

School Board holds twice-postponed January meeting Feb. 4

BY BETSY SMITH
EDITOR



Betsy Smith

Mountains of snow were pushed to the side of school parking lots after Winter Storm Fern blanketed the county. Students returned to the classroom Monday, Feb. 9, after two weeks at home. Incidentally, Harrison County returned to school a day ahead of Fayette County.

Winter storms caused the Harrison County School Board's January meeting to be postponed not once, but twice. After Winter Storm Fern struck, the meeting was moved to Tuesday, Feb. 3, but a subsequent hard snowfall that afternoon caused it to be delayed to Feb. 4.

The first order of business was to elect new officers for 2026. Ed Taylor was reelected chairperson; Mary June Brunker will serve as vice chairperson; Maria Bell, executive assistant to the superintendent, will continue as secretary; and Director of Finance Mary Grubb will continue as treasurer.

As January was School Board Appreciation Month, the Good News Report featured a video of students showing their appreciation for the various work done by the school board.

The Golden Horseshoe Awards were postponed to the regular February meeting.

ACTIONS

- The board approved trips for the high school wrestling team to go to the state tournament in Corbin and for KUNA to attend the annual conference in Louisville in March.

- The board approved an 8th grade trip to the Holocaust & Humanity Center in Cincinnati on April 24.

- The board granted Director of Finance Mary Grubb approval to apply for a Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance (KEMI) safety grant to enhance employee safety. The grant would be for \$2,500 or more. Grubb called it "a nice little perk" for having won the KEMI award the past two years in a row.

- The board approved the addition of the three HCMS success coaches to the salary schedule. Their salaries were paid for by a Kentucky Education Development Corporation grant.

- The board approved the usual \$1,000 donation to Project Grad.

- The board granted approval to accept the first offer of assistance from Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) in the amount of \$30,945. Grubb said the amount was about \$600 more than last year's first offer of assistance. The KETS offer must be matched by the district.

- The board granted approval to accept the offer of assistance from the School Facilities Construction Commission of \$32,401 for projects in the district's facility plan.

- The draft budget was approved, although Grubb noted it is just a replica of the current year budget "because we really know nothing" yet with the Legislature still in session.

- The board approved the MOA with Northern Kentucky University College of Education for students employed in the district while pursuing their certification.

- The board approved emergency certification for a science teacher at the middle school. The individual has met the requirements except for taking the test, according to Grubb.

- The board approved a change order for construction of the new high school in the amount of \$19,262.09. The change order is for work on the mechanical yard of the future Area Technology Center (ATC). Pouring the concrete pad for the transformer and installing conduits now will prevent the need for reworking the area when the ATC is eventually constructed and save money.

In regards to construction, progress has been hampered by the recent winter weather. Some work on the interior, such as piping, has been able to move forward. Roofing should begin soon.

- The board approved pay application #19 in the amount of \$975,876.47.

- Five outside groups were approved to use school facilities.

- Director of Facilities/Transportation Bill

Blackburn asked for board approval to renew the contract with Rumpke for a year. Calling them "the only game in town," he explained that last year the other bidder was twice the cost of Rumpke. The board approved renewing the contract.

- Track/cross country coach Stephanie Simpson appeared before the board along with four elementary students seeking approval for an elementary pilot track program this spring for interested students in grades three through five. The board approved the program.

OTHER

- Burchett gave an update on the calendar for next school year. The early release days will continue, he said. Friday was felt to be the best day as it does not affect the KSA assessment and listed goals and needs for each school.

- Burchett noted that Feb. 4 was the 15th day of school missed due to weather. All ten NTI days have been used. The rest of the missed days have been traditional snow days and must be made up.

In the existing school calendar Feb. 16 and March 6 are designated potential make-up days, and they will become in-person instruction days, Burchett said.

Also, March 9 is a teacher work day, but he said it will be on the agenda at the next board meeting to become an instructional day as well.

The teacher work day will move to May 19, which is the date of the primary election, during which schools cannot be in session.

He noted that at this point, spring break is not affected, but there is still a lot of winter

left to go.

Though it is not possible to set the date for graduation yet, he said, "It would be our goal to wrap up and be done sometime the last week of May."

- The remainder of the meeting consisted of presentations by Jon Hoskins, Westside Elementary principal; Todd Harp, Southside Elementary principal; and Josh Valentine, Harrison County Middle School principal. They outlined strengths and weaknesses as revealed by the KSA assessment and listed goals and needs for each school.

All three principals stressed the success of the early release days. Harp noted that collaboration and building district-wide teacher relationships ahead of consolidation on the Hilltop is very helpful.

