

DFP

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Steven Ward with Studio Kremer highlighted a number of regulatory and semantic edits to the DFP during a review from KDE. Ward said KDE accepted the LPC proposal for the DFP in principle, but its edits were technical changes to the document.

Among the largest edits to the documents included specifying the proposed Career and Technical Education pathways that would reside in Old Kentucky Home Middle School. Ward said for both OKHMS and Bloomfield

Middle School, they were asked to receive approval from the Office of Career and Technical Education.

In the new draft of the facilities plan, OKHMS will be home to the Media Arts. The draft lists cinematography/video production, interactive media and graphic design as part of this pathway. Additionally, Pathway to Careers and Family Consumer Sciences were a part of the proposed CTE programs.

House Bill 678 gave school districts more discretion in how to treat priorities for facilities. Ward said because of this legislation, some projects listed as priority five in the previous draft were moved up to

priority one. This allowed other projects labeled as discretionary to be placed alongside the proposed large-scale renovations.

“What we recommend to you is it’s important to renovate what you’ve already got then it is to prioritize new construction,” Ward said.

The LPC approved the recommended revisions for the district’s DFP by a 16-1 vote.

After the approval, the DFP now moves forward to the Nelson County Board to act upon. The LPC will be reconvened only if the Board rejects the document or in cases of major revisions or amendments to the DFP.

If the Board chooses to take action on the DFP, there would be a public hearing open to all members of the community. This hearing would be advertised for two weeks leading up to the forum, if the BOE moves forward.

Wednesday’s meeting was also the final public forum for the LPC — with a handful of community members speaking. While all three of the night’s speakers thanked the LPC for their work, one brought up concerns about a disconnect between the parent and community members surveys and what the LPC said the community’s priorities were.

Late last month, the district released the results of the parent and community member survey online at ncsipc.com. The parent survey had results from families in every building in the district — the largest percentage being Bloomfield Middle School with 21%.

The top priority for parents across the district included their child having a choice in their academics (96%) and the opportunity to explore careers through coursework (93%). Additionally, 89% of parents are interested in their student receiving a variety of academic offerings and opportunities.

Community members said their highest priorities for students included them graduating prepared to enter the workforce or college (77%).

In previous meetings, based upon feedback from those speaking in guest comments, the LPC said top priority for the community was clear school feeder patterns, access and opportunity, community and belonging, data-informed decision making from the LPC and a focus on student and staff benefits.

The Nelson County Board of Education is scheduled to meet May 20 at 5:30 p.m. at Central Office.



Joseph Lawson (in wheelchair) and his father, Steven Lawson, enter the courtroom in February 2024 for a status hearing in Nelson County Circuit Court. The Lawsons are each charged with conspiracy to commit murder and complicity to tampering with physical evidence in the 2015 disappearance and presumed death of Crystal Rogers. Steven Lawson goes on trial on May 27, while Joseph Lawson and Brooks Houck — who is accused of Rogers’ murder — go on trial June 24.

Brooks Houck enters the courtroom in February 2024 for a status hearing. Houck is charged with murder in the 2015 disappearance and presumed death of his ex-girlfriend, Crystal Rogers. His trial is set for June 24, 2025.



FEMA

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Disaster Recovery Center in Nelson County.

“We anticipate the DRC will open soon at the Boston Community Center, and we’ll share the exact date as soon as it’s confirmed,” Metcalf said.

Through the Individual Assistance program, residents can get support in the form of temporary housing, home repairs, personal property loss, medical and dental expenses, and other serious disaster-related needs.

“President Donald J. Trump has granted a major disaster declaration for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, triggering the release of federal funds to help people recover from the severe storms, straight-line winds, tornadoes, flooding, landslides and mudslides that began April 2, 2025, and continuing,” a press release by FEMA reads.

On Wednesday, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear

announced that the Trump administration has approved his April 28 and May 5 requests to add Individual Assistance for 24 more counties affected by the widespread flooding that took place last month. The number of counties approved for Individual Assistance is currently 37. The disaster declaration number is FEMA-4864-DR.

“Great news — 24 more counties have been approved for Individual Assistance by FEMA following the April severe weather,” Beshear said. “This process takes time, and we will continue to request more counties be added until everyone affected receives the support they need and deserve.”

