

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

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photo link: First State Heritage Park



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photo link: Longwood Gardens
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Riverfront East Development



Town Hall Meetings in Electric Vehicle Mandate



25th Annual Breast Cancer Update

photo link: Mt. Cuba Center

Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



PETE DU PONT RECORDS ARCHIVE OPENS AT HAGLEY LIBRARY

BY BETSY PRICE

A collection of Pete du Pont’s papers is now open to the public at Hagley Museum and Library. It includes decades of the former Delaware governor’s public writing, as well as photos, scrapbooks, recordings and correspondence with family members.

Among the material in the archive are items related to du Pont’s 1988 campaign to be the Republican nominee for president of the United States and du Pont’s push to bring credit card processing facilities to the First State after the Dupont Corp. became a lesser force in Delaware’s economy. That move shifted Delaware’s unemployment rate to the lowest in the nation at the time.

Eric Rau, director of the Hagley Library, said he found some of the presidential campaign material particularly interesting.

“Just how he ran the campaign, when he started and when he stopped,” Rau said. “There’s material there about managing the campaign.”

du Pont would go on to cede to George H.W. Bush, who became the Republican nominee and was elected president.

The collection springs from a partnership with [Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation](#), chaired by Pete’s son, Thère du Pont. The initiative makes Pete du Pont’s papers available to a wider audience as his foundation celebrates its 20th anniversary, Thère said in a Hagley press release. Rau said the two organizations began talking about the archive about three years ago. The materials arrived at Hagley shortly before the governor died May 8, 2021.

Hagley is a former du Pont estate that includes the first [du Pont family](#) home and garden in the United States, the company’s first powder yards and a 19th-century machine shop, as well as a library that focuses on materials related to the history of American business and technology.

Pete, whose full name was Pierre S. du Pont IV, was the great nephew of Pierre S. du Pont, who developed Longwood Gardens. The former governor also was an attorney, state legislator, member of Congress, commentator and columnist.

When the du Pont administration began, Delaware faced enormous challenges, including a financial structure that drove employers away, the Hagley release said. du Pont was able to win the confidence of the Democrats and pass the 1981 Financial Center Development Act with bipartisan support. It opened doors for national banks and credit card companies to start their operations in Delaware. That created thousands of new jobs and transformed the Wilmington skyline in a way no other single piece of legislation has done, the release said.

du Pont also co-founded Leadership Delaware and founded Jobs for Delaware Graduates, a workforce preparation program for high school students. The foundation was established in 2003 to honor du Pont, but also highlight Delaware innovation and projects that reduced the barriers to private enterprise.

Many of the records relating to du Pont’s years as governor are in the state archives, Rau said.

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GAMING, SOCIAL MEDIA CAN HELP SET UP KIDS FOR GAMBLING ISSUES

BY BETSY PRICE

With the advent of March Madness and the NCAA's national basketball tournament comes an avalanche of flashy ads for websites encouraging people to bet on games. But if you think that's the first time a child is exposed to the evils of a modern world bent on addicting youth to gambling, think again, says John Schmidt, the prevention services coordinator for youth at the Delaware Council on Gambling Problems.

For many young people, that grooming starts with monetized video games like Candy Crush or Farmville and the emotional rewards of social media apps like Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram. All of them encourage behaviors that pave the superhighway to gambling, says Schmidt. In games, the microtransactions often offer the promise of something that will be more lucrative than the money spent.

Games have changed in the last decade, he agreed. Games once could be bought for a flat fee and played until they were solved without spending another penny. Now most can be downloaded for free, but require purchases to move ahead when players want better tools, better costumes, even additional playing time.

The purchases more directly relatable to gambling are microtransactions in games that offer kids "loot boxes" for a fee. Many times, the kids don't know what's in loot boxes but are hoping for a valuable tool or weapon. That's a form of gambling, Schmidt said.

"So what's happening is more and more kids are spending more and more money trying to open these in hopes of winning valuable items," Schmidt said. "There is no difference between that mechanically and buying a scratch-off. It's the exact same thing. It's just virtual. It

just looks different. And it's creating the same responses in the brain that any gambling activity actually would."

The backlash against loot boxes is strong enough that when Overwatch, a popular game, came out with a new version, the makers themselves had removed loot boxes, Schmidt said. Kids who play card games like Pokemon can suffer the same kind of emotional reactions as gamblers when they buy a deck of cards hoping to find a powerful card, he pointed out.

With social media, he said, "You just get caught up in the zone, you're focused, you're isolated and you're seeking rewards, and sometimes you're even seeking things like attention, affection and validation, which is sort of another conversation, but it's one that I have in the classroom with kids."

In Delaware, nearly 44% of youth surveyed in middle and high schools admit to having gambled in the past year, according to the council. Yet, 66% of parents have never talked to their kids about gambling.

"We know that kids who are introduced to gambling by the age of 12 are four times more likely to develop a gambling problem," Schmidt said. "We want parents to understand that what seems so harmless, a simple card or skill game, can—for some children—lead to a dangerous gambling addiction."

SIGNS OF GAMBLING TROUBLE

Jennifer Allen of Camden was surprised to see her middle school son unable to stop spending money on micropurchases as the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Playing Xbox games connected him to his friends during the lockdown, she knew.

