

Vaccination rates vary by school

By Cris Villalonga-Vivoni and Natasha Sokoloff

STAFF WRITERS

As Connecticut families prepare for the back-to-school season, many are making sure their children are up to date on the vaccines required for in-person attendance. While many school districts across the country have seen a decrease in vaccination rates, Connecticut rates as a whole

have seen a rise in recent years. However, a closer look at immunization and exemption data shows a more complicated picture. Every school in the state of Connecticut, whether public or private, is subject to the same vaccination requirements – but the state data shows variations in immunization rates between districts, schools and grade levels. Vaccination rates don't just

differ between kindergartners and seventh graders — two grades which require specific vaccines to be update by. The rates can also look dramatically different from one school to another. In fact, while many Connecticut schools report 100% or just under that threshold, others show exemption levels reaching as high as 28%, according to statewide data. CT Insider examined state- Rates continues on A5



A health worker prepares a dose of the measles vaccine. Ronaldo Schmidt/AFP via Getty Images

HAMDEN HEADS BACK TO SCHOOL



Hamden students, including those at Hamden Middle School, above, returned to classrooms for the first day of school Monday. Enrollment for the new academic year is 5,321 students, according to Superintendent Gary Highsmith. The Board of Education chose to begin the school year before Labor Day so students could enjoy an earlier summer break the following June. See more photos, A5.



JIM MICHAUD/HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA

Ex-GOP official fined over absentee ballots

By Ken Dixon

STAFF WRITER

The State Elections Enforcement Commission has fined a former chairman of the East Haven Republican Town Committee \$3,500 for the illegal possession of nine absentee ballots he admitted delivering to local election officials during a local 2019 GOP primary. Carl J. Ruggiero Sr. signed a consent agreement and paid the fine to the SEEC for the nearly 6-year-old case that was closed this week by the commission during its regular meeting. "I made a mistake," the 89-year-old former local Republican leader said in a phone interview on Friday. "Somebody asked me if I would bring some ballots over, and stupid me, I did." Then-Town Clerk Stacy Gravino referred the matter to the SEEC. Ruggiero recalled that at the time that the clerk's office Fined continues on A8

Cheshire's Country Plaza sells for \$2.7M

By Christian Metzger

STAFF WRITER

CHESHIRE — Country Plaza, a two-story property located at 1111 South Main St. in Cheshire, has been sold for \$2.7 million. The commercial building houses retail including Toro Sushi, La Cucina, Aloha Swimming Pools & Spas, Kimmie's Nail Spa, and others, while office space is on the upper floors. The 26,000 square foot building sits on two acres and has acted as a retail center since its construction 40 years ago in 1985. The building has remained under the ownership of Richard N. Johnson and his family, under Country Plaza LLC, since its construction. The structure was advertised for its Plaza continues on A8

After a magical summer, home, sweet home, next for Fairfield National

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. — Participating in the Little League World Series is, of course, the opportunity and experience of a lifetime. It does, however, come with certain inconveniences. For example ... "We can't play video games here," said Logan Gryga, who started in left field Sunday as the Fair-



Mike Anthony COMMENTARY

field National baseball team closed out a magically wild summer with a 4-2 victory over Aruba in the third-place game at Lamade Stadium. The game ended right around noon and Team Metro, the name Fairfield National assumed as one of 10 regional champions, disbanded rather quickly thereafter. Every player had parents on site, and one family at a time checked out of Williamsport so the kids could start plugging back into real life after a four- Magical continues on A8



Christian Abraham/Hearst Connecticut Media Families and friends cheer for Fairfield National Sunday after winning the third-place game against Aruba at the Little League World Series baseball complex in South Williamsport, Pa.

Advice/puzzles.....B9	Comics.....B10	Public notices.....B6
Business.....A4	Obituaries.....A6	Sports.....B1-5
Classified.....B6	Opinion.....A9	Television.....B8



8 71534 00102 9

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Weather: Pleasant and less humid; sunny. High: 80. Low: 62. Page A10



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