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*December 15, 2022*  
*Vol. 3, Issue 50*



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**MORE OPIOID SETTLEMENT MONIES**



**HOCKESSIN COLORED SCHOOL NO. 107 HISTORIC SITE**



**FRIENDS HOLD OFF BUCCANEERS**

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**

*Photo link: Out & About*



*Community*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**



## UNCLE JOHN'S BBQ OPENS IN FORMER CLAYMONT GAS STATION

BY PAM GEORGE

John Berl doesn't like to sit still, and his average walking pace would make some breathless. A few weeks after the long-awaited **Uncle John's BBQ Stand** finally opened, he was zipping from the dining room through the open kitchen to the area holding the giant smoker—and back again.

The restaurant at 2509 Philadelphia Pike in Claymont debuted Nov 15, but the site was a destination long before that. While construction was underway, Berl and his team operated out of Uncle John's BBQ food truck in the lot. The new commercial kitchen allows the chef to centralize food truck and catering operations while serving customers in the slender dining room. And he's proving that good things come in small packages.

### UNCLE JOHN'S PATH TO BUSINESS(ES)

The Claymont native grew up cooking with his Polish grandmother, who loved entertaining family in her North Graylyn Crest home. His parents divorced when he was nine, and visits to his father included barbecuing on the grill.

Along with a love for food, he developed a work ethic at a young age. A high school co-op program gave him time to work at Domino's Pizza shop. After graduation, he started a landscaping and construction business, and worked in a pizza and sub shop on the side.

"My friends all worked at the pizza joint, so why not get paid and hang out with my friends at the same time?" he said.

The gregarious Berl earned the nickname "Hollywood" because he chatted up the customers as he made their sandwiches. The name was apt in other respects. Berl was a star grill master, and hosts were only too happy to let him command the flames at parties.

Berl continued juggling two jobs, one of which was usually in the restaurant industry. Once he started roasting pigs, friends began paying him to do small catering jobs.

"Once we stuffed a pig with a deer and a chicken," he recalled. "It was crazy stuff. I was having so much fun doing it, and I was getting paid."

A job as a foreman for an industrial solutions company was not as much fun. It required hours of travel as well as backbreaking work. In 2012, he quit and put his savings toward a food truck. Uncle John's BBQ was born.

### THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

But first, the 20-foot box trailer needed extensive repairs. Berl put his "can-do" attitude toward the project, which led to another business, Custom Concessions, which specializes in outfitting trucks for food service. Berl was ahead of the curve. Between 2012 and 2018, Delaware's food truck scene was just revving up.

"I took a leap of faith," Berl acknowledged. "There were only a handful of people around doing it. People seemed to enjoy it, and I enjoyed it too."

Other operators hit the road, and his company built many of their trucks. Eager entrepreneurs liked the idea of taking their cuisine for a test drive without paying rent. Restaurants, meanwhile, bought trucks for catering gigs.

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Community

# POLICE CHIEF SELECTED TO LEAD ST. LOUIS PD

had worked with the council to create a body-worn camera program.

“As the administration seeks a new police chief, it is my hope that the next chief is promoted from within the Wilmington Police Department, is someone with a vested interest in the city, and who will work day and night to ensure that the residents of Wilmington can feel safe,” Congo said in a statement.

He said law enforcement is a collaborative effort and the council will remain engaged with the administration and police department to continue improving morale within the department.

“I also hope to see a revival of a dedicated Community Policing Unit,” Congo said. “This unit was once comprised of a select group of officers who were visible within communities to help facilitate relationship-building with residents and who attended community meetings in their assigned areas.”

Tracy has served as Wilmington’s police chief since April 2017. Before leading that department, the Bronx native held command positions in the New York City and Chicago police departments.

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BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Wilmington Mayor Mike Purzycki hasn’t yet said how the city plans to replace police Chief Robert Tracy, who on Tuesday was selected to lead the St. Louis, MO, Police Department.

Tracy’s selection as the Gateway City’s top cop was **announced** by St. Louis Mayor Tishaura Jones Tuesday morning. It’s the first time in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department’s 214-year history that it’s hired a chief from outside its ranks. Tracy will remain Wilmington’s police chief until Jan. 6, 2023.

“Between now and then, I’ll have more to say about the transition to a new police administration,” Purzycki said in a **news release**.

Wilmington City Council President Ernest “Trippi” Congo II congratulated Tracy—an official he’s been highly critical of—on his new job. He noted that Tracy

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Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



## WALGREENS, CVS TO PAY DELAWARE \$43.6M OPIOID SETTLEMENT

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware stands to receive some \$43.6 million from settlements with CVS and Walgreens over their roles in America's opioid epidemic. In total, **CVS** will pay \$5 billion and **Walgreens** will pay \$5.7 billion, which will be distributed amongst states and municipalities involved in the litigation.

The announcement comes just days after public health officials announced that November 2022 was Delaware's deadliest month on record for overdose fatalities, at 43. That surpasses the previous monthly high total of 42 set in May 2022. November's 43 deaths included 21 people from New Castle County, 18 from Sussex County and four from Kent County.

Delaware's share of Monday's settlements will be placed in the state's **Prescription Opioid Settlement Distribution Fund** created last year with the General Assembly's unanimous passage of **Senate Bill 166**. The fund, which is overseen by an independent commission

co-chaired by the attorney general and lieutenant governor, was created to ensure settlement money is used to remediate and abate the opioid crisis without being diverted for other purposes. Organizations can apply for grants to pay for opioid remediation programs **HERE**. Grants are capped at \$100,000.