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photo by fauxels on Pexel



Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DEVELOPMENT CORP. HIGHLIGHTS RIVERFRONT EAST IN HEARING

BY SAM HAUT

Details of the planned development of Riverfront East in Wilmington were spelled out Wednesday to a state committee that oversees capital projects. Megan McGlinchey, executive director of the **Riverfront Development Corp.**, told the Bond Committee during a budget hearing that the effort to repeat the success of Riverfront West on the opposite side of the Christina River now is focusing on infrastructure and property acquisition. She said she hoped it would end up being as successful as the 25-year development of the west side of the river, which has generated \$616 million in revenue on \$495 million in state investments since 1996.

McGlinchey noted that a University of Delaware study found that in the past five years, the state invested \$105 million there and received \$169 million in revenue. In the past year, she said, the state had received \$33 million from that area and the city \$8.5 million.

“As we enter our 27th year of operation, the RTC has never felt better about the progress that we’ve made along the riverfront and the results that we’ve achieved for the state,” McGlinchey said.

The west project turned a polluted industrial playground into a place for people to live and play.

Gov. John Carney’s proposed fiscal year 2024 budget

recommends \$6.5 million for the Riverfront Development Corp. That does not include money that will be spent on roads by the Delaware Department of Transportation.

RIVERFRONT EAST PLANS

The RDC announced in 2021, that it would spend \$100 million for an 86-acre expansion of the riverfront project on the east side. It is expected to have 1.9 million square feet of office space, more than 4,000 residential units, 350,000 square feet of retail space, 9,000 parking spaces and 650 on-street parking spaces.

McGlinchey said the RDC was happy to have the move of a Salvation Army warehouse and 78-bed rehabilitation building to South Walnut Street completed in the last year. The corporation has divided the east project into three sections. It’s buying property in all three, but has focused most work on area 1, which hugs the curve of the river. A \$30 million project set to start this year will put in roads, signs, sidewalks and utilities. Moving utilities will be a massive job.

One of the key projects there will be creating a central green for that side. The two-acre park will sit in the middle of the development and the RDC hopes to get started with design this year, which cannot be paid for by DelDOT. About a dozen investors are interested in helping develop the area, she said.

McGlinchey also said Wednesday:

- The RDC’s inaugural holiday light display brought in 109,000 visitors, a 21% increase from the previous year, with 20% of the visitors from out of town.

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MEDICAL MARIJUANA MEETING GETS TESTY OVER TESTING COSTS

BY SAM HAUT

A frustrated Delaware medical marijuana provider accused a testing company of charging “grossly higher” fees than those in other states. The exchange took place March 16 in the Medical Marijuana Stakeholder Group, after Daniel Woodall, president, and chemist at the High Tide Lab Co., talked about testing marijuana for medicinal companies in the state.

“I would like to make a comment,” said Michael Wiser, president of the Compassionate Care Research Institute.

Wiser told the group he is concerned about the increased cost of testing. Compassionate Care spends more than \$1 million a year on testing, Wiser said.

“To be perfectly frank with you, we’ve operated in five states, and the fees that you’re charging are grossly higher than any other state we’ve operated in,” he said. “Just want to register that we are complaining about it. We think that the amount that you’re charging is exorbitant.”

Woodall responded “That’s bullcrap. That is such garbage.” Woodall said he didn’t appreciate the insinuation that the testing fees are responsible for increases in prices.

“There’s no way that the testing fee is an excuse,” he said. “You guys have charged the same amount of money forever. It’s the same price; don’t blame that on the lab. I don’t set your prices.”

“That’s such garbage, I’m sorry, buddy, but that’s such garbage. Sir, I will consider your statements. But don’t say that high prices are because of the lab.”

Asked how much they made last year, Wiser said he didn’t know, but Woodall estimated that it was around \$20 million. Wiser said that number was inaccurate and the real number is much lower.

Efforts were unsuccessful March 17 to reach Wiser for comment.

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Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



BY PAM GEORGE

Paul Cullen is on a mission to make risotto more approachable. Too often, home cooks avoid serving the northern Italian dish, said Cullen, who offers in-home parties featuring his Italian cuisine. They picture standing at the stove, tediously stirring broth into arborio rice until it reaches a creamy consistency. But that doesn't have to be the case.

"You don't have to stir it every waking moment," said Cullen, who owns **Paul's Kitchen**, which sells proprietary products and Italian imports.

See for yourself on Friday, March 31, when Cullen is the featured chef during the **Food Bank of Delaware's** Cooking for a Cause.

COOKING FOR A CAUSE RETURNS TO BENEFIT FOOD BANK

FUNDRAISING AT HOME

Along with mushroom-and-sausage risotto, the virtual cooking class will feature Tuscan white bean dip and Italian wine from his label, **Paul Cullen Wines**.

Nearly everything you need will be packaged for pick-up on Thursday, March 30, at the Food Bank's locations in Newark (222 Lake Drive) or Milford (140 Mullet Run, Unit E). This year, Sussex County residents can pick up the ingredients at Paul's Kitchen in Lewes (32882 Cedar Grove Road, just west of Route 1).

