



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis campaigns Friday morning at Frontier Bank in Rock Rapids. Running for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, he said the party needs to move on from its past failures to defeat President Joe Biden. Photo by Elijah Helton

2024 CAUCUSES

DeSantis first to visit Lyon with campaign heating up

Looking to supplant Trump as GOP head

BY ELIJAH HELTON
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ROCK RAPIDS—The heat inside the Frontier Bank base- ment matched the temperature outside Friday as a full house packed in to see the first 2024 Iowa Caucuses candidate to visit

Lyon County.

Ron DeSantis touted his record as governor of Florida and touched on policy specifics, although the main thrust of his Rock Rapids stump speech was straightforward: The Republican Party needs new leadership to beat President Joe Biden.

"If the election ends up being about what happened in the past, or if it ends up being about

personalities and other things like that, well then Biden is going to be able to sit in his basement again, not have to justify his record, and I think he's going to get away with it, and I think Republicans are going to lose," DeSantis said.

It's a thinly veiled attack on former President Donald Trump,

See **DESANTIS** on A5



Tim Baughman, an anti-pipeline landowner from Denison, speaks against the Summit Carbon Solutions proposal Tuesday morning in Fort Dodge. The city is hosting the Iowa Utilities Board hearing on the carbon dioxide project, a process set to go on for weeks. Photo by Elijah Helton

FORT DODGE—The Iowa Utilities Board opened its hearing on the Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline Tuesday, drawing fire from the proposal's opponents while supporters see security for ethanol producers. Summit, an Ames-based offshoot of industry giant Summit Agricultural Group, wants to be the first company with a CO2 pipeline in Iowa.

The project would cover more than 700 miles and connect 13 ethanol plants in the Hawkeye State to its five-state route ending in North Dakota. Iowa accounts for more than one-third of the overall pipeline footprint.

The IUB will decide whether to grant Summit a permit after the hearing.

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Sheldon High School student Noah Robinson meets with guidance counselor Shelby Bosma to go over his class schedule. Bosma says some students can be overwhelmed returning to academics after a relaxing summer. File photo

Start of school year can be stressful for students

Counselors offer advice on handling challenges

BY ALEISA SCHAT
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REGIONAL—N'West Iowa students grabbed their backpacks and set out for their first day of a new school year this week. Some students pedaled to elementary schools in 90-degree heat

while others hopped into cars with their learner's permits, headed for their first year of high school.

Whatever the combination of nerves and excitement experienced by the students, transitions are inherently stressful. Like any major transition, the back-to-school season has significant implications for students' mental

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The Iowa Department of Transportation specifically engineered Orange City's roundabout to fit large trucks that use Highway 10. Photo by Mikaela Mackey

Area's first roundabout opens in Orange City

DOT designs city circle to accommodate trucks

BY MIKAELA MACKEY
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ORANGE CITY—Orange City is now home to the first roundabout in N'West Iowa.

Although there is some concern among residents about navigating the

new form of roadway, according to city administrator Earl Woudstra, a roundabout may be the safest route to go.

A roundabout is a circular intersection where traffic is permitted to flow in one direction around a central island and priority is given to traffic already in the circular junction. Oncoming vehicles are required to yield to traffic

See **ROUNDBOUT** on A10

SUMMIT HEARING FINALLY STARTS

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WEEKEND WEATHER:	
SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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LOW: 52	LOW: 59
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NEWS

Don't sleep on students' mental health

STRESS

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health, according to Central Lyon Elementary counselor Kate Gerber.

"As adults, I think we can relate — it's a transition time, and with that transition comes a lot of different emotions and feelings," Gerber said.

The transition back to school often looks different for students at different ages and development stages. Younger students may act out or misbehave in response to new stressors. Older students may be more likely to process their experiences verbally or take an active role in managing their back-to-school stress and anxiety.

"The nice part about teenagers is it seems like they adapt to change a little more quickly than I would say the younger grades do," said Sheldon High School counselor Shelby Bosma. "Part of that is they're just getting older and more mature, and a lot of them have had jobs as well throughout the summer — they know how to follow those expectations that we set up.

"But it still takes a few weeks to kind of get back into the swing of things," she added.

Bosma has been counseling high school students for eight years, and she said the early weeks are all about striking the right balance.

"At the high school level, we have to make sure we're meeting all the standards in our curriculum. So, a lot of students kind of feel like it's 'go, go, go' right from the beginning," Bosma said.

It's about finding that middle ground — are we pushing hard enough, or are we pushing too hard? That can be a little bit of a challenge. I know students definitely feel overwhelmed when they start getting homework in all their seven or eight classes a week or two in. They're not used to having those deadlines for a whole bunch of different assignments for the last two months."

'So much unknown'

Abby Vanden Bosch is a school social worker who works with students in grades K-12, splitting her time between Western Christian High School in Hull and Rock Valley Christian School.

"There's just so much unknown starting a new school year," she said. "It's pretty normal to see that general anxiety — there's a new school year, often a new teacher, new students. That adjustment, and that social aspect of being around their peers, can in itself cause so much anxiety for some students."

