

Back-to-School Blues: Easing the Transition for Kids, Parents & Educators

Submitted by Shovonne Williams, Assistant Principal, Youth Villages

As students and teachers return to classrooms across Kentucky, the excitement of a new school year is often accompanied by something a little less cheerful: anxiety.

Whether it's a kindergartener stepping into school for the first time or a high school freshman navigating a sea of upperclassmen, the so-called "back-to-school blues" are real, and they affect parents just as much as kids. New teachers, unfamiliar hallways, shifting routines - it's a lot.

Top causes of back-to-school anxiety:

- Fear of the unknown: New teachers, classmates and routines
- Lack of preparation: Missing open house events can heighten stress
- Social pressures: Especially around lunch and fitting in
- Parental anxiety: Kids often mirror the emotional state of their caregivers

But there are ways we can ease the transition and set our kids up for a confident, calm start.

Start the routine early. One of the best things you can do is ease into the school routine before the first day. That means gradually adjusting bedtimes, practicing morning routines and even doing a dry run of the school commute. Don't wait until the night



before to enforce bedtime - start a week or two early so the change doesn't feel so abrupt.

Don't skip the open house. If your school offers an open house, make it a priority. Walking the halls, meeting the teacher and seeing where they'll sit can help kids visualize their day and reduce the fear of the unknown.

Manage your own anxiety. Kids are emotional sponges. If you're frantic, they'll feel it. Have you ever had mornings where you are spiraling inside but kept a calm exterior for the kids' sake? Modeling calm and confidence helps them feel secure. Take a breath, plan ahead and give yourself grace.

Normalize their feelings. Let your child know it's OK to feel nervous. Encourage them to talk about their worries and listen to their concerns without judgment. Share your own stories - like how walking into the cafeteria on the first day of school used to make you feel. That kind of connection can be incredibly reassuring.

Help them find their people. Social anxiety is a big part of back-to-school stress,

especially in middle and high school. Encourage your child to coordinate with friends about lunch periods or meeting spots. If they're walking into a new school, remind them it's OK to sit alone at first - others will join. Sometimes just having a plan makes all the difference.

For educators: Build rapport first. To our fellow educators out there: before diving into academics, take time to

build relationships. Kids need to feel seen and safe before they can learn. Whether it's through creative "get to know you" projects or simply being transparent about your own challenges, connection is key.

Community matters. Back-to-school events, supply drives and backpack giveaways aren't just feel-good moments -they're lifelines for families. When communities show up, kids feel supported.

Starting fresh. The start of a new school year is a chance for a fresh start - for students, parents and educators alike. Let's meet it with empathy, preparation and a little bit of grace. Because when we ease anxiety, we make room for growth, joy and learning.

Public Hearing Notice

To all interested citizens of Bracken County, Kentucky:

The Kentucky Department of Local Government (DLG) is accepting application material under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The City of Augusta, located in Bracken County, intends to apply for assistance to upgrade and improve certain elements of the Augusta Water Treatment Plant, and possibly also the existing groundwater wells. The plant and well sites are aged and in need of various improvements to equipment and mechanical that may include, but are not limited to pumps and valves, filters, mechanical, building improvements, and other such components of the plant and wells.

The City of Augusta will hold a public hearing on Monday, August 24, 2026, at 10:30 am at the Augusta City Office Building, 219 Main Street, Augusta, KY 41002. The purpose of this hearing is to obtain views on housing and community development needs, review proposed activities, review the proposed application, and solicit public comments. Technical assistance is available to help groups representing low- and moderate-income persons in developing proposals.

The following information concerning the CDBG program is available for public inspection at Buffalo Trace Area Development District, 301 Government Street, Suite 300, Maysville, KY 41056 Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm; or the Augusta City Office, 219 Main Street, Augusta, KY 41002, Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

A. Amount of funds available and range of activities that may be undertaken.

B. Estimated amounts of funds proposed to be used for activities benefiting persons of low and moderate income.

C. Plans for minimizing displacement of persons as a result of activities associated with CDBG funds and plans for providing assistance to those persons to be actually displaced as a result of CDBG funded activities.