The class goes live at 6 p.m. on March 31, so with a computer and a kitchen, you can sip Lambrusco and stir the rice in your yoga pants. Got plans that night? The broadcast will be available through Sunday, April 2.

THIRD TIME A CHARM

This is the third Cooking for a Cause, which was born during the pandemic when charities were canceling conventional fundraisers. However, the public embraced the homey approach.

"This year, I actually had friends and acquaintances ask me when the event would take place," said Jeff Whitmarsh, the Food Bank board member who came up with the idea. "It was rewarding to realize that this event was something people looked forward to as an annual activity."

The 2020 cooking class was live, but now it's taped in advance so viewers can stop, fast-forward or rewind the class. And while the team works on risotto, there's

plenty of time to talk and listen. Cullen, who fell in love with food and wine while on tour with Bad Company, will play guitar during the virtual event.

Kattie Fox will make raspberry-ricotta mousse for dessert, which you can make in advance.

"It's light, refreshing and super simple to make," said Fox, an alumna of the Food Bank's cooking school. She now runs the Food Bank's café and helps oversee the catering program.

CAUSE FOR COOKING

Fox also teaches students to bake, and Whitmarsh and Cullen will discuss the culinary education and training program during the broadcast.

"Having the opportunity to showcase the different aspects of the Food Bank's culinary program makes it difficult to put a dollar value on" the fundraiser's impact, Whitmarsh said. "It tips the scale toward a virtual event."

Not surprisingly, he noted that Cooking for a Cause is more cost-effective to organize than a labor-intensive in-person event. It's also a decent deal for the attendees; the cost is \$100 and the meal serves two people.

However, the Food Bank's cornhole tournament in spring and the Farm to Fork event in the fall are traditional fundraisers with in-person attendance.

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Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

REVENUES FALL SLIGHTLY AS STATE NOSES INTO POST-COVID ECONOMY

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware may have passed the peak of a rise in post-COVID revenues, the **Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council** heard Monday. Financial experts call that peak an “inflection point,” akin to that moment when roller-coaster riders feel a brief lift in their tummies before the coaster takes a plunge.

That doesn’t mean the state’s finances will plunge. Only that they likely will return to the same kind of smaller, steady growth of 2% to 4 % per year, as opposed to the 16% of 2021, said Rick Geisenberger, secretary of the Delaware Department of Finance.

The council lowered its current fiscal year 2023 estimates by \$79 million and lowered the amount that can

be appropriated in fiscal year 2024 by \$36.2 million to \$6,268.7 billion. That’s actually an increase of \$270 million over the council’s October estimates. Fiscal year 2024 starts July 1.

This is the first time revenue has fallen since April of 2020 when the pandemic started. Even so, Delaware is still expected to have a nearly \$1 billion surplus for 2024 and council members characterized the revenue changes as marginal. State Sen. Bryan Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown, a new member of the council, said he was surprised revenues weren’t softer.

“It’s better than the scenario I had in my head,” Pettyjohn said.

Coping with the loss of \$36.2 million in a \$6 billion budget is not a tragedy, both Geisinger and Pettyjohn said.

“We’re not talking about a \$400 million hole or a \$800 million hole that we have to fill as we get closer to the end of the year,” Pettyjohn said. “And when we get some of the final DEFACs, we may actually see the numbers improve marginally.”

It’s hard to predict what will happen, council members were told, partly because of what’s happening nationally. While S&P Global has said it no longer believes there will be a national recession and instead predicts a “pause in activity,” which Pettyjohn said is a short type of recession, with a little bit of pullback and slowdown in economic growth, but nothing long enough or big enough to trigger a full recession.

All the data in the committee hearing was put together before Silicon Valley Bank went belly-up, leading to the last two weeks of turmoil in the stock market, including the takeover of international banking giant Credit Suisse. Robert A. Glen, state Banking Commissioner told the council that Delaware banks seem solid and not at risk.

Among the points helping the economy, the council was told was that Congress raised the national debt ceiling, jobs are back to pre-pandemic levels and are still being created, the student loan forgiveness program is on hold and gas prices are lower this year than last and expected to stay that way. With the Fed continuing to increase interest rates, inflation is expected to ease to 4.4% this year and 2.7% in 2024, compared to the 8.8% of last year.

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DELAWARE GOP SETS FIVE TOWN HALLS ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE MANDATE

BY SAM HAUT

The Delaware GOP has scheduled five town hall meetings during the next two weeks that will focus on Gov. John Carney's electric vehicle mandate. That mandate to make 35% of new vehicles electric in Delaware by 2025 and 100% of new vehicle sales electric by 2035, is expected to trigger a raft of new regulations from the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control this spring. The GOP is opposed to the switch.

"Delaware does not need an EV sales mandate," said Rep. Danny Short, R-Seaford. "EVs are not the right choice for everyone. EV range, utility and load-hauling capability remain challenges in many situations.

"And EVs impose greater hardships on modest-income

families, and those living without in-home charging options (apartments, condos, urban areas with on-street parking)."

The town halls are expected to include three speakers: Dr. David Legates, a former Delaware state climatologist; David Stevenson, director of the Caesar Rodney Institute's Center for Energy & Environmental Policy; and Shawn Garvin, secretary of DNREC.

