COVID-19 will be shoved into the coat closet and largely left there.

“Kids can be kids and teachers can be teachers again,” said Dr. Jeff Menzer, superintendent of Colonial School District.

Some things will change, thanks to education-focused bills from the just-ended 151st Delaware General Assembly, but there’s been no back-to-school tirades about masks, no requirements for COVID-19 testing and no demand that desks spread six feet apart.

“I think you’re gonna see this year more of a renewed, reenergized group of educators who are committed to students,” Menzer said.

The state published its 11-page guide on managing COVID in schools this year, but with virtually no restrictions or requirements inside the classrooms. The Education Department’s guide encourages school districts to “promote” vaccination, but there is no requirement, nor will there be in-school testing.

If a student is exposed to COVID, they do not have to quarantine or stay home from school. The guide recommends that an exposed student wears a mask for 10 days and gets tested at least five days after their last exposure.

There is only one COVID-related requirement head-

ing into the school year. “Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should report the positive test results to their school nurse or COVID coordinator and isolate for five days regardless of vaccination status,” the Education Department’s guide read

“On day six after the positive test or symptoms start to appear, the student or staff member can exit isolation if they have had no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.”

Students or staff who test positive must also wear a mask for five days after exiting isolation.

“Classrooms look like they did three years ago,” Menzer said. “Desks are there, there’s flexible seating and furniture, there’s tables where two or more kids are sitting next to each other, and the social distancing stickers are no longer on the floors.”

He said he feels a real buzz from teachers to custodians to bus drivers, who seem to feel like a sense of normalcy has returned. Watching teachers set up their classrooms has sparked an energy that underscores that feeling, he said.

“Philosophically, COVID knocked us on our backside, but we are looking up now,” he said. “We’re getting back up and we’re energized. We’re ready to go.”

Education Secretary Mark Holodick said recent legislation will affect classrooms in many ways, from mental health support to Black history to readings.

“There are a number of other really impactful statutes,” he said. “This has been an incredibly busy, active legislative session in education.”

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

Photo by Christina Morillo from Pexels



Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DELAWARE'S REALTY TRANSFER TAX TO REMAIN HIGHEST IN NATION

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware will remain the state with the highest realty transfer tax in the nation after a bill to decrease the tax died in the General Assembly.

Introduced by Rep. Bill Bush, D-Dover, **House Bill 358** would have cut the tax from 4% of a property's sale price to 3%—the level it was at prior to 2017 when the General Assembly increased it to cover a budget shortfall. Bush declined to be interviewed for this story.

The realty transfer tax is levied on the purchase price of the home and is usually split between the buyer and seller, unless otherwise negotiated.

The move to cut the tax came after two years of raging sales in the housing market, leading to major windfalls for state and local governments, which split the

proceeds. The state gets 62.5% of the tax revenue, while local governments collect 37.5%.

Even though the bill was **filed** in March 2022, it didn't receive a hearing in the House Administration Committee until just days before the end of session. It was released from committee and assigned to House Appropriations, where it never received a hearing. Because the legislative session ended June 30, the bill will have to be reintroduced in 2023.

Rep. Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown, said when the General Assembly raised the tax in 2017 to cover a gap in the budget, they promised to return it to the original rate once the state's economic outlook improved.

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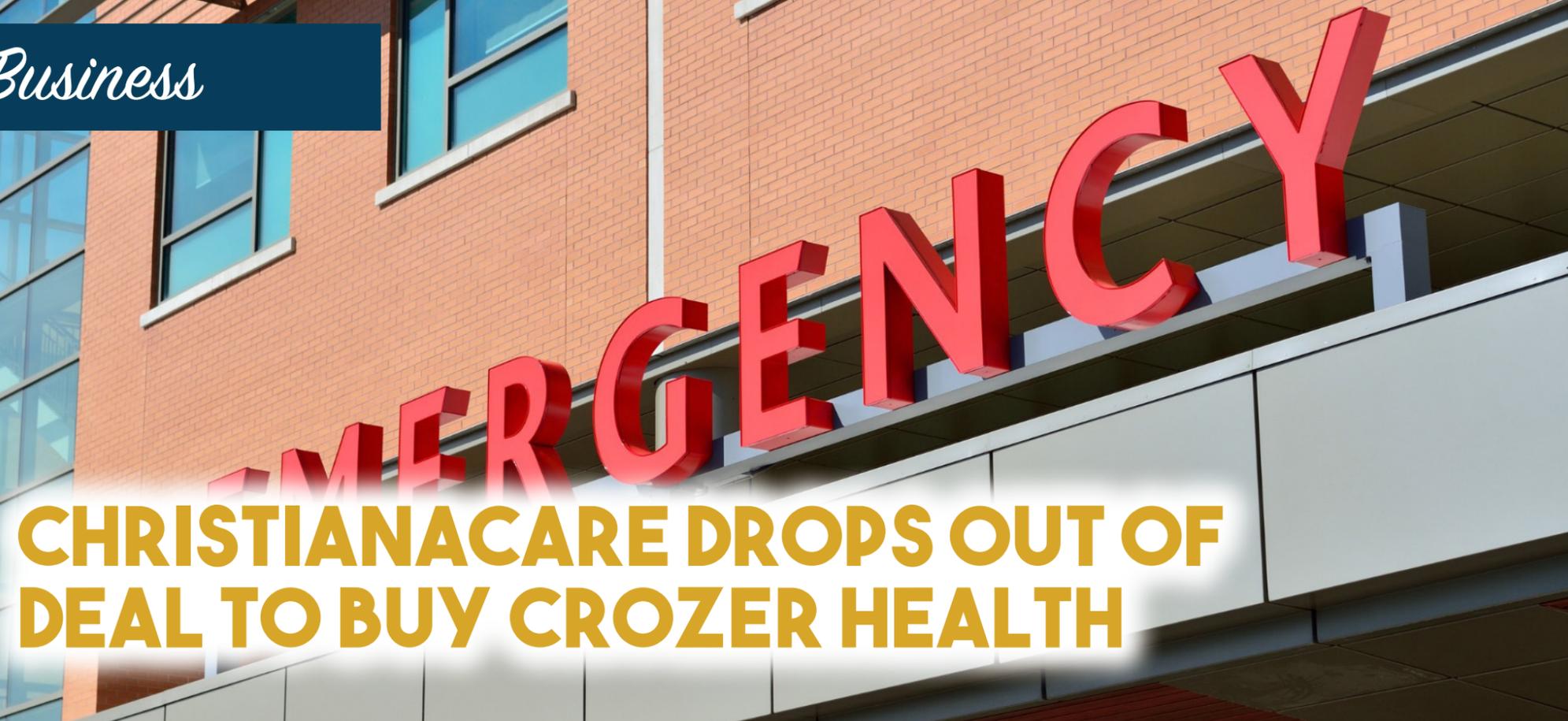
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CHRISTIANACARE DROPS OUT OF DEAL TO BUY CROZER HEALTH

