

FHS Fights Focus Of District Officials

Students who fight in Franklin High School face more stringent punishment than has been doled out in the past, the schools Superintendent said on February 23.

Superintendent John Ravally said at the monthly Board of Education meeting that FHS students caught fighting will be suspended and, once the suspension is over, they "will be put on a 45-day placement, while they're seeking an alternative placement to finish out the year."

Ravally's remarks came in response to comments made by several FHS parents who asked district officials to impose harsher penalties than simply suspensions for students caught fighting. The suspensions, they argued, ac-

complish nothing.

The parents and Ravally were reacting to an uptick in fighting at the school. Ravally said there were seven fights in a three-day period in February, remarkable because in the four-month period prior to that, the most number of fights in one month was seven.

"That was alarming to us," he said. "That's why we called a safety committee meeting, that's why we worked with the school administration to tighten things down."

"When we see those upticks like we had two weeks ago, we have to quickly address them," Ravally said. "I think we did, and not to say it's perfect, but it's getting better."

Continued on Page 7.

Little Genius Planet Opens Its Doors



Mayor Phil Kramer prepares to cut the ribbon at the Grand Opening of Little Genius Planet in Franklin Park. The center offers daycare and academic programs, and teaches under the Montessori umbrella.

Scan the QR Code with a mobile device to see the Grand Opening live stream by the Franklin Reporter:



Fees Increase For Summer Camp, Open Swim

Fees will increase for two popular summer programs run by the township Recreation Department.

Summer Camp and the evening swim programs will see new charges, as a result of action taken February 8 by the Advisory Recreation Council.

The fee for the 6-week summer camp program will increase 2.5 percent, from \$625 to \$640.

The summer open swim program, which has not charged during the Covid-19 pandemic, will now be \$20 for a family of four, with each extra family member costing \$5.

The department's fee waiver program will be in effect for both activities.

The increases were proposed by Recreation Director Beau Byrtus.

Byrtus was also adamant about including the fee waivers for the programs.

"We also offer a fee waiver, so kids are not not going to get a chance to go to camp," he said. "From my perspective, I streamlined a lot of that because I hate cumbersome processes for getting free or reduced, because I don't want to punish somebody."

"At \$150 a week, compared to Oak Crest, where you paying probably \$450 to

Continued on Page 8.

Eight Franklin Firefighters Graduate From SomCo Fire Academy



GRADUATION DAY — Troy Wilcox of Millstone Valley Volunteer Fire Department was one of eight township firefighters who graduated January 27 from the Somerset County Fire Academy.

fighter 1 graduates were among 38 graduates heading to 24 fire departments in Somerset County.

Township graduates and the departments to which they are committed were:

- Jack Kane and Khari Voorhees, East Franklin Volunteer Fire Co.
- Gary Hemmings, Franklin Park Volunteer Fire Co.
- Taif Kazi, Kingston Fire Co.
- Matthew Hutchinson, Little Rocky Hill Volunteer Fire Dept.
- Michael Grossman, Middlebush Fire Co.
- Kayci Galletta and Guy Troy Wilcox Jr., Millstone Valley Volunteer Fire Department.

Douglas Singleterry, Deputy Director of the Somerset County Board of Com-

missioners, praised the graduates for their commitment to their neighbors.

"You give us all faith that our homes and loved ones are protected at all times, and when disaster strikes, there are highly skilled, highly trained, highly motivated neighbors ready to come and give us their help and hope they need to recover," he said.

Singleterry noted that

even before the pandemic struck, volunteerism at many fire departments was on the downswing.

"Many of our departments in Somerset County and surrounding municipalities saw a significant loss in volunteers and had an extremely difficult time recruiting new volunteers," he said. "This at a time when we're seeing more major disasters

strike, like Hurricane Ida just a year ago."

"Were it not for firefighters and other first responders going out into the storm, many more lives would have been lost," he said. "But they were there, just as you have been trained to do when the next disaster strikes."

"Over the next year or so, one or more of you will be re-

Continued on Page 8.