D. Records regarding the past use of CDBG funds.

E. A summary of other important program requirements.

Comments on Application

A copy of the CDBG application material will be on file at the City of Augusta office, 219 Main Street, Augusta, KY 41002, and the Buffalo Trace Area Development District, 201 Government Street, Suite 300, Maysville, KY 41056, for citizens' review and comment during regular business hours from August 13, 2026, through August 31, 2026. Comments on the proposed application may be submitted to the attention of John Laycock, Mayor, City of Augusta, 219 Main Street, Augusta, KY 41002, until the close of business on August 31, 2026.

Non-Discrimination Clause

The City of Augusta does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability. The city provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation, including auxiliary aids and services, to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs and activities. Any persons requiring special needs assistance or services for non-English speaking residents should contact Kristie Dodge at (606) 564-6894 at least five days prior to the meeting. The TDD number for the hearing impaired is 1/800-648-6057.

NOTE: Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Contacts

Department for the Blind 1/877/KYBLIND <https://kcc.ky.gov/Office-for-theBlind/Pages/default.aspx>

American Printing House 1/800/223-1839 www.aph.org

Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing 1/800/372-2907 www.kcdhh.org

For Interpreter Directory http://oop.ky.gov/Public_Dir.aspx

State Relay TDD Number 1/800/648-6057

Augusta Independent to Begin School August 24

Augusta Independent students will return to the classroom on August 24. All families need to complete the online registration by August 21.

Returning Families

Returning Augusta Independent families need to complete the annual online enrollment update in the Parent Portal.

The link to the Parent Portal is kyedel.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/augusta.jsp. For those families who live out of district, you must complete this in addition to the annual nonresident application form.

In order to access the online enrollment forms, parents must have a parent portal account. If an account is needed, please submit the online request form at www.augusta.kyschools.us.

The link is under the Parents drop-down menu. Once logged into the portal, click "More" on the left side of the page. A list of links should open and the bottom link should be "Online Registration."

New Families

New families will go to kyedel.infinitecampus.org/campus/OLR-Login/augusta. It will instruct the parent to enter an e-mail address, and a link to register will then be e-mailed.

If you live outside the Augusta Independent School District, families should first complete the nonresident form before enrolling.

If you have any questions, please contact the school at 606-756-2105.

submitted

Bracken County Agricultural Advancement Council Sealed Bid Notice

The Bracken County Agricultural Advancement Council is accepting sealed bids for the sale of its used cattle handling equipment, including cattle gates and a head chute (trailer not included).

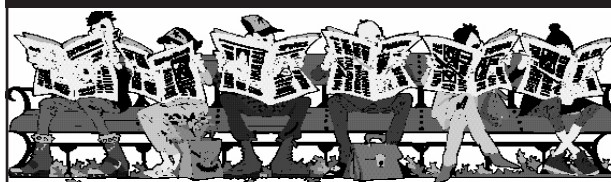
The equipment is available for public inspection at the Bracken County Extension Office during normal business hours. Anyone interested is encouraged to stop by and view the equipment before submitting a bid.

A minimum bid of \$1,000 has been established. While bids meeting or exceeding the minimum are preferred, the Council reserves the right to consider all offers and to accept or reject any and all bids in the best interest of the Council.

Sealed bids should be submitted to the Bracken County Extension Office by August 31st at 8:00 am. The Bracken County Agricultural Advancement Council reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

For additional information, please contact the Bracken County Extension Office at 606-735-2141.

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BRACKEN COUNTY SCHOOLS BUS ROUTES 2026-2027 UPDATED 8/5/2026

Bus #30 – Doug Horne

First Stop - Old Pea Ridge Road (6:20 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - AA Highway to #435 (Augusta-Minerva Rd.) - Williams Road - Maloney Road - Walton Pike - #2370 (Dutch Ridge) from AA Hwy. #19 to Brooksville - Fronks Lane and Daycare.

Bus #15 - Eddie Groves

First Stop - After intersection at #616, #875 to County Line (6:20 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Galbraith Rd, #352 (Garrison Rd.) - Kabler Mill Road - Licking Valley Estates - #352 to Parina Rd. - Parina Road - Case Ridge - Conrad Road - Brooksville Green Apartments.

Bus #21 - Ashleigh Dunn

First Stop - Intersection Sante Fe Rd and Campbell Lane (5:55 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Belmont Rd to Sante Fe (539) - Jacobs Road - Toadvine Road - 19 from Belmont to 165 - Old Oakland Road - Marshall Road - Oakland Road - Jett Road - Hamilton Road.