Individual Assistance has now been approved for Breckenridge, Bullitt, Calloway, Daviess, Garrard, Grayson, Hancock, Hart, Henderson, Henry, Jefferson, LaRue, Lincoln, McLean, Meade, Muhlenberg, Nelson, Ohio, Oldham, Pendleton, Powell, Trimble, Warren and Web-

ster counties in addition to those of Anderson, Butler, Carroll, Christian, Clark, Franklin, Hardin, Hopkins, Jessamine, McCracken, Mercer, Owen and Woodford, which were approved April 25. Assistance for more counties may be requested through an amendment if assessments warrant.

Beshear thanked President Trump, Office of Homeland Security Kristi Noem and everyone at the federal level who helped acquire this additional help for Kentuckians.

How to Apply: Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated counties can begin applying for assistance at DisasterAssistance.gov, by calling the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at 800-621-FEMA (3362) or by using the FEMA App.

Anyone using a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or other similar service, can give FEMA the number for that service.

When applying for assistance, make sure:

- You upload your documents online via the FEMA App or by visiting DisasterAssistance.gov.
- Your damaged home is your primary residence.
- You haven’t received assistance for the same losses from another source, including insurance.
- You are able to be reached by FEMA at the contact information you provide in the application.

If you disagree with FEMA’s decision, you may appeal:

- Online at DisasterAssistance.gov.
- In person at a Disaster

Recovery Centers, which will open in coming days.

- Or by mail or fax.

As the rains began that eventually led to widespread flooding, Beshear declared a state of emergency, activated the State Emergency Operations Center and the state’s price gouging laws to protect Kentuckians from overpriced goods and services as they clean up and recover from the severe weather. The price gouging prohibition was renewed April 17.

Following the storms, Beshear urged local officials to start the federal Individual Assistance and Public Assistance damage

assessments and asked Kentuckians who experienced storm damage to take photographs before cleaning up and to report the damages to their local emergency management officials.

Hutchins said those affected by the disaster should act quickly.

“Don’t wait. If you’ve been impacted, apply as soon as possible,” he said. “Help is available, and we want everyone who qualifies to receive the support they need.”

Further updates about local recovery resources can be found on the Nelson County Emergency Management Facebook page.

CAMERAS

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In prior court appearances by Steven Lawson — as well as alleged co-conspirators Joseph Lawson, his son, and Brooks Houck, who is accused of Rogers’ murder — Simms limited TV news media to only one camera in the courtroom, forcing Louisville and Lexington market stations and other stations to pool their resources and share video footage.

“This Court has also previously entered an Order to prevent courtroom distractions associated with the broadcasting of these proceedings,” Simms wrote. “In particular, that Order restricted media to one camera in the courtroom and it prohibited livestreaming. However, this Court has observed individuals sitting in the media area who have been videoing the proceedings on iPhones and iPads. To further complicate matters, there has been coverage on social media platforms, with this Court receiving complaints about the proceedings being livestreamed.”

By banning electronic devices, this would also prevent the jury from viewing details about the trial on TV or social media, and to avoid having to sequester the jury.

Also, with Joseph Lawson and Brooks Houck going on trial June 24, it would prevent witnesses from hearing the testimony of other witnesses.

“Unfortunately, this Court and trial counsel have profound nervousness that these witnesses would be able to observe the testimonies of prior witnesses if recordings are allowed at this trial proceeding,” Simms wrote. “To further complicate matters, some of these same witnesses will likely be called to testify at a subsequent

trial involving (Steven) Lawson’s co-defendants.”

Houck is charged with murder and tampering with physical evidence, while Steven and Joseph Lawson are charged with conspiracy to murder and complicity to tampering with physical evidence. All three men are currently incarcerated.

Simms consulted with the Administrative Office of the Courts Security Manager Darren Allen, who recommended to the judge to ban cameras during the trial.

The judge issued other restrictions in Tuesday’s order, such as:

- Public and media members would be allowed to observe the jury selection process on closed-circuit TV in Courtroom D on the second floor of the Warren County Judicial Center
- No disclosing of juror identities
- No livestreaming, video or audio recording by any individual in the courtroom gallery — anyone entering the courtroom with any electronic recording device such as laptops, cell phones or cameras will risk having those devices confiscated by court security personnel
- No audible outbursts are permitted in reaction to any testimony or attorney statements during the trial.

In addition, Simms said in the interest of avoiding improper influencing of the jury that there would be no clothing permitted pertaining to the case, as well as buttons, signage, banners and posters pertaining to the case, and no pictures of the victim, defendants or anyone else associated with the case.

Media will be permitted to report on the proceedings in the courtroom, so long as that reporting takes place outside of the courtroom. There will also be no designated media room.



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