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SURF BAGEL COMING TO MILFORD



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HEADLINES



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SURF BAGEL TO OPEN MILFORD LOCATION

BY TERRY ROGERS

Surf Bagel plans to open a third location and has chosen Milford for its new store. The new location will be next to Arena's at 204 Northeast Front Street. "I love Milford and have always wanted to be part of the community," Scott Kammerer, president of SoDel Concepts, the company that acquired Surf Bagel in late 2021, said. "It is a growing area with incredible people."

Surf Bagel is known for its authentic, fresh bagels, accompanying spreads as well as creative breakfast and lunch bagel sandwiches. The Milford menu will remain mainly the same as the other two locations, featuring homemade New York bagels with a large assortment of spreads. The menu will also include bagel sandwiches, cheesesteaks, wraps, salads and more. The new location will create 45 jobs in Milford.

"We love Milford," Caroline Judge, marketing for SoDel Concepts, said, "It is a growing community and we are really excited to bring a Surf Bagel to Milford. We love being part of the local community and we think Milford will be a great fit."

Surf Bagel Lewes, the flagship store in the franchise, opened in 2004 by brothers, Dave and Tom. They wanted to combine their love of surfing and passion for good food to bring homemade New York-style bagels to the beach. Since opening, the bagel shop has garnered a devoted following with customers who visit almost every day. The Milford location will be about the same size as the Midway location which opened in 2017. Hours will be 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

"As a coastal business, we appreciate Milford's rich history as an important hub in Delaware," Kammerer said. "Its history, attractions and communities have much to offer visitors and residents."

Construction on the Milford location is expected to begin this summer with an opening planned before the end of the year. They are currently hiring and those interested can apply at www.surfbagel.com/employment.

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CULTURE



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SETH KIBEL TRIO TO PERFORM FREE CONCERT

series said. “I was involved with the Coastal Concert series, and it is an excellent program, but I think it is a little overpriced for some of the residents of our area.”

Kibel is one of the Mid-Atlantic’s premiere woodwind specialists, working with some of the best bands in klezmer, jazz, swing and more. He has made a name for himself in the Washington/Baltimore region and beyond. He is the featured performer with The Kleztet, Bay Jazz Project, Music Pilgrim Trio, The Natty Beaux and more. He is the winner of 28 Washington Area Music Awards, including “Best World Music Instrumentalist” from 2003 to 2011 and “Best Jazz Instrumentalist” in 2005, 2007 through 2008 and 2011 through 2014.

“When You’re Smiling,” Kibel’s most recent recording, was released in 2018 on the Azalea City Recordings label and his song “New Waltz” was the Grand Prize winner in a 2016 Mid-Atlantic Song Contest sponsored by the Songwriters’ Association of Washington. When not performing, Kibel lectures on topics in music history for numerous institutions, including the Osher Lifelong Learning programs at Johns Hopkins and Towson University.

The free concert will feature jazz, swing, klezmer and more. Masks are required at the event.

BY TERRY ROGERS

As part of the Mispillion Performance Series, the Seth Kibel Trio will perform a free concert at the First Presbyterian Church located at 101 South Walnut Street in Milford on Saturday, April 30, at 7 p.m. The Seth Kibel Trio features Kibel on flute, clarinet and saxophone along with Sean Lane on piano and Bob Abbott on double bass.

“My mission and goal with this series is to bring in amazing artists who would perform concerts that are free to attend,” Jody Stein, who developed the concert



Milford School District
Morris Early Childhood Center
Kindergarten Registration Information

2022-2023 School Year

March 10 (Thursday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
March 14 (Monday)	8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
March 29 (Tuesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
April 6 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
April 12 (Tuesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
May 4 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
May 19 (Thursday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
June 1 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
June 7 (Tuesday)	4:00p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Important notes:

- Please call 422-1650 to schedule a date and time
 - Please indicate if you will need an interpreter
- Child must be 5 years old by August 31, 2022 to begin kindergarten
- You must bring your child for screening on your scheduled date and time to assist

Documents required for registration include:

- State Issued Birth Certificate (with raised seal)
- Proof of Residency (utility bill, lease agreement, mortgage papers) within the Milford School District
- Guardianship/custody information if applicable
- Immunization (shot) record
- Physical Exam
- Tuberculosis Risk Assessment or PPD results
- Lead test result

*Please note: Any family who is interested in being considered for the 2022-2023 Spanish Immersion Program lottery will need to register on or before June 7th. Any late registrants will be added to the waiting list.



MILFORD LIBRARY ON APRIL 2ND FRIDAY

PRESS RELEASE

Second Friday will be Friday, April 8, 2022, beginning at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the First Presbyterian Church of Milford. This month's program will focus on the Milford Library and the many, varied programs it has to offer.

R. David Lankes said, "Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities." Librarians Norma Chalmers and Carolyn Tabor will demonstrate how Milford's library builds community through its many services and resources. It's not your grandparents' library!!

Second Friday is a community service hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Milford. The programs are always free and family friendly. Programs are offered both in person and online. To request a Zoom invitation, please send an email to 2ndFriday.Milford@gmail.com. Invitations will be emailed the day of the event.



