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2635 Parade Road, Laconia
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Addressing childhood trauma in Laconia schools

By MCKENZIE HARRINGTON-BACOTE

LACONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Over the last few years, the Laconia School District has been actively working to understand what childhood trauma is, how it impacts our students, and what we, as an educational institution can do to mitigate the effects of this. We have also learned about secondary, or vicarious, trauma. This type of trauma is experienced by our staff as a result of supporting our students who are living with ongoing and pervasive trauma. Our teachers and support staff are serving in pseudo social worker or caregiver roles for many students, which falls outside of the typical academic instruction.

We have learned that many children experience a traumatic or adverse event, such as living through a natural disaster or serious car accident. Other children experience trauma that is considered ongoing, pervasive and sustained over time. That includes things such as living in a home with domestic violence, experiencing homelessness, or living with a parent or family member who is struggling with drug addiction or mental illness. Children are vulnerable to traumatic or adverse experiences and researchers have spent decades working to better understand the fallout of childhood trauma on brain development and their physical and mental health.

In the 1990s, the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente conducted the first study to determine the long-term physical and mental health affects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Examples of ACEs are physical and sexual abuse, parental neglect, violence within the home, parental separation, divorce or incarceration and the death of a parent. They found that many adult physical health conditions – including alcoholism, drug use, heart disease, obesity, and other serious illnesses – are directly related to the adversity experienced

during childhood and that there is a higher rate of ACEs for individuals living in poverty. They also found that an adult's quality of life, including levels of risk taking and psychological issues, are directly correlated to their level of ACEs. Essentially, trauma impedes students' ability to learn and express positive social and emotional behaviors in school.

As we have come to understand the lifelong affects of ACEs, we realized that we needed to increase our schools' abilities to provide protective factors for our

students. Protective factors are things like positive school culture and climate, positive relationships between students and staff, environments that feel safe, individual ability to self-regulate and individual understanding of how our brain develops and works. We learned that there are things we can be doing as educators to support our students in their ability to adapt to changes more easily, to develop hope for their futures

when their current home lives may feel hopeless, and to better get our students brains in the right space to allow for academic learning to take place.

As a result, the Laconia School District's Office of School Wellness applied to be a part of the state's first coordinated effort to develop Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS). Project GROW (Generating Resilience, Outcomes, and Wellness) is a partnership project with the state Department of Education's Bureau of Student Wellness, the Center for Behavioral Health Innovation at Antioch University and five other school districts in the state. We are currently in year two of this work, with a leadership committee comprised of representatives from every Laconia school guiding our work. While each building is at a different phase of implementation, all staff have received TSS professional development, and some schools have received targeted training, consultation and undergone an evaluation of their

see next page



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Mueller considers new charges for Manafort

BY CHAD DAY AND
ERIC TUCKER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort may face additional charges after lawyers in the special counsel's Russia investigation said he lied to them and broke his plea agreement, prosecutors said Friday.

The latest development in Manafort's case comes at a time of public activity in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. Prosecutors obtained a guilty plea from President Donald Trump's longtime legal fixer on Thursday and appear to be lining up charges against another Trump supporter.

The prospect of new charges adds to the legal peril of Manafort, the onetime political consultant who already faces years in prison after being convicted of financial fraud crimes in Virginia and pleading guilty to conspiracy counts in Washington.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson set a tentative sentencing date of March 5 as prosecutors plan to disclose next week what they believe are the lies Manafort told since pleading guilty in September and agreeing to cooperate with the investigation.

Manafort's lawyers, who deny that Manafort lied, will have an opportunity to respond and a judge is expected to hear arguments before deciding whether he breached his plea deal.

Prosecutor Andrew Weissmann told the judge that prosecutors had not yet decided whether to file new charges against Manafort for the alleged lies, saying, "That determination has not been made."

Trump is facing continued questions about whether he might pardon Manafort. At the same time, he is playing down the significance of the guilty plea of his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, for lying to Congress.

None of the recent moves by Mueller has definitively answered the question of whether Trump or his associates coordinated with Russian interference in the 2016 presidential campaign. And they don't directly accuse the president of any criminal wrongdoing or indicate that the president faces legal jeopardy.

But Trump has continually surfaced in Mueller's investigation, with references to him in Cohen's plea on Thursday and in a draft plea offer extended to conservative writer and conspiracy theorist Jerome Corsi and made public this week.

Trump has expressed sympathy for Manafort, Corsi and his longtime confidant Roger Stone, telling The New York Post this week that they were "very brave" for resisting the Mueller investigation. He said a pardon for Manafort, who has denied lying to investigators, wasn't "off the table."

That prospect of a pardon has drawn criticism, including from Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee who said it would

be a "complete abuse of power" and could prompt congressional action against the president.

Manafort faces up to five years in prison on each charge in his plea agreement. He is also set to be sentenced on eight felony counts in a separate case in Virginia in February.

Trump has spent recent weeks casting Mueller's team as hell-bent on destroying the lives of those in the president's orbit. Armed with information passed along by Manafort's attorneys to the president's legal team, Trump has accused prosecutors of dirty tactics and pressuring witnesses to lie.

Trump's lawyers' arrangement with Manafort's lawyers was unusual because it continued after he pleaded guilty to two felony charges and agreed to cooperate with the prosecutors. Trump's legal team also has received help from Corsi. He told The Associated Press that while in contact with Mueller's team,

he directed his lawyer to informally share information with Trump's attorneys, including Jay Sekulow.

Sekulow also received the draft plea documents a couple of weeks ago. The legal team alerted the Justice Department but privately was put off by a reference to Trump in the document.

Corsi, who rejected the plea deal, has said he expects to be charged by Mueller with lying to investigators as part of the probe's scrutiny of WikiLeaks and whether he or Stone had advance knowledge of the group's release of thousands of hacked emails stolen from Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta. Mueller and U.S. intelligence agencies have said Russia was the source of the material provided to WikiLeaks.

Both Corsi and Stone have denied having any contact with WikiLeaks or having any foreknowledge of its plans. Corsi also denies making false statements to investigators.

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