Garvin will come to two of the five town halls, on March 23 and 30, and send a representative to at least one that he is not able to attend because of scheduling conflict. The five town halls will all take place from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The first, on Tuesday, was at the Indian River Senior Center; March 23 at the Brandywine

Hundred Fire Hall; March 28 at 160 Peoples Plaza; and March 30, at Chambers Memorial Hall/Mill Creek Fire Hall. A March 29 meeting doesn't yet have a location.

Carney's executive order is based on California's **zero emission vehicle regulations**.

Legates and Stevenson served the Trump administration. Legates served as assistant secretary of Commerce for observation and prediction at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Stevenson was a part of Trump's EPA transition team.

Public hearings on the proposed regulations will take place after DNREC releases its regulations.

"The underlying hubris of the electric vehicle mandate proponents is that anyone who disagrees must be forced to comply for their own good," Short said. "I believe most Delawareans know when they're being sold a lemon, even when the pitch is delivered with the skill of a used car salesman."

Jane Brady, chair of the Delaware Republican Party, said Legates will talk about how carbon dioxide doesn't impact climate change, while Stevenson will say that electric vehicles are too costly, don't last long enough and are damaging to the environment.

Brady said electric vehicles one day will be able to solve many of the issues they currently face, but they should not be mandated until then.

"Taking away the option of choosing a different mode of transportation is the wrong way to go," Brady said. "The technology certainly isn't there to support the way that we live...Maybe someday electric cars will be so cheap everybody will want them, and they'll be so good at going long distances that everybody will want them."

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RETIREE BENEFITS SUBCOMMITTEE DIGS INTO MEDICARE CONCERNS

BY SAM HAUT

The state has a variety of ways to lower what it's paying for retiree healthcare, a new benefits subcommittee was told March 16. For current workers, they include:

- Cutting benefits for current employees by doing things like reducing benefits for spouses.
- Changing benefits given to people who worked for the state but didn't retire with the state.
- Establishing a minimum age to qualify for certain benefits.
- Changing the time it takes for employees to fully invest shares.

For retirees, those include:

- Moving to Medicare Advantage
- Using a Supplemental plan with different premiums
- Using a Health Reimbursement Arrangement
- Adjusting the cost share through the legislature.

Few details were given about those ideas as the State Employee Benefits Committee Retiree Healthcare Benefits Advisory Subcommittee met for the second time

Thursday to deal with Medicare benefits for retirees.

Bill Oberle, a member of the subcommittee, said that he doesn't have enough information at this time to make a decision regarding the Medicare Advantage plan. Denise Allen, another subcommittee member, said that there hasn't been enough analysis done on the Medicare Supplemental plan and that there's not enough information put out by the state on what the plans would entail.

The subcommittee was created earlier this year, spurred on by the outrage last year over a state plan to switch retirees from their current plan to a Medicare Advantage program. Retirees revolted, saying the move was made in secret, although it wasn't, and that it would cause a lot of problems for them. Those problems include making them switch doctors and require pre-authorizations for things they don't have to know.

Richard Geisenberger, secretary of the Delaware Department of Finance, repeated that one of the reasons for the move was to better control the costs of future

healthcare. If healthcare costs keep rising as they are now and the state keeps paying as it is now, Delaware's **unfunded liability** for healthcare plans is expected to grow to \$31 billion by 2050. Adopting the Medicare Advantage managed plan would have helped the state have only a \$3 billion deficit by 2050.

The lack of funding has already caught the attention of the nation's bond-rating companies, Geisinger said, and could mean Delaware's rating is dropped below AAA, causing the state to pay more for any money it borrows.

Delaware has been putting about \$45 million each year—1% of the state budget—into the Other Post Employment Benefits Fund to help cut into the deficit. Last year, it kicked over tens of millions from its budget surplus to help reduce the deficit more quickly and Gov. John Carney proposed doing that again with the 2024 budget, which starts July 1.

There's no silver bullet to cut costs, Geisenberger said. Even so, "this is very fixable problem," he said.

Some opponents to the changes have accused the state of trying to solve the problem by raising costs for current employees, he noted.

"That's never what was considered by the retiree benefits subcommittee," Geisenberger said.

Wayne Emsley, the New Castle County retiree on the subcommittee, made a presentation to the group showing that Delaware retirees make less on their pensions and Social Security than the average state employee salaries. However, he said, they pay for more monthly premiums than state employees, while Medicare retirees cost the state less per month.

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ATHEIST DAY RESOLUTION FAILS IN DELAWARE HOUSE

BY SAM HAUT

A **resolution** to declare March 23 National Atheist Day failed in the Delaware House, 11 to 26, with two absent and two not voting. The resolution was sponsored in the House by Rep. Eric Morrison, D-Glasgow.

“Today, atheists in America are often looked down upon and expected to remain silent regarding our beliefs,” Morrison told the House. “Many atheists are afraid to come out, so to speak, for fear that they will be ostracized and disrespected openly or surreptitiously and face serious real world consequences broadly. I have experienced that very valid fear many times.”

Republicans led the opposition to the bill, indicating it was against the interests of their constituents and erred too closely to supporting atheism.