Tacos Basilio Opens On Somerset Street



The air around a block of Somerset Street was filled with the music of a Mariachi band February 20, sounds which heralded the grand opening of a new Mexican restaurant, Tacos Basilio.

Along with the musicians and a large gathering of family and friends, on hand to welcome the new business to the township were Mayor Phil Kramer and Deputy Mayor Ram Anbarasan.

Scan the QR Code with a mobile device to see the video from the Grand Opening.



Councilwoman Pruitt Will Not Seek Re-Election

Citing the travel demands of her job as the reason behind her decision, Township Councilwoman Crystal Pruitt announced February 28 that she would not run for re-election this November.

Pruitt, a Democrat holding an At-Large seat, was appointed to the Council in January 2019 to fill the one-year unexpired seat of

Shanel Robinson, who had recently been elected to the then-Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Pruitt won the seat outright in 2019, and is in the final year of her first term.

Over her years on the Council, she has appeared in several political "power lists" compiled by statewide publications.

Pruitt's focus while on the

Council has been public safety, and she has spoken often from the dais about issues of concern to the Black community.

At the Council meeting, Pruitt said her job with Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind often takes her out of town and out of the state. As a result, she has had to miss Council meetings.

Continued on Page 6.

Township Woman Loses \$312K In Cryptocurrency Scam



A 53-year-old township woman was scammed out of more than \$300,000 late last year in what police call a cryptocurrency scam.

The woman, whose name was redacted from a copy of the Incident Report obtained by the Franklin Reporter & Advocate through an Open Public Records Act request, told township police that she lost the money on four occasions in mid- to late-December 2022.

The woman reported that she met the scammer in early November 2022 on the social media platform LinkedIn, where she was looking for a job.

The woman, who is Asian-American, said she and the man, who called himself “Hao Chen,” chatted on the app for several weeks, includ-

ing in Mandarin Chinese, before the topic of investments was broached.

The victim said the man initially introduced her to Coinbase, a cryptocurrency exchange, before moving to Crypto, another exchange.

The woman told police that before she invested, she verified the platform with another LinkedIn user going by the name “Corin Jiang.” She said she now believes that “Corin Jiang” was part of the scam team.

The victim had to use a currency exchange to covert her money to be able to be invested, according to the incident report. She told police that she believed “Hao Chen” controlled that exchange.

The victim told police that she initially invested a small amount, \$500, in Coinbase, which was wired back

to her bank, according to the incident report.

The victim told police that she saw a small profit from that investment, but then Coinbase canceled her account for an unknown reason. “Hao Chen” then convinced her to invest heavily in Crypto, she told police.

The woman told police that she wired the following amounts to Crypto:

- \$10,000 on December 12, 2022
- \$150,000 on December 16, 2022
- \$100,000 on December 27, 2022
- \$52,000 on December 29, 2022.

The victim told police that she was told she had to pay a \$300,000 “advance tax” before she could receive any return on her money. FTPD Officer Frank Mahon said in the incident report that he advised her not to pay it.

Mahon said he also advised the woman to contact a fraud alert company, and to change her passwords. She said she was going to close the account she was using because “Hao Chen” had some details about it.

Warrior Senior Athletes Have Their Special Nights

Franklin High School athletes on the winter track, boys’ and girls’ basketball, cheer and bowling teams were given their Senior Nights during late January and February.

During the events, hosted by the FHS Athletic Booster Club, the athletes were walked down a red carpet and given bags of gifts.