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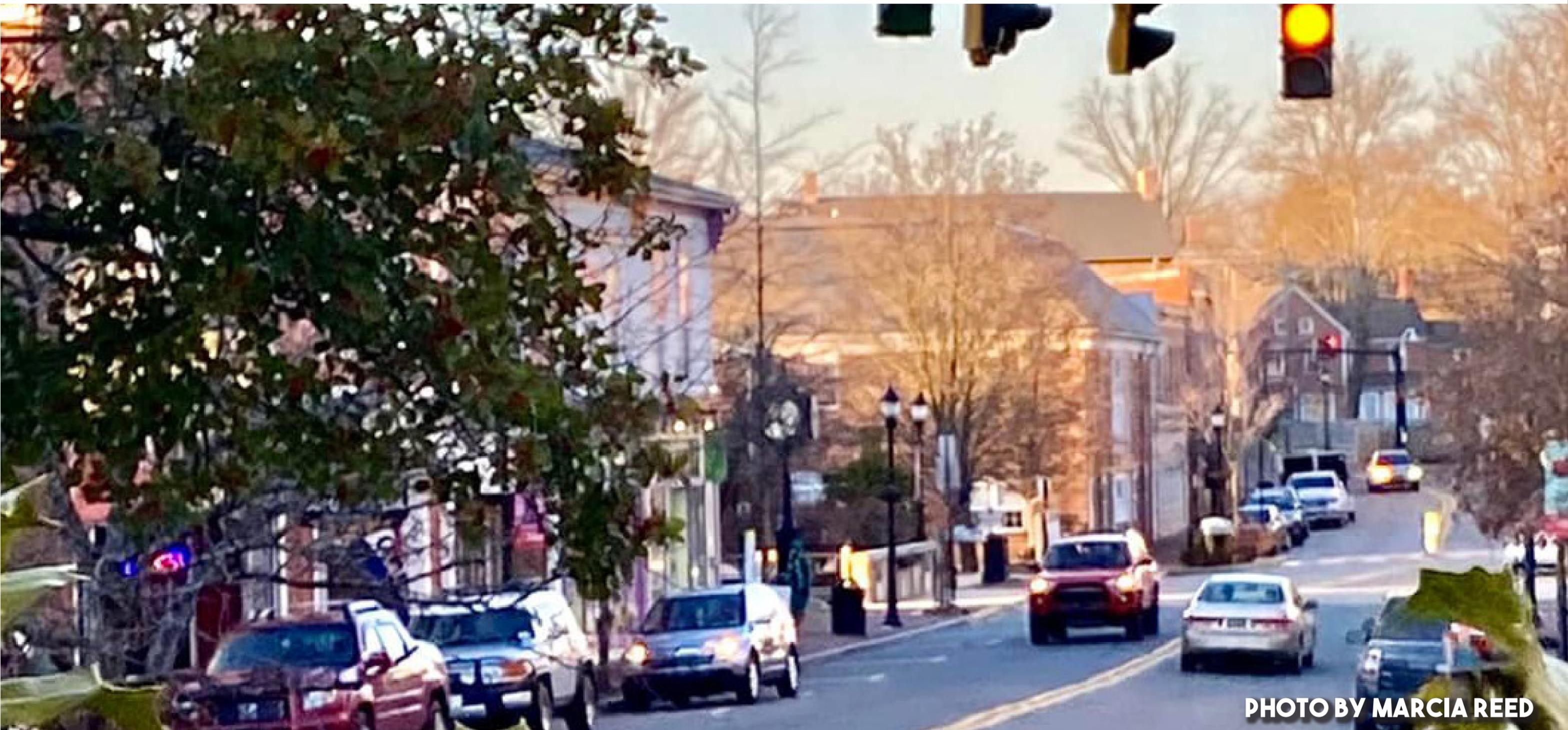


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COUNCIL APPROVES EXPANSION OF TEAL CREEK PLAZA

center. They have purchased the entire area.” Glick confirmed that the Halpern company plans to build a vacant building currently.

Rob Pierce, city planner, explained that the project would include a sidewalk along the entire frontage of the property as well as a six-foot vinyl fence on the north side of the property to screen residences that line Rogers Drive. There is also a 15-foot landscape buffer included in the plan between the shopping center and the residences.

“I’d like to make a couple of comments on the notice of the public hearing tonight,” Thomas Farrell who lives on Rogers Drive said. “The notice was published in the Delaware State News Feb. 28, the Milford Beacon on March 2. The planning commission hearing date was March 15. City Council hearing date March 28. The planning commission considered the application on March 15 and the city council held a public meeting on March 28 and voted to approve the ordinance. City of Milford ordains a conditional use permit for the shopping center upon adoption. The way this notice was written is kind of confusing because it says the decision has already been made.”

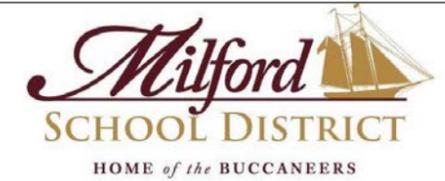
Farrell continued with his statement, asking council to deny the request.

See COUNCIL on page 10

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council approved a request from Halpern Family Series LLC to expand a building they own in Teal Plaza. They intend to add 14,347 square feet of space, bringing the total square footage to 30,590 square feet. Councilman Andy Fulton asked if there was a future tenant planned to move into the new section of the building.

“Halpern is the current tenant in the building,” Mike Glick of Lighthouse Construction said. “There’s no intention of them expanding into this space. They’re just looking to attract other businesses to that shopping



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“How many city council members reside within 50 feet of a shopping center?” Farrell asked. “Do not support this application to be approved by the city council since the proximity of the shopping center to our private residences will devalue our resale opportunities for the neighborhood.”

After Farrell’s statement, Councilman Andy Fulton asked City Solicitor David Rutt to explain the public notice letter.

“It says notice is hereby given that the following ordinance is currently under review. And then it gives the ordinance number, states the ordinance as it was read but then it goes on to say upon adoption of this ordinance, a conditional use is hereby granted,” Rutt said. “So, this is the notice of what the ordinance will read if you adopt it. So, it gives the notice that council or that the planning commission, assuming you adopted had considered the application gives notice that city council if you adopt it held the hearing tonight. Then it does state that upon adoption doesn’t say it was adopted that it is effective, says upon adoption, then this conditional use will be granted. So, reading this, notice it fulfills all the requirements state law, city charter.”

Councilman Todd Culotta and Councilman Jason James agreed with Councilman Fulton, stating that they had gotten many questions about the letters and Terri Hudson, city clerk, advised she would be able to reword the beginning of the letter to make it more clear to those who receive them. Councilman Dan Marabello asked whether the developer would be able to add buffers so that nearby property values would not be impacted.