Rep. Richard Collins, R-Millsboro, said he takes issue with atheism because it would mean there isn’t a place people go after death, and that more young people are nonreligious and feeling more suicidal.

“One of the things that concerns me about the concept of atheism is that those of us who believe in something greater than ourselves believe there’s somewhere better to go to in the future,” Collins said. “But without that, all we have to look forward to is disease, disability and death...the suicide rate among men is four times higher than females, and rapidly increasing.”


Morrison countered that a belief in an afterlife can lead to someone not working to fix the current world, and that correlation doesn’t equal causation.





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SENATORS UNANIMOUSLY AGREE ON 14 OF 15 BILLS

BY JAREK RUTZ

It was a day of unanimous votes for the Delaware Senate March 16, with 14 of the 15 items passed without any ‘no’ votes. Sen. Darius Brown, D-Wilmington, was the only legislator to vote against **House Substitute 1 for House Bill 34**, a law that would require school boards from district and charter schools to hold public comment on each agenda item up for a vote. The time for public comment would be required to take place before any vote. Brown did not comment about the bill during the session and immediate efforts to reach him were unsuccessful March 16.

Most school boards already allow community members to speak before action items, but bill sponsor Kim Williams, D-Marshallton, said this would make it uniform across the state. Williams is the chair of the

House Education Committee and a former Red Clay Consolidated School District board member.

Numerous **resolutions** passed without debate. They recognized special days and months of the calendar, such as designating March 25 as Greek Independence Day, April as Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month, and March 21 as Rock Your Socks for World Down Syndrome Day. The seven bills that flew through the Senate unanimously were:

- **Senate Bill 63**, sponsored by Sen. Dave Lawson, R-Marydel, reduces the required criteria for agriculture, horticulture or forestry land use in the state. It will now be assigned to a House committee for consideration.
- **Senate Bill 60**, sponsored by Sen. Laura Sturgeon,



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D-Hockessin, who is chair of the Senate Education Committee, provides teachers and other school employees paid leave if they are subpoenaed to testify, or asked to serve on a jury. It will now be assigned to a House committee.

- **Senate Bill 61**, also sponsored by Sturgeon, would increase the number of days teachers and school employees can use as sick leave for personal reasons from three to five. It would also prohibit administrators from asking an employee to explain why they need the day off. The bill is headed to a House committee.

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OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS WOULD HELP DELAWARE IMMIGRANTS ADJUST

BY SAM HAUT

A bill that could create a state Office of New Americans to help immigrants better integrate into life in Delaware sailed through a General Assembly committee March 15. **Senate Bill 44**, sponsored by Darius Brown, D-Wilmington, cleared the Senate Elections & Government Affairs Committee on a vote of two yes and two on the merits. On the merits means the legislator thinks the matter deserves debate but doesn't want to go on the record supporting it.

Only four of the seven committee members attended the hearing: Brown, Rep. Stephanie Hansen, D-Middletown; Spiros Mantzavinos, D-Elsmere, and Rep. Eric Buckson, R-Dover. Senate committees don't take votes in public. When the tally appears on the General Assembly website, it appears as numbers with no names

attached. The bill now moves to the Senate Finance Committee because it will cost \$543,620 for the 2024 fiscal year, with costs increasing by 2% each year.

The bill would create an advisory committee to advise the new office and the governor in attracting, retaining and integrating immigrants into the state.

"I'm concerned when we do increase the size of the government whether it's small or large," Buckson said. "How does it bid? How does it work?"

Buckson asked Brown whether the government already provides the services listed in the bill. Brown replied that it does, but that the process would be more streamlined with the new office.

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- URSULINE ACADEMY

STATE EMPLOYEE INSURANCE PREMIUMS TO RISE 9.4%

BY SAM HAUT

The State Employee Benefits Committee agreed to increase rates for workers on state health insurance by 9.4%. Chris Giovannello, who advises the state on benefits, said the committee had the option of a 16.8% increase at the beginning of July, or the 9.4% increase next year to address a \$140.5 million deficit. The committee is expected to vote for the same increase in the two years after that.

The deficit increase reflects a \$1.8 million increase for covering **weight loss medication**, \$3 million from the previous fiscal year and \$4.4 million from claims. If increases aren't made, the program's deficit will increase to \$305.5 million in the 2025 fiscal year, \$534.3 million in the 2026 fiscal year and \$829.1 million in the 2027 fiscal year.

This 9.4% increase would increase employee costs for the healthcare plan by between \$2.84 and \$27.88 a

month starting July 1, 2023, depending on which plan the worker chooses, and increase the state subsidy by \$68.20 to \$183.98 per month per employee.

If the committee had gone with a 16.8% increase, the cost for employees would have been between \$5.08 and \$49.82 per month, while the subsidy for the state would have been between \$121.88 and \$328.80 per employee per month.

Based on projections, the deficit would drop to \$52.2 million in the 2025 fiscal year, down to zero in the 2026 fiscal year and increase to \$1.5 million in the 2026 fiscal year.

Cerron Cade, director of the Office of Management & Budget and co-chair of the committee, said that the committee has avoided raising rates for the past five years because the program once had a large enough surplus to deal with it.



