

## DeVos pledges not to undo public education, pushes school choice

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a sometimes contentious confirmation hearing, education secretary pick Betsy DeVos pledged Tuesday not to dismantle public education and said she wasn't selected for the job simply because of her wealthy family's generous contributions to the Republican Party.



DeVos

Sen. Patty Murray of Washington state, the top Democrat on the Senate Health, Labor, Education and Pension Committee, asked DeVos point blank to pledge that she would not seek to privatize public schools or take money away from them.

DeVos, who has spent more than two decades advocating for charter schools and school choice, promised to work to address "the needs of all parents and students."

Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., a former education secretary, expressed confidence that DeVos is an "excellent" choice for the job. "She is on the side of our children," he said.

But as other Republicans praised President-elect Donald

Trump's pick, Democrats grilled her on a range of issues from child care to students with disabilities and making public colleges and universities tuition-free.

Asked outright by Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont if she got the job because of her family's political contributions, DeVos said: "As a matter of fact I do think that there would be that possibility. I have worked very hard on behalf of parents and children for the last almost 30 years."

On tuition-free public colleges and universities, DeVos said: "I think we also have to consider the fact that there is nothing in life that is truly free. Somebody is going to pay for it."

She skirted Sanders' question on whether she would support making child care free or much more affordable for low-income families as is the case in many countries around the world, saying only that she feels strongly about "parents having an opportunity for child care for their children."

## UK's May calls for a 'clean Brexit'

LONDON (AP) — Britain's future outside the European Union became much clearer Tuesday: It's so long to the single market, goodbye to the European Court of Justice and farewell to the freedom of movement for workers.

In a long-awaited speech, Prime Minister Theresa May finally revealed the U.K.'s hand as it prepares to start EU exit talks. She said the U.K. wants to free itself from EU governance and stop paying millions into its coffers, but still remain friends, allies and tariff-free trading partners with the soon-to-be 27 nation bloc.

"We want to buy your goods and services, sell you ours, trade with you as freely as possible, and work with one another to make sure we are all safer, more secure and more prosperous through continued friendship," May said in a speech to diplomats and dignitaries beneath the gilded paintwork and chandeliers of a Georgian London mansion.

"You will still be welcome in this country as we hope our citizens will be welcome in yours," she said.

Pro-Brexit British politicians praised the speech, and the pound rallied from recent lows as May provided more details of the path ahead for



AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth, pool  
Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May smiles as she arrives to deliver a speech on leaving the European Union at Lancaster House in London, Tuesday.

the split with the EU — and vowed that Britain would remain "a great global trading nation" open to business and talent from around the world.

Others called May's vision wildly ambitious, like a divorcing couple who hope to remain best friends, share the kids and keep each other's front door keys.

"This is rather like a divorce rather than 'friends.' And then the question is, divorces can be handled very well or very, very badly," said Tony Travers, director of British government studies at the London School of Economics.

Travers said Britain was hoping its friends in the EU will say "let's make it gentle, let's not — as with a bad

divorce — give all the money to the lawyers."

In her 40-minute address, May said Britain would leave the EU single market of some 500 million people, but "seek the greatest possible access to it through a new, comprehensive, bold and ambitious free trade agreement."

She said there would be no attempt to cling to bits of EU membership. Britain will "bring an end to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice in Britain," May said. It also will impose controls on the number of people coming to Britain from EU member countries, abandoning the bloc's principle of free movement.

May promised for the first time that Britain's Parliament

would be able to vote on the final deal reached between Britain and the EU, likely in 2019. However, she didn't say what would happen should lawmakers reject the agreement.

The speech received mixed reactions within the EU, whose leaders largely lament Britain's decision to leave.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the speech had "created a little bit more clarity about the British plans." French far-right leader Marine Le Pen of the National Front described it as "courageous" and respecting the will of the British people.

European Council President Donald Tusk described it on Twitter as a "sad process, surrealistic times but at least more realistic announcement." He said the 27 other EU nations were "united and ready to negotiate" once Britain formally starts the two-year process of talks by invoking Article 50 of the EU's key treaty.

In his final daily press briefing before the change in U.S. administrations, White House press secretary Josh Earnest called on these "critically important American allies" to engage with each other in a way "that's as transparent as possible."

## HAMLEY: Woodfield has 30 days to amend, resubmit lawsuit

Continued from 1A she needed more time to rule on Woodfield's third claim — expelling Pearce due to bad acts. The judge in a Jan. 11 letter to attorneys said she dismissed the claim.

Hampton stated Woodfield did not demonstrate how the allegations he made against Pearce related to any of the four Hamley businesses.

"There are no allegations of ultimate facts showing how the alleged wrongful conduct adversely or materially affected any particular LLC," Hampton wrote. "Nor are there any allegations how a material breach of a specific organization or operating agreement made it not reasonably practicable

to carry on the business of a specific LLC."

The judge concluded: "I find that plaintiff has not stated ultimate facts sufficient to constitute a claim for expulsion."

Still, Hampton allowed Woodfield 30 days to amend the lawsuit and try again.

The *East Oregonian* tried to seek comment from Woodfield and his lawyer, Steven J. Joseph of La Grande, but they did not immediately return messages.

Pearce said the dismissal "breaks up the ice jam" to what he has been trying to do for months — buy out Woodfield's interest in Hamley's. But, Pearce added, he would wait for Woodfield to make the first move.

## BUS: City expects slow ridership build

Continued from 1A

riders the first day and 20 on the second, but driver Ron Myers said things slowed down a little Friday after the snow days, likely because people weren't sure if it was running.

Myers, a lifelong Hermiston resident with decades of truck and bus driving experience, said he was pleased to be assigned the HART route. He said he was looking forward to driving on bare roads once the weather warms up, and to not having large piles of snow in front of many of the stops. For now cars have to wait behind him when there is not enough room to pull over without getting stuck in the snow, and the routes have been running about 10 minutes late.

If the bus gets to a stop early, it won't leave until the appointed time on the schedule, but if it is running late and no one is standing near the white and red marker at the stop, the driver will only pull over for a few seconds.

Most people didn't seem to mind a few extra minutes waiting if it saved them a long walk across town. On Friday morning Jason Cook of Pendleton got on at Fiesta Foods. He said he sometimes rides the Hermiston Hopper bus from Pendleton to Hermiston in order to shop or visit friends, but in the past he has had to walk from the Hermiston Hopper stop off Orchard Avenue to

## Hermiston to ask for bigger slice of county transportation pie

As Hermiston starts its new bus program, the city is still running its taxi ticket program for senior and disabled residents.

The program subsidizes rides from approved taxi services — currently Umatilla Cab Company — by allowing people to buy a \$2-per-ride ticket at city hall while the city reimburses the cab company for the rest of the cost of the ride.

At the Special Transportation Advisory Committee on Feb. 6 at 1:30 p.m. at the Umatilla County Courthouse, the city plans to ask Umatilla County for an increase in grant money to help support the program.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said a coordinated human services plan put together by the county recently showed that Pendleton and Milton-Freewater were providing fewer "special transportation"

rides for seniors and disabled residents than Hermiston but were getting three times as much money.

According to Morgan, Hermiston currently gets \$27,000 a year from the county, with the Hermiston Senior Center and Good Shepherd Health Care System's Carevan program getting another combined \$25,000. The city of Pendleton gets about \$87,000. Hermiston plans to ask that the city's grant be increased to \$55,000, which Morgan said still works out to 20 percent less per ride than Pendleton.

Morgan said in the past one of the reasons given for not giving more money to the city of Hermiston has been that the city's taxi program is limited to city residents, so the new grant application includes a proposal for expanding the program outside of city limits.

## ICE: High winds expected to batter Oregon coastline

Continued from 1A into the Columbia River Gorge could get up to an inch, the National Weather Service said.

Ice was disrupting and delaying public transportation around Portland on Tuesday evening, transportation officials said. Officials were urging Portland residents to avoid travel if possible.

A high wind warning was also in effect along the Oregon and Washington coasts, with gusts of up to 75 mph predicted on headlands and open beaches in some locations.

Flights were also delayed at Portland International Airport due to icy conditions.

Oregon has been pummeled by snow and below-freezing temperatures for days, but a warming trend starting Wednesday could mean flooding later in the week.

That would be another problem for newly sworn in Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, who has fielded angry questions on Twitter about why Portland streets are still caked with a thick layer of ice a week after a storm dumped 10 inches of snow on the city.

At a news conference Tuesday convened to discuss a new homeless shelter, Wheeler also spent time talking about the city's response to the storm.

"I'm not here to make excuses. I think we can do better," he said, adding that he wanted to review the response.

An incoming weather system was spreading freezing rain across a broad swath of the Cascades,



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