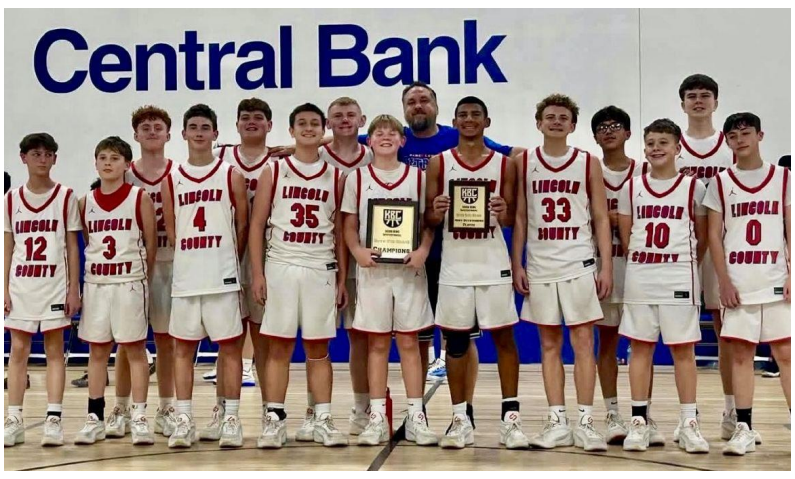


Lincoln eighth-graders win KBC Invitational championship **Page 10A**

The INTERIOR JOURNAL
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FILE PHOTO

Unbridled Barbershop owner Dustin Taulbee stands beside toys from a previous holiday giveaway. The shop and The Interior Journal are partnering for a third year to provide free haircuts and toys to children in need Dec. 21-23.

Unbridled Barbershop, IJ partner for third annual haircut, toy giveaway

By Casey Roberts
Interior Journal

STANFORD — Unbridled Barbershop and The Interior Journal are renewing their holiday partnership for a third year, offering free haircuts and toys to children in need Dec. 21-23.

Shop owner Dustin Taulbee will provide the haircuts at Unbridled Barbershop, 806 Miller St. in Stanford. The Interior Journal will provide toys to be distributed as part of the event.

The partnership is intended to give local families some help in the final days before Christmas, when gift shopping and holiday plans can add to the cost of groceries, bills and other everyday needs.

"Christmas should be something kids get to look forward to, but we know it can put a lot of pressure on parents," Taulbee said. "If I can take care of a haircut and help a child leave here feeling good, that's one less thing a family has to worry about."

The effort began in 2024,

See **UNBRIDLED**, 2A

School board seeks bids for former Highland Elementary building

By Casey Roberts
Interior Journal

STANFORD — The Lincoln County Board of Education is accepting sealed bids for the former Highland Elementary School property, offering the building and more than six acres for sale following the school's closure earlier this year.

The property includes approximately 6.081 acres at 75 Tick Ridge Road in Waynesburg. Bids will be opened at 10 a.m. Dec. 7 at the board of education office in Stanford.

Highland closed at the end of the 2025-26 school year after the board voted May 14 to consolidate the school with Waynesburg, Stanford and Crab Orchard elementary schools. The board approved revised elementary attendance areas June 4 to account for Highland's closure.

The school had served the community for more than six decades. A district facilities plan lists the original Highland building as dating to 1959, with an addition in 1999.

Discussions leading up to the closure included concerns about the building, staffing and operating expenses. In correspondence released by the district in May, Superintendent Bruce Smith identified septic system issues, staffing needs and potential operating savings among the factors being considered.

Any sale remains subject to final approval by the Kentucky

See **SCHOOL**, 2A

Highland, Hustonville elementary schools earn top ratings on state assessments

By Casey Roberts
Interior Journal

STANFORD — Two Lincoln County elementary schools have earned the state's highest accountability rating, with one celebrating the achievement as a fitting conclusion to its final year.

Highland Elementary and Hustonville Elementary were recognized during the Lincoln County Board of Education's Nov. 12 meeting after both schools earned blue ratings on the 2025-26 Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) results.

Blue is the highest rating in Kentucky's color-coded school accountability system, recognizing schools for strong academic performance and other measures of student success.

For Highland Elementary, the recognition carried additional significance. The school closed at the end of the 2025-26 school year, making the results a final achievement for a school that served generations of Lincoln County students.

Andrea Goldsmith, Highland's former principal who now serves as principal at

See **HIGHLAND**, 2A



LINCOLN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Hustonville Elementary Principal David Ledford, left, joins school staff members in displaying a banner recognizing the school's blue rating on the 2025-26 Kentucky Summative Assessment. Blue is the highest rating in Kentucky's school accountability system.

Former Lincoln youth pastor faces two-count felony indictment

By Casey Roberts
Interior Journal



Jason Coulter

STANFORD — A Lincoln County grand jury has indicted former youth pastor Jason Todd Coulter on rape and sodomy charges involving a 17-year-old.

Coulter, 48, of Hustonville, is charged with one count each of third-degree rape and third-degree sodomy in an indictment filed Nov. 13 in Lincoln Circuit Court.

The indictment alleges the offenses occurred in Lincoln County in May.

Bond was set at $15,000, with a condition prohibiting contact with the teenager. Kentucky State Police Trooper Damon Stevens is listed as a witness on the indictment.

Both charges are Class D felonies under Kentucky law, each punishable by one to five years in prison.

Coulter is scheduled to be arraigned Dec. 11 in Lincoln Circuit Court.

The investigation dates to Aug. 14, when Coulter called Kentucky State Police and said he wanted to confess to crimes, according to an affidavit filed by FBI Special Agent Bethany

See **FORMER**, 2A

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