Columbus schools see 5,202 major incidents

Assaults, sex offenses among them

Megan Henry Columbus Dispatch USA TODAY NETWORK

Columbus City Schools had a total of 5,202 fights, assaults, sexual offenses, guns brought to school or other “major incidents” during the first three months of this school year.

Tops among the “major incident” reports at Columbus City Schools in the first three months of the 2022-2023 school year were 3,389 fights and threats, according to public records requested by The Dispatch in December and recently released.

Columbus City Schools defines “major incidents” as any situation that requires support from an outside responding agency, such as the Columbus police and fire divisions, that occur at a school during the school day. It doesn’t include after-school fights, such as the one last October that resulted in the shooting death of Lovely Kendricks, an East High School student, during a fight in Franklin Park across Broad Street from the school.

Districtwide from Aug. 29 to Nov. 30 there were 1,128 physical assaults; 188 incidents of sexual misconduct; 176 incidents of drug use, possession or sale; 363 incidents of vandalism; 95 incidents of dangerous weapons not including firearms, and 57 incidents of sexual offenses.

There also were 16 incidents of false alarms and bomb threats; 16 incidents involving arson and explosives and seven incidents of alcoholic beverage use.

Ohioans left state to access abortions

Report shows travel to Michigan, Illinois

Hayley BeMiller State Bureau USA TODAY NETWORK

Mia found out she was pregnant in mid-August last year, weeks after she had taken Plan B to prevent just that. An undocumented immigrant and student, Mia supports her family financially and knew she wouldn’t be able to manage a pregnancy while trying to finish school.

She scheduled an appointment with an Ohio abortion provider, who told her she wouldn’t be able to get the procedure in-state.

The U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade weeks prior in their ruling on Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, prompting Ohio officials to reinstate the ban on abortions when cardiac activity can be detected. That’s usually about six weeks into a pregnancy.

Suit: Train released 1.1 million pounds of vinyl chloride

Benjamin Duer Canton Repository USA TODAY NETWORK

EAST PALMEN, Ohio — A new federal lawsuit against Norfolk Southern over the East Palestine train derailment alleges that 1.1 million pounds of vinyl chloride were released into the environment.

The lawsuit was filed Wednesday by the national law firm Morgan & Morgan in U.S. District Court’s Northern District of Ohio, one of six suits the railroad company is facing.

Authorities and Norfolk Southern have not publicly stated how much vinyl chloride was released following the Feb. 3 train derailment and ensuing controlled burn of chemicals on several cars.
HOLIDAY CLOSURES

There will be no trash collection in Columbus on Monday. The color collection schedule for trash will rotate forward one weekend and reset them until the next holiday, which will be Memorial Day, May 29. For those on the color collection schedule, trash collection day will rotate one day forward with Friday collection on Father’s Day.

Outside recycling and yard waste collection will be on a regular schedule.

Columbus City Schools and many of the public school districts will be closed on Monday.

• Ohio Wesleyan University and Delaware State College will be open on Monday.

• Franklin Metropolitan Library branches will be closed Monday for a staff appreciation meeting.

• Central Ohio Transit Authority will operate on a regular schedule on Monday.

Crime Stoppers provides information in local online dating extortion scam

Barthany Bruner
Columbus Dispatch
USA TODAY NETWORK

Central Ohio Crime Stoppers is warning people about an increase in reports of extortion schemes involving "sneaking" unsuspecting victims online.

A tipster said he was offered information leading to the arrest and indictment of the person or persons responsible.

Card phishing is a term used to describe a fake website that appears to be another person online, stealing false information and photos to perpetrate the deception.

Crime Stoppers said there has been a "significant increase" in reports of victims who are "deceptive" and want to go to the next step to ensure someone they believe to be a female. The victim has hidden their identity from the scammer or any other source of media or through an online dating application.

The suspect pretends to be a female and could send explicit photographs to the victim, with the victim sending similar images of the suspect to return.

The suspect then threatens to distribute the photos if the victim does not send them to friends and family and demands money, usually in the form of untraceable gift cards, Crime Stoppers said.

