

# PHAROS-TRIBUNE

PharosTribune.com

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2026

\$3.00

## SHOPPING FOR SUCCESS



Josh Flynn | For the Pharos-Tribune

Lewis Cass teacher Jessica Cozzello helps students Cameron Williford and Dylan Gordon navigate a mock grocery store. The activity was brought to Lewis Cass by Purdue Extension and teaches students about meal budgets and making healthy food choices.

### Lewis Cass students learn from mock grocery store experience

**JOSH FLYNN**  
FOR THE PHAROS-TRIBUNE

Lewis Cass High School students in the special education program had a fun opportunity to learn some new life skills Friday morning thanks to a mock grocery store experience developed by Purdue Extension.

The program, in its fifth year, visits schools and lets students role-play as customers at a grocery store where they learn about the five food groups, shopping within a budget and working together.

Students were paired up as roommates and given a budget of

100 dollars to purchase a week's worth of food.

Some students went a bit further, developing fun backstories where they worked at Walmart or lived in a mansion.

"It's a really great hands-on learning experience," said teacher Jessica Cozzello "We are really working with the students on finances and budgeting this year, trying to teach them how to shop and work with finances. I heard about the program so I contacted them and tried to get them to visit because our students learn better hands on. I wanted them to see it all in front of them and grow in

their academics with math, budgeting."

Students were able to shop from a large inventory of prop items that ranged from milk, eggs, meats and snack foods. Each item was individually priced and students monitored their spending as they selected items. Once finished shopping, they would "check out" with the Purdue Extension staff who talked with the students about their food choices.

"The basis of this program is to have the students work through a variety of scenarios to think about healthy and cost-effective shopping and to just get some practice

grocery shopping," said Purdue Extension educator Kailey Dockerty.

She said each group of students would cycle through the activity and get to make their own independent choices within a budget and individual criteria.

Purdue Extension educator JP Pietrowski said that he often sees students learn the difference between wants and needs when choosing food.

"When we talk about nutrition, they are learning about the five food groups and what fits within

See **GROCERY** on A8

## TB cases have been on the rise nationwide

Experts await 2025 tuberculosis numbers

**NADA HASSANEIN**  
STATELINE

In Johnson County, Iowa, the number of tuberculosis cases has increased in recent years — and so has the cost of containing it.

The cost of contact tracing and surveillance, traveling each day to patients' homes to ensure they take their meds or booking hotel rooms to quarantine patients, has surged from \$17,000 in 2020 to \$65,000 last year.

That doesn't include \$13,000 spent last year for language translation, as many of the cases were among the local immigrant communities, said Danielle Pettit-Majewski, director of the Johnson County public health department. She said the rise in spending is directly tied to the increase in diagnoses since 2020, with latent infections tripling, from 27 that year to 90 last year.

Last week, the state informed the county that the greater number of cases had made it too costly to help pay for the home visits, forcing the county to pay for them on its own.

"I was kind of dumbfounded," Pettit-Majewski said. "It was surprising."

Tuberculosis cases have been rising nationwide since 2021, and in 2024 — the most recent year for which data is available — they reached the highest level since 2011. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia reported increases in TB case counts and rates from 2023 to 2024, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In 2024, there were 10,347 reported cases nationwide, up 8% from the 9,622 cases reported the year before.

In Cass County, Indiana, Health Administrator Serenity Alter told the Pharos-Tribune in September that cases had risen locally on the same level as it has nationally. She said the local rise in cases at the time was partly due to close quarters of

See **CASES** on A8

## Youth social media crackdown advances to governor's desk

### Bipartisan legislation unclear on Snapchat

**CASEY SMITH**  
INDIANA CAPITAL CHRONICLE

A push to rein in youth social media — renewed in part by recent high-profile online exploitation cases — culminated on the last day of Indiana's legislative session after the lawmakers in both chambers agreed on final language and sent the bill to Gov. Mike Braun.

A final bipartisan Friday vote in the Senate capped a monthslong scramble that spanned multiple bills, and social media language once

declared dead was ultimately revived and folded into a broader education bill.

The final draft of House Bill 1408, authored by Rep. Jake Teshka, R-North Liberty, clears the way for parental-consent requirements, age-verification mandates and algorithm limits for certain social media platforms used by Hoosiers under 16.

The social media provisions did not originate in that bill, however. Language was first introduced this session in Senate Bill 199, penned by Sen. Jeff Raatz, R-Richmond, but was later stripped out by the Senate.

After more back and forth, the restrictions finally landed in House Bill 1408 as part of a negotiated end-

of-session compromise.

"This is an epidemic across our nation," Raatz said during the final Senate debate Friday. "Everybody in this room, I don't think, can deny that that's exactly what is going on. The question is, what can we do? This is one of the things that we absolutely can do."

This was lawmakers' second consecutive attempt to regulate youth access to social media after a broader proposal failed to pass in 2025. This session, the General Assembly took a narrower approach focused on parental consent, age estimation and social media platform design

See **BILL** on A8



Casey Smith | Indiana Capital Chronicle

Sens. Jeff Raatz, R-Richmond, left, and Mike Bohacek, R-Michiana Shores, right, debate a bill with new social media restrictions for certain Hoosier youth on Friday, Feb. 27, 2026, in the Indiana Senate.

### INSIDE

CLASSIFIED .....B3-B4 OBITUARIES..... A2  
COMICS.....A6 OPINION .....A4  
LOCAL .....A3 SPORTS..... B1-B2

### FIRST AMENDMENT

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

### WEATHER

Sunny.  
**High 58, Low 36.**  
Complete forecast on Page A10.



Vol. 182, No. 43

Subscribe: 574-722-5000 or 800-676-4125 Advertise: 800-676-4125 or 574-722-5000 Classified: 800-382-0696 Office hours: Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



## LET ME ASSIST YOU...

**Janice Sparks**  
Licensed Agent  
200 Eel River Ave. Banker's Row  
574-722-7442 Office  
574-721-3280 Mobile  
janicesparks.com  
retireflo.com/janice  
janice@janicesparks.com



## Let Me Make You A Winner

Call To Put Me On Your Team!

- Supplements
- Advantage Plans
- Part D Drug Plans
- Dental & Vision Plans
- Life Insurance
- Retirement

We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.

