



LCHS students (back, l-r) Kristen Wigginton, Synclaire Thornton, Diego Uscanga, John Thomas Bunderick, CJ Chandler, Greyson Duncan, (front, l-r) Tomas Urbina-Ramos, Shanna Kneec, Katelyn Bennett, Rheagan Doran, Miracle Crite, Destiny Whisnant gained clinical experience at Lake Crossing Health Center. They were the most recent class to complete the CNA certification offered through the LCHS CTAE program.

CTAE courses offer hands-on learning

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80 students have become CNAs through the program.”

Likewise, healthcare students participate in HOSA, which is an organization devoted to students of health science. In years without Covid, students perform community service projects, host blood drives, and attend the HOSA state conference where they participate in various health science related events, networking, and a college and career expo.

According to Michell Wilson, technology teacher, current technology classes being offered are “Introduction to Digital Technology” and “Computer Science.” These classes are a part of the programming and cybersecurity concentrations.

In Computer Science, students learn the basics of computer programming, the importance of cybersecurity, along with the basics of computer science. The course emphasizes computational thinking and helps develop the ability to solve complex problems.

In Introduction to Digital Technology, the course is designed for students to understand, communicate, and adapt to a digital world as it impacts their personal lives, society, and the business world.

“Computer and information technology occupations are growing at a much larger percentage than other occupations,” Wilson said. “It’s important that we offer classes such as these to expose our students to computer science and hopefully get them interested in one of the many computer science fields.”

According to Trey Holden, metal shop teacher, the welding pathway teaches students about shop safety, using hand and power tools, blueprint reading, rigging, welding, and sheet metal fabrication.

Live work projects for this year included the kids welding and metal working massive barbecue grills, fire pits, and even a chimney cap.

Furthermore, the SkillsUSA program has had many participants from LCHS annually – especially in the areas of welding, sheet metal, and construction.

SkillsUSA is a national program that allows CTAE students to compete at a regional, state, and national level, demonstrating their skills in the many CTAE pathway areas.

“[SkillsUSA] also covers the employability part of it too – so, job interviews, resume, professionalism in that respect,” Jordan said. “It’s good for the kids to be involved, especially if they want to continue to do these things. It helps build their resumes and helps them to become good at public speaking, since they have to get up and speak to people [at the competition].”

Like FFA, another of the CTAE student-run organizations is Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA).

FCCLA has been a very hands-on and active organization during these unique times, according to Taylor Adkins, current advisor and food science teacher.

There are weekly meetings that help to promote growth within FCCLA and the community. Students spent the first semester focusing solely on their community service project “Holiday Helping Hands.” Throughout the first semester, students collected basic



LCHS students Katelyn Bennet, Raven Mickens, Jayda Mayes, and C.J. Chandler participated in a HOSA community service event with Compass for Hope in Augusta.



LCHS students Christian Mueller and Bryson Segars work on welding a fire pit as a part of their CTAE live project.

necessities such as soap, toothpaste, blankets, masks, etc. to give to other students in the Lincoln County community facing homelessness.

“This community service project was a huge success!” the students of FCCLA explained. “We have also been operating an ongoing ‘Sweet Treat’ cart where we sell baked goods to fundraise for FCCLA before and after school.”

For the second semester, students participated in FCCLA National Programs such as the financial fitness national program and created seminars to deliver to middle school classes during their fun Friday.

“We made a splash with our celebration of FCCLA week [February 8],” the students continued. “We made ‘Thank You’ letters and cookies for all of the supporters of FCCLA and we promoted FCCLA through new posters that are hung up around the school. We also said an FCCLA fact of the day on the announcements every day. We had lunchtime trivia about the organization and gave away awesome prizes such as a triple-layer cake, a dozen chocolate-covered strawberries, and other Valentine’s Day prizes.”

“My goal is to spread awareness about FCCLA, so that students know about the endless opportunities that are open for them and all of the positives they could get out of it,” Adkins explained.

Her students readily agree as FCCLA is beloved at LCHS and viewed as a highly welcoming and motivational. Many students are devoted to this club and believe in furthering its missions.