Some of the victims have sent money prior to reporting the extortion to police. Crime Stoppers asked the public to use caution when communicating with potential dates and to not allow the scam to grow.

More information is asked to be called Central Ohio Crime Stoppers at 614-221-5000, or submit an online application or provide information online: cincycrimestoppers.org. All tips to Crime Stoppers are anonymous and a special coding system is used to protect the tipper, blonder43@quash.com or @CrimeStopper.

Train

A file of 4 photo photo shows portions of a Norfolk Southern Railroad freight train that derailed in a previous accident in East Palestine, Ohio.

Marchers

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The marching — and the subsequent court five of the marchers launched against the school board — represents an early role for Ohio in the civil rights movement that’s not widely known, according to Melvin Burnes Jr., a program officer at Ohio Humanities, a Columbus-based nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

“The perception is the forefront of the understanding of the traditional civil rights movement,” Burnes said.

“It is important for the students of Hilbrosr to see how this movement is shaping, the rise of the student activists in our own backyard in Ohio.”

The civil rights movement’s beginnings are traditionally marked by Martin Luther King Jr.’s Montgomery bus boycott in 1955-56, according to a 2015 documentary called “The Lincoln School Story: The Secret for Black Education in Ohio” on the march and court cases left and right in the 20-minute film that can be viewed for free at ohoshannabin.org.

The documentary also includes an article, “Marching On:” about the students’ efforts in its online magazine, Lumen, which can be read at ohoshannabin.org.

Although a HILBROHS STORY started to resurface in the early 2000s, Burnes said, “It may not be as well known as some other civil rights events move along. But it is important: It was a Northern story when the country’s at attention about how far the South had; it was an action by women; and it wasn’t in a major metropolitan area.”

Burnes said one of the significant things about the march is that it was an unarmed action.

“These women decided to make a change in their community and they refused to talk no for an answer,” he said.

When the first Brown v. Board of Education decision came down, there was little guidance and it was unclear what desegregation and integration would actually happen to supposed to happen, Burnes said.

As the Marchers approached the town, they were met with a large crowd of people who were marching to bring attention to the mothers as a component of that, he said.

The following year, a second Brown v. Board decision made it clear that desegregation should happen with all deliberate speed.

It was the first time they had ever met with educators, Burnes said.

The Marchers accompanied black school children to Webster Elementary School in an attempt to demand that the young students be admitted.

Several marchers accompany black school children to Webster Elementary School in an attempt to demand that the students be admitted.

The five plaintiffs, together with their attorneys, in a precedent-shattering action for a national state, in which they instituted action in federal district court for a temporary restraining order on the Board of Education from barring their children from white elementary schools in September, 1954. From left to right: Enie Stewell Traylor, Zella Cummerland and Gertrude Clemmo, all plaintiffs. Back row, left to right: Attorney Russell C. Berlind, Zella Cummerland and Berlind and attorneys Constance Baker Motley and James H. McGee, of Dayton.

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Train

The law firm based its calculation on the total volume of the tax on 900,000 gallon DOT 350120 bulk tank cars carrying 6 pounds per gallon of vinyl chloride.

The suit claims “Norfolk Southern blew holes in its rail cars of vinyl chloride cars and dumped 51,000,000 pounds of vinyl chloride into the environment,” while trying to eludicate a law firm that claimed that Norfolk Southern released more vinyl chloride into the environment in one week than all industrial emitters combined did in 2018.

Vinyl chloride is a gas used to make polyvinyl chloride hard plastic resin in plastic products and is associated with an increased risk of liver cancer and other cancers, according to the federal government’s National Cancer Institute.

Officials warned the controlled burn of cars containing the gas would send toxic gas plummeting and recalled the 1984 train collision that derailed.

The company, which has long been a leader in the field, agreed to pay a $10 million settlement.

“Norfolk Southern must clean up its mess,” said attorney Jeff Thickman, who represents the affected community.

“People in the area know that the rail company has a history of polluting the region, and they want to see justice served.”

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Train

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