

PSL board rejects charter school's bid

By Cynthia Washam
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FORT PIERCE — More than three dozen impassioned teachers, parents, students and a state representative failed Tuesday to persuade



the St. Lucie County School Board to approve Somerset College Preparatory

Academy's application to add a middle school.

Board members said they unanimously rejected Somerset's plan because of deficiencies in its application.

"We have to follow the law," Board member Carol

Hilson said. "The application does not meet the criteria given to us."

Deficiencies board members discussed at the 5 p.m. meeting included inadequate plans for bus transportation, insufficient services for disabled

students and a budget that does not cover staffing costs.

Administrators for the Port St. Lucie charter high school said they will appeal the decision, which could take several months. The state's Charter School

Appeal Commission hears appeals, then makes recommendations to the Florida Board of Education for the final decision.

Speakers urged the board to approve the

See BOARD, 11A

Fall may be cooler than normal

More rain also likely

By Elliott Jones
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It's really just a slight change, but the lower humidity and degree or two in lower temperatures means it's fall on the Treasure Coast in a big way.

Wednesday morning is the official change of season and temperatures are starting to moderate.

We've gone from 90 percent humidity last week to 65 percent Tuesday, National Weather Service meteorologists said. That number can fluctuate vastly on a daily basis.

We're moving from a summer that tied with 1998 for the second warmest on record — with an average 82.7 degrees — to a fall and winter that could, at times, see temperatures slightly lower than normal.

There's also an increased likelihood of more rainfall than we typically receive in the fall and winter, meteorologist Matt Bragaw said.

El Niño is predicted to result in higher than normal rainfall from clouds that block the sun during what is normally the start of the dry season. According to forecasters, there is a 50-50 chance of a boost in the annual cooling that typically starts during October, Bragaw said.

Expect more rainfall in the region, which is still sloshy from last week's deluge due to remnants of Tropical Storm Grace.

For a second weekend in a row, the Fellsmere Riding Club is canceling the rodeo at its ring.

"It's a lake," said spokeswoman Karen Ledford. The ring filled with water from a ditch that overflowed, she said.

Rainfall was the heaviest in southern St. Lucie County, where — in a 24-hour period ending the morning of Sept. 17 — about 7.6 inches fell at the state's Savannas Preserve State Park, a low-lying 70,000-acre nature area between Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie.

"It made the kayakers happy," said park manager

See WEATHER, 16A



POPE FRANCIS

HOLY VISIT TO AMERICA



PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pope Francis, accompanied by President Barack Obama and others, is greeted upon his arrival at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Tuesday.

Warm welcome for pope

Pontiff met by cheering crowd in U.S.

By Michael Collins
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WASHINGTON — Pope Francis set foot on U.S. soil for the first time Tuesday, beginning a six-day sojourn that will take the popular pontiff to three major cities and give him a platform to challenge the nation's political leaders and American Catholics on controversial issues such as immigration and climate change.

The Argentine-born pope's Alitalia plane, Shepherd One, sliced through an overcast sky and touched down at 3:49 p.m. at Joint Base Andrews, just outside Washington, D.C.

In a rare welcome accorded to a visiting head of state,



The crowd cheers as Pope Francis arrives Tuesday.

President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama were waiting to greet the pontiff, along with a military honor guard, the president's daughters, and Vice President Joseph Biden and his wife, Jill.

A number of Catholic clergy also were on hand, their black robes and purple and red sashes flapping in the wind.

Seventeen minutes after the plane bearing the flags of Vatican City and the United

INSIDE

Immigration activists make a plea to arriving pope. 5A

Faithful wait along motorcade route for glimpse of Francis. 5A

States taxied down the runway, the pontiff stepped through the jet doorway and waved. A cheer went up from the crowd of several hundred onlookers as the pope, wearing a simple white cassock and plain black shoes, descended the stairs for a red carpet greeting.

"We love Francis! Yes we do!" the crowd chanted. "We love Francis! How about you?"

After a handshake with Obama, the president, the pope and their entourages walked to a hangar, where the leader of the free world and the head of the world's 1.2 billion Roman Catholics met

See POPE, 5A

For live coverage of the pope's visit, a photo gallery and more, go to TCPalm.com



CHINA'S XI ARRIVES

Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Washington state Tuesday for a visit to the U.S. that will include talks on how U.S. and Chinese experts and businesses can collaborate on nuclear energy, smarter electricity use and other clean technologies.

The visit comes a year after Xi and President Barack Obama announced their nations would cooperate to fight climate change.

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87°/71°
Rain: 20%
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