Both elementary principals shared their teachers' uncertainty over the eventual consolidation, saying teachers struggle with such things as picturing what the environment will look like, who will be teaching next to them, where the playground at the current middle school will be and the fact that the middle school barely has windows.

"That's their world; it's important to them," Harp said.

Harp and Hoskins strongly advocated for math interventionists. Harp described the great strides made thanks to Southside's reading interventionist, Leslie Jones.

In addition to the need for extra teaching positions and curriculum support, Valentine underscored the importance of continued funding for a mental health position at the middle school. The grant funding the position runs out

this year.

The board went into executive session session in which no actions were taken.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

New Hires

Jennifer McIlvain, Saint Edward's School - Reading Barton Interventionist

Emma Moore, HCMS - Success Transition Coordinator

Abigail Logan, Northside - Special Education Instructional Assistant

Joshua Lane, Bus Garage - Bus Driver

Jesse Brown, HCMS - Success Transition Coordinator

Danny Adams, Bus Garage - Bus Driver

New Hires: Substitutes

Amber Blanton, Bus Garage - Substitute Bus Monitor

Jenna Berry, Westside - Substitute Teacher

Desiree Bynum, Bus Garage - Substitute Bus Monitor/Substitute Bus Driver

April Morris, District Wide - Substitute Nurse

Joshua Garrison, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Marissa Taylor, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Ruby Whitson, District Wide - Substitute Cook

Jeremy Philpot, Bus Garage - Substitute Bus Driver

Savannah Wilson, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Savannah Westenberger, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Zachary Hruby, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Eli Carter, District Wide - Substitute Teacher

Extended/Extra Duty

Tiffany Gallagher, Northside - Mentor Teacher

Donald Ritchie, HCMS - Music/Drama Program

Jamie Devasher, HCHS - Graduation Coordinator

Evelyn Kiser, Elementary Drama Club Coach

TRANSFERS

Elisha Perkins, Northside - Kindergarten Instructional Assistant to Special Education

Instructional Assistant

Hannah Moore, Eastside - Special Education

Instructional Assistant to

Northside - Kindergarten

Instructional Assistant

Britney Northcutt, Northside - Special Education

Instructional Assistant to

HCMS - Success Transition Coordinator

RESIGNATIONS

Jennifer Coldiron, Northside - Instructional Assistant - Effective Dec. 31, 2025

April Morris HCHS - School Nurse - Effective Dec. 31, 2025

Mark Whitaker, Bus Garage - Effective Nov. 15, 2025

RETIREMENT

Jenny Carroll, Bus Garage - Bus Driver - Effective Jan. 1, 2026

The next meeting of the Harrison County Board of Education will be Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 6 p.m. at the Board Office, 308 Webster Avenue.

LEGAL NOTICE

MASTER COMMISSIONER'S SALE

The Master Commissioner of the Harrison Circuit Court will sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder(s) at the Harrison County Justice Center, in Cynthiana, Kentucky, on Friday, February 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., the following properties listed below:

Pursuant to a Judgment and Order of Sale entered by the Harrison Circuit Court on December 3, 2025, in Civil Action No. 24-CI-00230 styled *Mid South Capital Partners, LP, Plaintiff, vs. Eric S. Smith, Mark S. Smith, The Eric S. Smith and Mark S. Smith General Partnership d/b/a Maric Farms, a Kentucky General Partner, Commonwealth of Kentucky, County of Harrison, Unknown Spouse, if any, of Eric S. Smith and Unknown Spouse, if any, of Mark S. Smith, Defendants*: Being all of Tracts 24, 25, and 26 of Maric Farm #7, as shown on that certain subdivision property survey plat, prepared by Charles A. Mullins, registered land surveyor, registration no. 775, for Maric Farms dated the 14th day of April, 1983, revised June 15, 1983 and of record in the office of the Harrison County Court Clerk in Plat Cabinet 1, Sheet 69A. Parcel ID# 030-0000-010-06-0000 See Deed Book 296, Page 372.

The property is being sold to produce a sum sufficient to satisfy the judgments and liens as follows: (a) The costs of this action, including the Master Commissioner's fee, appraiser's fee and advertising costs; (b) Judgment for Mid South Capital Partners, LP, Plaintiff, in the amount of \$9,364.31 for Certificates of Delinquency for tax years 2013 through 2016 and tax years 2018 through 2022 plus interest from November 2025 until paid; (c) Real estate taxes, plus interest and penalties, if any, for taxes assessed for the year 2025 and previous years. (c) Plaintiff Court costs and attorney fees.