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BOYS TRACK RECORDS	GIRLS TRACK RECORDS				
NAME	YEAR	NAME	YEAR		
A. BARRY	11.81	2001	A. BARRY	11.81	2001
A. BARRY	14.20	2000	A. BARRY	14.20	2000
A. BARRY	16.20	2000	A. BARRY	16.20	2000
A. BARRY	18.20	2000	A. BARRY	18.20	2000
A. BARRY	20.20	2000	A. BARRY	20.20	2000
A. BARRY	22.20	2000	A. BARRY	22.20	2000
A. BARRY	24.20	2000	A. BARRY	24.20	2000
A. BARRY	26.20	2000	A. BARRY	26.20	2000
A. BARRY	28.20	2000	A. BARRY	28.20	2000
A. BARRY	30.20	2000	A. BARRY	30.20	2000
A. BARRY	32.20	2000	A. BARRY	32.20	2000
A. BARRY	34.20	2000	A. BARRY	34.20	2000
A. BARRY	36.20	2000	A. BARRY	36.20	2000
A. BARRY	38.20	2000	A. BARRY	38.20	2000
A. BARRY	40.20	2000	A. BARRY	40.20	2000
A. BARRY	42.20	2000	A. BARRY	42.20	2000
A. BARRY	44.20	2000	A. BARRY	44.20	2000
A. BARRY	46.20	2000	A. BARRY	46.20	2000
A. BARRY	48.20	2000	A. BARRY	48.20	2000
A. BARRY	50.20	2000	A. BARRY	50.20	2000
A. BARRY	52.20	2000	A. BARRY	52.20	2000
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A. BARRY	58.20	2000	A. BARRY	58.20	2000
A. BARRY	60.20	2000	A. BARRY	60.20	2000
A. BARRY	62.20	2000	A. BARRY	62.20	2000
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A. BARRY	68.20	2000	A. BARRY	68.20	2000
A. BARRY	70.20	2000	A. BARRY	70.20	2000
A. BARRY	72.20	2000	A. BARRY	72.20	2000
A. BARRY	74.20	2000	A. BARRY	74.20	2000
A. BARRY	76.20	2000	A. BARRY	76.20	2000
A. BARRY	78.20	2000	A. BARRY	78.20	2000
A. BARRY	80.20	2000	A. BARRY	80.20	2000
A. BARRY	82.20	2000	A. BARRY	82.20	2000
A. BARRY	84.20	2000	A. BARRY	84.20	2000
A. BARRY	86.20	2000	A. BARRY	86.20	2000
A. BARRY	88.20	2000	A. BARRY	88.20	2000
A. BARRY	90.20	2000	A. BARRY	90.20	2000
A. BARRY	92.20	2000	A. BARRY	92.20	2000
A. BARRY	94.20	2000	A. BARRY	94.20	2000
A. BARRY	96.20	2000	A. BARRY	96.20	2000
A. BARRY	98.20	2000	A. BARRY	98.20	2000
A. BARRY	100.20	2000	A. BARRY	100.20	2000

HOME	1:00	VISITOR
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Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

REDDING CONSORTIUM: NEED TO ADD MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOL SERVICES

BY JAREK RUTZ

The [Redding Consortium for Educational Equity](#) wants to add the same kind of support and wraparound services that elementary schools get to middle and high schools that need them. Those services include before- and after-school programs, summer programs, interventions, tutoring, wellness centers, child care and other social services.

The topic took up about a half-hour of the consortium's Social Determinants Work Group meeting Monday night. The 19-person committee agreed to recommend the additional investments at the regular meeting next month.

Essentially, the services fill in a student's academic and behavioral gaps they have during a school day. Last year, the consortium implemented wellness centers and wraparound services at the Bancroft School, the Bayard School and Kuumba Academy Charter School. It also

helped fund full-day preschool at the Kingswood Community Center, the Latin American Community Center, A Leap of Faith Child Development Center and St. Michael's School and Nursery.

The services were paid for by the state, which granted \$12.8 million to the organization for fiscal year 2023. Gov. John Carney has recommended \$10.2 million in funding for the group for fiscal year 2024.

The consortium was created to recommend policies and practices to the governor and General Assembly to improve educational outcomes such as test scores for all pre-K to 12th grade students in the city of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

Dorrell Green, who also is superintendent of the Red Clay Consolidated School District, said there is a disconnect in policies since the consortium hasn't provided the services to middle and high schools.

"That's an area where there's a gap, and we have to look at the alignment and where those programs are being offered, and ultimately how we're defining wraparound services relative to what we see in elementary school versus what we see in middle and high school," he said.

Green pointed out that many of the middle schools are in suburban areas, which causes transportation issues that the elementary schools—all in the city—don't necessarily experience.

Member Teri Lawler, who works at the Department of Education, said it was a good idea to start with elementary schools, but reminded the group what the goals of the consortium are.

"We are charged with looking at the needs for services that support students during and after school from early learning through high school," Lawler said. "Now we really want to start to dig into an exploration and an assessment for the needs of middle and high schools."

Member Jeff Menzer, who also is superintendent of Colonial School District, said it's a good idea for the group to start transitioning to middle and high school after spending the majority of the past few years heavily focused on early education.