Separately, Attorney General Kathy Jennings **announced** Monday that she has completed her review of and plans to join two separate national settlements with Teva and Allergan, both opioid manufacturers. Those settlements, which will also go into the Prescription Opioid Settlement Distribution Fund, will bring the state an additional \$25.2 million.

Monday's settlement announcements are in addition to agreements with Johnson & Johnson, Amerisource-Bergen, Cardinal Health, McKesson, Purdue Pharma, Walmart, Mallinckrodt, McKinsey & Co. and Endo, totaling roughly \$250 million.

"The true cost of the epidemic is measured in lives, not dollars," Jennings said in a news release Monday. "This is an especially painful time of year for families who have lost loved ones, and I am mindful of the fact that no amount of money can fully repair the damage done to our state."

In addition to the financial terms, the settlements with CVS and Walgreens—and an earlier settlement with **Walmart**—require the pharmacies to monitor, report and share data about suspicious activity related to opioid prescriptions.

In a **statement**, Walgreens said the settlement will allow the company to focus on the health and wellbeing of its customers and patients while making positive contributions to address the opioid crisis.

"We believe this is in the best interest of the company and our stakeholders at this time, and allows our pharmacists, dedicated healthcare professionals who live and work in the communities they serve, to continue playing a critical role in providing education and resources to help combat opioid misuse and abuse," Walgreens said.

In another **statement**, CVS said it was pleased to resolve the claims.

"We are committed to working with states, municipalities and tribes, and will continue our own important initiatives to help reduce the illegitimate use of prescription opioids," said Thomas Moriarty, chief policy officer and general counsel with CVS Health.

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*Government*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**

# DE SUPREME COURT EXPLAINS DECISION TO OVERTURN VOTE-BY-MAIL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

In a 69-page **decision** that cited versions of Delaware constitutions dating back to 1776, the state’s Supreme Court this week explained its ruling overturning mail-in voting and same-day voter registration laws passed by the General Assembly earlier this year.

The state’s highest court in October unanimously **ruled** the statutes unconstitutional but issued an abbreviated order due to time constraints imposed by the then-upcoming general election. This week’s opinion explains the court’s justification in full.

The decision focuses predominantly on the mail-in voting law before turning briefly to the same-day registration statute near the end. It explores the history of absentee voting in the First State, including legal challenges in **1939** and **1942**, a court opinion in **1972**, and the General Assembly’s authorization of mail-in voting on an **emergency basis** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision also addresses the state legislature’s failed initial **attempt** to amend the Delaware Constitution to allow no-excuse absentee voting, and its subsequent attempt to pass a near-identical bill without amending the Constitution.

“Stymied by the proposed amendment’s failure in the House, the legislative proponents of the expansion of no-excuse voting by mail reverted—albeit with a measure of diffidence—to the ordinary legislative process,” the court wrote.

The court emphasized that its decision should not be taken as a reflection of its views on the relative advantages and drawbacks of universal absentee voting or a later registration deadline.

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# CARNEY EXTENDS HEALTH EMERGENCY TO PROTECT HOSPITAL CAPACITY

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Not everyone is thrilled about Gov. John Carney’s decision to extend Delaware’s COVID-19 public health emergency for another 30 days. The order “aims to help protect capacity at our health care facilities and it enables the state to maintain eligibility for federal funding or assistance,” said Charlie Quimby, a spokesman for the governor’s office.

Charlie Copeland, co-director of the Caesar Rodney Institute’s Center for Analysis of Delaware’s Economy and Government Spending, is among many who don’t see the point of continuing the emergency order. “COVID is over and it’s been over for months,” he said.

Copeland is a former legislator who served as leader of the Senate Republican Caucus in 2007 and 2008.

“Giving Gov. Carney another emergency extension is based on a lie that COVID is still a major health threat,

or at least one that’s larger than any other respiratory virus, including the flu or the RSV that we’re seeing spike in children and others,” Copeland said.

The extension of the public health emergency is Carney’s **10th**, not including the various state of emergency orders issued during the pandemic. Quimby noted that there’s an ongoing staff shortage at health care institutions, and Carney and Division of Public Health officials already have warned that beds are filling up with cases of COVID, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and the flu. Specifically, Quimby said, the order:

- Allows the Delaware National Guard to take precautionary or responsive actions to help local authorities.

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# RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO STOP ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

After dispersing \$122 million in rental and utility assistance, the Delaware State Housing Authority will stop accepting applications in the new year to manage application volume, the agency announced Tuesday.

“There is no guarantee when the program will resume accepting new applications,” the Housing Authority said in a news release. The program closure is necessary due to overwhelming demand, the agency said, causing funds to be “depleted at an exorbitant rate.”

No new applications or recertifications will be accepted for the **Delaware Housing Assistance Program**, or DEHAP, after 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 2, 2023. Landlords and tenants may continue submitting applications and recertifications until the Jan. 2 cutoff. Those with open or in-progress applications submitted prior to the deadline should continue to monitor their emails, text messages and voicemails for status updates.