BY STAFF WRITER

ChristianaCare’s plans to **expand** into the Philly area have blown up. The Wilmington health care system announced Aug. 18 that it will not be buying Crozer Health from Prospect Medical Holdings Inc.

The two systems had announced the signing of a letter of intent for ChristianaCare to acquire Crozer Health from Prospect on Feb. 11, 2022.

Since then, a joint statement said, “The economic landscape has significantly changed, impacting the ability of the sale to move forward.”

The release did not specify what those changes were but both systems are having to deal with the aftermath of COVID-19, inflation and coming changes in the way Medicare pays.

If the deal had gone through, ChristianaCare would have bought four Pennsylvania hospitals:

- Crozer-Chester Medical Center, 499 beds
- Delaware County Memorial Hospital, 215 beds
- Springfield Hospital, handles outpatient services
- Taylor Hospital, 105 beds

Crozer Health was established in 1990 by the merger of Crozer-Chester Medical Center and Delaware County Memorial Hospital in Drexel Hill, PA. The system was bought by Prospect Medical Holdings Inc. in 2016.



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DUPONT WILL BUILD NEW \$50 MILLION PLANT IN NEWARK

with our experienced colleagues in operations, engineering, quality and other interconnected teams,” Singer said.

DUPONT ORIGINS

DuPont, which started as a gunpowder manufacturer on the banks of the Brandywine River, now is a multi-industrial leader with technology-based materials and solutions that help transform industries and everyday life.

The semiconductor company delivers enabling materials for semiconductor fabrication, packaging and assembly. In Delaware, it manufactures key materials used in chemical mechanical planarization, an essential step in the making of modern semiconductors.

Consumers use semiconductors daily for data storage, automotive electronics, cloud computing, online collaboration and 5G wireless communication, and the demand for them continues to increase. Poised for a decade of growth, the industry is projected to become a trillion-dollar industry by 2030.

Supporting DuPont Electronics & Industrial’s investment of \$50 million in equipment and fit out costs are a state Jobs Performance Grant of \$65,550 and a Capital of Expenditure Grant of \$1,578,000 from the Delaware Strategic Fund.

Distribution of grants from the Delaware Strategic Fund is dependent on the company meeting commit-

ments as outlined to Delaware’s Council on Development Finance, which reviewed and approved the company’s request for up to \$1,643,550.

“The DuPont Company has been part of Delaware’s DNA for 220 years,” said Gov. John Carney. “With this expansion of their semiconductor division, the company is showing their commitment to our state and workforce.”



BY BETSY PRICE

DuPont Semiconductor Technologies will expand its Newark campus by building a \$50 million, 385,000-square-foot facility in nearby Glasgow.

The company, a business unit of **DuPont Electronics & Industrial**, had searched sites in northern Delaware and Maryland before deciding to build in Delaware.

The new facility is expected to become the primary work site for more than 70 existing workers and to create about 10 new positions.

“DuPont materials for chemical mechanical planarization are an essential part of the semiconductor supply chain, used by customers around the world in highly sensitive semiconductor chip fabrication,” said John Singer, vice president of Integrated Operations, DuPont Electronics & Industrial.

Having a new plant near the current facility allows the company to “continue to have close collaboration



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We saw a boost in website referrals from Delaware LIVE during our admission season.
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Photo credit: Food Bank of Delaware



Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

HOCKESSIN FUNDRAISER STARS DOGFISH BEER AGING SINCE 2014

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

A keg of unusually well-aged beer stars in a Sept. 13 fundraiser at a Hockessin restaurant supporting a program to help veterans.

The beer is Dogfish Head 120 Minute IPA—aging since 2014. The beneficiary is **Paws Helping Heroes**, which “gives a dog a home and mission to become the new battle buddy to a hero that sacrificed everything for our freedom.” Several veterans and their dogs will attend and discuss the benefits of the program. The venue is **2 Fat Guys**, a Hockessin landmark since 2005. It’s at 701 Ace Memorial Drive.

Tickets are \$75 and are available by texting 302-545-4008. Jeff Cook, who runs 2 Fat Guys with Tom Craft, said he expects the event to sell out.

The beer gets better with age. Cook said it’s the longest that he and the leaders of Dogfish Head have known for such a keg of Dogfish Head 120 Minute IPA to be set aside to mature.