Students also worry about academic performance, she said, and the pressure to succeed can take a toll on students' emotional well-being.

Vanden Bosch often meets with students one-on-one throughout the school year, and she serves as a liaison between students and their teachers and between the school and parents. Her focus early in the year is on helping students make the adjustment to a new routine and new academic and social expectations.

Vanden Bosch said preschool jitters are normal, and instead of glossing them over or simply encouraging students to "be positive," it's important to normalize the fears and anxieties that can attend a new year at school.

"There's still such a stigma around mental health, but I do believe that there are more conversations being had," she said. "It's pretty normal for students to feel all this worry, and it's important to help normalize that for them — because it's pretty scary — especially for the younger ones who are a little bit newer to school."

Routine and ritual

Early-school-year dread isn't unusual, according to Gerber, and to help, she encourages parents of younger students to consider establishing a good-bye ritual to help alleviate separation anxiety and general worry.

"One really good strategy, if you have primary kids or a new student, is to create a ritual for how you're going to say 'goodbye,'" she said.

Gerber has two young children, and each morning, she and her 5-year-old son say "goodbye" with a special handshake. Her 7-year-old daughter signs "I love you" in American Sign Language to bid her mom adieu.

"And I always say, 'I can't wait to see you when you come back,'" Gerber said. "It's just creating a cool ritual on how you're going to go different directions for the day."

For younger students especially, there is comfort in consistency, she said.

Gerber also encourages parents to be deliberate about making time to connect with their children before and after school, creating space to slow down amid the bustle of early-morning drop-offs and after-school ferrying.

"It's little things, like validating your child's feelings if they're sharing that they're worried, that they're scared, that they're unsure — really taking



School social worker Abby Vanden Bosch chats with students in the HUB, a multipurpose space near the student services offices at Western Christian High School in Hull. Vanden Bosch provides mental-health support for students and is a liaison between parents and the high school. Photo submitted

the time to connect," she said. "We're all very busy, and it sounds simple, but sometimes that's the piece that we miss — making eye contact with your child and saying, 'You know, I understand being worried. This is new, and it's scary, but it doesn't mean that it's bad, and it doesn't mean that we're not going to figure it out together.'"

Getting younger students to school on time, or even a little early, also can help ease before-school nervousness, Gerber said.

"At school we talk a lot about arriving on time and giving your child a little transition time in the morning rush," she said. "Those basic things make a big difference."

Sleep matters

After a summer of staying up late and sleeping in, adjusting to the demands of the school schedule can lead to lethargy, grumpiness and conflict for students and their families. Students may forget things in the mad rush out the door, or they might be late to school.

There are consequences for students' mental health, too, and irregular or inadequate sleep can contribute to depression and anxiety, according to licensed independent social worker Michael Henning.

"Sleep is really important, and sometimes I think we forget how important it is for kids, too — especially getting them back into a sleep schedule that gets them ready for school," he said.

Henning is a therapist with Creative Living Center, a Rock Valley-based mental health provider with multiple locations in the region. Henning conducts school-based therapy in several school districts in N'West Iowa along with seeing clients in his office.

"Sleep definitely plays such an important role in our mental health," Henning said.

Like Henning, Gerber recommends students start adjusting their sleep routines — pushing bedtimes and wake times earlier — at least a week before a new school year. Beginning the transition two weeks before school is even better, she said, and would benefit students of any age.

"Doing that ahead of time within your home is valuable," she said.

Even for students that didn't start adjusting their sleep schedules before school started can start establishing good sleep habits now, Bosma said.

"I've had many, many conversations with students about their sleep schedules," she said.

The harrows of sleep deprivation are especially common among teenagers, who experience a shift in their circadian rhythms that researchers call "sleep phase delay." During adolescence, it is developmentally normal and appropriate to go to bed — and wake up — around two hours later than is normal for adults.

"I've read some studies on that, and teenagers' brains really don't start turning on until, like, 10 in the morning," Bosma said.

Inadequate sleep can cause students' academic performance and overall mental and physical health to suffer, but high school students face a number of pressures that can interfere with a healthy sleep routine, including a busy academic and extracurricular schedule.

"They go to school for eight hours. Then, if they're involved in an activity after school, there's two hours of practice, and they go home and eat, and if they have homework, they've got to get that done," Bosma said.

Adolescence is a crucial period for identity formation. High school students are preoccupied by questions like, "Who am I?" and, "Where do I fit?" Friendships and socializing are an important part of the identity-formation process, but with overcrowded schedules, many high school students have to squeeze in their socializing late at night. Significantly, those interactions are often mediated by a screen.

That is a no-no, according to sleep experts.

"Our students are super busy with extracurriculars and work and homework, and they sacrifice sleep. They say, 'I could go to bed, or I could stay up and talk to my friends.' It kind of builds and builds to where we have kids either falling asleep in class, or they kind of just hit that wall and they're struggling really bad," Bosma said. "In the talks I have with students, they definitely don't understand that at a minimum, they need eight hours of sleep — and it's actually recommended for teenagers that they should get closer to 10 hours."