“There is 100-foot setback from the north property line to our building. And from that building our parking spaces. That leaves approximately 50 feet of open space from our limit of disturbance to their property line,” Chad Warren, an engineer with Davis, Bowen & Friedel, said. “And I believe there’s existing wetlands, trees in this area, and those could potentially be saved to provide an additional buffer. There is that fence that we’re proposing along the far north line. Potentially, we could bring that in closer if the client is willing. Another thing since we submitted this application, we’ve spoken with Kent Conservation District, and there’s an existing pond on the south side of the existing site. It’s kind of hard to see but anyway, conservation district wants us to engulf that existing pond. So potentially we can bring our proposed pond down, which would decrease our limit of disturbance in that area adjacent to Mr. Farrell’s house.”

Pierce pointed out that city ordinance requires a six-foot buffer and that the fence would provide a solid visual barrier.

“I just wanted to say that this property has been zoned commercial for ever and ever and ever. And probably 10 or 15 years ago, probably more 15 years ago, we were all excited because they were going to build a Dunkin Donuts there and that didn’t happen and since that point, I haven’t heard of any developing of that piece of land,” Councilwoman Katrina Wilson said. “So you know, it was going to be commercial either now or later. Because that’s what it’s been zoned. And I say I lived over there for 25 years and that’s because I worked there. You know



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See COUNCIL on page 11

how we live at our work and that was our building for all those years. I'm happy for sidewalks because that road is traveled a lot. So that would be a great enhancement of the sidewalks. And I'm happy for the double buffer. The trees and the fence is going to enhance that because over the years the fencing that was there has really has taken a beating, the existing fences that's been there, from weather and you know, reasons like that. So it's actually going to enhance that corner thing just as long as we put the double buffer requirement in."

Councilman Fulton pointed out that just because land had been zoned commercial for a long time did not mean council should ignore the needs of homeowners in the area. Councilman Marabello agreed.

"I just want I just want to pick it back on what Councilman Fulton said. So we have to realize even though it's zoned commercial, for these people that's their home and we have to maximize what they see," Councilman Marabello said. "Regardless, if this is commercial, and it's been that way, they live there. That could be the last home they live in. We want to make it as nice as possible without considering whether it's commercial. Too bad. No, it's not too bad. He's a human being. We want him to have a peaceful life for the rest of his life, visually and aesthetically. And I don't think it's hard thing to ask for the builder to put the buffer around those homes. General. It's just my comment."

Councilman James concurred, stating that part of the charge of council was not to stymie development but also had an obligation to minimize negative impacts on residents as well.

The motion was made requiring the developer to install both the six-foot fence and landscaping buffers to minimize any negative impacts on nearby residences. With the conditions, the measure was approved unanimously.



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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



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BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council voted unanimously to notify DelDOT that they support the repair of the Mispillion drawbridge which was damaged several months ago by a construction vehicle. DelDOT has indicated they may not repair the bridge, making it unable to open to boat traffic.

“I’ve had a discussion with DelDOT, they would like to have a position from the city with regard to the Mispillion bridge. I think the issue with the Mispillion bridge is they can either leave it in a closed position and not repair the bridge or they can repair the bridge and make it operational,” Mark Whitfield, city manager, said. “I believe based on some comments that I’ve had, with a number of both business folks as well as other citizens that it is really in the city’s best interest to have the bridge operational. From what I understand the Secretary of DelDOT will yield to the desires of council so it’s my recommendation that we make a recommendation to DelDOT to make the bridge operational.”

CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS REPAIR OF MISPILLION DRAWBRIDGE

Mayor Archie Campbell pointed out that Sudler Lofland, owner of the Vinyard Shipyard, had filed a lawsuit against DelDOT. City Solicitor David Rutt, who also represents the Loflands, confirmed the lawsuit was filed.

“I filed suit on behalf of Mr. Lofland. There are three crab boats that were up there, they’re being repaired right? And they can’t get out. And you know, these are the livelihoods of these guys. And regardless of the Loflands’ situation, there’s a greater benefit to the whole city,” Rutt said. “Let me let me give you some further background. So, we filed suit. We asked for a mandatory injunction. We asked for expedited consideration. There’s going to be a court teleconference with counsel on Wednesday afternoon. And at that point, we’re going to be asking the court to have them open that bridge, asking DelDOT. I’ve had several conversations with them. They claim that there have been three inspections. All three inspections say if they open the bridge, they may not be able to close it. There’s the possibility the bridge could fall in the water. And what’s the other one? If they open the bridge and it will not close, then it’ll be 12 to 18 months. I said if you open the bridge now, what’s it matter? If you do it now as opposed to six

See BRIDGE on page 14



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BRIDGE from page 13

months from now it's still going to be 12 to 18 months."

Rutt stated that if the bridge is opened and will not close, they will have no option but to repair it under state law as Rehoboth Boulevard is a major state artery. He also stated DelDOT was concerned about detours.

"I was explaining this to an attorney, I said you go out Cedar Beach Road, hit the overpass down Route 1 and back on Northeast Front Street and you've gone around," Rutt said. "Anyway, there's going to be this argument. I don't know if the court will grant it as it's as it's a big ask. But there are those three boats. Sudler has three wooden yachts that he's restored, there's also a couple of other pleasure boats or something there. But then to Mr. Culotta's point, it's a much bigger issue than Mr. Lofland. It is much bigger for the entire community. This is a historical issue. So, there is something being moved on this. We'll see what happens. I looked at the letter and I made a couple suggestions. One is to have this also copy to Mr. Postles because I know he's been involved in conversations on this. Charlie Postles. Also, I would suggest copying it to the governor. Sometimes you have to go bypass some people. And so those would be two suggestions. And also, if I can and I'm going to ask permission during this argument if I can present to the court that the city has taken a position to open the bridge so well, to repair the bridge."

Mayor Campbell questioned what would happen if the bridge fell into the water when it opened. Rutt stated that they would have to replace the bridge. Councilman Culotta stated that he was told the waterways in the United States have priority over roadways.