DOGFISH HEAD AND DOGS

Dogfish Head, which first released the beer in 2003, says it has “sweet citrus/piney/floral hop aromas, almost candy-like.”

Since the keg will generate a limited number of six-ounce pours, the fundraiser also features vintage Palo Santo, selected by Dogfish Head founder Sam Calagione, plus Dogfish Head 60 Minute IPA, Seaquence Ale and Sam Adams Octoberfest in a souvenir **Dogfish Head** pint glass.



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A raffle features items from local businesses, with the grand prize a catered pig roast worth \$800.

The fundraiser also features a smoked pig barbecue buffet by 2 Fat Guys, ice cream by Woodside Farm Creamery and a DJ and entertainment by Slightline Events.

The fundraiser runs 6-9 p.m., and Calagione will be around from 6-8 p.m. Cook said the goal is to raise \$8,000, to fund at least one service dog in its new mission by Paws Healing Heroes of Glassboro, New Jersey.





Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

ELECTION CENTER

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware voters have several options to cast their ballots in the upcoming primary and general elections thanks to two new laws passed during the General Assembly's most recent legislative session.

Senate Bill 320 created an opt-in vote-by-mail system wherein voters have to request a ballot before one is sent. Under the law, ballots and ballot applications will never be automatically mailed to voters under the bill. After a voter makes the request, the Department of Elections mails a ballot, which the voter may complete and return by mail or at one of many designated ballot drop boxes throughout the state.

Voters are required to verify their identity on the ballot by including either the last four digits of their Social Security number or their driver's license number. That provision of the law is thanks to Sen. Colin Bonini, R-Dover, who kept the Senate in session overnight to reach a compromise.

"In smaller states like Delaware, there is tremendous potential for fraud with mail-in and absentee ballots," Bonini told Delaware LIVE News. "By requiring identification that can be verified, it's not perfect, but it's dramatically better than it was."

Bonini emphasized that the Department of Elections will handle private informa-

HOW TO VOTE IN DELAWARE'S UPCOMING ELECTIONS

tion in a secure manner. "The bottom line is that we can verify that the person who's voting is actually the person they say they are," he said. "I just think that's critical."

House Substitute 1 for House Bill 25 eliminated the state's deadline which required voters to register or update their registration by the fourth Saturday prior to an election. Under the new law, voters may register to vote or update their registration up to or on Election Day.

Both provisions face **legal challenges** but, as of now, remain in effect for this year's primary and general elections.

WAYS TO VOTE

- In-person at your polling place on Election Day
- In-person early at designated early voting locations
- Request a mail-in ballot and return it through the mail
- Request a mail-in ballot and return it in person at a ballot drop box
- Request a traditional absentee ballot

More information about each voting method can be found below.

VOTER REGISTRATION

This year, you may register to vote until Election Day. Eligible individuals may register at any time, including when they go to vote at an early voting site or at their polling place on Election Day.

- Not yet registered? Click [HERE](#) to register online.
- Unsure of your registration status? Click [HERE](#).
- To submit your registration application by mail, follow the instructions [HERE](#).
- You can also register at certain government offices, such as DMVs or state service centers. Click [HERE](#) for a complete list of places to register.
- You may register at your polling place on Election Day. Unsure of your polling location? Click [HERE](#).

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BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

With weeks to go before the first votes are cast in Delaware’s 2022 election cycle, advocates for government transparency are pushing for better campaign finance reporting.

Common Cause Delaware, a nonprofit group that lobbies for open, honest and accountable government, has called for more frequent and detailed reporting of campaign funds collected when candidates run for office.

“It’s common knowledge that people work for the person who pays them,” said Claire Snyder-Hall, executive director of Common Cause Delaware. “That’s how it often works in politics as well. Studies show that elected officials are more likely to govern in accordance with what their donors want than with public opinion.”

Under current law, campaigns are only required to file three **spending reports**: at the end of each year, 30 days prior to an election and eight days prior to an election. If the candidate has a primary election, they’d file five reports.

TRANSPARENCY ADVOCATES PUSH FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Snyder-Hall wants to keep those reports, but also require candidates to file four additional quarterly reports.

“When voters are trying to decide who to vote for, one thing they can do is look at campaign finance reports to see who’s funding the candidate,” she said. “If a candidate receives a lot of money from police unions, for example, or teachers unions, that can say a lot about what they stand for, and voters have a right to know that information.”

Because everyday voters don’t follow campaign finance reports closely, having additional data and more time to disseminate it before an election will go a long way in improving transparency, Snyder-Hall said.

“It’s only 30 days until the election, and so that doesn’t leave a lot of time for people to be able to learn and digest that information,” she said. “Whereas if it was quarterly reporting, they would know earlier.”

Having quarterly reports would also level the playing field between candidates who have primary elections and those who don’t, she said.

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LEGISLATIVE HALL EXPANSION FAR FROM A DONE DEAL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A committee assembled to draft plans for a potential **expansion** of Delaware’s state capitol building spent much of its Aug. 11 meeting reiterating the tentative nature of its work. The **committee** was established after the General Assembly unanimously **voted** in 2021 to study and recommend a plan to address Legislative Hall’s technological, security and space needs.

The group appears to have nearly reached a conclusion about its recommendation back to the General Assembly and governor: a \$122 million expansion that doubles the size of the existing building.

But at the group’s second-to-last meeting on Aug. 11, Sen. Bryan Townsend, D-Glasgow, expressed concern about submitting such an expensive and elaborate plan while other facilities in the state have more significant deficiencies.

