



Wolfe steps down from Reitz girls soccer coach

SPORTS, 1B

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Scanner doubts raised



Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation Board of School Trustees hold a meeting at the EVSC Administration Building at 951 Walnut Street in Evansville, Feb. 9. MACABE BROWN/COURIER & PRESS

Bill signed to reform animal welfare

Thomas B. Langhorne
Evansville Courier & Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

EVANSVILLE — For Vanderburgh County Prosecutor Diana Moers, the governor's signature on a package of statewide animal welfare reforms inspired by local events marks the end of a long road.

House Bill 1165, authored by State Rep. Wendy McNamara, and advocated for by Moers, has now been signed by Gov. Mike Braun.

It means, among other things, that starting July 1, prosecutors across Indiana will be able to file felony charges in allegedly horrific animal abandonment and neglect cases. That wasn't possible before unless the alleged offender had a previous conviction for the same offense.

It means the penalty for killing a law enforcement animal will be raised from a Level 6 felony to a Level 5 felony. It's a big difference: A Level 6 felony carries from 6 to 30 months in prison. The penalty for a Level 5 is one to six years.

The bill also makes the theft of a domestic animal a Level 6 felony. It removes liability for citizens who forcibly enter a vehicle to rescue a domestic animal from a hot car, provided specific conditions are met.

Moers said she is "ecstatic" that the bill stemming from her and McNamara's work has crossed the finish line. It's not the end of the line, though, she said.

"I think we'll continue to assess the severity of animal abuse and neglect cases that we're seeing," she said Friday. "This addresses the increase in the prolific animal hoarding cases that we've been seeing in Vanderburgh County.

"But my goals are never really met until we stop all crime, but this is a huge step forward to recognizing the depravity of people who commit these types of actions against animals."

Moers has said many cases of animal abuse and hoarding are uncovered when authorities are investigating child abuse and neglect.

"Many children are also victims of

Weapons detection isn't guaranteed, EVSC school safety auditor says

Thomas B. Langhorne
Evansville Courier & Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

EVANSVILLE — Weapons detection technology isn't guaranteed to work and can cause false alarms for items that aren't weapons. Those are just two of the concerns EVSC's new school safety consultant raised recently before the school board.

The remarks by Kenneth Trump, president of National School Safety and Security Services, at last week's school board meeting suggest the technology won't be his company's recommendation when it turns in its report this summer after completing a top-to-bottom assessment of security measures in schools.

EVSC has thus far resisted the calls of some parents that it follow the lead of Warrick County School Corp. WCSC decided on Oct. 13, after a run of threat incidents, to spend \$300,000 on weapons

detection technology at its three high schools and Warrick Pathways and Career Center.

But after Trump's presentation last week, EVSC school board president Mike Duckworth said the corporation is wise not to "do a kneejerk reaction to a neighboring corporation's and others within the state that put metal detectors in."

"Our approach is a little more methodical," Duckworth said, noting that EVSC would rely instead on what it and Trump's firm learns from teachers and school administrators.

Trump pointed out that people still get weapons past Transportation Security Administration, and TSA agents "do a stellar job at what they do and are highly trained, more than you would ever be able to train school staff to do weapons detection."

"So you may have weapons detection that has six different settings," Trump said. "You have to decide what you're

"Before they even finish an audit, they kind of seem like they're against metal detectors or weapons detection. What do they really think that they're going to come up with?"

Crystal Barnard
Thompkins Middle School parent

going to do. Do you want to hit the most sensitive setting, where you're going to pick up the small knives and other things and you're going to have hundreds or thousands of kids standing outside for hours to get in?"

Trump pointed to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina, where administrators recently asked students not to bring metal 3-ring binders and metal frame backpacks into school because those items

See DOUBT, Page 2A

Ivy Tech's president left KY schools with big budget hole

Alexandria Burris
Indianapolis Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

When Indiana's community college system announced Marty Pollio as its president last spring, its board of trustees touted his experience as superintendent of one of the largest urban school districts in America.

"Marty Pollio is a results-driven, dynamic leader with immense heart and passion for students," said then-Ivy Tech Board of Trustees Chairman Andrew Wilson.

Now, Pollio's past success and management abilities are coming under question as his former employer grapples with a surprise \$188 million budget deficit that came to light just weeks after he left.

A newly released audit commissioned by Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, where Pollio was superintendent for eight years, found that a culture of excessive spending, poor money management practices, and the consolidation of power over financial matters by Pollio contributed to the massive budget hole.

"Management had not been honest about the financial positioning of the district," Jefferson County Board of Education Chair Corrie Shull told IndyStar in a recent interview. When asked how he defined management, Shull pointedly said, "the superintendent," referring to Pollio.

Now, students, teachers and administrators in the Kentucky school district are paying the price. To cut costs, the district has proposed staff layoffs as well as steep programming and contract cuts.

A spokesperson for Ivy Tech declined

to make Pollio available for an interview, saying via email that he is no longer doing interviews about his time at Jefferson County Public Schools since he's not with the school corporation.

In previous interviews with other news outlets, Pollio has denied misleading the school board about the district's financial position.

"In every presentation that we provide to the board, whether its budget, academics, anything, we sit down and review it," Pollio told the Louisville

See PRESIDENT, Page 3A

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