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BRIDGE from page 14

“That’s a navigable waterway, right and it is under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard,” Rutt said. “And DelDOT has said the Coast Guard’s going to defer to them as to what they do. I don’t know if that’s true or not right. I mean, that’s all something coming out and litigation if we get there.”

Rutt also stated that DelDOT had other concerns with the bridge.

“More than one of their concerns is that it’s a draw-bridge,” Rutt said. “Every time it has to be opened. They have to get a bridge tender from somewhere coming up and opening the bridge, so I mean that again, that’s their issue to figure out what you got to do.”

Councilman Fulton stated that he felt the bridge should be repaired as it is part of the city.

“I mean, we’re a river town,” Councilman Fulton said. “You kind of have to have a way to get in and out on a vessel if you are a river town.”



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EDUCATION



MATTHEW BUCHER RUNNING FOR AT-LARGE SCHOOL BOARD SEAT

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District will hold an election on May 10, with two candidates filing for an At-Large seat vacated by Rony Baltazar-Lopez who chose not to run for another term. Scott Fitzgerald, who holds a District D seat on the board, is running unopposed. Jalyn Powell and Matthew Bucher both filed for the At-Large seat. Milford Live sent the following questions to each candidate and Bucher's responses are written in his own words.

Q: Can you provide your background? Education, career, family, etc.

A: A native Western Kentuckian, I grew up where the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers meet in the extreme southern tip of Illinois. I graduated with honors from Vienna High School, and left IET, a computer and electronics trade school, after a year when I was offered a lucrative career opportunity.

Nearly 25 years ago, I moved to Delaware with my wife when I obtained the position of Northeastern regional manager with a food distribution company. While able to live nearly anywhere along the East Coast, my wife and I chose lower Delaware because it reminded us the most of our respective birthplaces.

That job required extensive overnight travel. So with the desire to live our lives and raise a family in Delaware,

I landed a job as a construction estimator, and I have done that for over 20 years. Through my job, I have become familiar with company financials, budgets, project profit/loss, and of course the many ins and outs of major commercial construction and its specialty trades. I frequent as a consequence of my career many of lower Delaware's flagship facilities for purposes of construction and renovation quite often.

I have been a volunteer in the Milford School District for the last 15 years. I have read to (and been read to by) children at Evelyn Morris. I have chaperoned field trips, dances, and other events at Bannecker and the old Middle School. I have fundraised for and contributed to many of the extracurriculars sponsored by Milford Schools. I have built Homecoming floats and grilled hamburgers at the high school. I have served on the School Counselor's Parents Advisory Council. In short, I have, alongside so many other great Milford parents, done whatever was needed, whenever it was needed, to help make Milford Schools the center of our community.

Over the years, I have observed, both locally and beyond, trends within our public education system that have given me cause for concern. Some of these concerns will be explained further as a consequence of answering



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See **BUCHER** on page 18

BUCHER from page 17

some of the questions below. As a Milford School District parent (emeritus), as a taxpayer, as a community member, I came to the conclusion that one of the ways to effect change and address concerns shared by me and others within our local community was to serve. I respectfully ask my fellow Milford School District community stakeholders for their vote on May 10.

Q: What are your plans to help create the most successful and desired school district in Delaware?

A: This may be my favorite question, not least of which because the answers to it continue to be given to me by the members of our community. When I first decided to run for school board, I had (as anyone would), a few notions about the issues on which I would focus. What I have learned, through conversation with both teachers, former students, and parents, is that their most pressing concerns did not always fit what everyone assumes.

One concern is academic rigor and educational recovery; many have observed that, because of the two-year restrictions imposed as a consequence of the pandemic, their children have fallen behind academically in ways that will follow them all their life in terms of future opportunities and future earnings. Relatively poor educational outcomes will impose a serious social and economic cost on our students' future as well as hampering our community's attractiveness to investors and professionals. I share this concern, and believe the school boards across Delaware must make it a priority to press the state government, up to and including the governor, for educational recovery. I don't pretend to

See BUCHER on page 19



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know what form that will take; we must partner with front-line teachers, parents, administration, concerned organizations, and the Dept. of Education for solutions.

I have had more than a few parents relate they have removed their children from Milford School District within the last few years, and I will admit I was at first taken aback by the two most commonly given reasons.

One is the lack of Gifted and Talented programs at certain age groups. While we must always have focus on the various cohorts that will need additional help, we cannot pass over our high achievers, and just as importantly, those students who strive to become high achievers. Those students become role models for the greater student body; we need to retain these students and not lose them to private schools or the technical school districts.

Another is the issue of bullying and school violence. There are, in our community, parents who have removed their children because of recurring incidents in our schools. I have heard from three such parents in the past two weeks; two of those had taken the extraordinary step of removing their child.

It should be taken as axiomatic that no learning can occur without first establishing order. There is no excuse for anything less than a 100% safe school environment at all times. These incidents must be taken seriously and offenders punished, including removal from the classroom or the district schools, if warranted.

I also believe in local control and local responsibility for our school districts, as much as and whenever possible. I am told the local district, although paying a large

fraction of the total tax burden for the district, only has discretionary control of about 1% of the funds. I intend to be vocal about this lack of community control whenever I can.

I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I do pledge to listen with humility and appreciation to community members with legitimate concerns, and to communicate honestly in the performance of my duties as a member of the school board.

Q: School districts across the country have been issuing restrictions regarding what is taught in the classroom, with respect to historical and contemporary conditions in the U.S. How will you handle requests for curriculum changes from parents and the community?

A: School districts in other states have differing levels of authority; likewise, their state legislatures may give the local school district powers not granted to Delaware school boards. In Delaware, school board members are required to follow state law as set down in Title 14 of the Del. Code; it is part of the oath of office members must take in advance of entering their duties. Every potential or sitting board member anywhere in Delaware should have a working understanding of what that means.

Let me take what I think is the intent of the question head on: I am opposed to and will fight the teaching to the children of our community as fact any political or social theory the end result of which divides children into oppressors or oppressed. I will fight against any divisive social instruction that declares the United States is an inherently racist country, or that American social institutions are so infused with racism, that racism can

exist without identifying any racists. No nation or community can long hold itself together if such beliefs are widely accepted.

