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Sioux City Journal

Founded in 1864

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

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IOWA SENATE DISTRICT 1

Drey flips Republican seat

Sioux City Dem breaks GOP supermajority in Iowa Senate

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SIOUX CITY — First-time Democratic Party candidate Catelin Drey, a 37-year-old Sioux City mom and strategic com-

munications professional, is poised to win the Iowa Senate District 1 which would flip a Republican seat and break the GOP supermajority in the Iowa Senate.

Drey defeated Republican Christopher Prosch by winning seven of the 13 precincts for the district, according to unofficial results on the



Drey

Woodbury County Auditor's website. She had leads in the following precincts: Riverside Elementary, Loess Hills Elementary, Hunt Elementary, Liberty Elementary, Unity Elementary, Bryant Elementary and Irving Elementary. She led in absentee balloting as well. "I am incredibly grateful to the

voters in Senate District 1 for this opportunity to serve them," Drey told The Journal. "I'm so proud of the work that Team Drey did to get us to this point and I am ready to start doing the work in January."

If there are any gubernatorial nominee votes in 2026, the process could change as

Please see **DREY**, Page A3

'RUN GOVERNMENT LIKE A BUSINESS'



TIM HYNDY, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds smiles while being acknowledged with an ovation in recognition of her years as governor. At center is Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen and at right is South Dakota Governor Larry Rhoden. The moment came during the 19th Tri-State Governors' Conference held Tuesday at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites in Dakota Dunes, South Dakota.

Tri-state governors talk flooding, wastewater, 185th at conference

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NORTH SIOUX CITY — The 185th Air Refueling Wing, flood mitigation and the rebuild of Sioux City's beleaguered wastewater treatment were among the issues discussed Tuesday during the 19th Tri-State Governors' Conference in Dakota Dunes.

Govs. Kim Reynolds of Iowa, Jim Pillen of Nebraska and Larry Rhoden of South Dakota attended the event, which was hosted by the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce and held at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Event Center. The purpose of the conference is to foster state and local partnerships among the three states, to work toward a common goal of economic prosperity and to maximize the quality of life for Siouxland residents.

Pillen said he doesn't believe the state should provide all of the funding to improve wastewater infrastructure that is being overloaded by large companies. He said industries that are growing and making a lot of money in communities should be "a part of solving that problem."

In 2023, the Sioux City Council, despite objections from the business community, approved a residential, commercial and industrial sewer rate hike to help fund a phased-rebuild of the regional plant at 3100 S. Lewis Blvd. The project is expected to cost between \$400 and \$500 million. Local leaders are asking the governors to "aggressively pursue federal funding" for the project.

"Why are we not going and talking with the company to say, 'Do you understand what your business has done to our infrastructure?' Am I in left field?" Pillen asked. "Run government like a business. Everybody else should pay their fair share."

The wastewater treatment plant improvements project has already been awarded a \$500,000 grant from the State of Iowa. Reynolds said she is "happy to continue to be a resource" for the project.

"Wastewater infrastructure — we're continuing to work on that, any way that we can be helpful with a local decision," she said.

Replacing the 185th Air Refueling Wing's main runway at Sioux Gateway Airport is a top priority of the city of Sioux City, the Siouxland Initiative and Siouxland Chamber of Commerce. Upgrading the 9,000-foot runway to support the Iowa Air National Guard unit's heavy refueling tankers is expected to cost \$91.8 million.

Reynolds said she is in "constant communication" about the 185th with Maj. Gen. Steve Osborn, U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra, U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst and the "entire delegation."

"It is a priority for each and every one of us, and so I will continue to look at what that timeline looks like for the funding. We understand the economic impact that that has on our state and on the tri-state area," she said.

Please see **GOVERNORS**, Page A3

Dawson enters Fourth District race

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CHEROKEE, Iowa — The race for Iowa's Fourth Congressional District is expanding once again.

On Wednesday morning, former Democratic State Rep. Dave Dawson of Lawton announced he is running for the seat currently held by Republican Rep. Randy Feenstra who is eyeing the governorship. His official kickoff was scheduled for noon Wednesday at the Cherokee Public Library.

Dawson, who was born in Cherokee and grew up in Washta, Iowa, is now the seventh person to enter the race in Iowa's reddest district. On the Republican side, Iowa Tea Party founder Ryan Rhodes, Siouxland Chamber President Chris McGowan, House Majority Leader Matt Windschitl and Humboldt farmer Kyle Larsen have all thrown their hats in. On the Democratic side are Storm Lake stay-at-home mom and former education assistant Ashley WolfTornabane and Sutherland nurse Stephanie Steiner. The district, which takes in 36 counties in western and north central Iowa,

Please see **DAWSON**, Page A3

District to send families to collections for lunch bills

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SIOUX CITY — The Sioux City Schools plans to utilize a collections agency for families who have more than \$300 in unpaid lunch fees and are not making an effort to pay off the balances.

The Sioux City school board voted 5-2 on Monday to approve the utilization of NCS Collection Agency for "any lunch or fee balance exceeding \$300, provided all prior outreach and assistance efforts have been exhausted." Board members Dan Greenwell, Bob Michaelson, Jan George, Lance Ehmcke and John Meyers voted for, Treyla Lee and Earl Miller voted against.

At a future school board meeting, the district will bring forward an agreement with NCS Collection Agency for board approval.

Currently, the district has \$79,628.38 in unpaid lunch balances. Of that, 53 students had accounts that exceeded \$300 in unpaid balances at the end of last year.

Associate Superintendent Angela Bemus said the district previously averaged \$20,000 to \$30,000 in unpaid balances a year, but following COVID-19, they have averaged \$80,000 to \$90,000 in unpaid lunch a semester.

Bemus believes the lack of pay is a result of students receiving free lunch during the COVID-19 pandemic.

District policy states an elementary account can go as far negative as \$16.65, a middle school account can go as far negative as \$18.15, and a high school account can go as far negative as \$18.60.

Please see **LUNCH**, Page A3