The proposal includes a four-level, 350-spot parking garage with a private floor and underground tunnel beneath Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard so lawmakers and staff may “limit cross-contact with the general public.” A massive new wing would double the size of the current building and include space for offices, a secure courtyard and larger House and Senate chambers.

A reconfiguration of the existing building would allow for a new cafeteria, enhanced security checkpoint, gift shop, bathrooms, offices, storage space and more.

The plan is far from finalized.

The committee will make a recommendation to the General Assembly, which will ultimately vote to move forward immediately, return to the drawing board, delay the plan or scrap it altogether.

Townsend said some media coverage of the committee’s work “wasn’t necessarily an accurate representation, I think, of where the group really sort of was, and it was sort of pre-judging things a bit.”

The coverage did open Townsend’s eyes, though, to how the public might feel about expanding the state capitol when there are so many other areas of need throughout the state.

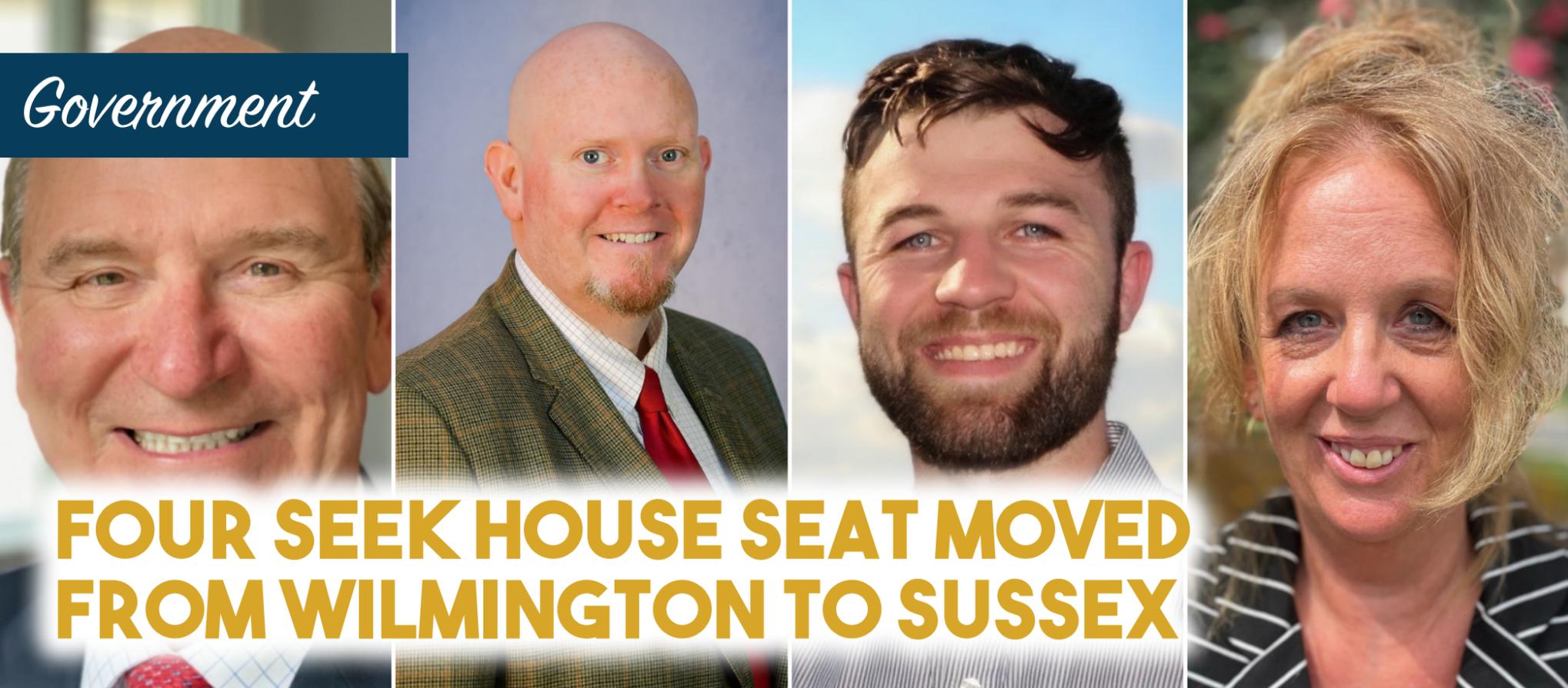
“It also put me in a position to kind of understand how I likely would feel if, in fact, the group recommended certain things with the level of conviction that the media reporting sort of indicated we already have,” Townsend said.

He said that because the building is only utilized part of the year, he wouldn’t feel comfortable voting for such a costly proposal “until, for example, there is a modern and fully effective and equitable high school in the city of Wilmington.”

“I, for one, would find it very difficult to support recommending this level of investment on a building that is used part of the year,” he said, “and perhaps to avoid certain kinds of discomforts for legislators or even the public when there are ample discomforts for other segments of the Delaware community that have yet to be addressed.”

Rep. Tim Dukes, R-Laurel, responded that Delaware could focus on the need for a high school in Wilmington, for example, while also developing a plan for Legislative Hall that will “make things a whole lot safer and more convenient for our constituents.”

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



FOUR SEEK HOUSE SEAT MOVED FROM WILMINGTON TO SUSSEX

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Now that the Route 24 corridor from Millsboro to Angola has its own state House District, four candidates have emerged to represent the area. The legislative seat was moved from Wilmington to Sussex County during last year's redistricting process, reflecting population growth in the southern end of Delaware.

