

The Boston Globe

Serving our community since 1872

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024

‘Science of reading’ wins support in poll

Bill to require curriculum idles in Legislature

By Mandy McLaren
GLOBE STAFF

Most Massachusetts parents think the Bay State should require scientifically based reading instruction in schools, according to a new statewide poll of roughly 1,500 parents released Monday.

The poll, conducted by the MassINC Polling Group between April 8 and May 2, found a combined 84 percent of parents believe schools definitely

or probably should be required to use “evidence-based” reading curriculum, or teaching materials supported by a vast amount of scientific research. That research, often referred to as the “science of reading,” shows most students will need explicit instruction in phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension, to become successful readers.

The results come as a bill to require evidence-based reading instruction sits idle in the Massachusetts Legislature, even as a growing number of states have passed similar laws. Currently, curriculum decisions in Massachusetts schools are left

LITERACY, Page A8

Star witness in Trump trial details hush-money plot

‘Just do it,’ ex-president said about payoff to porn actor, Cohen testifies

By Ben Protes, Jonah E. Bromwich, and Maggie Haberman
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW YORK — Michael Cohen, the do-anything fixer who once boasted of burying Donald Trump’s secrets and spreading his lies, took the stand at the former president’s criminal trial Monday in Manhattan and exposed those machinations to the jury and the world.

Narrating the prosecution’s case in tell-all detail, Cohen testified that Trump in 2016 had personally directed him to pay off a porn actor and had approved a dubious reimbursement plan.

“Just do it,” he recalled Trump saying about the hush-money payment to the porn actor, Stormy Daniels.

After Trump had won the White House, Cohen demanded

his money back, he said, and met with Trump, who approved monthly reimbursements. Then, the president-elect changed the subject to his new job, saying “This is going to be one heck of a ride in D.C.”

Over nearly five hours of testimony, Cohen painted a damning portrait of his relationship with Trump, decoded their shady vernacular, and spotlighted the conduct at the center of the first criminal trial of an American president: the silencing of women who had stories of sex with Trump to tell and to

sell. Cohen’s star turn marked the climax of prosecutors’ case as they formally introduced the jury to a witness who has loomed over the trial and could trigger the former president’s downfall. He brought the case’s architecture into focus, offering firsthand corroboration of what jurors have heard from other witnesses. He also wove a sprawling cast of characters into a single narrative, saying that Trump, bent on winning the presidency, had orchestrated

TRUMP, Page A6

REMEMBRANCE AND WAR



LEO CORREA/ASSOCIATED PRESS



AFF VIA GETTY IMAGES

Monday was Israel’s Memorial Day, a date when Israelis grieve fellow citizens killed in war or terrorist attacks. This year’s day of mourning, the first since the Hamas attack of Oct. 7, was complicated by that event and the ensuing war. At left, a woman sat amid memorials at the site of a music festival targeted by Hamas in October. At right, two children watched smoke billowing during Israeli strikes east of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. **A3.**

Three inmates accused of killing James “Whitey” Bulger have struck a plea deal. Bulger was beaten to death in a federal prison in West Virginia in 2018. **B1.**

Governor Maura Healey is turning to a former prison in Norfolk as a temporary emergency shelter for migrants, her administration says. **B1.**

MBTA commuter rail workers have reached a contract agreement, averting a strike. **D2.**

Ukraine’s military is confronting a “critical” situation in the country’s northeast as it tries to repel a Russian offensive, a top Ukrainian general says. **A4.**

In Maine, mass shooting looms over a race for sheriff

By John Hilliard
GLOBE STAFF

SAGADAHOC COUNTY, Maine — John Ring stood among the stacks of his book shop in the city of Bath, and considered the choice before county voters. In the shadow of the state’s worst mass shooting, they will decide who will lead a sheriff’s department faulted by state investigators for failing to take the assailant into custody more than a month before the rampage, despite his repeated threats to commit a shooting.

But Ring believes neither candidate on the ballot for Saga-

dahoc sheriff — the incumbent, Joel Merry, nor Merry’s subordinate, Sergeant Aaron Skolfield — is fit for the job. A state commission investigating the shooting criticized the sheriff’s office, and Skolfield by name, in a March interim report for not intervening to remove Robert R. Card II’s firearms before he killed 18 people and wounded 13 more across county lines in Lewiston on Oct. 25, despite ample evidence Card was a threat.

“This is one of those times where we need to clean house,” Ring said. “There is a duty to go

MAINE, Page A8

‘You make these decisions according to financial returns, not according to politics.’

ERIC MASKIN, *Harvard economist*

Some universities weigh student demands on Israel divestment

By Hilary Burns and Mike Damiano
GLOBE STAFF

Two weeks ago, Brown University students who had set up an encampment on campus to protest the war in Gaza vowed they would not leave until school leaders met their demands, which included divesting the endowment from any company tied to Israel’s military.

Instead of sending in the police, as other universities had, Brown’s leaders negotiated a key concession with the student activists: They

would put the question of divestment to a vote by the governing board in October. In exchange, students cleared the encampment.

► **Harvard says lock on gate was cut with bolt cutters during pro-Palestinian protest.** **B1.**

“We finally got past this obstacle,” said Isabella Garo, a student negotiator. Now, she said, activists will lobby the governing board to vote

DIVESTMENT, Page A5

Disability rights warrior’s last battle: to leave an estate

By Jason Laughlin
GLOBE STAFF

AMHERST — In more than four decades of fighting for the rights of people with disabilities, Joe Tringali never got angry. But he sure was persistent.

He called, emailed, called again, relentlessly, until he got legislators to listen.

Most recently, Tringali’s steady but forceful activism focused on a practice by MassHealth, the state’s Medicaid program, of claiming the assets of clients after they die to recoup the cost of long-term care, what’s known as estate recovery. The practice robs people with significant disabilities of the power to accumulate savings



JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF



KATHY EDGELL

Kathy Edgell (left) was the partner of Joe Tringali (right), who died last year. He fought a MassHealth practice that claims assets from patients’ estates to recover disability care costs.

and other assets they can leave to their families, Tringali argued.

He had been instrumental in shaping legislation now under consideration that could significantly restrict the state’s ability to recover those assets.

Paralyzed as a teenager after diving into the shallow end of a swimming pool, Tringali spent his career working in advocacy, much of it for the Stavros Center for Independent Living in Amherst. But he didn’t live to see the outcome of his recent lobbying. He died in December at age 71.

Now, some of his estate will likely be subject to the very policy

ESTATE RECOVERY, Page A7

Easy, breezy
Tuesday: Warmer, partly sunny.
High 73-78, low 57-62.
Wednesday: Cloudy, some rain.
High 64-69, low 53-58.
Sunrise: 5:23. Sunset: 7:58.
Obituaries, **C11.**
Comics and Weather, **D5-6.**

VOL. 305, NO. 135
Suggested retail price
\$4.00