Boys' Basketball



Cheer



Bowling



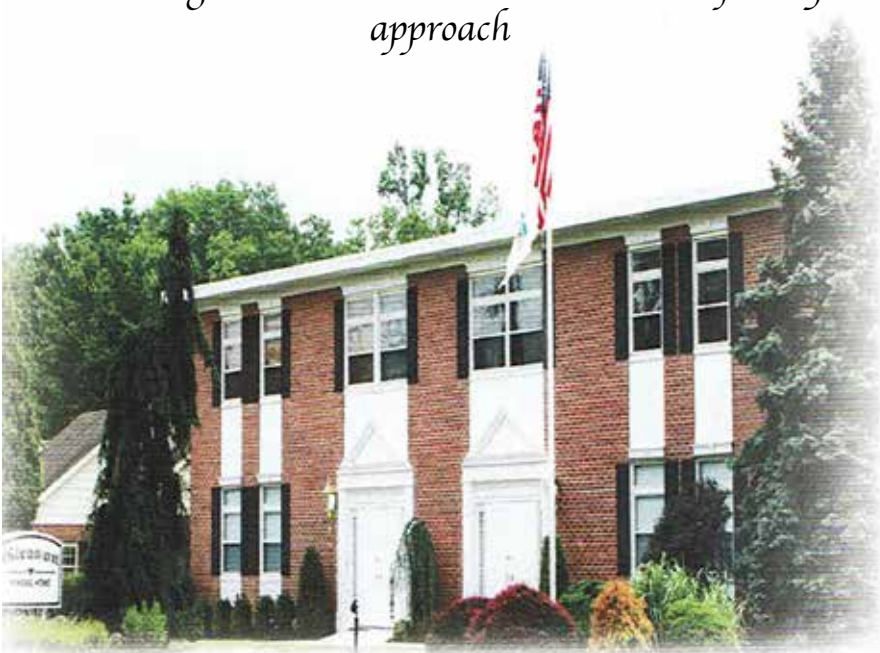
Girls' Basketball



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Hamilton Street Apartment Developer Sues Township, Claims Politics Is Behind Plan To Scuttle Apartment Complex

"All this time my project is sitting there, I'm losing money all the time they're waiting," he said. "All the tenants have made arrangements to move out ... I said I would give you money to go to a nicer area, if you can't afford it, I'll build you out."

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Police: ‘Disciplinary Action’ Led To PSE&G Supervisor Murder

Disciplinary action led to the February 8 fatal shooting of a PSE&G supervisor by a man who formerly was his subordinate, authorities said on February 10.

The assailant, David Curtis of Washington, approached Russel Heller around 7 a.m. as Heller was standing next to his car in the Weston Canal Road parking lot and shot him, killing him, police said.

Police Accreditation Assessment Team Invites Public Comment

The public is invited to weigh in on the Franklin Township Police Department’s effort to once again be accredited through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police.

Accreditation by the NJSACP “results in greater accountability within the agency, reduced risk and liability exposure, stronger defense against civil lawsuits, increased community advocacy, and more confidence in the agency’s ability to operate efficiently and respond to community needs,” Public Safety Director Quovella Maeweather said in a press release. “This accreditation sends a strong message to our community that maintaining the highest levels of public safety is a top priority.”

The public may comment on how they believe the department is meeting the NJSACP standards by phoning in comments, emailing or traditional mail.

Residents can contact Detective Robert Young at (732) 873-5533 x2401 for information about the standards.

To phone in comments, call (732) 873-5533 x2401 from 10-11 a.m. February 8.

About three hours later, Curtis was found to have died by suicide in his car while it was parked at a Bridgewater commuter lot, adjacent to the TD Bank Ballpark.

with the standards can be observed. Once the Commission’s assessors complete their review of the agency, they will report to the full Commission, which will then decide if the agency is to be granted accredited status.”

Accreditation is valid for a three-year period during which time the agency must submit annual reports attesting to their continued compliance with those standards under which it was initially accredited.

The FTPD was also accredited in 2013, after a two-year vetting process.

The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police through its New Jersey Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission is the legitimate authority and accreditation agency in the state of New Jersey. For more information regarding the Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission, write the Commission at New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission at 751 Route 73 North, Suite 12 Marlton, N.J. 08053 or email hdelgado@njsacop.org.

“The handgun revolver utilized by Mr. Curtis, which was found on his person when he was located deceased by authorities from a self-inflicted gunshot wound was legally registered to him,” according to the release.

The investigation also revealed that the shooting “was not politically connected with (Heller’s) elected office or political affiliation,” according to the release.