Watch the Redding Consortium's next full meeting

[HERE.](#)



POLLING



PLACE

43 TO COMPETE FOR 23 SCHOOL BOARD SEATS IN MAY 9 ELECTION

BY JAREK RUTZ

The list of school board candidates for the May 9 election has been finalized after delays caused by new background check regulations. Forty-three candidates will run for 23 vacancies across 16 school districts. That's one less candidate than 2022's 42 candidates competing for 19 open seats.

State education groups had hoped that more people would run, but First State Education took the high road in appraising the numbers.

"First State Educate is pleased to see so many community members step up to run to serve on their local school board," the organization said in a statement. "We look forward to meeting and talking with the candidates over the next nine weeks."

First State Educate, an advocacy group that wants to catalyze change in education by empowering Delawar-

eans, will participate in a series of forums designed to let district residents get to know their candidates. See the list below.

March 3 was the deadline for filing, but a 2021 **law** requires school board candidates to complete a criminal background check and a child registry check before their name is listed on the Department of Elections **website**. According to Delaware Code, the **State Bureau of Identification** must complete a criminal background check within 15 days of the candidate's request.

Laurisa Schutt, executive director of First State Educate, **previously** raised questions about the transparency of who filed. Candidates should have been listed as "pending" if they're waiting on checks to be completed, that way the public is aware of who's running, she said.

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APPO TO LEASE WEAPON DETECTORS AMID SCHOOLS' FOCUS ON SAFETY

BY JAREK RUTZ

Appoquinimink School District's vote last week to install weapon detectors is the latest move by Delaware schools to combat violence and the presence of guns. It's an issue that's plagued schools since fall, with the latest incident occurring Wednesday when a Sussex Central High School student was found with a firearm on school property. The student was taken into custody and the firearm was also confiscated.

Districts have approached the problems in different ways—through hiring constables, increasing event security and more—often citing the Uvalde, Texas, school shooting on May 24, 2022, as spurring concern. Trouble at fall football games and the discovery of guns in schools has ratcheted up fears.

REASON FOR DETECTORS

In September 2022, Appoquinimink School District and New Castle County Vo-Tech's Howard High School changed their **football admissions policies** in response to a shooting that took place off of Appoquinimink High's campus during a game, and another incident where crowds stormed the exits and hopped fences at a Howard game.

In February, a 16-year old male was charged in connection to a **fired gun** in Colonial School District's William Penn High School. On the same day as Colonial's incident, unloaded guns were discovered in the backpacks of an 8-year-old and a 14-year-old at Shortlidge Elementary School and A.I. du Pont Middle School, respectively.

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TWO DEL. STUDENTS HEAD TO NATIONAL SCIENCE CAMP, STEM CAREERS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Newark Charter High School junior Runyl Liu said her passion for science comes from a middle school jingle she heard.

“We heard this one song about the periodic table and I just really liked the song,” Liu said. “I sort of fell in love with the periodic table and all how chemistry works. It was a very, very odd journey, but what I know is that I am definitely a STEM girl.”

Liu will join MOT Charter School senior Maanvi Sarwadi as the two Delaware delegates selected to attend the all-expenses-paid 2023 National Youth Science Camp. Both hope the experience will help boost their planned STEM careers.

From June 19 to July 12, the two will head south to Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, where the camp has been held since its founding in 1963.

“I’m really looking forward to the outdoor adventures where we’ll combine nature with science,” Liu said. “I’ve always found that interesting.”

Each state sends two representatives to the camp, as does Washington, DC; Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Celebrating its 60th year, the camp is designed to honor and challenge rising leaders and provide them with opportunities to engage with STEM professionals and participate in outdoor activities.

“They get to go kayaking and rock-climbing, do yoga, practice different languages, listen to keynote lectures during the day with prominent scientists and engineers, and really get to have a wide array of experiences,” said Tonyea Mead, Delaware’s coordinator for the camp.

The speakers for this year have yet to be announced,



but previous years included astrophysicist **Neil de-Grasse Tyson**, astronaut **Neil Armstrong**, mathematician **John Nash**, fighter pilot Gen. **Chuck Yeager**, physician-geneticist **Francis Collins**, NASA scientist **Julie Robinson**, former Yahoo! President **Marissa Mayer** and inventor David Hackleman.

Liu said meeting professionals in the fields she’s interested in will help grow her network before even entering college.

“The camp will help me make connections, get to meet really like-minded people that are interested in science, and get to meet very well-acclaimed experts in the fields is an awesome opportunity,” she said.

CLICK TO READ MORE



STATE TO GET ADVICE ON IMPROVING SCHOOL FUNDING IN FALL

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware will have recommendations on how to improve their public school funding formula sometime this fall. Drew Atchison, senior researcher at the **American Institutes for Research**, shared the project timeline during an equity in education seminar March 17 hosted by the **Vision Coalition of Delaware**, a public-private partnership composed of a broad range of Delawareans who work together to improve the state's public education.

"In the report, you'll be able to see comparisons of Delaware's current system to what other states do," Atchison said. "We'll be examining the strengths and weaknesses of Delaware's funding system according to those big questions of adequacy and equity."

