

PUC approves new area code for 502 region

BY EAGLE POST STAFF

A new area code will be added to north-central Kentucky, joining the current 502 area code to ensure enough phone numbers remain available for residents and businesses, the Kentucky Public Service Commission announced Thursday.

According to a news release from the PSC, the commission has approved an all-services distributed overlay for the 502 service region. The change will allow current customers to keep their phone numbers and the 502 area code, but all local calls will eventually require dialing the full ten-digit number.

The need for a new area code became apparent when the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) projected that the current supply of numbers in the 502 area would be exhausted by the third quarter of 2027. NANPA filed for relief with the PSC on Oct. 14, 2024, leading to the current plan’s approval.

The PSC release said the new area code, which has not yet been assigned, will cover the same geographic region as the 502 area code. Created in 1947 as one of the original area codes, the 502 code now serves north-central Kentucky, including Louisville and Frankfort.

The full order, a video of public hearings, and additional records related to the case are available at psc.ky.gov, under case number 2024-00333.

Implementation of the new area code will follow a 13-month rollout schedule. Network preparation is set to begin June 1, 2026. A permissive dialing period—where calls can be made using either seven or ten digits—will begin Dec. 7, 2026. Mandatory ten-digit dialing will start on June 7, 2027, and the first numbers with the new area code could be issued as early as July 5, 2027.

The PSC will announce the new area code in a future release once it is assigned by NANPA, the release said.

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The Kentucky PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It oversees more than 1,100 utility providers across the state.

HIGHLIGHTS

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“We just gave it a big face lift,” he said. “We are excited about welcoming our students back to Millbrooke.”

Indian Hills Elementary has some work done on their playground and restrooms. Freedom Elementary has new floors; and Crofton Elementary has a new media center.

Work is still being done on the

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Early Learning Center to add seven new classes.

“That is the first phase, we would like to do a total of 11 eventually, but our goal is to have seven additional classrooms at MLK Early Learning Center by Oct. 1,” he said.

Bentzel said the district is excited about getting back into their routines and welcoming students back.

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CCPS

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year is when the district began implementing interventions and saw a 29.85% decrease in behavior referrals.

“This has been monitored for consistency and sustainability,” Stevenson said. “Last year was the first year we saw behavior decrease and our learning environment scores increase.”

When comparing the five learning environment score categories from 23-24 and 24-25 they found positive changes. The categories are creating an environment of respect and rapport; establishing a culture of learning; managing classroom procedures; managing student behavior and organizing physical space.

On creating an environment of respect and rapport, Stevenson said they stayed the same at 3.1, which is accomplished.

“We have been able to sustain that school this year,” she said.

On establishing a culture of learning, the school district sustained the score at 2.9, which Stevenson pointed out was only a tenth of a point away from accomplished. For managing classroom procedures, the district went up a tenth of a point to reach the accomplished area.

Managing student behavior also increased a tenth of a point, which kept the district in the accomplished area. Organizing physical space received 3.3 from a 3.2, which is accomplished.

“This is the second year in a row we have been able to decrease our referrals and increase our learning

environments,” said Stevenson.

When it came to interventions, she said school counselors conducted 6,803 one-on-one meetings with students the past school year; and completed 488 small group/classroom sessions within the schools.

“Looking at lessons they taught within that schools consisted of coping strategies, bullying, self-care, self-regulation, anger management and so on,” Stevenson said. “Just depending on what that school needed on their data.”

Between the school based therapists, Mt. Comprehensive and Pennyroyal Mental Health, they have seen over 1,000 students. They have done 127 suicide screeners and 140 threat screeners.

PASS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Stevenson moved on to the the Positive Approach to Student Success (PASS) Program, which the board approved in a previous meeting.

“Lee Major was accepted for the supervisor position and we are incorporating that program as we speak,” she said. “This has positive behavior support, scientific based research practices, we talked about wanting the students in the mainstream instead of enclosed all the time.”

The program will identify students who are currently at-risk, based on data and who have already been through tier 1 and tier 2 and were not successful.

“As students progress through the program and their behavior improves they will be able to exit the program,” Stevenson explained.

Superintendent Chris

Bentzel explained that this program is only going on at Hopkinsville High School this year “to get a grass roots process started so it transfers to the new high school in 2026.”

“This program is something really important and valuable for our students who are not the typical students,” he added. “We have needed this for a very long time.”

They school district did receive grant money to help pay for the program.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TRAINING

Stevenson moved on to the new threat assessment training program the school district is utilizing: EQUUS.

She said the district was granted the program at no cost for three years through the West Kentucky Safe Funds Grant.

“This is a wonderful program that is going to maintain everything from threat screeners, threat assessment safety plans, safety drills,” she said. “All of this will now be located in one location.”

She said having everything in one location will allow school teams to track a student’s history, coordinate between mental health and safety initiatives and ensure that every relevant piece of information is readily available when making important decisions.

Stevenson said the threat assessment team consists of the administrator, the nurse, the School Resource Officer, the school counselor and school based therapist.

She said they are excited for the upcoming school year.


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