Republican candidates include Dr. Jeff Hilovsky, co-founder of Sussex Eye Center, and Dr. Bradley Layfield, principal of Sussex Central High School. They'll face off in a primary election on Sept. 13. Whoever wins that election will challenge Democrat Keegan Worley and Independent Party candidate Amy Fresh.

Worley is an English teacher and wrestling coach at Caesar Rodney High School. Fresh is a realtor and owner of Be Yoga Fresh yoga studio in Long Neck.

The district encompasses northeast Millsboro, Oak Orchard, Long Neck and Angola. There are 8,660 Republican voters in the district, 7,528 Democratic voters, and 5,245 voters who are unaffiliated or members of a third party. Most of the area in the new 4th District was previously represented by Republican Rep. Ruth Briggs King.

The seat lost in Wilmington was long held by Rep. Gerald Brady, who resigned in February. It's currently held by **Rep. Bud Freel**, who will be out of a job in November.

Delaware LIVE News spoke with all four candidates, all of whom cited infrastructure deficiencies and education as their primary concerns.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

Vote in the primary on September 13.

Elections.Delaware.gov

Primary election day is almost here, but you can only vote if you're registered. If you're not registered, getting started is easy. Visit Elections.Delaware.gov. Register for the primary, research candidates, find your local polling place and learn about all the ways you can vote—including absentee voting, early voting and voting by mail. You have a voice. Be heard!

Register and vote by September 13.



Photo by Pixabay



Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

NEWARK CHARTER COMPLETES 21-YEAR EXPANSION

BY JAREK RUTZ

Newark Charter School unveiled its \$20 million junior high school Tuesday. It's the latest addition to a campus that began with classes in trailers scattered around a parking lot in 2001. Then, the charter school had 435 students in grades five to seven.

Now, its campus easily could be confused with a small college. Newark Charter today sits on a 44-square-acres near the intersection of Route 279 and the Christina Parkway. It serves more than 3,000 students from kindergarten to 12th grade in four buildings arranged in three smaller campuses that essentially form spaces for younger learners, the junior high and the high school.

The new 93,000-square-foot, three-floor junior high will be home to about 600 students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade

It features a "cafetorium" that morphs from a lunch room into an auditorium space complete with a stage for performances. The building has its own gym, library, science labs, performing arts spaces and athletic fields.

Newark Charter has added to or altered some part of the buildings or campus every year since it was founded, said Dr. Frank Newton, head of school.

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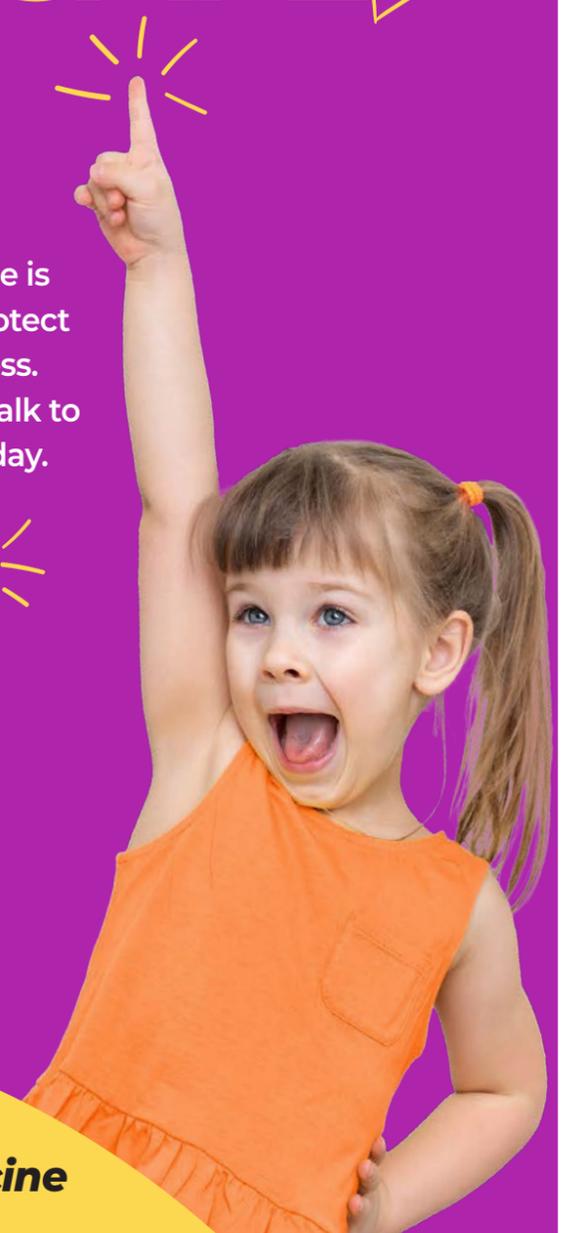
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de.gov/youthvaccine





FIVE LUCKY DISTRICTS GET HELP WITH NEW ECO-FRIENDLY BUSES

BY JAREK RUTZ

Bruce Ashby, transportation supervisor at Capital School District, said his office didn't ask for state help in getting three new electric buses and one propane one. But he will be delighted to get them.

Electric and propane buses are said to be more environmentally friendly than gasoline-powered ones because they release less carbon dioxide as the fuel burns. Ashby said about one-third his fleet of 55 buses are already propane-fueled, with the first introduced more than five years ago.

The state's "really been pushing the electric buses the past couple years," he said.

Capitol's new buses are included in a group for which the Delaware Department of Education on Tuesday submitted rebate applications to the federal government.