Attorney for Plaintiff: Hon. Hunter Jones

Terms of Sale:

All properties shall be sold upon the following terms and conditions unless otherwise noted: (1) The property shall be sold free and clear of all liens and claims of the parties to this action; (2) The purchaser shall be required to pay the sum of 10% of the purchase price in cash, certified funds or by other immediately verifiable collectable medium of exchange acceptable to the Commissioner, on the day of sale to apply on the purchase price; (3) The balance of the purchase price shall be due and payable within thirty (30) days after the day of sale; (4) The purchaser shall be required to execute a bond with good and sufficient surety thereon as approved by the Commissioner to secure the unpaid portion of the purchase price, the bond to bear interest at the rate the judgment bears, from the day of sale until paid, the bond to have the same force and effect as a judgment and shall remain a lien on the property as additional security until the purchase price is paid in full; (5) The purchaser shall have the privilege of paying all or any part of the purchase price or paying the bond before maturity by paying the balance of the principal together with all accrued interest thereon until the date of payment; (6) The purchaser shall obtain possession of the property upon confirmation of the sale by the Court and payment of the purchase price in full; (7) All ad valorem taxes on the property for calendar year 2026 and all subsequent years shall be assumed and paid by the purchaser. All real property taxes due and owing to Harrison County or the City of Cynthiana, if applicable, for 2025 and prior years will be paid from the proceeds of sale. (8) The property shall be sold subject to any assessment for public improvements levied against the property and subject to all rules and regulations enforced by the Cynthiana-Harrison County-Berry Joint Planning and Zoning Commission, all applicable health and safety regulations, all restrictions and easements thereon appearing of record in the Harrison County Court Clerk's Office, governmental laws and regulations affecting the property, and shall be subject to any unrecorded easements, discrepancies or conflicts in boundary lines, shortage in area and encroachments, if any there be, which an accurate and complete survey or an inspection of the property would disclose; (9) The purchaser shall bear the risk of loss on the improvements on the property and the risk of loss shall pass to the purchaser as of the day and time of sale; (10) The property shall be sold with any improvements thereon "as is"; and (11) The property shall be sold subject to such right of redemption as may exist in favor of the United States of America pursuant to 28 USC Section 2410, and the right of redemption of the Defendants, if applicable and any rights or requirements imposed by Civil Rule 4.11, if applicable.

All bidders will be prepared to comply with these terms.

Hon. John Lair
Master Commissioner
Harrison Circuit Court

SERVICES

LEGAL REPRESENTATION
CHARLES W. KUSTER,
KUSTER LAW OFFICE,
P.O. BOX 202
FALMOUTH, KY 41040
GENERAL CIVIL PRACTICE,
ESTATE PRACTICE
AND LIMITED CRIMINAL
MATTERS
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT:
859-900-5015
217 West Shelby St.,
Falmouth KY

LEGAL NOTICE
Invitation to Bid
The Harrison County Board of Education will receive sealed bids for:
Harrison County WiFi
Intelligence Services
Sealed Bids will be opened on:
March 2, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.
308 Webster Avenue,
Cynthiana, Ky. 41031
From 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
daily
Contact: Richard Harris,
District Technology
Coordinator
859-234-7110,
Richard.harris@harrison.ky.
schools.us
An Equal Opportunity
Employer
Mr. Ed Taylor, Chairperson
Mr. Harry Burchett,
Superintendent
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITY

34 Harrison County students receive MCTC credentials

MAYSVILLE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

The following students from Harrison County were awarded credentials, including degrees and diplomas, by Maysville Community and Technical College in Fall, 2025:

Taylor Cheyeene Bell,
Kaelynn J. Bennett
Erin E. Best
Amberly Bruner
Nathan Todd Chaffee
Kamryn Nichole Clines
Weston Arnold Dale
Joseph Daniel Doolin
Kate Gasser
Jaime Renee Hammond
Taylor Leigh Harney
Lauren R. Highlander
Lexie Ann Highlander

SERVICES

LEGAL REPRESENTATION
CHARLES W. KUSTER,
KUSTER LAW OFFICE,
P.O. BOX 202
FALMOUTH, KY 41040
GENERAL CIVIL PRACTICE,
ESTATE PRACTICE
AND LIMITED CRIMINAL
MATTERS
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT:
859-900-5015
217 West Shelby St.,
Falmouth KY

LEGAL NOTICE
Invitation to Bid
The Harrison County Board of Education will receive sealed bids for:
Harrison County WiFi
Intelligence Services
Sealed Bids will be opened on:
March 2, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.
308 Webster Avenue,
Cynthiana, Ky. 41031
From 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
daily
Contact: Richard Harris,
District Technology
Coordinator
859-234-7110,
Richard.harris@harrison.ky.
schools.us
An Equal Opportunity
Employer
Mr. Ed Taylor, Chairperson
Mr. Harry Burchett,
Superintendent
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITY