

News Argus



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Auditor to investigate city's finances

N.C. treasurer requests state probe following delinquent audits

BY PHILIP SAYBLACK
PSAYBLACK@NEWSARGUS.COM

The city of Goldsboro's finances are coming under increased scrutiny from the state.

The N.C. Department of the Treasurer has enlisted Beth Wood, state auditor, to conduct

an audit of the city's finances.

The decision to bring Wood in to examine the city's books was made by Dale Folwell, state treasurer, who said the purpose of the investigation is to find out why the city's audits have been late for so many years.

The announcement, confirming Wood's involvement in examining the city's finances, came Wednesday, two days after Sharon Edmondson, deputy treasurer and director of the State and Local Government Finance Division of the Department of State Treasurer, and Susan McCullen, director of the Fiscal Man-



Dale Folwell

agement Section of the Local Government Commission, addressed the city's ongoing trend of presenting late audits during the Goldsboro City Council meeting. "It is troubling that the state's 30th largest city, the county seat and home to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, no less, has been unable to get its act together

to conduct a basic but critical oversight function," Folwell said. "Audits are necessary to assess financial well-being, to ensure bills are being paid and money is not missing."

"Hardworking Goldsboro taxpayers deserve to know their elected and appointed officials uphold the highest standards as stewards of public funds. That confidence is

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Face masks required at 15 county schools

Board moves to require masks with increasing COVID-19 exposure

BY BECKY BARCLAY
BBARCLAY@NEWSARGUS.COM

After a vote by the Wayne County Board of Education earlier this week on new masking rules, 15 of Wayne County's 32 schools are requiring students, staff, and visitors to wear masks in the buildings as of Tuesday.

Charles B. Aycock High, Eastern Wayne Elementary, Greenwood Middle, Mount Olive Middle, Northeast Elementary, Northwest Elementary, Spring Creek Middle and Wayne School of Engineering schools are among those schools masking up once again.

Others include Brogden Primary, Carver Elementary, Fremont Elementary, Grantham Elementary, Grantham Middle, Meadow Lane Elementary and Norwayne Elementary.

Wayne County Board of Education members, in a 4-2 vote Monday, made masking for COVID-19 mandatory at each school if the school has an 8% or higher exclusion rate of the school population.

Making the motion, board member Craig Foucht explained that the exclusion rate equals the total

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Ken Derksen, Wayne County Public Schools executive director for community engagement and student and family support, updates the Wayne County Board of Education Monday on the current COVID-19 situation in area schools.

News Argus/BECKY BARCLAY



Remapping case moves to state's high court

BY GARY D. ROBERTSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — The legal fight over North Carolina's redistricting plans shifted quickly to the state Supreme Court the day after trial judges refused to throw out the new maps. By Wednesday, nearly half of the justices had been asked by lawyers to stay out of upcoming deliberations because of alleged conflicts.

Plaintiffs in the case filed appeal notices with the state's highest court almost immediately after Tuesday's ruling by a three-judge panel that allowed the use of congressional and legislative districts approved the Republican-controlled General Assembly for upcoming elections.

The court already signaled last month to expect a fast-moving hearing schedule. State election officials have said they need final maps in place by mid-February to keep the once-postponed primary election now set for May 17 on time. State law would give legislators two weeks to address any unlawful districts.

Lawyers for Republican legislative leaders asked Wednesday that Associate Justice Anita Earls be recused because

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County seeks expanded state grant for new Fremont school

BY KEITH TAYLOR
KTAYLOR@NEWSARGUS.COM

Wayne County will apply to the state lottery commission for expanded grant funding for the new Fremont Elementary School while seeking restoration of forfeited lottery funding.

The Wayne County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Wednesday to pursue the modified grant funding. The Wayne County Board of Education voted Monday in favor submitting the new funding application. Before the commissioners' vote, Wayne County Manager Craig Honeycutt reviewed the process that led to the new funding application.

The county approved an application Jan. 19, 2021, for a Needs Based Public School Capital Fund grant from the North Carolina Education Lottery Commission. The original grant was approved, with a maximum of \$15 million and a local match of \$5 million.

"Part of this grant award included that the county would not receive its lottery funding for a period of five years," Honeycutt said. The grant was awarded in April 2021. The county modified its agreement with Wayne County Public Schools on Sept. 21, 2021, to state that the

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Today's high

56°

Cloudy



FIVE-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY NIGHT: Mostly cloudy. Low, 38.
FRIDAY: Mostly sunny. High, 53. Low, 27.
SATURDAY: Partly sunny. High, 40. Low, 27.
SUNDAY: Snow, then rain. High, 47. Low, 30.
MONDAY: Sunny. High, 46. Low, 27.

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