Milford School District does not teach these things as part of curricula at any level that I am aware, and I will fight to help ensure this always remains the case. What is taught, and rightly so, is the whole of American history, which must include the, at times, horrific injustices committed upon members of various groups, based upon race, sex, religion, etc., and that history needs to be taught accurately and unvarnished in order to avoid repeating those injustices. Every day that someone was oppressed for immutable characteristics was a day America fell short of the promise of the Founders and our Declaration.

As to input from parents and the community: as their representative, I would certainly listen to their concerns, and discuss with them a possible solution. No board member, or quite frankly, member of the school administration, should do otherwise. As one of their elected representatives, not only would I be bound by duty to take their concerns seriously, but I have made such a commitment the core of my campaign. As to the final disposition of a particular concern, that of course depends on conversation with all stakeholders, and in accordance with Delaware law.

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JALYN POWELL FILES TO RUN FOR AT-LARGE SCHOOL BOARD SEAT

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District will hold an election on May 10, with two candidates filing for an At-Large seat vacated by Rony Baltazar-Lopez who chose not to run for another term. Scott Fitzgerald, who holds a District D seat on the board, is running unopposed. Jalyn Powell and Matthew Bucher both filed for the At-Large seat. Milford Live sent the following questions to each candidate and Powell's responses are written in her own words.

Q: Can you provide your background? Education, career, family, etc.

A: I was born and raised in Sussex County, Delaware, where I attended and graduated from Milford Senior High School with honors. I went on to pursue my Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Delaware State University. I was recognized in 2017 with Delaware State University's George Washington Leadership Award for my community outreach contributions and stellar performance within their Political Science Department. I graduated with a Master of Arts in Law with a concentration in Human Rights and Rule of Law in May of 2020 from Regent University School of Law. I am now a co-lead for the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative's Youth and Young Adult Development Workstream. I am the lead organizer of the "Walk of Change" move-

ment which consisted of peaceful demonstrations that were marched in silence. The Walk of Change demonstration held in Milford brought hundreds of people together to demand Racial Equity and Social Justice in lieu of the rising public displays of police brutality. I was one of the speakers for the March For Our Lives Movement in 2018. I've worked with and for organizations like Delaware Futures, Dual School, Pathways to Success Inc. and Strive Leadership to enhance youth voice and prepare students for the workplace and real world.

I serve on various boards representing the BIPOC community and youth voice such as the Girls Basketball Committee with the DIAA, Delaware Center for Inland Bays' (CAC) Community Advisory Committee, YWCA Delaware's Racial Social Justice Advisory Committee and more! Ultimately, I was inspired to launch my own business servicing youth and young adults, OUTLOUD LLC, which empowers young adults by providing them with support services and educational resources to create leaders of today. I serve as the Youth Lead for the state of Delaware's System of Care Grant where I provide young adults with peer support training and education around mental health and wellness. Now I am a traveling speaker, business owner and community

See POWELL on page 21



POWELL from page 20

advocate servicing our youth and community in areas of social justice and mental health and wellness.

Q: What are your plans to help create the most successful and desired school district in Delaware?

A: Equity and Efficiency is on top of my list. I would work with the school administration and the Supervisor of Equity and Support Services to create and sustain equitable access to resources, opportunities and environment for our students, staff and community. I would also work with the teachers and the Curriculum Committee to review ways to improve our students' efficiency in STEM related subjects. Currently, Milford School District has a proficiency rate of 17 percent in mathematics and 39 percent in ELA (English Language Arts), and for me that is unacceptable. Whether that's improvement in curriculum or access to tutoring services, I will look into ways to improve our students' efficiency rates in those areas to make sure we are doing our job as an educational system in preparing our students for the future.

Q: School districts across the country have been issuing restrictions regarding what is taught in the classroom, with respect to historical and contemporary conditions in the U.S. How will you handle requests for curriculum changes from parents and the community?

A: I would ensure that both parents, teachers and professionals are represented on the School Curriculum Committee. This will ensure that the parental voice is being represented. Teachers that would have to teach the content and professionals that can give sound advice, such as information and assurance as to why these works

See POWELL on page 22



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of literature or topics are or are not necessary for student learning, should be on the Committee. There should be a collaborative effort to ensure students are getting the most efficient and diverse education while also understanding parental and community views are important through this process.

Q: Do you anticipate policing of the arts and literature that students are assigned or create? How far do you feel the First Amendment extends to students?

A: Schools should be a safe place for students to learn, grow, and be able to express themselves so long as it does not interfere with the free expression rights of others. Students should be able to discuss and express views relevant to the subject matter in classrooms to assure meaningful participation and respect the contributions made by others. Students should have the right to express themselves through direct and symbolic means as long as such expression does not interfere with the educational process and does not reflect obscenity, vulgarity, and inflammatory statements. Moreover, students should be able to have the right to petition school officials regarding activities directly related to the conduct and improvement of the educational process. I believe that students deserve to have their voices heard; not diminished. Schools are learning pods, places where students will learn from their mistakes. To effectively learn and grow and become productive citizens of this state and country, students should be exposed to diverse thinking.

“Policing” literature is already done through the School Curriculum Committee where a holistic K-12 curriculum is recommended to the school board for approval.

However, I will have my modes of communication open to the community because understanding the different viewpoints and concerns of others and reaching consensus among all stakeholders is the type of governing I want to uphold.

Q: Do you anticipate a political group or business influencing any decisions you make as a board member?

A: The only influence I have when making decisions is the community I am representing. Parental, student and staff opinions and concerns will be taken in consideration along with any qualitative or quantitative supporting data on whatever issue is under review at that time.

Q: Diversity has been on the forefront in education lately. In what ways do you plan to promote diversity as a school board member?

