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The Augusta Chronicle

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ANALYSIS

UNPLUGGED



Schools rethink technology use in the classroom, examine student screen time

Janice Mak
Arizona State University | THE CONVERSATION

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced in-person classroom instruction to go virtual, students suddenly needed to have their own laptops or tablets in order to interact with teachers and complete assignments.

Most states used federal pandemic funding to address the digital divide. This refers to the gap between students and families who had their own tablets, computers and high-speed internet, and those who did not.

While most schools resumed in-person classes by 2021, many of them continued to rely heavily on online platforms and apps to help

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 3A



Experts say students need to learn more than how to use a laptop or an artificial intelligence chatbot; they should also understand how data is collected and used, how AI and other computing systems work and how technology affects people and society. PHOTO AND ART BY GETTY IMAGES

FPL Food cuts jobs during renovation of plant

Joe Hotchkiss
Augusta Chronicle
USA TODAY NETWORK

An Augusta beef processor is cutting part of its workforce in a renovation that’s expected to scale back full production for more than a year.

FPL Food, which operates a plant on New Savannah Road, is eliminating 183 jobs while the facility modernizes, the company recently announced.

FPL said its premium programs will continue. The company markets cuts of Black Angus and Wagyu beef under the Châtel Farms label.

“Augusta has been home to FPL Food for 22 years, and our success here would not have been possible

See **FPL FOOD**, Page 2A

Latest GA business surge helps rural counties

Ty Tagami
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — The economic boom continued in Georgia last year, with a second record-topping year of business investment and job growth.

Gov. Brian Kemp and the state Department of Economic Development announced \$35.2 billion in project investments for the fiscal year that ended June 30. That is up from \$26.3 billion the prior fiscal year, which had also broken records.

The figures are for companies newly locating in Georgia and for expansions by existing companies. Expansions accounted for 79% of projects and for 15,370 of the estimated 25,300 new private-sector jobs, the joint statement issued on Thursday said.

Sometimes familiarity breeds contempt, but that adage does not seem to apply to Georgia and business.

See **BUSINESS**, Page 2A

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