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Tuesday, February 24, 2026

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Bill would offer more resources to inmates

SF 10 would allow Dept. of Health to contract with county jails

DYLAN FARRELL
Casper Star-Tribune

The Wyoming House Appropriations Committee discussed a bill Monday afternoon that would allow the department of health to contract with county jails to treat

mentally ill detainees.

The bill has been supported by both the Wyoming Department of Health and the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, and sets the path for county lockups to offer more services to mentally ill detainees, including those who are waiting for beds to open up at the Wyoming State Hospital in Evanston.

"If we can admit and discharge people in a more rapid fashion, as as intended at the state hospital, we can serve those clients

that are coming in through the courts much faster," Stefan Johansson, director of the Wyoming Department of Health, told the Star-Tribune.

Johansson estimates the state hospital has "about 25 to 30" beds available to criminal inmates.

Johansson said the bill would help address a treatment logjam that has arisen at the Wyoming State Hospital driven by increasing demand for services. As it stands, many defendants and inmates face monthslong

waits for access to treatment they need while in detention at county facilities.

"Meanwhile, who bears the brunt of that? It's the sheriff's and the jail administrators that are trying to to keep these people safe," Johansson said of the delays. "And in many cases, they can be very, very very sick individuals with significant mental mental illness, mental health issues, folks that are violent, [and] folks that are self harming."

Please see **BILL**, Page A4

'POSTCOLONIAL MURDER'



ANDREW TOWNE, STAR-TRIBUNE

Casper native Nina McConigley signs her newly released book called How to Commit a Postcolonial Murder on Friday, Feb. 20, 2026, at the Nicolaysen Art Museum.

Novelist returns home to Casper for book signing; urges funding for the arts

HANNAH WARD
Casper Star-Tribune

For Nina McConigley, growing up in Wyoming was fundamental to becoming an artist. Now, her hometown of Casper — under a different name — is the setting of her debut novel.

"How to Commit a Postcolonial Murder," released in January,

follows two tween Indian-American sisters growing up in rural, 1980s Wyoming, beginning with a private confession to the reader of the murder of their uncle. McConigley hosted a book signing at The Nicolaysen Art Museum on Friday.

McConigley's own experience growing up biracial in 1980s

Casper allowed her to include hyperlocal details, she said, like attending Camp Sacajawea on Casper Mountain, shopping at Sears and JCPenney while the buildings were still downtown and entering the county fair through 4H.

Please see **MCCONIGLEY**, Page A4

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

HS state championships ready to take center stage

JACK NOWLIN
Casper Star-Tribune

State-culminating high school sports championships reach another level this weekend, with boys' and girls' wrestling set for Thursday through Saturday at the Ford Wyoming Center in Casper and Nordic skiing Friday and Saturday outside Pinedale.

State wrestling begins a three-week run of state championships at the Ford Wyoming Center as Class 1A/2A state basketball is scheduled for March 5-7 and Class 3A/4A state basketball takes place March 12-14.

The Star Valley girls are seeking their fourth consecutive all-class state wrestling title while Thunder Basin is going for its third 4A title in a row. Powell (3A) and Moorcroft (2A) are looking to repeat as team champions.

More than 850 wrestlers from across the state are scheduled to compete for individual gold, including 28 returning state champions. Star Valley's Tel Parry, competing at 144 pounds in 4A, has a chance to be the 34th wrestler all-time to finish his prep career as a four-time state champ.

On the girls' side, five wrestlers — Pinedale's McKinzie Mortensen and twin sister Kaylea Mortensen, Cody's Ashton Hubbs, Thermopolis's Lilly Quintanilla and Kemmerer's Kaylie Julander — will be chasing their third state titles.

Please see **STATE CHAMPS**, Page A4

State Board of Ed urged to re-open Chapter 10 rules

ALLISON ALLSOP
Casper Star-Tribune

Wyoming State Board of Education members heard from the community last week about the Chapter 10 Rules that went into effect this school year.

Multiple education associations and individuals spoke to the board during the public comment portion of the meeting, many asking the board to re-open the Chapter 10 Rules.

Chapter 10 involves K-12 content and performance standards. Justin Pierantoni, superintendent

of Laramie County School District #2 and president of the Wyoming Association of School Administrators, told the board the revised rules have created challenges in trying to implement the standards, especially in math.

Pierantoni said the recent shift to all standards for all students has created some difficulties for teachers and school administrators to implement.

"And there were some consistent threats that started to occur within districts as well as among associations across the state,"

Pierantoni said. "And I think one of the underlying pieces was, can we do this well?"

Chapter 10 history

The state began to hear grumblings in the 2018-2019 school year from schools as a new content area was about to be implemented. School staff said there were too many content standards, and different districts were prioritizing different standards.

Please see **CHAPTER 10**, Page A4



Students from Natrona County High School leave the building on Sept. 8, 2021. Education associations and individuals spoke to the State Board of Education members on Feb. 19, asking the board to re-open the Chapter 10 Rules.

FILE, STAR-TRIBUNE

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The Grouch

Wyoming winter can't decide if it wants to murder you with a negative 30-degree windchill or give you a false sense of hope with 48 degrees and sunshine.



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