The killing is still under investigation. Police as that anyone with information contact the Somerset County Prosecutors Office Major Crimes Unit at (908) 231-7100 or the Franklin Township Police Department at (732) 873-5533 or via the STOPit app. The STOPit app allows citizens to provide anonymous reports including videos and photos. STOPit can be downloaded to your smart phone for free at the Google Play Store or Apple App Store, access code: SOMERSETNJ. Information can also be provided through the Somerset County Crime Stoppers’ Tip Line at 1-888-577-TIPS (8477).

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Life Stories

Jane Adele Campbell Resta, 92



Jane was a devoted wife to Frank Angelo Resta (deceased 1991), a loving mother to four children: June (Dennis), Frank (Celeste), Debra, and Ed (Lisa). An admiring grandmother to Andrea (Rob), Justin (Bena), Carlie, Carina, Ryan, Corey (Anna) and Sara.

Jane was a mental health warrior. She loved family, friends, dance, and fashion, and she cared, loved and appreciated all those who were fortunate enough to cross her path.

All services were held privately at request of the family.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to NAMI NJ at www.naminj.org.

Daniel Marx, 78

Mr. Daniel Marx passed away on February 23, 2023 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick. He was 78 years old.

Dan was born and raised in Irvington NJ, where he

met his future wife, Esta Roth. He graduated from Irvington High School and furthered his education at Rutgers University, earning an MBA in Accounting.

He was employed by Samuel Klein and Company in Newark and then went on to work for Grad Associates also in Newark for many more years. He also ran his own private CPA practice where he did tax and accounting work for neighbors, friends and small businesses.

He and his wife Esta first resided in Colonia and then moved to Edison, where they raised their family together. In 2004, they moved to Somerset Run in Franklin Township where they both made many good friends.

Dan was an active member of Temple Ohev Shalom in Colonia where he served in many leadership roles, including Congregation President. He was currently a member of Temple Beth El in Somerset.

In retirement, he was able to enjoy travelling and playing cards with his friends, and enjoying the precious time he spent with his grandchildren.

Dan was pre-deceased by his loving wife Esta in 2018 and by his parents Walter and Zita Marx.

He is survived by his children, Mitchell Marx and his wife Ellen and Amy Blake and her husband Jason, as well as his beloved grandchildren Shawn, Zoey and Will. He is also survived by his brother Bernie Marx and his wife Judith.

Contributions in his name may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation at www.michaeljfox.org

Elaine Green, 86



Elaine Green, formerly of Franklin but most recently of Hillsborough, passed away on February 22 at home. She was 86.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, she lived in Somerset, East Brunswick and Aventura, Florida for 20 years before moving to Hillsborough five years ago.

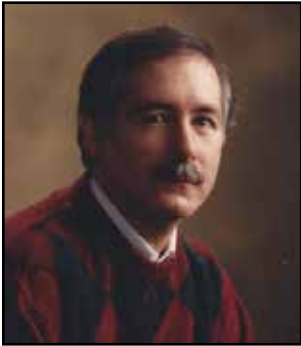
She worked as the Director of Financial Aid at Rutgers University in New Brunswick before her retirement. Elaine enjoyed playing cards and mahjong, bowling, traveling and listening to Frank Sinatra. She was also a former member of the Sisterhood of the Temple at Beth El in Somerset.

Her husband, Irving Green died in 2019. She is also predeceased by her parents, Sidney and Faye Mandelstein.

Surviving are her sons and daughters-in-law, Mark and Barbara Green of Hillsborough and Jeff and Joan Green of Somerset; sister and brother-in-law, Anita and Stuart Krantz of Monroe; grandchildren, Stacy, Michael, Jason (with Megan) and Justin (with Shelby); and great-grandchildren, Gabriella, Asher and Rylenn.

Funeral services have been handled privately under the professional direction of the Gleason Funeral Home, Somerset.

James Gagliastro, 76



James Gagliastro, of Somerset, passed away on February 12 at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick. He was 76.

Born and raised in Hoboken, he also lived in Jersey City before moving to Somerset in 1991.

Jim worked as a Risk

Management Analyst for JP Morgan in New York City, then later as a Realtor for Prudential in Somerset. He was also a US Air Force veteran, serving during the Vietnam Era. He received his Bachelor's in Economics from St. Peter's College in Jersey City and his MBA from Pace University in New York City.