The 14 electric and 17 propane school buses are divided among five school districts:

- Red Clay Consolidated: eight electric, six propane
- Brandywine: seven propane
- Capital: three electric, one propane
- Colonial: three electric, one propane
- Caesar Rodney: two propane

The Education Department said 338 buses in the state are already propane-powered, but the 14 electric ones requested would be the first of their kind. Electric vehicles are at the core of a **federal push** for drivers and businesses to choose eco-friendly options.

ECO-FRIENDLY BUSES

David Stevenson, director of the Caesar Rodney Institute's Center for Energy Competitiveness, endorsed

propane-fueled buses, saying they have positive outcomes. They provide safe, reliable transportation with lower fuel and maintenance costs and are cleaner running than diesel, he said. He has some doubts about costs and safety of electric buses.

"The jury is still out on electric buses that cost about 50% more and can't be recharged during a power outage," Stevenson said. "A one-year-old electric bus caught **fire** in Connecticut and was difficult to put out. It may be too soon to adopt this technology."

The state is requesting the rebate grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Rebate program. It will provide \$5 billion nationally over the next five years to help school districts replace their gas guzzlers with eco-friendly models.

The electric and propane buses also beat diesel engine buses in gas mileage and other factors.

"I won't know too much until we actually get them and can start using them and tracking their efficiency," Ashby said. "But I do know that they're supposed to keep the air clean, so I'm looking forward to getting them so we can see how they operate."

The Education Department did not ask for a specific dollar amount when applying for the grant. The federal government has a funding **formula** that dictates how much the grant would be worth, depending on where the district is requesting an electric zero-emission or a compressed natural gas propane bus. The grant size also depends on the amount of buses requested.

The program also has a funding schedule for the charging stations that will need to accompany any new electric buses.





LEARNING COLLAB, SCHOOL BOARDS MAKE JOINT MEETING PUBLIC

BY JAREK RUTZ

The joint meeting of the Red Clay, Brandywine and Christina school districts to discuss concerns about the **Wilmington Learning Collaborative** will be public. The meeting is set for Tuesday, Aug. 30, at 6:30 p.m. at the **Neighborhood House** at 1218 B St. in Wilmington.

All three district boards have pushed off ratifying or refusing the 16-page draft **agreement** they received June 2 that details the roles of all parties involved with the collaborative, including the districts and governing council.

All 21 school board members, seven from each district, will be present. The meeting will also be livestreamed **HERE** and is open to the public. There is no time allotted for public comment.

The public was asked in an email sent out this week by the Learning Collab to provide written comment to their school board or participate in public comment at upcoming board meetings: Brandywine 9/19, Christina

9/13, Red Clay 9/21.

Officials from the governor’s office and the Department of Education are expected to attend Tuesday.

The Wilmington Learning Collaborative is a joint project, initiated by Gov. John Carney’s **office** and the **Department of Education**. It seeks to put all the Wilmington elementary and middle school students in the three districts, which are largely suburban districts, under one board so that curriculums and other programs can be tweaked to help city students better learn.

The program is expected to include access to community and family services and to use more grassroots and teacher-led ideas to capitalize on the knowledge of those who see the kids each day.

Delaware has allocated \$7 million to help run the collaborative, which would also draw state monies allotted to district budgets.



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KENT COUNTY COURTHOUSE

JUDGE TELLS CAESAR RODNEY MOM TO LAWYER UP

BY JAREK RUTZ

India Scott, the Caesar Rodney School District mother who is suing another parent and son for dodgeball game injuries, was told Monday to get a lawyer or her case will be dismissed. Court of Common Pleas Judge Anne E. Hartnett told Scott to find a lawyer by Oct. 3, the day Hartnett has scheduled a second pretrial hearing.

The suit, filed in the Kent County Court of Common Pleas, stems from a Jan. 10 **dodgeball game** played in a **Postlethwait Middle School** gym class.

Scott alleges that her son, seventh-grader Charles Cottman, was attacked by ninth-grader Finn Dyer after Cottman eliminated Dyer in a game by hitting Dyer with a ball. According to records, there was then an 11-second period where Finn was hitting Charles' head. Police records state the weapon used was "hands and feet." That led to doctors diagnosing Charles with a

concussion and mild traumatic brain injury.

Zachary George, the Dyers' lawyer, protested giving Scott an extension to find a lawyer. Finns' father Alex Dyer, who was in attendance but did not speak, is losing money by the hour, George said.

"We tried to negotiate this matter in an appropriate way, and we were shut down," he said.

George had called Scott May 9 and offered her a settlement payment of \$1,500, which she refused. Scott claims the Dyers should help pay for the cost of Charles' medical care. The school district has said it is not liable for the injuries. George argues that Alex has parental immunity and is not responsible for the actions of his son, who's a minor.

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CAESAR RODNEY STUDENT, FATHER SUED OVER GYM DODGEBALL INCIDENT

BY JAREK RUTZ

The mother of a Caesar Rodney School District seventh-grader has sued another parent claiming his son repeatedly hit her son during a gym class game of dodgeball, leaving her child with a traumatic brain injury and medical expenses.

On April 29, India Scott, mother of Charles Cottman, filed the lawsuit against Alex Dyer and his son, ninth-grader Finn Dyer, asking for medical expenses and “pain and suffering” damages.

The Dyer family lawyer said Monday he doesn’t believe Charles’ injuries are as serious as his mother claims. He added that neither he nor the family would comment further.

The suit raises questions about who, if anyone, is responsible when a child is injured at school.

Scott said Caesar Rodney officials have repeatedly told her the district is not responsible for the assault or subsequent injuries, even though the incident happened in the school gym.