This will be the second time the Housing Authority stopped accepting DEHAP applications due to over-

whelming demand. In September, the program was **paused** to modify regulations and manage application volume. It reopened in October with tighter restrictions.

It’s not clear whether the qualifications will be adjusted after the upcoming pause is lifted. According to the Housing Authority, people experiencing emergencies, such as eviction with a set court date, the immediate risk of homelessness or utility cut-off can start a new application for assistance after Jan. 2 through one of the program’s 15 **Community Navigators**. The Housing Authority emphasized that the DEHAP program is not permanently ending, but said “the program in its current format will eventually end.”

For additional details on the DEHAP program, visit [decovidhousinghelp.com](https://decovidhousinghelp.com) or call 1-866-935-0407.

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# NEW CASTLE COUNTY URGED TO INCREASE, EXPAND IMPACT FEES

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

New Castle County on Monday was given a draft plan by consultants to expand—and increase—the impact fees charged for development. The county adopted such fees in 1999 to “finance new or expanded infrastructure and service needs for development.” And they have not changed much since.

The county’s consultants recommended adding fees to encourage low-income housing and open space; differentiating more types of housing and businesses in assessing the fees; and raising the fees. If what was recommended is approved, most developers would pay a lot more and would most likely just pass along those costs to the people and businesses that buy and rent those houses and commercial properties.

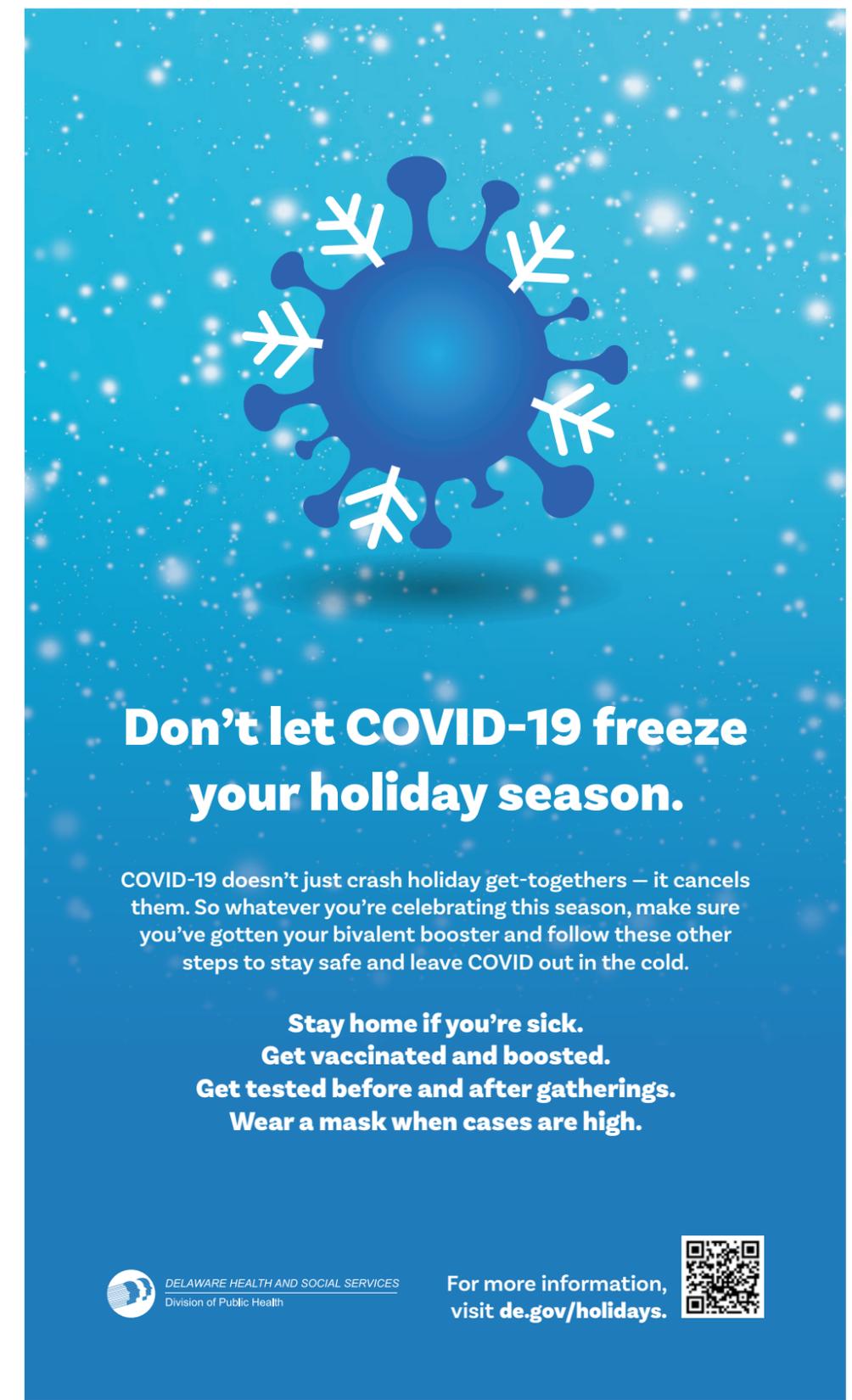
New Castle County breaks down impact fees into parks and special facilities; libraries; county facilities; EMS; fire and rescue; and law enforcement. Current impact fees, for example, total \$1,157 for a single-family house.