He was an avid chess player and also enjoyed reading, watching history and Sci-Fi movies, NY Giants football, and in his youth playing soccer and singing doo-wop music.

Jim was predeceased by his parents, Joseph and Ellen Gagliastro; and brother, Joseph.

Surviving are his wife of 33 years, Rosalia; daughter, Lisa Gagliastro of Somerset (with fiancé Michael Vergara); brother, Thomas Gagli-

astro of Middletown, and step-sister, Rose Gagliastro of Puerto Rico.

Frances Legenhausen, 85

Frances Preisler Legenhausen of Somerset passed away on January 31 at the Regency Jewish Heritage Nursing Home in Somerset. She was 85.

Born in Finderne, she lived in Middlebush, South Bound Brook, Middlesex, Bound Brook, and Hampton Bays, New York, before moving to Somerset in 2018.

Celebrating her life are her son, Curt White of Somerset; daughter Bethany Legenhausen of Annandale; and grandchildren Oliver, Nolan, and Elizabeth.

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Statewide Power List Includes Local Luminaries



Shanel Robinson

Nine people who either live in Franklin Township or are connected to the Eight Villages are included in InsiderNJ's 2023 African-American Power List.

InsiderNJ is "a nonpartisan website dedicated to political news in the state of New Jersey," according to its web site. The publication regularly publishes "power lists" of different aspects of the state's political landscape.

Here are the Franklin-connected people on this year's list, along with the blurb about them published by InsiderNJ:

7. Bonnie Watson Coleman

The 12th District Congresswoman made history in 2015 when she assumed the oath of office as New Jersey's first African American Congresswoman. A former Democratic State Party chair

with a strong and independent progressive record, Watson Coleman keeps her own counsel and makes her own political moves. A survivor and a fighter.

51. Shanel Robinson

The former Franklin Twp. Councilwoman made history in 2018 as the leader of the Democratic Board of Commissioners ticket that broke the GOP chokehold on county government. Chair of the Somerset County Commissioners Board.

HONORABLE MENTION

- Lamont Repollet - President of Kean University
- Kimberly Francois - Township Councilwoman
- Crystal Pruitt - Township Councilwoman
- Buster Soaries - Pastor Emeritus at First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens
- Mohamed Jalloh - Associate Township Prosecutor
- Tina Jalloh - Somerset County Surrogate
- Randal Pinkett - Entrepreneur, winner of season four of reality show "The Apprentice."

Assemblymen Danielsens's 'Head-To-Toe' Clothing Drive Nets More Than 1,500 Pieces

More than 1,500 hats, socks, scarves, and gloves for children between the ages of 3 to 16 years were collected by state Assemblyman Joe Danielsens (D-17) during his recent Winter Head-to-Toe clothing drive.

The annual event was held this year between December 1, 2022 and February 13, 2023.

Danielsens's office coordinated with New Brunswick-based Elijah's Promise and Unity Square, and the Franklin Food Bank and Franklin Youth Center to distribute the items, according to a press release about the event.

"These organizations do remarkable work when it comes to supporting members of our community and

connecting them with the resources they need," Danielsens said in the release.

"I want to extend my most sincere appreciation and thanks to the Franklin Township JFK Democratic Club, the communities of Somerset Run, and Canal Walk, as well as all the individuals who have donated to my drive for their generous donations, as this initiative

would not be possible without your support," he said in the release.

"I'm proud to represent Legislative District 17, as the dedication and support this community embodies when it comes to supporting one another continues to impress me," Danielsens said in the release.

Councilwoman Crystal Pruitt Will Not Seek Re-Election In November

Continued from Page 1.

"For me, one of the most important things about this job is showing up, and because I'm traveling so often for my job, I made a really difficult decision that I think in the end is the responsible one, and that is not to run for re-election," Pruitt said, her voice filled with emotion.