Zachary George, the Dyers’ lawyer, said courts generally hold that parents are not responsible for the actions of their children, and a Widener University Delaware Law School professor agrees. John Culhane, co-director of the school’s Family Health Law and Policy Institute, said, “What that means is they’re not liable just by virtue of being parents.”

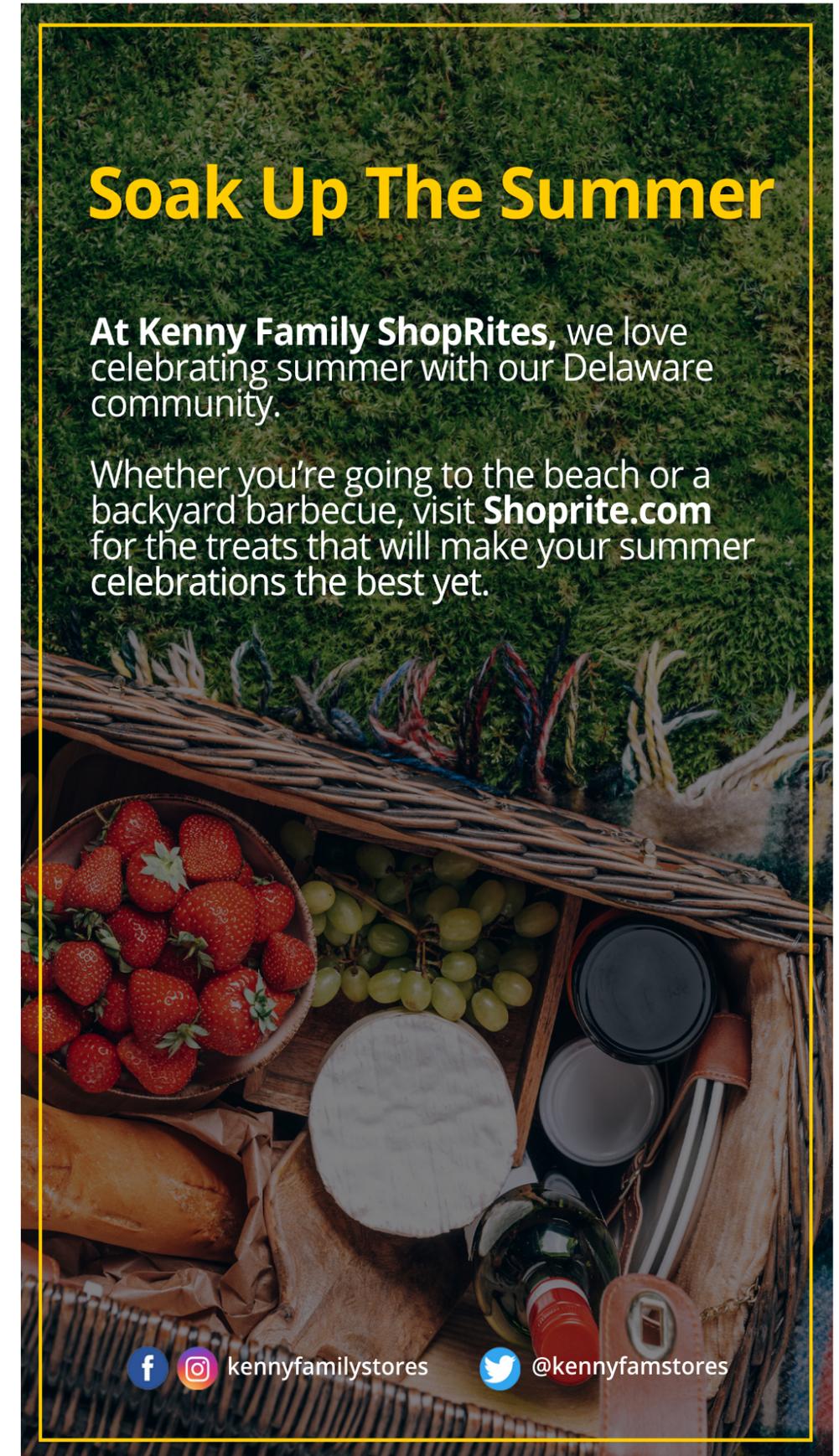
Also at issue is whether race played a role in the situation. Charles is Black. Finn is white. India Scott believes the incident was racially motivated.

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PUBLIC CALLS FOR RED CLAY MANDARIN IMMERSION CHARTER

BY JAREK RUTZ

Several members of the public called Aug. 17 for the Red Clay Consolidated School District to help create a Mandarin immersion charter school in New Castle County.

During Red Clay’s monthly board meeting, proponents said students would spend about half the day in English-speaking classrooms and the other half in classrooms where the instructor exclusively uses Mandarin.

PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR IMMERSION

Kelli Carrubba, a mother of two students in Red Clay, brought the topic up, saying that there are many students in the district that would benefit from the Mandarin immersion charter. According to her, parents have already organized a non-profit and a board for the “New Castle Language School,” and a Facebook page of 118 members who are in support of the new building.

The page was created on March 19, 2021 with the mission of “developing globally-minded citizens who have the knowledge and skills to affect positive change in our world.”

“We know that with Red Clay support, this school will be a success,” she said. “We want every child to have the opportunity to become bilingual and globally-minded citizens prepared for the ever changing world.”

Immersion programs have a proven record to improve test performance, Carrubba said, as well as enhancing cognitive skills and increasing cultural sensitivity. With Red Clay’s support, she said, the New Castle Language School will give students the tools they need to secure Delaware’s future, both economically and culturally. At the moment, only Mandarin would be taught.