One slide in the consultants’ presentation concluded that that \$1,157 fee should go up—just to account for inflation since they were last adjusted in 2006—to \$2,036. The slide provided five scenarios for adjusting fees, including no increase and various timetables and methods of increasing them. Four of the five scenarios call for indexing the fees to inflation.

One push to increase the impact fees is that County Council this fall voted to spend \$7.5 million over three years to preserve open space and agricultural land. Establishing a separate fee for open space will help finance part of that plan.

Doing the math on average current growth—2,000 homes and four million square feet of commercial space annually— he consultants pegged the open-space fee at \$377 for a single-family detached house.

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# CONTRACT AWARDED TO IMPROVE BUS SERVICE IN WILMINGTON

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

The Delaware Department of Transportation has accepted a \$2.3 million **bid** to improve the bus system on four streets in **downtown** Wilmington. The Wilmington Transit Corridors Improvement project aims to reconfigure Orange Street (between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 10th Street) and also improve transit on King (between MLK and 10th) and Eighth and Ninth streets (between Adams and Church streets).

“The goal of the project is to provide better shelters and other amenities at bus stops within the Central Business District of Wilmington along with safety improvements for pedestrians,” said Diane Gunn, a senior engineer with Century Engineering who is acting as DelDOT’s project manager.

Bus stops on all four streets would get LED signage to provide real-time bus arrival information. Sidewalks will be extended at the stops, creating what DelDOT

calls **bump outs** to reduce bus boarding and unloading times. New bus shelters will provide better pedestrian accessibility “while still protecting users from the weather,” DelDOT says.

Benches and trash receptacles are also planned.

Grass Busters Landscaping is scheduled to start work next spring and finish by fall. The work was estimated to cost \$2.6 million.

### BUS STOPS AND PARKING SPOTS

One **document** on DelDOT’s project **page** and a **video** of a 2021 information session say the work will include dramatic changes on Orange.

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# A WOMAN'S PLACE? FOR RUTH BRIGGS KING, IT'S THE LEGISLATURE

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

It's not uncommon for state Rep. **Ruth Briggs King** to be the only woman in a room full of men. The Georgetown lawmaker is the only female legislator in Delaware's General Assembly who belongs to the Republican Party. She doesn't let that get in the way of representing her constituents. In fact, she sees it as an opportunity.

"There have been numerous times when I have had to bring up what the guys didn't see," Briggs King told Delaware LIVE News.

"You don't know what you don't know, so we can be talking about healthcare and you might not understand there's a need for additional women's health services or pediatric services because, well, you're not a woman."

Her comfort speaking out for women's issues even when she's outnumbered comes from a philosophy she's carried her whole life.

"I've always gone by the mindset that, to whom much is given, much is expected. I have certainly been given so many opportunities—not just handed to me, but I worked for these opportunities—and I work to live up to those expectations."

Sen. Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown, who shares a large part of his district with Briggs King, said her presence makes the Republican Party stronger.

"Too often we kind of get caught in our own bubble and don't recognize women's point of view in some of the legislation and some of the points and arguments that

we make," Pettyjohn said. "Having her there as a resource and having her as another voice is extremely powerful. It's extremely important and definitely valuable."

Briggs King was recently recognized by women's lifestyle magazine **ELYSIAN**, which singled her out for her "unwavering leadership and strengths in organizational development and strategic planning" with "a proven track record to address and solve problems with an end-game of realizing results."

## WHO IS RUTH BRIGGS KING?

Briggs King has served in the House of Representatives since 2009. Her district, RD 37, spans from Georgetown to just north of Millsboro in Sussex County. East to west, the district stretches from the Harbeson area to Hardscrabble, not far from Sussex Tech.

Prior to joining the legislature, Briggs King was a sort of "Jill of all trades," working in medicine, education, banking, finance and real estate. The Del Tech and Wilmington University grad said there was never one moment when she realized she wanted to run for public office.

"I was running around in those circles because my dad had been very engaged in politics and his father before him, so it was just something I always saw as an opportunity," she said.

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*Photo credit: University of Delaware*



*Education*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**



## HOCKESSIN COLORED SCHOOL NO. 107 OPENS AS HISTORIC SITE

BY JAREK RUTZ

A school building in Hockessin instrumental to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that desegregated public schools, will enter a new chapter driven by diversity, inclusion and equity.

Hockessin Colored School No. 107, which operated from 1920 to 1959, was a one-room schoolhouse built to serve Black children who were not allowed to attend school with white children. It attracted national attention in April 1952 when Delaware Chancery Court Chief Judge Collins J. Seitz issued his decision that the disparity between white and African-American students violated the U.S. Constitution.

Hockessin Colored School No. 107 students, now in their late 80s and 90s, returned Wednesday, this time to a jam-packed, newly renovated building that celebrates their shared history.

After a decade of renovations and planning, what was

once a school building symbolic of America's racial divide is now the Center for Diversity, Inclusion and Social Equity. Ten former students entered one-by-one through the front doors as the crowd erupted in thunderous applause.

For former student Sonny Knott, that door went from a symbol of oppression to a historic landmark—a fitting bookend for a life during one of America's most transformative centuries for people of color.

"I was in the second grade in 1937 when I first walked through that door," Knott said. "Now 85 years later, I'm walking through that door again. I'm excited about this day because I can bring my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren, my neighbors here, because this is our history."