"I will finish out this year, but it's been a tremendous honor to serve the citizens of Franklin Township," she said as she unsuccessfully tried to hold back tears. "Franklin Township raised me and for at least five years I was able to give something back. I hope this isn't the last opportunity

I'll have to be of service, and I'm not falling off the face of the Earth."

"I just think that I'm the type of person that puts their whole self in everything I do, and the moment I cannot, I need to take a step back and provide space and opportunities for someone else to step up," Pruitt said.

"It's been an honor and I wouldn't be crying about it if it wasn't a difficult decision," she said. "Thank you so much for allowing me to be your Councilwoman for five years, and I hope to be able to serve you again in the future."

Council members praised Pruitt for her work and for the decision she made.

"We appreciate you giving of your time and your talent, and all of the contributions you've made to Franklin Township," said Councilwoman Kimberly Francois (D-At Large). "You still have the rest of the year to serve, so we're going to work you to death until you leave."

"We love you, we care about you, and we appreciate that you made that decision, it was definitely a hard decision," she said.

"Just because you're not here in the Council, doesn't mean you're going to go away," Francois said. "You'll still be in Franklin, and I know you're still going to serve."

Councilman James Vasanella (D-Ward 5) said, "It takes a lot of courage to make hard decisions."

"Everyone up here puts in a heck of a lot more hours than we even realize ... but that's what we're here for. Very courageous decision," he said.

Councilwoman Shepa Uddin (D-Ward 2) said she was "definitely" going to miss Pruitt.

"I'm going to continue to bug her," she said. "She's full of knowledge."

"I love communicating with her and just brainstorming," Uddin said. "I will miss

having her presence to do that. But we'll keep doing it this year."

Councilman Carl Wright (D-Ward 4) said he was happy for Pruitt.

"We might be sad, but we're happy for you," he said. "We're sorry you're leaving, but we're happy you are leaving because you're a happy camper, and that's the main thing, being a happy camper."

Deputy mayor Ram Anbarasan said he got to know Pruitt as they walked the town, campaigning together in 2019.

"It took a lot of conviction to make the decision, which shows the mettle of the person she is," he said. "A person of integrity to public service. I really appreciate and commend you on your decision."

"I love her to death, and I wish her all the best," he said.

Township Democrats will meet this month to pick their slates for the election.

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School Officials Promise To Crack Down On Fighting At FHS



CRACKDOWN ON FIGHTING – Schools Superintendent John Ravally told parents that high school officials will crack down on students who fight during school hours.

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Among the parents speaking was Debra Zavatsky, who has a child at FHS and also is a district teacher.

“I’m here as a parent to express my concern,” she said. “I don’t want the administration to just say we’re following our code of conduct; this is the best we can do. The ones that are not paying attention to these rules ... these few are getting away with a lot. Oftentimes the administration says our hands are tied, we’re doing our best.”

Schools, she said, “need to be safe. They need to feel safe. They need to be a productive learning environment for all students. Right now, they don’t feel that way.”

“Even my kids are saying that the Code of Conduct is not being followed and that the leniency that’s being followed in our district is causing empowerment to the wrong students,” she said. “The students who are raising havoc have more power

than the students who are doing what they need to do. That is upside-down.”

“There needs to be a no tolerance policy in place so these students don’t feel that they can get away with it,” she said.

“We need to make it so that these kids feel that they can improve in a structured environment,” Zavatsky said. “What happened to structure? What happened to rules?”

Tom Pydeski said parents are “curious about the action you’re going to take. If the violence that we’ve seen in the mall or some other public place, arrests would be made.”

Pydeski said that “95 percent of the students are following the rules, doing what they need to do, getting good grades, representing the school proudly ... and that small portion has no consequences for what they do, and they continue to do it. For the fights to be broken up

and the kids sent to detention or suspension, I don’t feel that’s enough.”

“We need to do something, and we need to do it before something serious happens,” he said.

Kelly Probst, who said she works in a nearby school district, told the Board that her students were showing her videos of fights at FHS during the course of one day.

“Look what’s going on at your kids’ school,” she said. “I was going out of my mind.”

Probst said one of the problems is the ease students have in communicating with other over cell phones.

