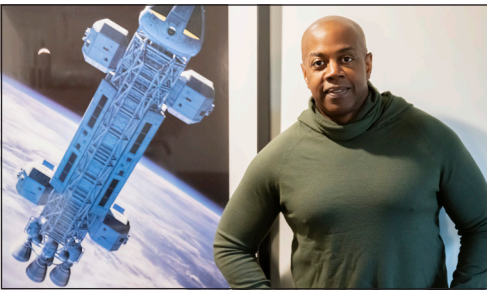


Sunday Life: Stillwater filmmaker explores space transportation, both real and fictional, in 'The Eagle Obsession.' **E1**



Business: For a Twin Cities mom, finding good sex ed turned into 'Talk Toolbox.' **A18**

Sports: Gophers defensive coordinator Danny Collins has been dreaming of this job. **C1**



SUNDAY PIONEER PRESS

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★ **Education**

PHONES DOWN, PENCILS UP



JOHN AUTHEY — PIONEER PRESS

A student checks their cellphone after classes end for the day at Oak-Land Middle School in Lake Elmo on Wednesday. The Stillwater school district, which includes Oak-Land and began classes this week, decided in March to adopt a phone-free school day policy starting this academic year.

As students return this fall, district-wide policies will determine device use in Ramsey, Washington and Dakota county schools

By Imani Cruzen and Mars King
Pioneer Press

School districts across the state have adopted policies on student cellphone use after the Legislature mandated them last year. With school about to begin for many districts — and already in session in some — districts are letting parents and students know what to expect regarding cellphones. The Pioneer Press reached out to 10 of the largest public schools in Ramsey, Washington and Dakota counties — as well as Hill-Murray School, a private school in Maplewood — to get information on their policies and how to find out more.

RAMSEY COUNTY

Mounds View Public Schools

The Mounds View Public Schools board passed its cellphone policy in March following feedback from a cellphone advisory group, as well

as surveys and community conversations. Students in elementary schools cannot use cellphones at any time during school hours. Middle and high schoolers can use their cellphones during school hours that don't include scheduled class time or other school-related activities, meaning phones can be out during passing times, recess or lunch. Because of the range of student ages, discipline is based on individual situations. To see more about the policy, go to mvpschools.org/about/news/cell-phones.

North St. Paul-Maplewood Oakdale School District

At the high school level, cellphones are not allowed in any learning spaces, such as classrooms, flexible learning spaces or the school gymnasium. **DISTRICT POLICIES » PAGE 8**

So far, so good for schools already limiting phone use

Schools that started their policies last year noticed improved safety, grades and attendance

By Imani Cruzen
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Many students returning to Minnesota classrooms this year will find new restrictions in place on cellphone use. A number of schools implemented policies on cellphones last year, but this year is the first that districts are mandated to have one. District-wide policies provide consistency for schools and staff, said Jamil Payton, principal of Johnson Senior High School in St. Paul. "One of the things that came up when we started around this time last year ... was some teachers were like, 'I'm down to do this, but everybody's got to do it,'" Payton said. "I don't want to be the teacher that's going hard on this policy — or

not just policy, I mean these expectations — but then when a student goes to the next class, the teacher lets them have their phones out, and then when they come back to me, they're like, 'Well, so-and-so let me have my phone out.'" At St. Paul Public Schools, the use of personal electronic devices is not permitted during school hours, but high schools can develop their own plans. At Johnson Senior High School, students will need to place their phones in phone pouches near the teacher's desk and can use their phones only during passing time and lunch. Parents need to sign off on the policy as part of back-to-school forms and signs will be up in school buildings spelling out the new rules. **CHANGES » PAGE 8**

IMMIGRATION

Lawyers: Feds aim to 'coerce' guilty plea

Administration threatens to deport Abrego Garcia to Uganda after he turned down first plea offer

By Alan Feuer
New York Times

Lawyers for Kilmar Abrego Garcia, the immigrant who was wrongfully expelled to El Salvador in March and then returned in June, accused the Trump administration Saturday of trying to "coerce" him to plead guilty in his criminal case by threatening to deport him "halfway across the world" to Uganda. In a seven-page filing in U.S. District Court in Nashville, Tenn., the lawyers said that Thursday evening, one day before Abrego Garcia was set to be released from criminal custody, federal prosecutors offered him a deal. The prosecutors said that if he agreed to remain in jail until Monday and then pleaded guilty to charges of having taken part in a long-running conspiracy to smuggle immigrants lacking legal status across the United States, they would agree to deport him to Costa Rica after he served whatever sentence he was given in the case.

Costa Rica letter

As a further inducement to enter a guilty plea, according to the filing, the prosecutors provided the defense lawyers with a letter confirming that Abrego Garcia could live freely in Costa Rica, which would "accept him as a refugee or grant him residency status." The lawyers said they ultimately rejected the proposal to keep Abrego Garcia locked up through the weekend but promised to convey the government's offer of a plea bargain to their client. But after Abrego Garcia was freed from custody in Tennessee on Friday afternoon, they said, the Trump administration suddenly changed course. Working together, the Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security informed the lawyers that if Abrego Garcia did not accept the offer to plead guilty and be sent to Costa Rica by Monday morning, then Immigration and Customs Enforcement would start the process of expelling him to Uganda. **GARCIA » PAGE 4**

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

The good, the bad and the deep fried

A ranking of this year's best and worst new Minnesota State Fair foods

By Jess Fleming and Jared Kaufman
Pioneer Press

It was a beautiful first day at the Minnesota State Fair, and as usual, the Pioneer Press crew and friends started bright and early to taste through all 33 official new foods and dishes from most of the new vendors. We've ranked the best and the worst. Some foods didn't make the top 15 or the bottom 10, and you can find our thoughts on those at TwinCities.com. Family, friends and fairgoers offered their tastebuds and opinions for our rankings, too. Here's what we tried and what we

think. What was your favorite new food? Think we screwed up? Let us know at eat@pioneerpress.com.

THE BEST

Counting down to our No. 1 favorite 2024 Minnesota State Fair new food. **15. Beignets, Beans & Beignets, \$6 for 2** **WHAT IS IT »** Deep-fried pastry dough topped with powdered sugar. **OUR VERDICT »** Nothing flashy, but solid quality makes these worthwhile. **JESS FLEMING, FOOD EDITOR »** That's

Inside: Peek into the Fair's past with photos from our archives. **A6** 60 years ago, Space Tower arrived. **A3** nice and fluffy. I've had worse beignets at fancy restaurants! It's hard to find a good beignet around here. **JARED KAUFMAN, FOOD AND FEATURES REPORTER »** A delightful coffee snack! What a good way to start the day. **CLARE FLEMING, JESS' DAUGHTER »** I've never had a beignet before and I'm pleasantly surprised. **STACIE KAMMERLING, JARED'S GIRLFRIEND »** A filling might've been fun. **FIND IT »** On the northwest corner of Judson Avenue and Clough Street



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FAIR FOODS » PAGE 16

The beignets at Beans and Beignets.