Every former student has stories to tell about their experiences at the school, Knott said—many funny and

happy, others traumatic and terrible. Knott said students at Hockessin School were made to use often-outdated hand-me-down books that white schools no longer wanted or needed. Often, when the books made their way to Hockessin School, there would be missing pages, making it impossible for students to read aloud or follow class instruction.

He joked that so many student names would be written in the back of the book that by the time his school received them, it sometimes seemed like there were more names than pages.

"It's very, very important that the kids nowadays know what we went through," Knott said.

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# Education



BY JAREK RUTZ

The Brandywine School District voted Monday night to explore using the same new model for evaluate its superintendent that Christina decided to consider two months ago. The vote came after Brandywine School Board member Ralph Ackerman recommended contacting the **Delaware School Boards Association** to set up a workshop to talk about its program they would use with Superintendent Lincoln Hohler.

John Marinucci, executive director of the association, described the program in late September to Christina's board. The program is free, but requires some training. It was created by **Cape Henlopen** School Board Chair Alison Myers as part of a doctoral dissertation.

The superintendent evaluation focuses on five areas:

- Vision and goals
- Teaching and learning
- People, systems and operations
- Professional responsibilities
- Superintendent's goal

It's been used by the Cape board since 2017.

# BRANDYWINE SEEKS HELP ON SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

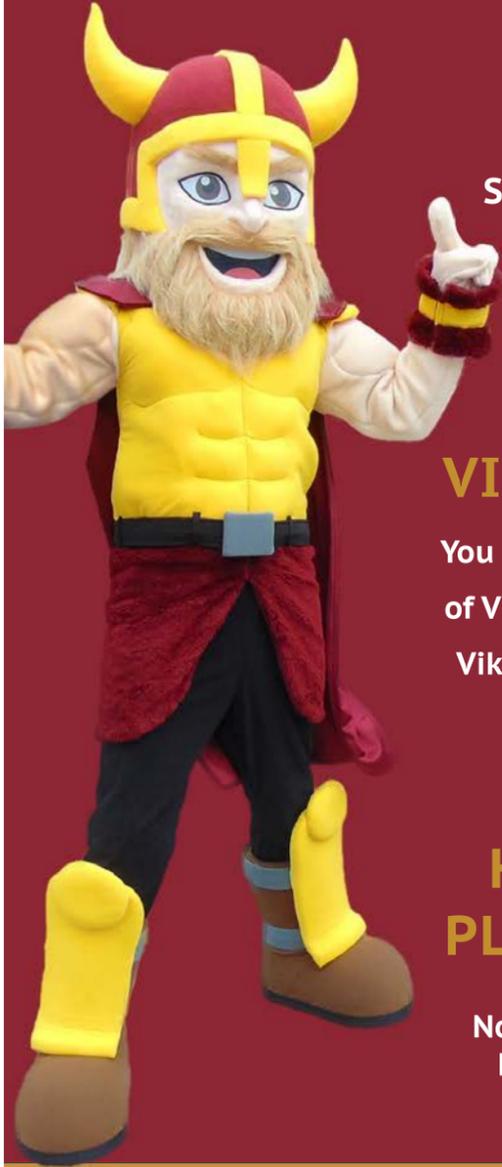
The move follows discussion in the education world about boards not holding annual reviews of their superintendents' performances. Education advocacy group **First State Educate** said few districts do that. Colonial's board and other district boards have some form of end-of-the-year meetings with superintendents, but there is no formal review that spells out how the superintendents did or didn't achieve the goals and met expectations.

"I would ask for the rest of the school year, the board does exactly what Mr. Ackerman is proposing, and take a look at some different models that are out there," said Brandywine board member Kim Stock.

Capital and Lake Forest school districts have also inquired about Cape Henlopen's model, according to Marinucci.

"What's great about it is it's not just an evaluation since it starts with developing performance expectations that the superintendent and the board agrees to at the beginning of the year," Marinucci said. The model includes check-ins throughout the year and then the formal evaluation at the end of each school year.

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# TEACHER'S UNION GETS ONE WISH: PAY COMMITTEE MOVES MEETING

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware's state teachers union got one of its wishes Monday when the state committee charged with adjusting the salaries of public school workers announced it will push its monthly meeting back an hour.

Mark Holodick, education secretary and chair of the Public Education Compensation Committee said at the start of Monday's regular meeting that starting next month, the committee will meet at 4:30 p.m. rather than 3:30. The earlier time meeting makes it difficult for teachers to attend, particularly elementary school teachers, since many of them are on the clock until 4:30 p.m.

Union officials had blamed the lack of teachers attending for one reason the committee voted last month to delay any formal recommendations on salary until next year.

Sen. Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown, pointed out that the meetings should be held on Monday and Friday, so they won't conflict with legislators on the committee having to attend General Assembly sessions Tuesdays,

Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Rep. Mike Smith, R-Pike Creek; Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, chair of the Senate education committee, and Rep. Kim Williams, D-Stanton, chair of the House education committee, also are members of the 15-person committee.

After the committee voted to delay its recommendations, which is allowed in the bill that created the committee, the **Delaware State Education Association**—the teacher's union—called for educators to attend the committee meetings. That led to a move to have the meeting start later in the day. That point is underscored by the fact that there is just one current educator is on the committee: **Christina School District's** Dave Kohan.