A: My election as a school board member would be the first step in promoting diversity. Currently, Milford School District has about 50 percent minority enrollment and of the seven board members only two are racially diverse and only ONE is a woman. During a conversation with two students, they shared with me how they don't feel like school is a safe place for them to be vulnerable because they don't see people who look like them. When they had minority representation at the administrative level and in the classroom, they felt more comfortable coming to school and sharing issues because they felt they had someone they could relate to. During my tenure I will work with the Supervisor of Equity and Support Services and the Superintendent to improve hiring practices and retention strategies to recruit and retain minority educators. I believe it is

important our students see diversity in leadership from their teachers to the administration and board levels. When you have diversity shown and practiced in your institutions students feel safer and more comfortable when working with different social groups in the real world. Studies show diversity also promotes students' creativity and innovation, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, diversity in education also means ensuring that younger voices are being heard on the school board. As a 25-year-old, I would continue to uphold a younger voice that already exists. To inspire our youth and children they should be able to see that young people can be in positions of power. I will also continue to make sure that the Board has a student and teacher representative at each school board meeting.

Q: During the COVID-19 pandemic, many parents were angry at school boards for mandates given to them by the governor. What is your opinion on governmental mandates and how school boards should handle them?

A: Governmental mandates are imposed using data, professional guidance and with the best interest of the public in mind. I believe in following the mandates of the governor to ensure the safety of our students in public spaces such as school. I also acknowledge that educational decisions affecting our communities should have community input. I will consider decisions made on a case-by-case basis, taking in inputs from all members of our community.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES CONTRACTOR SURCHARGE PAYMENT



BY TERRY ROGERS

On Monday, March 21, Milford School District Board of Education approved a 13 percent increase to bus contractors who transport students for athletics and field trips. The increase was to address the increase in fuel costs.

“The Athletic and Field Trip bid packet was approved in June of this year,” Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, said. “One thing that we did, if you look at the bid packet, actually from this year compared to the year before, it’s really the same. They gave us the same bids as last year. There has been a substantial increase in the average cost per gallon of diesel fuel and this has led to a substantial increase in the cost to provide these services. We are going to recommend a surcharge to our bus contractors for all student field trips and athletic transportation services throughout the remainder of the school year.”

Dr. Sara Croce, chief financial officer, presented a chart that indicated the increase in diesel fuel from July 2021 to March 2022. In July 2021, diesel fuel was \$3.20 per gallon and, during the first two weeks of March, rose to \$5.19 per gallon, dropping to \$4.95 per gallon as of March 16, 2022.

“We met with our bus contractors about this last week and they respectfully asked that we assist them during this time,” Dr. Croce said. “The percentage difference from that compared to the original quote in July is about a 13 percent increase.”

Board member Jean Wylie asked what fund the additional costs would come from and if the district could sustain the costs. Dr. Croce stated that the costs would come from the athletic fund and that the district could sustain the additional amounts although there may be a slight budget overage as these expenses were not anticipated. Dr. Adam Brownstein pointed out that even with the 13 percent increase, the contractors would still only be compensated for half their costs.

“Based on current market value, correct,” Dr. Croce said. “And they do understand there is a rolling average that’s going to take place and the hope is that gas prices will decline some before the end of the year. What we’d like to do going forward is have some type of contingency where if gas prices start to fluctuate so volatily, we would reevaluate and provide them with something throughout the year versus having them come to us.”

See **SURCHARGE** on page 24



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Dr. Brownstein stated that he appreciated what Dr. Croce was doing for the contractors.

“I personally feel like if we are going to do something like this, in an attempt to make our lives easier and to prevent having to continually revisit this issue, three months, six months down the road, that perhaps the proposal could have some sort of rolling average so we wouldn’t have to keep revisiting this issue,” Dr. Brownstein said.”

Dr. Croce confirmed that when the bid packet was compiled during the summer months, the district planned to look at the issue and determine what could be implemented to avoid this in the future.

The measure passed unanimously.



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SECONDARY MATH CURRICULUM ADOPTED

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District Board of Education adopted a new secondary math curriculum at their its meeting. The district chose to purchase enVision Math after a pilot group of Milford Central Academy and Milford High School teachers along with several administrators overwhelming chose the curriculum.

“The original quote provided back in February has remained the same,” Dr. Bridget Amory, director of Student. “One of the things we did confirm with the company is that it does indeed include the onboarding professional development that we were seeking. We will continue to work with the company as well as with the state of Delaware Math Coalition should we need to have additional professional development for our teachers beyond the initial onboarding.”

Dr. Amory explained that professional development offerings would be available at the end of the school year in anticipation of implementing the curriculum the following year. The district will also offer summer work opportunities for staff who are interested in participating as well as professional development at the start of next school year to be sure staff is comfortable with the new curriculum.

The cost of the curriculum for grades six through eight is \$138,536.45 while ninth through 12th grades will cost \$126,197.34. The cost includes print materials for the next six years, site licenses and the initial professional development element. When the information

about the curriculum was presented to the board in February, Dr. Amory provided details on why the staff overwhelmingly chose the enVision program.

“Math non-negotiables guided our process,” Dr. Amory said at the last board meeting. “These were non-negotiables that we established with our math task force throughout the district when we started the process three years ago.”

According to Dr. Amory, the enVision program was built with Common Core standards and allows students to look at math in new ways while also providing teachers with flexible choices in resources. There is supplemental information designed to help struggling students as well as components that allow students to use math concepts in real-live applications. The district also piloted Reveal Math which includes an intervention aspect called ALEKS Math which the task force also liked. Dr. Amory explained that the district may look at purchasing that portion of Reveal Math in the future for students who need additional help at the secondary level.

The board approved the new curriculum unanimously.

MILFORD
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BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District students who will enter sixth grade starting in the 2022-23 school year were provided information about the Spanish Immersion program. Sharlitta Gilbert, Milford's EL and World Language Specialist, along with Gary Zoll, principal of Milford Central Academy and Carmen Crowley, M.Ed., Delaware Dual Spanish Immersion Coach, provided an introduction to the program to students and parents.