Screens and sleep

Across grades and ages, screen use is one major interrupter of healthy sleep patterns, and Bosma, Gerber and Vanden Bosch all encourage their students to turn off phones and screens well before bedtime.

"My main one is definitely putting the phone down, or not turning on a video game, and trying to do something with no screen for 30 minutes before they're trying to go to sleep," Bosma said. "There are lots of studies out there that say the blue light from phones and screens makes our brain wake up more, and so then it's harder to go to sleep."

Blue wavelengths of light are beneficial during the daylight hours because they boost attention. As daylight wanes, however, exposure to blue light is disruptive to sleep, suppressing the body's secretion of melatonin, a hormone that influences circadian rhythms.

"Really taking seriously our electronic use and making sure that we're as a family unit even shutting screens down 30 minutes before bedtime, is so important," Gerber said. "That's the bare minimum they recommend before you go to sleep."

Instead of spending time in the blue light of their screens, Gerber encourages parents and students to spend that time connecting with one another.

"You could tell your kids, 'Let's journal before we go to bed, or draw a picture of something we're looking forward to and something that we're a little bit nervous about,'" she said.

Along with limiting screen use before bed, many experts encourage young people and adults to keep their phones out of their bedrooms entirely. If needing an alarm clock is the excuse, they recommend investing in the old-fashioned variety.

Takes a village

While parents can do a lot to support the emotional and social well-being of their school-age children before and after school, Vanden Bosch said, parents also can lean educators, who show up at school day after day, invested in creating a culture in which students can thrive.

"We're asking, 'What can we do to set them up for success?' We're trying to navigate any worries they might have and encourage as much parent communication as we can," she said. "Whatever works at home, we want to be able to do as best we can to provide that for the student at school. We're there to give them consistent support."

LAW

OC MAN CHARGED FOR ASSAULTING HIS SISTER

ORANGE CITY—A 19-year-old Orange City man was arrested about 6:35 p.m. Friday, Aug. 11, on a charge of first-offense domestic abuse assault.

The arrest of **Marsellus Clay Dean** stemmed from him assaulting his sister by grabbing her T-shirt by the back of neck collar and ripping her shirt down her back that day, according to the Orange City Police Department.

A no contact order was issued against Dean with his sister.

SANBORN MAN ARRESTED FOR ASSAULTING HIS SON

SANBORN—A 46-year-old Sanborn man was arrested about noon Saturday, Aug. 12, on an O'Brien County warrant for first-offense domestic abuse assault.

The arrest of **Jesse Taylor Eldridge Sr.** stemmed from him becoming upset with his son the evening of April 2, the date of his son's 18th birthday, at their residence at 501 Sibley, S.L., according to the Sanborn Police Department.

The elder Eldridge started throwing furniture at his son and flipped a table between them.

The son was hit and had a large bruise and his right eye was swollen shut, according to the incident report. A warrant for the elder Eldridge's arrest was issued April 7.

PASSENGER INJURED IN MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT

HAWARDEN—A passenger was injured in a motorcycle crash about 3:25 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 12, near Hawarden.

Fifty-five-year-old **Jamie Leroy Kelsheimer** of Windom, MN, was driving northeast on Cherry Avenue when he approached a curve onto 390th Street about six miles northeast of Hawarden, according to the Iowa State Patrol.

He moved over to avoid sand and gravel on the roadway and lost control of his 2011 Kawasaki Vulcan, laying it on its side where it flipped, landing in the north ditch and ejecting the two riders.

Seventeen-year-old **Maleya Wis-sink** of Rock Valley was transported by the Hawarden Ambulance to Hawarden Regional Healthcare.

Kelsheimer complained of a possible injury but was not transported for health care, according to the incident report.

He was cited for failure to maintain control of his motorcycle, which received an estimated \$2,500 damage.

TWO SIOUX CENTER MEN JAILED FOR METH, MORE

SIOUX CENTER—Two Sioux Center men were arrested about 12:55 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 16, on charges of first-offense possession of a controlled substance — methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia.

The arrest of 34-year-old **Claudio Lopez Martin** and 21-year-old **Bernardo Jesus Lopez Martin** stemmed from the investigation of "a suspicious vehicle in a restricted area" on Fifth Street Southwest in Sioux Center, according to the Sioux Center Police Department.

Claudio Lopez Martin was found in the front passenger seat of a 2006 Pontiac Montana. Signs of drug ingestion were observed, and he told law enforcement there may be a small amount of drugs in the van and gave permission to search the vehicle.

A glass pipe containing residue and a small black bag with a white rock and white crystal powder substance inside were found in the vehicle. The substance field tested positive for amphetamines.

Bernardo Jesus Lopez Martin was a passenger in the van and showed signs of drug use.

Another passenger who is a minor also showed signs of drug use. He said Claudio Lopez Martin supplied him with drugs, and he had smoked in the vehicle, according to the incident report.

Claudio Lopez Martin then was additionally charged with child endangerment — methamphetamine exposure and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

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