New Haven Register

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East Haven High expands support for freshmen

Over a quarter of ninth graders failed a class last year

By Jessica Simms
STAFF WRITER

EAST HAVEN — Over a quarter of East Haven High School freshmen failed at least one class last year, prompting the district to find ways to ease students' transition to the high school level, school officials said.

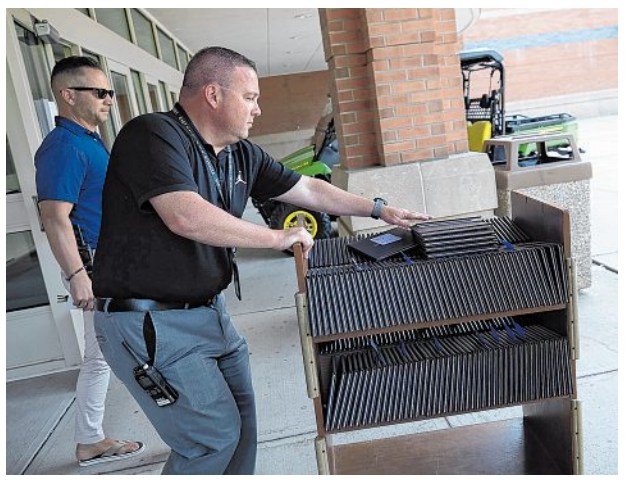
Last school year, 28% of the freshman class was in "critical status," meaning they had failed at least one class, East Haven High School Principal Vincent DeNuzzo told the Board of Education. In comparison, 16% of the senior class was in this category and 19% of the juniors.

"We did notice that once students get past 10th grade, they begin to stabilize and those critical status rates decrease steadily. ... We wanted to capitalize on the positive growth that we are seeing from grades 10 through 12 and then address the needs as they arrive as ninth graders," DeNuzzo said during Tuesday's school board meeting.

In a survey over the summer of the current 10th graders, students say they struggled with transitioning to the length of high school classes, the larger environment, how they are expected to do manage their coursework independently and more, DeNuzzo said.

"There's more emphasis on independent work from students," he said. "There is more emphasis on student expectation for their accountability, for

Freshmen continues on A4



Dave Zajac/Hearst Connecticut Media

East Haven High School Principal Vincent A. DeNuzzo wheels out the diplomas for the class of 2025 next to Assistant Principal Anthony Russell on June 12, 2025. DeNuzzo said school officials are working to improve the freshman class's transition to high school.



Hearst Connecticut Media file photo

The Hartford Co-op of Weaver/Hartford Public/Classical won a first-round game in the CIAC Class L playoffs in 2025. Weaver's Leo Ramirez (21) is seen here celebrating a touchdown with teammate JJ Perry (17) during CIAC Class L high school football quarterfinal game action against ATI in Hartford on Dec. 3, 2025.

Hartford embraces football co-ops

For now, it's unique. Could other cities follow?

By Dave Stewart
STAFF WRITER

Change isn't always easy.

So when talk of the Weaver and Hartford Public high school football teams forming a co-op started a few years ago, the alumni of the longtime rivals weren't exactly on board.

In so many words: Heaven forbid.

But for the athletes? They just want to play.

"That part of it was more with the alumni than it is with the kids. The kids were a lot more open to it," said Heidi Schmidt, Hartford Public Schools Athletic Director. "They want to be able to play and they want to be able to participate, and they like the success that came with it. You want to be able to give them an opportunity to play and give them the best experience possible."

Hartford is home to four co-ops among its schools: Weaver and Hartford Public were joined by Classical in one; with another three combining SMSA, Bulkeley, HMTCA, and University; Capital Prep and Achievement; and CREC, Aerospace, International and Innovation.

Across Connecticut, co-ops have become a fact of high school football life. Nine have been added in the past two years, giving the CIAC 26 co-ops, doubling the total of 13 in play in 2013.

Among the state's cities, Hartford is unique in its adoption of co-ops, with overall participation numbers having increased, according to Schmidt. The co-op of Weaver, Public and Classical went 9-3 in 2025 and advanced to the CIAC Class L

Co-ops continues on A7

Ansonia picks locations for speed cameras

By Brian Zahn
STAFF WRITER

ANSONIA — The city's Board of Aldermen unanimously voted to add automated speed cameras to Pershing Drive and Ford Street Tuesday, forwarding a 42-page plan to the state for a final approval.

"This is not a magic wand" to stop all speeding across the city, Police Chief Wayne Williams said. "This is one tool."

Williams said Ansonia police would continue to enforce traffic laws on city streets, but automated cameras would provide an opportunity to enforce laws without a permanent officer presence. Alderman Tyler Kennedy asked Williams for specific confirmation that the cameras are not Flock cameras. Williams said Flock, which offers automated license plate reader technology, serves a different function from the automated speed cameras from vendor DacraTech that Ansonia intends to install. Whereas Flock collects and maintains a searchable database for its client municipalities and businesses, Williams said the speed cameras only collect license plate information of vehicles traveling 10 miles per hour or more above the posted speed limit, which is then forwarded to city officials to review for the potential issu-

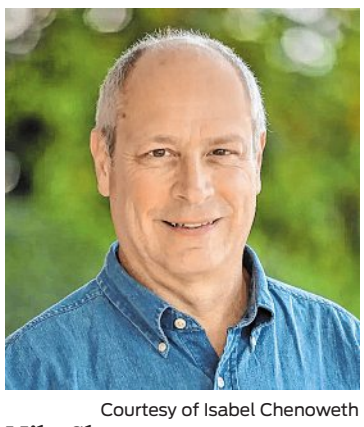
Ansonia continues on A7

Celebration of life planned for SCSU English professor who died after New Haven hit-and-run

By Kaitlin Keane
STAFF WRITER

NEW HAVEN — A celebration of life has been planned for Sunday to commemorate the life, advocacy and teaching of Michael Shea, a longtime English professor at Southern Connecticut State University who died Oct. 24 after being seriously injured in a hit-and-run pedestrian crash.

Shea's current and former students, colleagues, family and the wider SCSU and New Haven community are invited to share memories of Shea at the celebration, to be held at the Lyman Center for the Performing Arts, 501 Crescent St. in New Haven, from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, according to the university's website.



Courtesy of Isabel Chenoweth

Mike Shea

The event will be livestreamed to the SCSU calendar page on Sunday.

"The event is open to all who knew and cared for him," the university website said. "RSVPs are encouraged for space planning purposes, but not required. Attendees are asked to bring a favorite (written) memory of Mike, plus silly jokes, to share."

Shea died Oct. 24 after being injured in an Oct. 9 hit-and-run crash involving an e-bike rider, a school spokesperson confirmed. For the past 41 years, Shea, 74, taught Shakespeare, film and critical thinking at SCSU, according to his obituary.

At the time of his death, Shea was teaching four classes for

Shea continues on A4

Congress shifts toward Gen X



Philip Bump
COMMENTARY

During the 19 years from 1946 to 1964, one baby was born in the U.S. for every two people who'd been alive at the end of World War II. It was a baby boom comprised of baby boomers, a term that would only come into vogue decades later as a way to describe this demographically distinct surge in new Americans.

Over time, every institution in the country was swamped by baby boomers like the front edge of a tsunami. Simply through sheer scale, the baby boom became the dominant force in culture, business and

Bump continues on A4

Advice/puzzles....B11
Business....A6
Classified....B7-8
Comics....B12
Obituaries....A8
Opinion....A11
Public notices....B7-8
Sports....B1-6, 10
Television....B10

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Weather: Cloudy, breezy with rain becoming intermittent. High: 45. Low: 34. **Page A12**