"This class is so important because, moving forward into sixth grade and then into high school, your children will begin a program that will allow them to earn a Seal of Multiliteracy," Crowley said. "What is that? Many of the students here will decide to go to college and earning the Seal of Literacy identifies them as bilingual. If they continue moving forward with the program, they can also earn three credits. Right now, it is just amazing to see them in classes, how much Spanish they use."

Gilbert also explained some of the other benefits of the program, which included marketable language skills, increased flexibility and focus as well as superior problem solving skills.

"Some benefits have emerged and I'm sure you've already seen some of the benefits of your child coming home and speaking Spanish and you hear them communicating out in the community," Gilbert said. "But some additional benefits are economic advantages. It always pays to speak a second language when it comes to job employment,

MSD NEW 6TH GRADERS LEARN ABOUT IMMERSION PROGRAM

if you're bilingual you have a step above other candidates. Now, academic achievements, so we probably kind of talked about literacy returns that your child will be able to receive even before that. Of course, to receive the seal, and that is a national recognition of their bilingual ability. Also, their scores are usually higher than their peers. Because for those who are bilingual, the work is a little harder. Generally, the scores are higher than their monolingual peers when talking about syllabi literacy. And again, the students who are in the immersion program are brilliant. It takes a lot to process a different language."

Zoll provided additional information about the benefits of the program, explaining that many of the students in the immersion program take AP Spanish in high school which can provide them with free college credit, saving costs when the child does go to college. He also explained that students have a traditional class schedule at Milford Central Academy with some expressives lasting all year and others only a semester. However, the immersion program lasts all year.

"So right now we have a six period day, there's six classes that all students take," Zoll said. "In first period, that could be that expressive class when they're learning about the Spanish language. Getting more of what they've been getting, it might be the social studies, period three science, or they have their expressive math. One of the things that we've heard from parents and students, they've been with the same friends, same classmates when they get here so they're going to be mixed in with other students."

In a slide presented by Goll, a sample schedule would have students starting the day in Spanish language arts in their first period, moving to social studies, then science, an expressive like band, physical education or art, followed by math then English language arts. Immersion takes place in Spanish language arts for all students in the program and in either social studies or science. At the orientation, students were provided a scavenger hunt written in Spanish with students having to follow the directions to find each of the five locations.

HEALTH



PHOTO BY ROBERT J. NEARY PHOTOGRAPHY

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PRESS RELEASE

As the only teaching hospital in central and southern Delaware, Bayhealth celebrated Match Day on Friday, March 18. On Match Day, Bayhealth learned the names of the 24 new doctors who will join one of its **Graduate Medical Education** (GME) programs. Bringing the total number of residents at Bayhealth to 45, the GME programs further bolster the health system's mission of strengthening the health of its community, one life at a time. Bayhealth first announced the creation of graduate and undergraduate medical education in March 2019.

Bayhealth has three GME, or residency, programs—family medicine, general surgery, and internal medicine. Now in their second year, the Family Medicine Residency Program matched with eight residents and the Internal Medicine Residency Program matched with 13 residents. The General Surgery Residency Program matched its first class of residents which includes three physicians. The residents are medical doctors who will further their education working in the hospital setting as well as community-based physician practices for the next three to five years.

BAYHEALTH MATCHES WITH MEDICAL RESIDENTS

Kendall Barton, MD, is among last year's incoming class of Family Medicine residents and served as the emcee for the Match Day event. "I have learned and grown as a physician in ways I never would have imagined," he said of his first year of residency. "My colleagues and I have been able to provide much-needed healthcare in every aspect of medicine to a wide variety of patients. It's been an incredible experience being able to treat and educate my patients on everything from major depression to hypertension, from prenatal and newborn care, to end of life and palliative care." In the first year of the Family Medicine and Internal Medicine Residency Programs, the residents cared for more than 1,600 patients.

"The residents we welcomed in 2021—like Dr. Barton—gave hope to so many in our community, and I'm confident the 2022 residents will help catapult this program to its highest level and where it's destined to go," said Bayhealth President and CEO Terry M. Murphy, FACHE. "When I think about the impact that we've made in one year, I'm hopeful for the impact we'll have as this program continues to grow. We're making history in central and southern Delaware."

Launched this year was Bayhealth's General Surgery Residency Program. "The new General Surgery Residency Program will keep us driven to stay ahead of the curve and remain on the cutting edge of surgical procedures," said GME Chair and Colorectal and General Surgeon Assar Rather, MD, FACS, FACRS. "We not only

want to provide the highest quality, safest care for our patients, but we want to entice and attract the highest caliber residents to be part of our program."

"All of our faculty and staff for these three residencies know that we are entrusted to help teach and mold great physicians," said Chief Medical Officer and GME Designated Institutional Official Gary Siegelman, MD, MSc. "Many of these young doctors will remain in and serve our community after they finish their graduate training, having a positive impact on our community for years to come. As a teaching hospital we are now attracting experienced physicians to our team who are eager to teach and shape the next generation of clinicians. The GME programs are a win-win for both our community and our health system."

Visit www.BayhealthGME.org to learn more about Bayhealth's residency programs.





BAYHEALTH TO PRESENT UPDATES AT UPCOMING MEETING

PRESS RELEASE

The monthly meeting of the Milford Conversations group will be held on Thursday, April 7, from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at 101 S. Walnut Street in Milford (the First Presbyterian Church). The program for the morning will be an update on happenings at BayHealth Medical Center, the “new” hospital in Milford .

Milford Conversations is open to all interested community leaders in Milford, including those representing business, civic, nonprofit, environmental, arts, education, health and government sectors. Speakers vary and opportunity is given at each meeting for participants to announce upcoming events or points of interest in the organizations they represent. The meeting will be held in the church’s fellowship hall. Entry through the back door, off of Pearl St., is recommended. For questions, please call 302-422-5701.



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PHOTO BY KEVIN EICKMAN

A bill to **ban transgender girls** from participating in girls' sports in Delaware was heard in Senate Committee

Wednesday

SENATE COMMITTEE HEARS FAIRNESS IN WOMEN'S SPORTS ACT

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A bill to require Delaware student-athletes to compete on athletic teams or in sports associated with their biological sex was the subject of a raucous Senate committee hearing March 23. [Senate Bill 227](#) specifically aims to prohibit transgender girls—or girls who were born as boys—from playing on girls' sports teams.