Legislation to boost I.D requirements for absentee voters heads to Senate

By BEAU EVANS
Capital Beat News Service

Georgia senators sent legislation to boost identification requirements for absentee voters to the state Senate floor Thursday, February 18, in a committee vote along party lines.

A bill sponsored by state Sen. Larry Walker III, R-Perry, would require voters seeking to request and cast absentee ballots to provide their driver’s licenses or other valid ID such as passports, employee ID cards, utility bills, or bank statements.

The measure was among a slate of bills to clear the Senate Ethics Committee last Thursday and head to the Senate floor for votes as early as next week.

Other bills that passed included legislation to create a new state elections supervisor, allow county officials to count absentee ballots before Election Day, and tighten reporting requirements for voting results. They are among a legislative package backed by Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan, who presides over the Senate. He has called for tightening absentee voter ID requirements but opposed efforts by some Republican leaders to restrict who in Georgia can vote by mail.

Walker’s bill is among the more controversial absentee-voting changes Republican lawmakers are seeking after the 2020 election cycle caused distrust in Georgia’s election system for supporters of former President Donald Trump, who lost the general election in Georgia to President Joe Biden by 11,779 votes.

“It is an attempt to provide an easily verified way to confirm that the person requesting the ballot is indeed who they say they are and that live ballots are issued to only legal voters,” Walker said Thursday. “There is nothing in here that makes it harder to vote or [that] obstructs voting by absentee.”

The bill would require registered Georgia voters to provide their s of birth and driver’s license numbers, or the numbers on their personal ID cards if they do not have a driver’s licenses, in order to request absentee ballots.

Without a driver’s license or personal ID card, a voter would have to submit photocopies of a different form of valid ID such as a passport or utility bill to their local elections board or registrar.

The bill would also make permanent an online portal to request absentee ballots that Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger’s office set up for last year’s elections, which drew millions of mail-in ballot requests amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The stricter absentee ID rules in Walker’s bill would do away with the state’s current system of verifying signatures on mail-in ballot request forms and envelopes, eliminating a focal point for attacks by Trump and his allies who alleged absentee voter fraud and called for deeper audits of the 2020 election results.

Raffensperger, whose office repeatedly rejected Trump’s fraud

claims, has backed increasing the absentee ID requirements during this legislative session, as have other top state Republicans including Gov. Brian Kemp, Duncan, House Speaker David Ralston, R-Blue Ridge, and the Georgia Senate Republican Caucus.

Democrats, meanwhile, are opposing Walker’s measure and others on absentee voting that they view as attempts at voter suppression meant to curb Democratic momentum after the party seized the presidency and both of Georgia’s U.S. Senate seats in the 2020 elections.

Several Democrats on the Republican-controlled committee argued last Thursday the bill could disenfranchise voters who do not have driver’s licenses, and possibly raise the chances for identity theft with more people sending out sensitive personal information and documents in the mail.

“I think you’re trying to cure a problem in your mind,” said Sen. Ed Harbison, D-Columbus, the Senate’s longest-serving member. “But the truth is, it opens the privacy door.”

Walker dismissed those concerns, acknowledging some voters are “going to have to make an effort” to verify their identities without driver’s licenses, but that the benefits of tightening absentee voter ID verification would outweigh the privacy risks.

“I’m not saying identity theft can’t happen,” Walker said. “I think the value of this is way higher than any potential risk of it happening.”

Other Republicans on the committee pointed out Georgians already have to show their IDs to vote in person, as well as for many other activities such as boarding an airplane or interacting with police officers during traffic stops.

“We are a nation of laws,” said Senate Majority Whip Steve Gooch, R-Dahlonega. “We’re used to having identification cards on us.”

“I just can’t understand anybody opposing requiring some kind of identification to present to an elections office to prove who you say you are.”

Senate Minority Leader Gloria Butler, D-Stone Mountain, countered that sending personal information in the mail is different from flashing an ID to a police officer or clerk at a liquor store — and should face tighter protections against identity theft.

“There’s a huge difference in mailing something in, filing it away and keeping it, than it is me just having it and showing it and the person looking at it and leaving,” Butler said. “So I think we need to stop confusing that [since] it’s not a correct statement.”

The bill passed by a 7-4 vote and now heads to the Senate floor.

