

**BEYOND BRRR**  
Very cold today with highs only in the teens; clear and frigid tonight.  
**Forecast, E14**

# The Providence Journal

**THURSDAY**  
JANUARY 3, 2008

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## High schools across R.I. still struggling to make the grade

Despite an aggressive reform effort, test scores of high school juniors have remained flat for several years.

BY JENNIFER D. JORDAN  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Only half of Rhode Island's 58 public high schools are making enough progress in English and math, while the other half are failing to make adequate yearly progress — a slight dip from last

year's 54 percent.

According to the results of tests given to 12,000 juniors last March, 40 percent of the state's high schools are failing to educate all groups of students — including special education, low-income and minority students — to the state standard on English

and math tests. Because these 23 schools have failed for multiple years, they are classified as making insufficient progress by the state Education Department.

Another 10 percent of high schools have failed to educate all groups of students to the state standard for one year, and therefore are placed on a watch list, including several rural and

suburban high schools: Burrillville, Cumberland, Narragansett, Westerly and Chariho Regional.

The other 50 percent of Rhode Island's high schools — 29 schools — made adequate

yearly progress in the 2006-2007 school year.

But proficiency rates among students statewide are stagnant. Despite an aggressive statewide high school reform effort, test scores of high school juniors have remained flat for the past several years, with about 53 percent scoring proficient or better on the English portion of the test and 43 percent scoring

proficient or better in math.

Officials said they were disappointed more high schools were unable to have all groups of students meet the state standard in English and math, although it is harder for large schools with diverse populations to do so. Schools with 45 or more black, Asian, American

SEE **SCHOOLS, A6**

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Extra: For a chart of school by school results, go to [projo.com](http://projo.com)

### CAMPAIGN 2008



NYT / OZIER MUHAMMAD



NYT / DOUG MILLAS



AP / LM OTERO

Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., at a campaign rally yesterday in Davenport.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., at a campaign stop yesterday in Cedar Rapids.

John Edwards, the former North Carolina Democratic senator, yesterday in Iowa City.

# In Iowa, a battle to the finish line

BY MICHAEL D. SHEAR and ANNE E. KORNBLUT  
THE WASHINGTON POST

DES MOINES, Iowa — The presidential candidates yesterday made their final appeals to voters in the earliest-starting and most expensive campaign in Iowa history, fanning out across the state in search of a victory and crucial momentum headed into a frontloaded primary season.

With the races in both parties still too close to call, the leading candidates sprinted between college campuses and small towns to make their last pitches before tonight's caucuses, well aware that the wide-open races in both parties would be decided by the lavish turnout operations they spent millions of dollars and much of the last year building.

Republican Mitt Romney flew two dozen reporters across Iowa for a series of events, ending a hyper-organized Hawkeye State effort that is now threatened by Mike Huckabee's unconventional campaign. "It's kind of like, you know, you can't wait," Romney told a rally in Bettendorf. "Maybe it's like Christmas morning and you want to run down and open the present and see what you got

and hope it's not a lump of coal."

On a bitterly cold Midwestern day, Democratic front-runners Hillary Clinton, John Edwards and Barack Obama closed out their yearlong debate over experience versus change. The three are running even in the polls after a contest that began with Obama a virtual unknown, Edwards coming off of a second-place finish here in 2004 and Clinton enjoying massive institutional advantages.

All of the candidates exhibited both exhaustion and a bit of desperation — the natural outcomes of a presidential campaign that began earlier and with more intensity than ever before but has also failed to produce an obvious front-runner on either side.

After two brief morning events, Huckabee flew to Hollywood to tape an appearance on the *Tonight Show With Jay Leno*. And not to be outdone by Huckabee, Democrat Clinton taped a cameo appearance on the *Late Show With David Letterman*, taking her message of experience beyond Iowa's borders — but not leaving the state for a moment to do it.

But even as they closed out their Iowa campaigns, some of the candidates began turning their attention to the East Coast, where New Hampshire's primary will take place just five



Mike Huckabee, the former Republican governor of Arkansas, on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* last night.

