



## Study eyes rising cost of 'annoyance economy'

BUSINESS, 2A

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## Palmyra board OKs \$2.1M HVAC fix for local school



Palmyra Area School Board members approved a \$2.134 million contract with SitelogIQ for HVAC work to the Pine Street Elementary School during their meeting Feb. 26 meeting. PHOTOS BY MATTHEW TOTH/LEBANON DAILY NEWS

**Matthew Toth**

Lebanon Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - PENNSYLVANIA

Palmyra school officials approved a \$2.1 million contract to replace 58 HVAC units at Pine Street Elementary after the district discovered a mold issue in the summer of 2025.

Elected school board members approved the \$2.1 million contract with the Minneapolis-based SitelogIQ in an 8-1 vote. Board members originally postponed a \$2.1 million contract with G.R. Sponaugle for the same work during their Feb. 12 meeting over a \$3,000 contract differential between the two companies.

School Board President Jill Martin defended the postponement, saying that the board saved significant money by waiting those two weeks.

"I just want to reiterate that by doing our due diligence," she said. "We saved, according to my numbers, \$23,000 between the bid that was cheapest last week and the bid that was cheapest this week."

The plans and cost estimates for the HVAC work were originally brought to the school board during their finance committee meeting on Jan. 22, with the proposals put on the board's agenda Feb. 12 for approval.



Pine Street Elementary teachers stand in solidarity during the Palmyra Area School Board meeting in response to a comment made by a board member the previous meeting about people not wanting to work at the school.

Board members postponed the decision without providing a date to bring up the discussion again.

In the week following that meeting, school officials reported that an individual heat pump unit in a Pine Street second-grade classroom failed to operate properly while students were in

attendance. According to a letter provided by the district, while the heating issue was fixed the same day, the district did move students into another classroom for the rest of the week as they assessed the situation.

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## Iran war may impact economy

Oil prices rise but Fed is likely to hold rates

Rachel Barber and Betty Lin-Fisher  
USA TODAY

Oil prices jumped and global stocks stumbled immediately following U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliation, but economists say the war will likely not have much impact on the Federal Reserve's upcoming interest rate decision.

For now, the war that killed Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and led to disrupted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is expected to mean higher gas prices for American consumers and potential increased volatility in financial markets.

Although analysts are watching for signs that high energy costs could mean heightened inflation, Wells Fargo Chief Economist Tom Porcelli said the war

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## Middle Creek issues avian flu advisory as outbreak spreads

**Matthew Toth**

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Visitors to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area should avoid handling any wildlife and immediately report sick or dead birds as the state responds to an avian influenza outbreak.

Officials at the park are putting up advisories to help curb the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the area, but they noted that visitors are still welcome at bird-watching spots.

The warning comes as the commission responds to the recent avian influenza outbreak, also known as HPAI, in the commonwealth.

"At this time, we are aware of some deceased birds on the main lake at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area," officials said in a statement. "Due to current conditions, no safe retrieval can take place."

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