

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2019



RAIN LIKELY
High, 50. Low, 43. > B6
seattletimes.com/weather

The Seattle Times

WINNER OF 10 PULITZER PRIZES

INDEPENDENT AND LOCALLY OWNED FOR MORE THAN 122 YEARS

SEATTLETIMES.COM

\$1.50

Mueller disputes accuracy of BuzzFeed's report on Cohen

STORY ALLEGES TRUMP TOLD HIS LAWYER TO LIE

Account differs from what a source told New York Times

By MARY CLARE JALONICK AND ERIC TUCKER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Special counsel Robert Mueller's office Friday issued a rare public statement disputing the accuracy of BuzzFeed News' report that said President Donald Trump's former longtime lawyer and fixer told Mueller the

president directed him to lie to Congress.

BuzzFeed, citing two unidentified law-enforcement officials, reported late Thursday that Trump directed Michael Cohen to lie to Congress about a Moscow real-estate project and that Cohen told Mueller that Trump personally instructed him to lie about the timing of the project.

The report said Mueller's investigators learned about Trump's directive "through interviews with multiple witnesses from the Trump Organization and internal company emails, text messages, and a cache of other documents."

The report said Cohen acknowledged Trump's instructions when he was interviewed by the Mueller team.

A proven effort by Trump to pressure a witness to commit perjury would be one of the most damning revelations so far in the investigation into Russia's attempts to sabotage the 2016 presidential election and could be the cornerstone of a case that the president obstructed justice to keep investigators at bay.

One person familiar with Cohen's testimony to the special counsel's prosecutors told The New York Times that Cohen never implied the

president had pressured him to lie to Congress.

The statement by Mueller's office Friday night didn't cite any specific errors. In it, the special counsel's spokesman, Peter Carr, said, "BuzzFeed's description of specific statements to the special counsel's office, and characterization of documents and testimony obtained by this office, regarding Michael Cohen's congressional testimony are not accurate."

The statement was unusual because it appeared to be the first time the special counsel had publicly challenged the facts of a news-

See > **COHEN, A6**

\$2 debt may evict Seattle family

FEDERAL VOUCHER FALLS JUST SHY OF RENT TOTAL

Mother says she didn't receive payment notice

By VIANNA DAVILA
Seattle Times staff reporter

The outstanding rent Keilani Luxmore owed on her Seattle apartment for the month of December wouldn't buy you a cup of coffee, a gallon of gasoline or even bus fare in this city.

But Luxmore's failure to pay \$2 last month means she is facing eviction from the home she shares with her three young children, in addition to the possible loss of the federal Section 8 voucher that covers most of her rent.

It could also result in a return to a homeless shelter for Luxmore and her children, ages 3 and under.

"I can't take care of my three kids without my Section 8 voucher," said Luxmore, 23, as she wept, standing in a hallway of the King County Courthouse on Thursday, awaiting a hearing on the eviction proceeding. "I just want my kids to be safe." Her two sons, ages 3 years and 18 months, played around her as she cried to her attorney in frustration. Her 7-month-old daughter

See > **EVICTON, A5**

Among the greatest of great whites



JUAN OLIPHANT / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ocean Ramsey, a diver and shark advocate, is dwarfed by a 20-foot great white shark — one of the largest ever recorded — off the shore of Oahu, Hawaii, earlier this week. Images and videos of the behemoth, rumored to be a legendary shark nicknamed Big Blue, have riveted viewers on social media. Ramsey has pushed for years for a bill that would ban the killing of sharks and rays in Hawaii. > SEE STORY, A3

PROJECT HOMELESS

Will Edgar Martinez make the Hall of Fame in his 10th and final time on the ballot? Track his progress up until announcement day.

ONLY ON SEATTLETIMES.COM



st.news/EdgarHOF19

Washington wants to level the playing field in high-school athletics

WEALTHIER SCHOOLS WIN MORE CHAMPIONSHIPS

WIAA weighs socioeconomics in new classification proposal

By EVAN WEBECK
Seattle Times staff

Before every school year, George Foster holds a meeting with all of the coaches at Rainier Beach High School. It's pretty standard stuff, the Vikings' athletic director says, with one exception.