Kendall Massett, executive director of **Delaware Charter Schools Network**, said she wasn’t yet familiar with the comments on the program from the board meeting and couldn’t discuss it.

Dayan Knox also spoke, saying people across the county would benefit from a Mandarin immersion charter.

“There are lots of kids in the regular school district and lots of families who are interested in Mandarin

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immersion, but they don’t come from a single feeder pattern,” he said. “This means it’s hard to establish a strong Mandarin immersion program that runs from K all the way through 12.”

The charter, especially with the support of the district and its board, would be a way to provide a quality education to families who are clearly interested in the program without straining the resources of a single school, he said.

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Photo by Guy Kawasaki for Pexels



Health

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

MONKEYPOX

STATE PARTNERS UP TO VACCINATE EVEN MORE FOR MONKEYPOX

BY BETSY PRICE

The state expanded access to the monkeypox vaccine on Monday, Aug. 22, and focus on reaching those who are most likely to contract the virus. The average person is not.

The Delaware Division of Public Health on Monday offered vaccines through state health clinics, Beebe Healthcare in Lewes, AIDS Delaware, the HIV Consortium in Wilmington and Camp Rehoboth in Rehoboth Beach. The state this week already had expanded vaccine access to those living with HIV and those receiving HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

Starting Monday, Aug. 22, the state included those engaging in high-risk activities, including sex, that increase exposure. Those groups include:

- Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and have had multiple (more than one) or any anonymous sexual partners

- Transgender women or nonbinary persons assigned male at birth who have sex with men
- Sex workers (of any sexual orientation/gender)
- Staff (of any sexual orientation/gender) at establishments where sexual activity occurs (e.g., bathhouses, saunas, sex clubs)

Delaware has 11 **confirmed** cases of monkeypox. Across the nation, 13,500 cases have been confirmed, mostly in men. Monkeypox can be transmitted easily because the virus creates bumps or fluid-filled sores that can break, infecting others.

With the number of monkeypox cases rising across the country, the vaccine has been scarce, worrying both

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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



REFEREE STRIKE DERAILED BEFORE FOOTBALL SEASON STARTS

BY PATRICK GARYANTES

The Delaware high school football season had a near miss last week, before the DIAA stepped in to help avert a referee strike.

The Delmarva Football Officials Association had been disputing compensation for the 2022 season and began a work stoppage Aug. 15, the day high school fall sports could begin practicing. Gearing up for games often includes reffed scrimmages with an opponent, but handfuls of scrimmages over the past week were canceled or done without officials.

On Friday, though, the officials association agreed with the DIAA to work the upcoming football season. The officials were invited to a Sept. 8 board meeting to present their proposal.

Repeated efforts were unsuccessful this week in reach-

ing the Delmarva Football Officials Association for comment.

Historically, the DIAA, Delaware Board of Education, Delaware Association of Athletic Directors and the Delaware Interscholastic Officials Committee have negotiated and agreed upon contracts for all fall, winter and spring sports officials. Officials Committee leader Walt Connors explained what had happened in a public Facebook post.

“The game fees have been talked about and negotiated through ALL 17 officials’ organizations and all ADs/schools since May 2021, and presented to the DIAA for inclusion in the regulations in March 2022,” he said.

Connors said the football officials’ past president and all other presidents were included in more than 30

emails and multiple video discussions. “They were asked to directly gather data more than a year ago but did nothing,” Connors said. “It seems their group is now saying they were never told anything.”

The contract, which would have lasted through 2027, would raise pay from 2021’s \$77 to \$97, Connors said.

This proposal was submitted and agreed upon by the DIAA on June 1 of this year with the football officials and others given until July 6 to voice concerns. No one did, Connors said.

Over time the original five-year contract was shortened to one-year deals that could be negotiated after each school year, Connor said. This new version of the contract was agreed upon recently and presented to all the officiating departments in mid-July.

Two members of the football officials association then told the Delmarva Sports Network they had been handed a contract for the upcoming year in July and told that it had been negotiated and agreed upon for them. The officials said they were told they needed to sign off on the contract by Aug. 15.

But, the officials said, they were never included in negotiation and because of that, they would not agree to, leading to scrimmages being canceled.

The contract offered to raise their pay to \$84 per game and continue the flat \$10 earned for any official crossing county lines.

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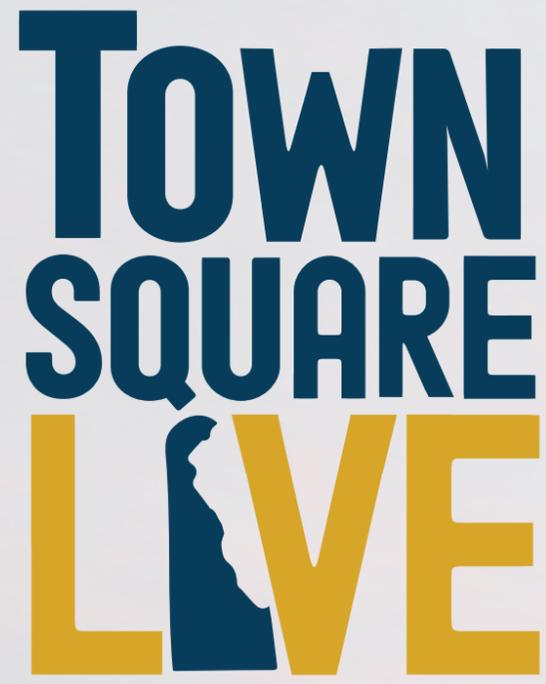


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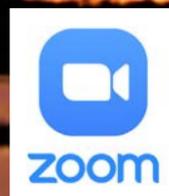


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