"Now, elementary educators have time after dismissal to get the things done that they need to get done, and to be fully engaged in our meetings," Holodick said.



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# KUUMBA'S \$2.4M GRANT WILL EXPAND WELLNESS, AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

BY JAREK RUTZ

**Kuumba Academy**, a Wilmington charter school, will use a \$2.4 million state grant to expand its health center and summer school program. The school will start receiving money from the grant—called a wraparound grant because it can be used to pay for school services outside the classroom—in January.

Through the same grant, Capital's **Towne Point Elementary** will be given \$800,733 and Christina's **Bancroft School** \$708,114.56.

The goal of the wraparound grants, according to the state Department of Education, is “to establish or expand community-learning centers that provide students with academic and non-academic opportunities as well as high-quality preventative health care and mental health assistance when schools are not in session.”

Kuumba Academy's grant will help expand its new school-based health center that opened this year thanks to a \$1.4 million Delaware Wraparound Services Initia-

tive grant. The center is ran by **ChristianaCare**. Those funds also helped create Kuumba's after-school tutoring program, which has 75 students enrolled. The Bayard School (\$1,238,000) and the Bancroft School (\$958,000) also received that same grant.

Being able to open a school-based health center has been a goal since the school moved into the Community Education Building in Wilmington in 2014, said Kuumba Head of School Sally Maldonado.

“We just kept hitting barriers, trying to get the center up and running,” she said, “so the wraparound grant finally made this eight-year-long dream possible.”

Kuumba's health center includes a nurse practitioner, pediatrician, social worker, counselor, nutritionist and coordinator. “They're meant to help not only the student but their families as well,” Maldonado said.

Wilmington's Community Education Building was founded in 2012 with the mission to create and build educational support systems to allow students to have equal opportunities for success. Many of the students served in the building are lower-income students.

Kuumba's social worker helps connect families with outside services such as rent support or resources for food. The counselor provides students and family mental health services. The nutritionist counsels students about how to create a healthier lifestyle.

Out of Kuumba's 643 students, 260 have already registered with the health center since it first opened in May. That number is supposed to grow this year as more students become familiar with its services, Maldonado said.

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## What does a vibrant preschool-12 learning community look like?

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# RED CLAY TO INDEPENDENTLY TEST FOR LEAD IN SCHOOL WATER

BY JAREK RUTZ

A **Red Clay Consolidated School District** committee will hire an independent group to test for lead in water at district schools. The Lead in Water Action Committee will work with **Batta**, an environmental lab company that conducts tests for lead in water.

“At this time, we are working with our community experts, our facilities and maintenance department, and Batta to formulate our testing plan,” said committee co-chair Jessica Farrand. “We are going to focus on consumption points and food preparation fixtures for routine testing. Fixtures that are not intended for consumption will be labeled as such.”

The cost of Batta’s services was not mentioned in a Dec. 7 meeting of the Wellness Committee, and efforts were not successful Dec. 8 to reach Farrand for information on how much the project costs.

There is a per-test fee as well as hourly labor charges, she said.

The district decided to test its own water after the Delaware Division of Public Health released a report in October that **identified** dozens of state schools with a harmfully high content of lead in their water supply. The **Environmental Protection Agency** states that anything over .015 milligrams of lead per liter of water is dangerous.

Six Red Clay schools had lead concentration higher than the .015 limit. They are: Skyline Middle School, A.I. du Pont High School, A.I. du Pont Middle School, Cab Calloway School of the Arts, H.B. du Pont Middle School and James H. Groves Adult School.

Exposure to lead can seriously hurt a child, causing damage to the brain and nervous system, delaying growth and development and contributing to learning and behavior problems.

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# HEATHER HITCHENS NAMED SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OF YEAR

of my population vary daily, and I am a crucial part of figuring out what they need.

She was one of 19 other support staff from up and down the state vying for the state title. They include custodial staff, secretaries, nutritional staff, bus drivers, bus aides and information technology staff. Hitchens received \$5,000 for earning the state title. All of the competitors win \$2,000.

“It’s important to let them know that they are cherished and that everybody recognizes their hard work and contributions to the educational mission,” said John Marinucci, executive director of the **Delaware School Board Association**. “Without them, the school would not be able to function.”

In addition to overseeing the Special Olympics for the Lake Forest district, Hitchens organizes inclusion events during the school year to bring awareness and acceptance of students with special needs.

She’s helped create bocce ball and soccer unified tournaments, and has been active in Spread the Word to End the Word campaigns. That’s a global campaign designed to get people to stop using hurtful language about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In a news release, Jon Buzby, senior director of Special Olympics Delaware’s Unified Champion Schools program, praised Heather’s leadership skills and her ability to excite her colleagues to go above and beyond when trying to make a difference in school.

Hitchens brings the award to Lake Forest School District for the second consecutive year.

Last year’s winner was David Thomas, a computer lab and technology paraprofessional at **Lake Forest East Elementary School**.



## BY JAREK RUTZ

Heather Hitchens of Lake Forest Central has been named Delaware 2023 Educational Support Professional of the Year. A paraprofessional, she works with students with disabilities in small classroom and inclusion settings.