"You know our athletic department doesn't have any money," he tells them. "So if you want anything, you're going to have to fundraise yourself."

Rainier Beach is situated in one of Seattle's least wealthy, most diverse neighborhoods, where census data shows people of color make up three-quarters of the population compared with one-third citywide. It's hung five state championship banners in the last decade and bred a dozen professional athletes since the 1980s. You could fill an NBA starting five with its alumni — or at least one heck of a backcourt. It's also in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, where the median income — \$34,745, according to the latest census data — is less than half that of the average Seattle

household.

But the number the Washington Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA), the state's governing body for high-school athletics, is interested in is 69.8. That's the percentage of Rainier Beach's 736 students who qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches, a common proxy measure for poverty. It's the highest number in the Metro League and 26 points above the state average of 43 percent.

Over the past decade, four of every five public schools that won state titles resided below that 43 percent figure. The average for championship teams was 29 percent — 13 points below the state average.

Statewide, almost all high-school championships are won by students at wealthier, whiter schools. And the barriers to competition are increasing at ever earlier ages for low-income communities.

The WIAA believes it has found a socioeconomic factor that can help level the playing field.

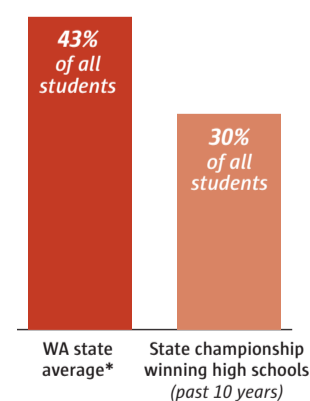
Under a new proposal, that 69.8 number would be used as a type of offset against the school's enrollment. In this case, it would mean a 26 percent reduction in the enrollment figure used to determine whether the school plays at Class 4A, 3A, 2A and so on. For every percentage point more than 10 points above the 43

See > **WIAA, A5**

State champions vs. state average

Overall, 43 percent of Washington students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches. But at schools that win state championships, the number is lower.

STUDENTS QUALIFYING FOR FREE OR REDUCED-COST LUNCHES



*Based on all grade levels
Sources: Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, Seattle Times analysis
EMILY M. ENG / THE SEATTLE TIMES

THE NUTS and bolts of the WIAA classification proposal > **SPORTS, C1**

Schultz considers entering presidential race in 2020 as an independent, aides say

FORMER STARBUCKS CEO

Trump's foes worry that a 3-way contest would help president win re-election

By MICHAEL SCHERER
The Washington Post

Advisers to former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz have been exploring the possibility of launching an independent bid for the White House in 2020, according to two people who have been informed of the discussions.

The entry of a high-profile billionaire Democrat outside the traditional party structure would add an unpredictable dynamic to the increasingly sprawling campaign to deny President Donald Trump a second term.

Trump's opponents, including many Democratic strategists, have expressed concerns that a serious three-way race in November would divide the Democratic vote in a way that helps Trump win re-election, either directly by denying Democrats in states they would otherwise have won or by shifting the ultimate decision to the U.S. House.

A former Ohio governor, John Kasich, a 2016 Republican candi-

date for president, is also looking at the possibility of running as an independent candidate. Neither Kasich nor Schultz has settled on a decision.

"Anyone thinking of running for president as an independent would have to think really hard about splitting the anti-incumbent, anti-Trump vote, and just playing the spoiler role and re-electing Trump," said Howard Wolfson, a former strategist for Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign.

He now advises former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is considering his own presidential campaign, as a Democrat. "I think that would be a terrible legacy for anyone to leave," Wolfson said.

Schultz, who has a net worth of about \$3.3 billion and describes himself as a "lifelong Democrat," has not said publicly whether he will mount a presidential campaign and

See > **SCHULTZ, A6**

© 2019 Seattle Times Co.
Our newsprint contains recycled fiber, and inks are reused.



7 59423 26000 2