“I would like to see a stricter phone policy at the high school and the middle school,” she said. “The phone is a big problem. It’s all coordinated, I see it all day.”

“Chronic kids fighting don’t belong with the kids trying to get an education,” she said. “The phones are the problem, and the consequences are lame.”

Many school districts are “challenged” by their phone policies, Ravally said.

He said the district once looked into putting the phones into “phone bags” but that proved impractical.

“Kids have already figured out a way around that,” he said. “They buy one phone that they use, and another phone that they don’t use is the one they put in the bag.”

Ravally said the District could more strenuously enforce its Electronic Recording Device Policy.

“If we see you whip out your phone, we can only assume that you’re videotaping with it,” he said. “We’re going to do a better job with challenging students who do that and providing consequences for students who do that, from as minimal as taking your phone and giving it back to your parents to detentions, Saturday detentions, even suspensions.”

While eliminating phones is not practical, Ravally said, “but what we can do is control how the phones are being utilized and when they’re being utilized.”

“We’re going to do what we can, and it can be a lot, to try to start to discourage how these phones are being used inappropriately,” he said.

Ravally said the District also has to do a better job supporting students’ mental health issues.

“We’ve engaged with the right people, but we’ve got to do a better job connecting kids with the resources,” he said.

Board members also weighed in on the issue.

“I appreciate you coming out, your concern is our concern,” Board member Walter Jackson told the parents. “I encourage you to support us, because we do hear you. We’ll make sure that your voices are heard and your concerns are

heard. We’re all here because our district is a great one and I want our district to be an example for other districts in the state.”

“One of the things that’s great about Franklin is that we’re all united to make sure that our kids have the best, and that you not only come to tell us what concerns you, but you come with potential solutions and ways to help,” Board member Laurie Merris said. “Even in tough times, we’re working together for the good of our town and our children.”

Board member Bill Grippo said it was important to look at the “98 percent of our students who are doing just fantastic.”

“This period we’re going through is a dark time,” he said. “But I think our Superintendent and the board are working out of it. I’m going to predict that you’re going to see a marked improvement.”



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Eight Franklin Firefighters Graduate From SomCo Fire Academy

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sponsible for keeping a home from being destroyed, saving the life of a mother or father, or keeping a grass fire from spreading into a residential neighborhood,” Singleterry said.

“It is no small thing to commit to enter a burning building, to carry dozens of pounds of gear on your back ... you have to be ready to save someone else’s life at a moment’s notice.”

Singleterry promised that the Commissioners will support county firefighters.

Somerset County Office of Emergency Management Director Lisa Werner, who oversees the Emergency Services Training Academy, celebrated the “little return to normal” that the ceremony represented.

“I am so proud to be here

to be a part of these firefighters’ training, and to ensure that this academy is here to serve the people of Somerset County for many generations to come,” she said.

Alan Querec, one of the Academy’s instructors, told the graduates to continue with their training.

“You’re at the start of an unbelievable career,” he said.

“Don’t be afraid to make mistakes. The best mistake is one that you figure the answer to.”

“No one in this room is perfect,” he said.

Fees Increase For Summer Camp, Open Swim

Continued from Page 1.

\$500 a week ... they’re still getting swim lessons, still getting access to the pool, still going on trips,” Byrtus said. “We don’t want there to be obstacles, and we don’t want money to be one of those obstacles.”

Byrtus said that now that life is getting back to normal, post-Covid, this is the right time to reinstate the pool fees.

“Before I came here the pool charged \$25 a family for the summer,” he said. “The first summer, we did charge that \$25, then Covid hit and we didn’t charge at all, and we haven’t charged since.”

“I’m proposing that we go back to that model of charging,” he said. “I think we could charge \$20 for the family for the entire summer. A family is four people, I don’t care what the makeup of that is. Each additional kid we would charge \$5 for the entire summer.”

“Our fee waiver system would come into effect as well,” he said. “The idea here is not to put up obstacles for kids, the idea is if a kid has a need, we’re going to take care of it.”

The open swim hours will be 4-8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, and noon to 8 p.m. on Saturdays.



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