A separate measure to end no-excuse absentee voting in Georgia is expected to come up for consideration in the committee early next week after clearing a

subcommittee on Wednesday.

That bill, sponsored by state Sen. Jeff Mullis, R-Chickamauga, would only allow registered Georgia voters who are age 75 and older, physically disabled, out-of-state, or facing other limited circumstances to vote by mail.

State law since 2005 has let any Georgian registered to vote who wants to cast an absentee ballot do so without having to provide a reason for seeking the mail-in route.

The committee on Thursday also passed a bill by Senate President Pro Tempore Butch Miller, R-Gainesville, that would create a new state elections supervisor tasked with training local election workers and punishing low-performing county officials. It passed by a party-line vote.

Also passing along party lines were two bills by state Sen. Bill Cowsert, R-Athens, that would shorten the time limit for local registrars to enter voting data into the state’s voter-history system and boost reporting requirements for the state’s election-results website, including the number of absentee and provisional ballots issued, cast, and rejected.

A bill brought by Sen. Jen Jordan, D-Atlanta, was the only measure to pass unanimously on Thursday. It would let counties begin processing absentee ballots on the Monday before Election Day, helping ease pressure on local elections officials to count mail-in ballots.

Other Republican-sponsored bills still awaiting consideration are measures to ban absentee-ballot drop boxes, end automatic voter registration for Georgians who receive new or renewed driver’s licenses, prohibit anyone except state and local elections officials and candidates from sending voters applications for mail-in ballots, and allow poll watchers to monitor vote tabulations more closely.

Documents needed

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County Health Department will not be able to provide the screening or immunization. Parents are encouraged to contact their children’s pediatricians.

Two proofs of residency must also be produced, including physical addresses only. One proof of residency must be a utility bill such as gas, water, electric, etc., and the second can be a current lease/rental agreement, paycheck stub, residential property tax bill, warranty/quit claim deed, home purchase agreement, third person affidavit of residency, or homeowner’s insurance policy. (A third-party affidavit used for residency must be notarized before it will be accepted.)

Parents or guardians must be present to enroll a child. A license or photo ID will be needed at the time of registration to verify the names on the child’s birth certificate. If a parent’s or guardian’s name is not listed on the birth certificate, guardianship papers must be produced before a child can be enrolled.

Enrollment in pre-K is on a first-come, first-enrolled basis.

A child will not be registered until all of the required documents are received.

Camping out at LCES will not be permitted, and parents will not be allowed to line-up before 7 a.m.

For more information, call the Lincoln County Elementary School office at 706-359-3449.

DPH reports eighteenth fatality as COVID-19 cases rise to 477

Lincoln County had its eighteenth reported COVID-19 fatality according to the Georgia Department of Public Health’s (DPH) website as of Monday, February 22.

The Lincoln County Health Department was unable to confirm the fatalities as of press time.

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County increased to 478 with eighteen reported fatalities as of the 3 p.m. posting by the Georgia Department of Public Health on Monday.

Neighboring Wilkes County lists 638 cases and sixteen deaths, McDuffie County reports 1558 cases and 37 deaths, Columbia lists 10,384 cases and 145 deaths, and Richmond County reports 18,385 cases and 339 deaths.

Also reported as of 3 p.m. Monday, 806,119 Georgians had tested positive for COVID-19. Of those patients, 54,883 were hospitalized, and 14,689 deaths have been reported.

COVID-19 vaccinations are being administered locally by the Lincoln County Health Department and vaccinations here will

continue as long as time and vaccine doses are available.

The State of Georgia is currently in Phase 1A+ of the vaccine rollout. That means that healthcare workers, long-term care facility workers and residents, law enforcement personnel, and adults over 65, regardless of health conditions, and their caregivers are eligible for the vaccine. Others will be included as future phases are rolled out but the time of that is unsure at present.

Those who qualify may call the health department at 706-359-3154 to schedule an appointment. If no one answers the phone, please leave a message and your call will be returned within five business days to get you scheduled.”

The LCHD will be operating its vaccination clinic in a drive-through model, where scheduled appointments will arrive and park in the back parking lot of the health department. After arriving, registration and vaccination will take place inside the driver’s vehicle. The entire process from start to finish will take approximately 30 minutes.