“I ensure students with disabilities participate to the best of their ability, whether that be maneuvering their wheelchair to score a goal or learning a picture communication system to vocalize their needs,” Hitchens said in her application. “I strive to embody the least dangerous assumption to guide students to succeed. The needs

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*Sports*

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# FRIENDS HOLDS OFF BUCCANEERS FOR STATE TITLE

in the second quarter, Friends added a 32-yard field goal from Alessio Christanetti-Walker which would later prove to be the winning score.

After a scoreless third quarter, the Buccaneers began to find their offense. Midway through the fourth quarter Caravel quarterback Truman Auwerda found his groove. Starting on their 15-yard line, Auwerda connected with Vandrick Hamlin for 42 yards to start the scoring drive. Then on fourth and 14, Auwerda found Mekhi Carmon who made a great sliding catch to keep the drive going. On the next play, Jordan Miller was able to punch it in from six yards out for the Buccaneers only touchdown of the game.

Caravel would get a second chance late in the fourth quarter after forcing the Quakers to punt. After a completed pass to Christian DeRegis on first down, Auwerda looked for him again over the middle. However, this time Friends defensive back Andrew McKenzie stepped in front of the pass to intercept the ball and solidify Wilmington Friends as the 2022 Class 2A state champions.

When asked about the win, coach Bob Tattersall said “This was much more difficult because I spent most of the time standing around. He (son Rob) is just what this team needed.”



BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Wilmington Friends school won its second state with a 10-7 victory over the Caravel Buccaneers. The Quakers were in the championship game in 2018, but had some major injuries that created a lopsided loss to Woodbridge. Their last state championship came in 1984 with a 22-12 victory over Claymont.

The Quakers were led by the third generation of Tattersalls, quarterback Robby, son of coach Rob Tattersall and long-time coach Bob Tattersall. Ryan Tattersall is the younger brother of Robby Tattersall and also sees significant time for the team also on defense.

Robby has been the leader all season at the quarterback position doing it both in the air and with his legs. He led them in the championship game as well as he had 115 yards on 23 carries on the ground, and went 13 for 21 with 117 yards passing with one touchdown. Robby hit Ishmael Johnson for a four-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter to give Friends a 7-0 lead. Late

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## CAESAR RODNEY RIDES SEVEN PINS TO DEFEAT SAINT MARK'S

BY BENNY MITCHELL

The formula to winning a wrestling dual meet is simple. Find seven pinners on your team and then at least one that can stay off their back. The Caesar Rodney Riders used that formula to win their season opening non-conference match over Saint Mark's 46-30.

The Riders won seven matches by pin and picked up a major decision in one other match. Saint Mark's recorded four pins in the match.

"We definitely needed those seven pins tonight, I like my guys going out after pins. It can make a difference in the match like it did tonight," Caesar Rodney head coach Trey Mitchell said.

With the match starting at 132 pounds the Spartans took the first bout with Aaron Menickella won a 3-1 decision over Nate Moore. The Riders answered with a 21-9 major decision by Dylan Bennett over Alec Baxley

at 138 pounds and then Jaxson Kopp secured a pin in 5:28 at 144 pounds.

The two teams traded pins with Saint Mark's Keigan Barnes got a pin in 1:59 at 150 pounds and the Riders' Cam Cataldi responded with a pin at 157 pounds in 2:28 giving the Riders a 16-9 lead after five bouts.

The Spartans took the lead back with consecutive pins by Vinny Hurst at 165 pounds and then Luke Spoor at 175 pounds giving Saint Mark's a 21-16 lead at the mid-way point of the match.

The Riders responded with a pair of pins of their own as Owen Dixon secured a pin at 190 pounds in 1:03 and Owyn Meister at 215 in 23 seconds. Spartans 285 pounder Aiden Zellman's 43-second pin got Saint Mark's back on the board as the Riders led 28-27 heading into the lightweights.

"I'm really proud of our effort, they (Caesar Rodney) are a great team, we are young and talented and we had some key match ups, some key wins tonight. I'm really impressed with my guys and really looking forward to the rest of the season," Saint Mark's head coach Cam Butler said.

Clif Backsh avenged a loss from last season with a 9-3 decision at 106 pounds over state finalist Alex McEvoy giving the Spartans the lead 30-28.

"I liked the fight in my team tonight, Saint Mark's came out like a ball of fire and brought it. That's the whole reason we came up here to wrestle them to get good competition and we did," Caesar Rodney head coach Trey Mitchell said.

The Riders closed out the match with three consecutive pins coming from Cole Moffett (113) in 1:49, Nick Moore (120) in 1:10 and Trevor Copes (126) in 1:01 giving Caesar Rodney their first win of the season as well as Mitchell's first win of his career.

Saint Mark's will head to the Penn Manor Tournament this weekend and return to dual meet action next Wednesday when they host Conrad. Caesar Rodney will compete in the Milford Invitational on Saturday and then begin Henlopen Conference action Wednesday at defending state champion Cape Henlopen.

"We will get back in the room tomorrow and get back to work. We have the Milford Invitational on Saturday before we head down to Cape next week. We look at it as another opportunity to wrestle and get better," Mitchell said.





**BY GLENN FRAZER**

The Delaware Interscholastic Football Coaches Association announced this year's All-Class football teams for the three classifications at a meeting in Dover Thursday.