AP / JEFF CHIU



AP / CHARLIE NEIBERGALL

Mitt Romney, the former Republican governor of Massachusetts, in Cedar Rapids yesterday.

## Price of oil hits \$100

Consumers can expect higher gasoline and home-heating oil prices as the cost of a barrel of crude continues to soar.

JOURNAL WIRE REPORTS

Oil prices briefly reached \$100 a barrel yesterday, a psychologically important milestone in an era of rapidly escalating energy demand and tightening supplies.

Crude oil futures for delivery next month hit \$100 on the New York Mercantile Exchange shortly after noon when a single trader bid up the price by buying a modest lot and then sold it immediately at a small loss. Prices eased somewhat in later trading, settling at \$99.62.

The spike in crude prices of \$3.64 for the day reflected deeper worldwide trends, including the surge in energy demand from China, India and the oil-producing countries themselves.

"We're starting the year with a bang," said Fadel Gheit, senior energy analyst for Oppenheimer & Company.

The immediate impetus for the price rise appeared to come from an attack by rebels in the Nigerian oil center of Port Harcourt and rough weather in the Gulf of Mexico that slowed Mexican oil exports.

The price of oil has been flirting with the \$100 mark for months, and in recent weeks there has been added price pressure because of turbulence in Pakistan following the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, which may threaten further unrest in the Middle East.

There is no shortage of explanations for the escalation of oil prices by about 60 percent over the last year. The price of a barrel

SEE **OIL, A4**

## Barrington teen pleads not guilty to murder charge

Ryan Greenberg, 17, is accused of killing his classmate, Patrick Murphy, in a boating accident.

BY C. EUGENE EMERY JR.  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Ryan Greenberg, of Barrington, pleaded not guilty yesterday to four charges, including second-degree murder, in the boating death of Patrick Murphy on the Barrington River July 17.

His Superior Court arraignment came after a statewide grand jury indicted the 17-year-old, adding the murder charge to previous

allegations of operating a boat to endanger, death resulting; underage possession of alcohol; and refusing to take a breath test after he failed a field sobriety test.

Dressed in khaki pants and a navy blazer, the former Barrington High School student, now a senior at Hope High School in Providence, was released on \$100,000 recognizance, 10 times the original amount.

He was also ordered to undergo

random alcohol and drug screening, banned from operating watercraft and prohibited from traveling outside Rhode Island or Massachusetts.

He is due back in court on April 2 for a pretrial hearing.

Greenberg, who remained outside the courtroom until his name was called, said little during the arraignment before Special Magistrate Joseph A. Keough.

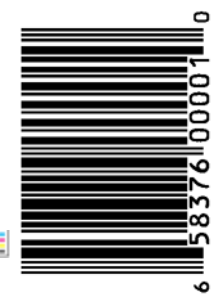
Murphy's parents, John and Phoebe, watched the proceedings

SEE **DEATH, A7**

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Your turn: What can be done about teen drinking? To respond, go to [projo.com/barrington](http://projo.com/barrington)

Ryan Greenberg enters Superior Court yesterday for arraignment on charges in the death of Patrick Murphy in a boating accident in July.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / MARY MURPHY



### INSIDE TODAY

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6 SECTIONS

Ask Amy	E10	Lifebeat	E1
Bridge	E10	Local News	D1
Business	F1	Lotteries	C6
Classified	F5	Obituaries	D4
Comics	E11	People	E1
Crossword	E10	Rhode Island	B1
Editorial	B4	Sports	C1
Legal ads	A9	Television	E13



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### MONITORING MORTGAGES

Rhode Island becomes one of the first states in the country to require all mortgage originators who are not employed by a bank or credit union to register with a national licensing system designed to improve regulatory oversight and "fight mortgage fraud and predatory lending." **F1**

### LATE-NIGHT LAUGHS

Dave, Jay and Jimmy are back behind their respective desks on late-night TV with new shows for the first time since an entertainment writers' strike began eight weeks ago. **A2**



### RAMS ROLL

Jimmy Baron scores 22 points to lead five Rhode Island players in double figures as the nationally ranked Rams beat Fairleigh Dickinson, 94-63, and extend their winning streak to nine games. **C1**