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NEWS, 3A

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Rob Burnside, DeDe Hayes and Angel Burnside stand together at Hayes' high school graduation in May.

JOE SIMON/THE ENQUIRER

A PRINCIPAL’S BIGGEST LESSON

From losing a career to gaining a son

Grace Tucker Cincinnati Enquirer | USA TODAY NETWORK

Robert Burnside felt mixed emotions in the stands at Cintas Center, witnessing hundreds of Kings High School graduates accept their diplomas. • The former Lakota East High School principal first felt acute stress, which he likened to post-traumatic stress disorder, as memories returned from his nearly two decades leading high schools. Graduation ceremonies like this one, he said, used to be his Super Bowl. • But overriding the stress and the longing for the profession he once cherished was immense pride for the graduate he was supporting that day: Landerius “DeDe” Hayes.

Not too long ago, Burnside knew Hayes to be a junior walking his halls at Lakota East, one of many students Burnside liked humoring with his “goofy pants” he’d sport every Friday.

At the time, Hayes was the student experiencing homelessness who Burnside championed when Lakota ordered his withdrawal. He was the 16-year-old who, due to circumstances out of his control, didn’t have an in-district address on file.

And Hayes was the student for whom Burnside

put his career on the line, allowing the teenager to stay in classes despite his unenrollment – a situation that prompted a district investigation, Burnside’s resignation from Lakota and departure from the education field at large.

A year later, in May 2026, a freshly graduated Hayes sits at Burnside’s dining room table. Hayes, now 18, has grown accustomed to calling his former

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Officials confirm bat tested positive for rabies

Leonard L. Hayhurst
Coshocton Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK

COSHOCTON – A bat in Franklin Township of Coshocton County has tested positive for rabies, but there was no confirmed exposure to humans.

The Coshocton Public Health District said it was notified on July 29 of the positive test by the Ohio Department of Health, according to a community announcement.

The announcement said animals that alerted the resident to the bat had direct exposure and were being monitored by local health officials. Both animals had received rabies vaccinations.

According to the ODH, 15 additional bats in 14 counties have tested positive for rabies in 2026, including adjacent Tuscarawas and Muskingum counties. The disease attacks the nervous system, including the brain and spinal cord.

Bats are the most common source of rabies exposure in Ohio, because bites are small and difficult to detect. It’s also commonly found in raccoons and skunks. Rabies is transmitted via saliva through contact by a bite, open

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Bats rank second behind skunks in animals that have tested positive for rabies in Larimer County in recent years. USA TODAY NETWORK VIA REUTERS

Ohio employers could soon see \$1 billion payout

Jessie Balmert
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

Ohio employers could soon receive \$1 billion from the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation.

Gov. Mike DeWine asked the Bureau

of Workers’ Compensation board of directors to approve a \$1 billion dividend for employers. If approved in August, that would bring the total amount paid to public and private employers during the DeWine administration to \$10.2 billion.

The total exceeds the premiums em-

ployers have paid since 2019, according to a news release.

“If this dividend is approved, BWC will have paid employers more in dividends than employers have paid in premiums under this administration,” Ohio BWC administrator Stephanie McCloud said.

The DeWine administration said it was able to repay employers because of its “strong financial management and investment returns.”

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