Class 1A was dominated by Laurel and St. Elizabeth, the two teams that played for the state title Saturday. The Bulldogs placed 11 players on the first team, while the Vikings had five players named to the first team. The Class 1A offensive player of the year is Laurel senior quarterback Kayden Shockley, the defensive player of the year is senior linebacker Evan Collins also from Laurel, and the lineman of the year honor goes to senior Brayden Hearn as the Bulldogs swept the three awards.

In Class 2A, the championship finalists, Wilmington Friends (seven) and Caravel (five) landed a total of 12 players on the first team led by offensive player of the year Robby Tattersall of Friends, and Mekhi Carmon from Caravel, the defensive player of the year. The 2A lineman of the year is Temple-bound Luke Watson from Saint Mark's.

Smyrna paced the Class 3A first team with six selections.

# DIFCA ANNOUNCES 2022 ALL-CLASS FOOTBALL TEAMS

Middletown, Sussex Central and Salesianum each placed five players on the first team, while Dover and Appo had three players on the prestigious list. The 3A offensive player of the year is Yamir Knight from Smyrna, the defensive player of the year honor goes to Nate Ray of Sallies, and the lineman of the year is Elijah Husser of Appoquinimink.

See below for the entire list of those receiving first and second team honors.

## 2022 ALL-CLASS TEAM

### Class 1A

#### FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

- QB Kaden Shockley, Laurel (Sr)
- FB Gavin Andrews, Saint Elizabeth (Jr)
- RB Quasim Benson, Saint Elizabeth (Sr)
- RB Kyle Wilson, Laurel (Sr)
- WR Tenye Martin, Charter of Wilm. (Sr)
- WR Aviyon Matthews, Seaford (Jr)
- WR Chris Character, Saint Elizabeth (Sr)
- TE Yasir Felton, Saint Andrews (Jr)
- C Brayden Hearn, Laurel (Sr)
- OG Marquis Thompson, Laurel (Sr)
- OG Phil Kamara, Odessa (Jr)
- OT Owen Chaffinch, Laurel (Jr)
- OT James Schultz, Seaford (Jr)

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# LAUREL BULLDOGS WIN BACK TO BACK STATE FOOTBALL TITLES

BY BENNY MITCHELL

For two seasons the Laurel Bulldogs have carried the target on their back with the number one ranking in Class A and for two seasons they have raised the state championship trophy at Delaware Stadium in December.

“Unbelievable,” Laurel head coach Joey Jones said after the Bulldogs defeated St. Elizabeth 28-13 to win the DIAA Class A state football championship for the second straight year.

Laurel’s Owen Chaffinch recovered a St. Elizabeth fumble on the first play of the game at the Vikings’ 37-yard line. Four plays later Xavier Limehouse on a fourth and two went around the left end for a 29-yard touchdown run. Michael Gonzalez-Perez converted the kick as Laurel led 7-0 just 2:17 into the game.

Laurel added to its lead early in the second quarter on a 13-yard touchdown run by Tate Walls. Gonzalez-Perez converted the kick as the Bulldogs led 14-0 with 9:23 to play in the first half.

St. Elizabeth was driving on their its possession, but the drive was halted when Ny’Aire Farlow jumped the route and intercepted Chris Soto’s pass at the Laurel 46-yard line for the Bulldogs second takeaway of the first half. Laurel was unable to capitalize on the turnover and was forced to punt the ball as Kaden Shockley kicked a low ball that rolled to the St. Elizabeth 14.

The Vikings put together a solid 10-play, 86-yard drive capped off by a 22-yard halfback pass from Chris Character to a wide open Tony Shiavoni. Soto converted the kick as St. Elizabeth cut the Laurel lead to 14-7 at halftime.

Neither team could get much going on offense in the third quarter. Early in the fourth quarter, St. Elizabeth got a key stop as Laurel went for it on fourth and two. Shockley was held to a one-yard run giving the Vikings the ball at its 46-yard line with 8:16 to play in the game.

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# HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL, WRESTLING RANKINGS: WEEK 2

BY NICK HALLIDAY

# DELAWARE **LIVE** SPORTS TOP 10 RANKINGS

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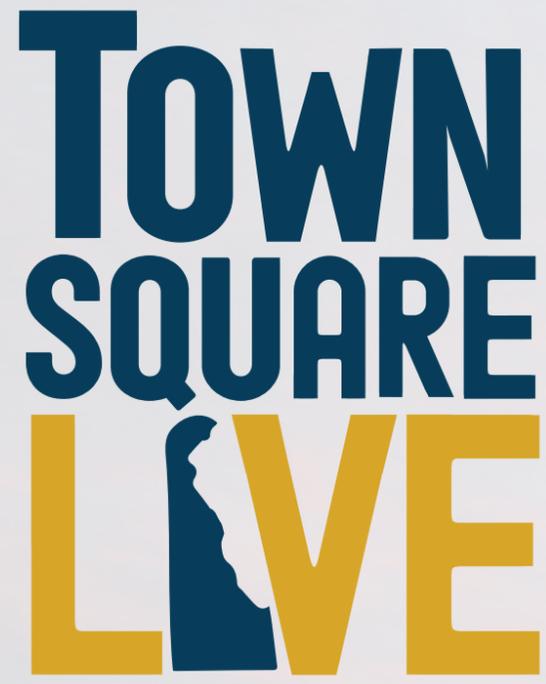


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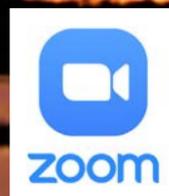
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