The state announced in August that it paid American Institutes for Research \$698,438 to analyze current policy and make recommendations for improvements,

with a focus on equity for all students.

The report will also include if there's substantive evidence of unequal opportunity in schools and if the current funding system is equitable for not only students, but the taxpayers that pay for public schools to operate.

"We'll also be looking at issues of transparency and flexibility," he said, "We'll be developing some alternative approaches to funding that we think would result in an equitable and adequate education."

The institute recently finished a study on New Hampshire and Vermont's funding system for similar reasons.

Concerns around school funding came to a head after a far-reaching **lawsuit** resulted in more state funding for poor and special needs children and also triggered a statewide property reassessment. To learn more about how Delaware funds its schools, click **HERE**.



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25TH BREAST CANCER UPDATE TO FOCUS ON ACCESS, ADVANCES

BY STAFF WRITER

The Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition will offer its 25th Annual Breast Cancer Update virtually April 19.

“As someone who has seen firsthand the impact of medical care disparities on breast cancer patients, I am passionate about the need to address access and equity issues in healthcare,” said Dr. Karen Louie of Christiana Care said. “No one should be denied access to life-saving treatment because of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or any other factor beyond their control. It’s time for us to come together and work towards a more just and equitable healthcare system that ensures that all patients receive the care they deserve.”

The annual update will focus on Access & Advances in breast cancer care and therapies.

The event began as a small scientific meeting designed to provide physicians with the latest trends in breast cancer treatments and diagnosis. It has grown to an annual educational conference that is free to the public.

According to the coalition, healthcare professionals and students seize the opportunity to not only earn CEUs and contact hours at no cost, but they are also provided the most up-to-date tools available for diagnosing and treating breast cancer.

Some of the topics that will be covered at this year’s update include access, equity and barriers to care, oncoplastic surgery, immunotherapy and breast cancer, research on fear of re-occurrence in partners as well as re-occurrence of breast cancer.

“Our goal is to have programming that empowers our community in the fight against breast cancer,” Bender said.

Register for the virtual event [HERE](#).



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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



MYERS SETS TWO RECORDS FOR DELAWARE TECH SOFTBALL

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Macey Myers became the first player in Delaware Technical Community College softball to eclipse both 100 hits and 100 RBI. Macey went 4-for-6 and knocked in six RBI in a doubleheader against Anne Arundel Community College to open the season, which put her over the 100 mark in both categories, supplanting her in the history books forever. Myers was named Eastern Pennsylvania Athletic Conference Player of the Week for softball due to her outstanding stats during the teams first four games of the 2023 season. She batted 9-for-11 with six doubles, one home run, and nine RBI.

Myers didn't know she had set the records till "one day at practice" and she said "I never thought about it or never crossed my mind, like it was a complete surprise. They announced it at practice one day and I had no idea they had anything planned. I had no idea how many hits or how close I was. It was a complete surprise."

In a press release from Del Tech, as of March 15, Myers has 110 career hits and 115 career RBI and the team has 33 games remaining in the regular season. As a freshman, she recorded 39 hits, 44 RBI and had a batting average of .494. The next season, she blew those

numbers out of the water with 58 hits, 59 RBI and a .460 batting average. Myers said "I have an approach where all I try to do is hit the ball hard and like that has always been my approach since I was 12 years old."

While Myers technically accomplished both over parts of three seasons, she ultimately did it in just 64 games. We spoke to Jason Burlew, the public relations manager at the school, and he emphasized she accomplished in a set of games that would be a normal career for any other player. Her freshman season was shortened by at least five games due to other schools not competing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since she only needed two games in her third season to break 100 hits, she likely would've done it sooner if she had played the regular amount of games during her first season.

For more information on Delaware Tech Athletics, visit www.dtcc.edu/athletics or follow dtccathletics on Instagram.



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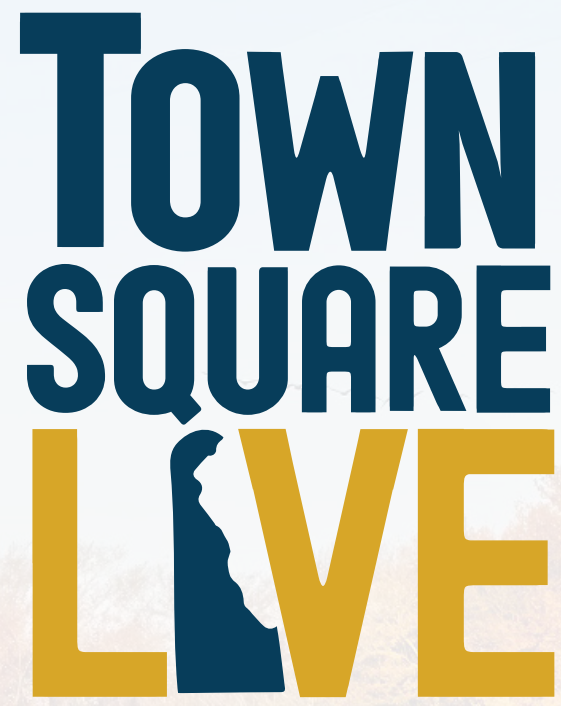
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