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# The Kentucky Standard

SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025

## NCS Local Planning Committee begins new facilities process

Outside facilitator explains new data, guidelines

BY KATELYN NORRIS  
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After four years, Nelson County Schools has once again begun the process of revising its District Facility Plan, with the Local Planning Committee meeting earlier this week.

On Wednesday, all 19 members of the LPC convened for their meeting as they begin the steps of crafting or revising the

DFP. This year, the Nelson County Board of Education voted to have an outside facilitator help the meetings stay on track through the process — James Neihof with Green River Region Education Cooperative was selected.

Prior to Wednesday's meeting, a new community representative was selected by the BOE and two new teacher representatives were also added. The initial representatives resided outside of the NCS district and were asked to be replaced by the Kentucky Department of Education.

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PETER W. ZUBATY/The Kentucky Standard

Nelson County Sheriff Ramon Pineiroa, second from right, and Chief Deputy Brandon Bryan, far left, appeared in Circuit Court Thursday for arraignment for allegedly violating whistleblower laws. Both men plead not guilty. Michael Niemietz, second from left, will defend Bryan, and Steve Romines, far right, is representing Pineiroa. Their trial date is Oct. 27.

## Sheriff and chief deputy to face Oct. 27 trial date

Pineiroa, Bryan plead not guilty to official misconduct, other charges

BY PETER W. ZUBATY  
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Nelson County Sheriff Ramon Pineiroa and his chief deputy, Brandon Bryan, entered not

guilty pleas in Nelson Circuit Court Thursday, waiving formal arraignment in the whistleblower case against them.

Both men face felony charges for allegedly discriminating against deputies Will Purdom and Ian Justice in their roles with the Greater Hardin County Narcotics Task Force, and for abuse of public trust, among other charges.

Special Judge Elise Spainhour,

of the 55th Judicial Circuit covering Bullitt County, will hear the case, and Bullitt Commonwealth's Attorney Amanda Hernandez Troutman has been appointed special prosecutor. Steve Romines will represent Pineiroa, while Michael Niemietz is handling Bryan's defense. Det. Blake Owens of Kentucky State Police Post 4 is investigating the case.

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## Nelson County Board examines district athletics, opportunities

ATC programs looking for temporary homes

BY KATELYN NORRIS  
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Nelson County Schools took time to reevaluate countywide athletics and extracurriculars following Tuesday night's outside audit of its programs.

Mike LaFavers was brought on by the district

earlier this year in January as Program Consultant to audit NCS programs for students. He said his goal through the audit was areas of strength and growth for the county, but also make recommendations and support a framework for district discussion.

LaFaver emphasized he does not make any decisions regarding the district's program, but rather recommendations.

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## Downs steps down from NCEDA post

BY STAFF REPORT  
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For the second time in the past year, the Nelson County Economic Development Agency is seeking a new leader.

John Downs, who took over the post as NCEDA President last May, is resigning, a Thursday press release announced. Downs was named to the post in April 2024, taking over for longtime economic development chief Kim Huston, who retired last spring after 22 years.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, we want to thank John for his contributions during his time with



John Downs

NCEDA," Board Chairman Bill McCloskey said in a press release. "His efforts in fostering business expansion and job creation have been valuable, and we wish him the best in his future endeavors."

Downs, a banker, also has experience in planning and zoning and has served on various county boards in the past.

Downs' resignation goes into effect April 25. The press release said the NCEDA Board will begin the search for a new president "in the near future to ensure a seamless transition in leadership."

## Bardstown Schools approves expanding tech plan

BY KATELYN NORRIS  
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Each year, BCS takes a look at top priorities for its school's technology with the District Technology Director Roman Hardin. During this year's district technology plan presentation, Hardin envisioned the tech plan as two-year endeavor, stating this would take time to expand and build.

Hardin said a lot of their focus will be on fully utilizing the technology department's new space in the district's career and technical education building, Bardstown Polytechnic. The emphasis of the department within the heart of the building was to reinforce its connection with Bardstown Middle and Bardstown High.

"It has been a focus of ours to maximize that space," he said. "... We're taking up the space that we need to take up, but we want to fill that space in every way we possibly can. I'm going to need a little more time to do that."

Another critical aspect of the technology plan is continue to support BCS educators as they strive to effectively use technology — specifically in ways to improve student engagement and learning.

Hardin said a new technology career pathway is also being developed to connect students with hands-on learning opportunity for their future. He said the creation of the pathway will allow him to do more than he currently does with student internships.

Although, he did say his student interns have become more skilled in quickly repairing district Chromebooks — but he emphasized that is not all his students do.

"As far as integrating us into the Polytech building we're getting pretty integrated," he said. "They know where we're all the time. The signage has been fantastic. Everybody can find us now. We are now starting to have, just for the

first time, started having high school students come down turn their Chromebooks in there."

The district is committed to its one-to-one initiative, which ensures each student has access to a personal computer.

However, the big step forward in technology is artificial intelligence (AI), which Hardin said many teachers are already excited to begin utilizing.

He said they'll begin working with teachers to educate and determine what it's used for and how to use it properly. There are many more questions surrounding AI that anything else on the tech plan according to Hardin.

"We plan to fully develop how to utilize it as best we can here for student achievement," he said.

Bardstown Board of Education will meet next month for their regularly scheduled meeting on April 15 at noon at Bardstown Central Office.

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