Under the bill, cisgender female athletes, or girls who were born as girls, would be allowed to compete on boys' sports teams if the sport in question is not available for girls, like wrestling, for example.

"You can be anything you want to be in this great country; the purpose of this bill is not to undermine that privilege," said Sen. Bryant Richardson, the bill's sponsor. "The purpose of the bill is to protect the gains in women's sports that came about almost 50 years ago under Title IX."

Richardson referred to transgender girls as "male-bodied," and said that when male-bodied athletes are allowed to compete on girls' teams, biological girls are at higher risk of injury, because male-bodied athletes are, on average, bigger and stronger.

See **FAIRNESS** on page 32



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“The inclusion of male-bodied athletes in women’s sports inevitably means that more females lose out,” Richardson, R-Seaford, said. “We have an obligation to defend everyone’s rights. What is wrong is when the rights of some put at risk the rights of others.”

The chair of the Senate Health & Social Services Committee, Sen. Sarah McBride, D-Wilmington North, identifies as transgender. McBride is the first openly transgender state senator in the country and the highest-ranking transgender elected official in United States history. She took Richardson’s bill as a personal affront to her identity and said it puts transgender children at risk.

“I didn’t run for this office to talk about transgender identities,” McBride told the committee. “But when legislation comes before me that goes after young people—that goes a step too far.”

McBride argued that there are many competitive advantages and disadvantages in high school sports—among them, wealth and access to private coaching, and biological differences between cisgender athletes such as height and weight and athletic capacity. She asked Richardson if his bill sought to level the playing field by addressing any of those perceived disparities.

“This legislation is aimed at fairness in women’s sports,” Richardson responded. “It’s to protect women’s sports and to protect women against injuries and protect them from losing opportunities for scholarships.”

McBride quipped back, “So you believe that I have a biological advantage over Elena Delle Donne in basketball?” Richardson said that’s just one of many examples that could be made to justify an argument on either side.

He specifically cited the case of Lia Thomas, a transgender woman who previously swam for the University of Pennsylvania’s men’s team. Thomas’s recent success against cisgender female swimmers has brought renewed attention to the ongoing debate on transgender women’s participation in sports.

The UPenn swimmer has thus become a focal point in a larger political disagreement over the balance between inclusion and fairness.

Democrats protested that Richardson’s bill is a solution in search of a problem—that there have been no instances in Delaware of transgender girls making waves in girls’ sports in the way Thomas has.

Richardson noted a rule passed by the Red Clay School District Board of Education in Dec. 2021 that affirms transgender and gender diverse students’ right to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports corresponding with their gender identity. The rule does not affect athletes on interscholastic competitive sports teams, who must still abide by the policy set by the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association’s board of directors.

Under current DIAA policy, transgender students are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity under any of the following conditions:

- The student provides an official record, such as a revised birth certificate, a driver’s license or a passport, demonstrating legal recognition of the student’s reassigned sex.
- A physician or social service provider certifies that

the student has had appropriate clinical treatment for transition to the reassigned sex.

- A physician or social service provider certifies that the student is in the process of transitioning to the reassigned sex.

The bill is one of at least 35 filed in state legislatures across the country that would limit or prohibit transgender women from competing in women’s athletics.

Republican governors in Indiana and Utah vetoed legislation in recent days that GOP-controlled legislatures in those states passed.

The wave of bills is part of a larger agenda, McBride said.

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MSD DISCUSSES 8TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District discussed a change to its policy that would permanently allow eighth grade students to participate in high school athletics. The policy is currently in place but must be reviewed regularly.

“Our coaches and our athletic director are in favor of continuing this policy,” Gary Zoll, principal of Milford Central Academy and Milford High School, said. “They thought it would give our student-athletes chances that they didn’t have before and helped them a lot in fielding some JV teams. So, just to give you some of the opportunities for students, we had an eighth grade wrestler last year that placed second in state.”

Superintendent Kevin Dickerson pointed out that without allowing the eighth graders to participate, there were some spring teams that may not be fielded as there were not enough players. School Board Vice-President Rony Baltazar-Lopez asked if this was a policy the district hoped to make permanent, and Dr. Dickerson agreed that it was.

“The question is, Mr. Baltazar-Lopez, do we have another review two or three years down the road or do we just make this a permanent policy and get back to revision whenever appropriate?” Dr. Dickerson said. “I think what we are asking for is just a little more clarity regarding what the board wants to see here and extend into future years.”

Board member Kris Thompson pointed out that Milford Central Academy may not have a team that the high school has which means that an eighth grader could miss out on participating.

“We don’t have all those sports at MCA, so our eighth graders who like swimming and tennis don’t have a chance to play those and get them interested in those sports before they get to high school,” Thompson said. “I can speak on behalf of being a coach at MCA and the downside as a coach is to have a great team going into eighth grade and you lose a couple of your star athletes. We don’t have state championships, you don’t have conference championships and allowing some of these athletes to move up and compete in high school as eighth graders has given them some huge benefit for later on when they mature, become juniors or seniors, there is no state tournament they have not seen yet. There’s no competition they haven’t seen. I think we’ve done a really good job piloting this program and I think it is time to move it toward a more permanent solution.”

Dr. Dickerson also pointed out that there has been increased participation among Milford Central Academy students with this policy. It has allowed the school to offer more JV programs than they could were eighth graders not permitted to compete at the high school level. School board member David Vezmar asked if this

could be changed to an action item as the board had reviewed the policy several times over the past few years.

“I don’t see it necessary to have a review period,” Vezmar said. “I think we’ve done that. My recommendation would be to make it permanent and if the need arises to review it later, we can do that.”

School board President, Jason Miller agreed, stating that the district had a superintendent and athletic director who would keep an eye on it. Dr. Dickerson stated that the policy would be brought to the next school board meeting as an action item.

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