Bus #29 - Jerry Combess - Where assigned

First Stop (6:15 a.m.)

Bus #34 - Lisa Collins

First Stop - Big Run Salem (when required)

Roads Assigned - Hilton Lane (6:20 a.m.) - Salem Ridge Rd - Justice Dr - Courts Hill - Western Hills from Courts Hill to 10 - #1011 Perkins Ridge.

Bus #31 - Tom Lathem

First Stop - #616 (Silvey Road) (6:35 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Jett Estates - Hester Road - #875 (Bridgeville Rd from Germantown to 616), Tanyard Hill Road, Germantown Store, #10 to Hillsdale Road.

Bus #26 - Danny Teegarden

First Stop - Bottom of Milford Hill (6:25 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - 2897 Foster Chapel - Riley Mill Road - Ball Park to Moore Road - #19 from Harrison Co. line to Kelly Ridge.

Bus #41 - Lisa Beyersdoefer

First Stop - 875 (Mt. Zion Rd) (6:30 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Tallner Road - Augusta-Berlin (north end) - Shoftstall Road - Wagel Road - Mini Farms Road.

Bus #23 - Troy Staggs

First Stop - Eden Ridge (6:25 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Eden Ridge - Lower Snag Creek - Johnsville-Foster Rd. - Western Hills Rd. - Union Chapel Road - AA - 1159 from AA to High School. Afternoon: MS athletics to HS.

Bus #13 - James Hopp

First Stop - Willow Lenoxburg Rd (6:05 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - #10 - McCarty Ridge - McClanahan Road - Old Sparks Rd - Fords Ave - Cook Ridge Road.

Bus #20 - Jeff Rees

First Stop - Wrangling Run (6:35 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - #8 from Wrangling Run to Wellsburg-Walcott Road - Locust Creek - Ruf Road - Bradford Rd. - Walcott-Johnsville Rd. - Augusta Berlin Rd from AA to Bladeston. Afternoon: MS athletics to HS.

Bus #32 - Durinda Abercrombie

First Stop - Fegan Ridge (6:45 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - #10 from Hillsdale Rd. to Woodland Acres - Feagan Ridge (D Howard and D Maines Rd) - Thompson Ridge - Danahe Rd. - Vermillion Rd.- Doyles Lane - Delaney Road - Woodland Acres - Reservoir Lane - McNamara Lane - Michaels Lane - #10 from Hackett Ridge to E.B.'s.

Bus #14 - David Cummins

First Stop - New Zion Road (6:20 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - New Zion Road - Haley Ridge Rd. - Forest Hills Rd. - Dana's Place (only) - Cumminsville-Berlin Rd. - McCarty Rd - Elizabeth St. - Apartments.

Bus #16 - Garland Davis

First Stop - Augusta Dover Rd (6:40 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Dover-Minerva Rd. - Old Dover Rd. - City of Augusta (Hamilton Ave - Second St. - Main St. - Rt. #8) - #19 (Augusta Chatham) from #8 to AA Hwy. - Augusta-Chatham East - Valley High - Old #19, Shady Lane.

Bus #27 - Tammy Norris

First Stop - Pool Hill Rd (6:40 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Powell St - Howell Dr - Frankfort St - Willow St - Cooper Street - Don Galloway Dr - Woodward Ave - Garrett Ave - Grandview Dr - S. Bluegrass - Lincoln Ave - W. Miami St - Liberty St.

Bus #33 - Patrick Boone

First Stop - Lower Lenoxburg-Foster Rd (6:30 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - AA to Foster - Lower and Upper Lenoxburg Foster Rd - Foster - Lower Holts Creek - Old Carntown Rd - Upper Holts Creek Rd. - #1019 from AA to #10 - Upper Snag Creek.

Bus #19 - Randy Newman

First Stop - Willow Neave Rd (6:20 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Neave Milford Rd - Neave Ridge Rd - Mattox Rd - Bracken Hills Dr - Stump Rd - Brownings Corner - Chaney Rd - Kelly Ridge.

Bus #22 - Allen Lippert

First Stop - Dutch Ridge Rd (6:30 a.m.)

Roads Assigned - Asbury Rd. - #2370 (Dutch Ridge) from Asbury to AA - Hook Lane - Pea Ridge Rd.- North Bluegrass - Hackett Ridge.