



Children play at Telegraph Hill (TelHi) Cooperative Preschool at Helen Wills Playground Park in San Francisco. Photos by Camille Cohen/For the S.F. Chronicle

Making preschool more affordable

City expands subsidy program to help families stay

For many San Francisco families, preschool is cheaper this year. It's also more complicated. Mayor Daniel Lurie's expansion of the Early Learning for All subsidy has made two-thirds of the city's young families eligible for assistance paying for daycare and preschool — while adding a new variable to what can already feel like a high-stakes hunt for parents thinking years ahead about their child's education. Liz Winograd, vice chair for the San Francisco Child Care Planning and Advisory Council, knows how seriously some peo-

JESSICA ROY
PERSONAL FINANCE



Este Applegate, center, listens during story time at Telegraph Hill Cooperative Preschool. The expanded ELFA program has made preschool cheaper, while adding new considerations for families.

ONLINE: Tool shows S.F. preschool tuition, school by school. bit.ly/ChronPreschoolTool

Lurie unveils endorsements for November

By J.D. Morris and Alyce McFadden
STAFF WRITERS

Mayor Daniel Lurie is flexing more of his political muscle in San Francisco's November election by endorsing candidates and measures across the local ballot. Lurie said Friday that in

two competitive races for open seats on the Board of Supervisors he is backing leading moderates Theo Ellington, who is running in District 10 to succeed Supervisor Shamann Walton, and Manny Yekutieli, running in District 8 to replace Supervisor Rafael Mandelman. The outcomes of those races

could help determine whether the board retains a moderate majority friendly to Lurie's agenda. Lurie's endorsement of Yekutieli is particularly noteworthy given that Yekutieli has faced a high-profile sexual assault allegation. But that accusation has not stopped Yekutieli from secur-

ing other major endorsements, including from the local Democratic Party, and the mayor said Yekutieli had assured him the allegation was not true. Lurie and Yekutieli cofounded the nonprofit Civic Joy Fund, which uses private donations to host street parties, trash

Endorse continues on A10

S.F. Opera cancels performances as musicians strike

By Tony Bravo, Aidin Vaziri and Mariecar Mendoza
STAFF WRITERS

San Francisco Opera canceled its opening-night performance of Verdi's "Simon Boccanegra" as orchestra musicians gathered to protest outside of the War Memorial Opera House, abruptly halting the start of the company's 104th season and sending dressed-up patrons streaming out of the venue. The musicians of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra announced the strike less than an hour before the 8 p.m. curtain on Saturday, saying they would not perform without a new contract. Their previous agreement expired July 31. "It is with heavy hearts that we announce that the musicians of the San Francisco Opera Or-



Musicians and their supporters picket outside the War Memorial Opera House on Saturday night as members of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra strike for a new contract with higher wages.

chestra are on strike and we will not be performing at tonight's Opening Night," the musicians said in a statement released at

7:30 p.m. "A strike is not something we take lightly, and we are deeply sorry to everyone who planned to spend this evening at the opera." Opera General Director Matthew Shillock appeared onstage before the audience Saturday night to announce the cancellation, prompting audible gasps inside the auditorium. "As far as we know at the moment, the orchestra is on strike throughout," Shillock told the crowd, adding that Opera in the Park on Sunday would also be "very sadly canceled." The Chronicle is a sponsor of the annual free outdoor concert at Golden Gate Park. Shillock told patrons the company would be in touch about options to donate the value of their seats, hold the credit

Opera continues on A10

Sheriff oversight chief may be ousted

City probe finds misconduct by president of S.F. board

By Michael Barba
STAFF WRITER

A San Francisco official accused by several women of violence and sexual abuse committed "official misconduct" when he repeatedly misused his position and title for private gain, according to a city investigation released Friday that could lead to his ouster. The investigation, launched by Inspector General Alex Shepard in response to reporting by the Chronicle, found that William Palmer, the outgoing president of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department Oversight Board, violated city ethics laws 14 times in connection with two incidents since December, including by using his position for personal benefit. Palmer has served on the oversight panel since the Board of Supervisors appointed him in 2021. A former inmate who spent most of his life in prison for a crime he committed as a teenager, he positioned himself as a voice for formerly incarcerated people on the board, which seeks to monitor jail conditions and hold sheriff's deputies accountable. The alleged violations stem from two events investigated by the Chronicle, and

Oversight continues on A9

S.F. Chinese chamber sued by ex-staffer

By Ko Lyn Cheang
STAFF WRITER

A former employee at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce filed a lawsuit Wednesday against the nonprofit and nine of its leaders, alleging she was wrongfully terminated in July in retaliation for reporting that she had endured years of sexual harassment and assault at the hands of the group's leaders. Judy Lee, who was hired as the chamber's program director in April 2025, seeks at least \$1 million in damages for the alleged hostile work environment and sexual harassment she said she faced while in that role and as a volunteer for years before she was formally hired. The chamber is a powerful advocate for the neighborhood's businesses and organizes the beloved annual Chinese New Year Parade, but the lawsuit describes an organization marred by a culture of pervasive sexual harassment and political infighting. It alleges the nonprofit was run by older men whose recurring, unwanted romantic and sexual advances toward Lee and other young women were well known by its leaders, who did not take action to stop them.

Chamber continues on A7