

Gas tax suspension to continue in some areas

SARAH LADD
KENTUCKY LANTERN

Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday extended a May executive order that reduced the gasoline tax by 10 cents for 33 cities and counties whose local officials requested an extension.

In order to obtain an

extension of the May 5 executive order past the 30-day mark of June 10, Kentucky judge executives and city mayors had to make an official request under state law, Beshear's office said.

Any jurisdiction whose leaders didn't make a request will pay the 10 cent tax again starting June 11.

"Gas prices are too high due to the continued war in Iran, and Americans – including right here in Kentucky – are struggling. Every dollar counts, and my executive order lowered gas and diesel prices across the state to help our families save," Beshear said in a statement. "Government is there to

help our people, and the state can and will make up any potential financial hit. Right now, our priority should be on Kentucky families, and I applaud these local leaders for doing what's right."

The following jurisdictions will see a tax reduction extension through June 30:

The cities of Alexandria, Ashland, Campton, Carrsville, Clay City, Covington, Drakesboro, Earlington, Eminence, Falmouth, Gamaliel, Glencoe, Island, Jenkins, London, McHenry, Oak Grove, Owensboro, Owingsville, Paintsville, Park City, Sebree, Smithfield, Smiths Grove,

West Point, Whitesville and Winchester;

Louisville Jefferson County Metro Government;

And Carter, Graves, Magoffin, Morgan and Wolfe Counties.

According to AAA, gas prices vary across Kentucky but generally hover around \$4 per gallon.



John McDonnell/AP Photo

The west front of the U.S. Capitol with the Supreme court on the left and the Library of Congress on the right, is seen from the top of the Washington Monument, on Saturday in Washington.

Social Security trust fund faces earlier shortfall

BY FATIMA HUSSEIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Social Security's retirement trust fund is projected to face a funding shortfall in 2032, a year earlier than last year's projections, according to an annual report released Tuesday, while Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund will be unable to pay full benefits in 2033, which is unchanged from last year's estimate.

Rising healthcare costs and government spending have contributed to a

projected depletion date that is less than 10 years from now.

The looming challenge for the programs is a partial funding gap, not a collapse. Even after trust fund depletion, the system will continue issuing benefits, albeit at reduced amounts.

Last year, Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund go-broke date was pushed to 2033 from 2036 the year before that, according to the report from the programs' trustees.

SEE SOCIAL/PAGE A7

LIBRARY

FROM PAGE A2

Tuesday (June 2nd, 16th, 30th)
Clay City Park: 9:30-11:15
Tuesday (June 9th, 23rd)
Poole: 9:30-10:30
Thursday (June 4th, 18th)
Palmer Place: 2:10-2:30
Thursday (June 11th, 25th)
Tamke Day Care: 9:20-9:30
Webster St. 9:35-10:30
Redbanks Sebree Colonial Terrace: 10:45-11:15

Times & locations are subject to change without notice. Stops may be canceled due to inclement weather, road conditions, or governor mandates. We apologize for any inconvenience.

NEW BOOK RELEASES

SING THE 50 STATES by DR SEUSS
VIEW FROM THE EAST WING by JILL BIDEN
WHISTLER by ANN PATCHETT
ROAD TRIP by MARY KAY ANDREWS
DEATH ON THE LANAI by RACHEL E COURAGE
DEEP WATER by STUART WOODS
CLIVE CUSSLERS COLD FIRE by GRAHAM BROWN
ROCKETS RED GLARE by JAMES PATTERSON
CHOKE POINT by BRAD THOR
TO FLAME A WILDFLOWER by SARAH A PARKER
COMMUNION by J D VANCE
THE RAINY DAY BOOKSHOP by RAEANNE THAYNE
NANTUCKET SECOND CHANCES by PAMELA KELLEY
SHAKEN by JOHN GRISHAM
WAIT AND SEE by IRIS JOHANSEN

YOU FIRST by CAROLINE KENEPES

SAY NEVER by BLAKE PIERCE
GO COLD by BLAKE PIERCE
SKUNK GOES POTTY by JAMES PATTERSON

THE FRENZY by JOYCE CAROL OATES
THE SECRETS WE HIDE by KARIN SLAUGHTER

IT COULD HAVE BEEN HER by LISA JEWELL
WHISPER CREEK by ALLISON BRENNAN

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS by LISA JACKSON
THE DELIVERY by GREGG HURWITZ

NO DUMB QUESTIONS by JASON & TRAVIS KELCE
SONGS OF THE DEAD by BRANDON SANDERSON

BIRDS OF PREY by HARLAN COBEN
STORM TIDE by PAUL DOIRON

NEW DVD RELEASES

YOU SEASON 5
THEY WILL KILL YOU
HOPPERS
A KNIGHT OF THE SEVEN KINGDOMS 1
MAGNIFICENT LIFE
SUPER MARIO GALAXY MOVIE
LORNE
YOU, ME AND TUSCANY
SHE DANCES
DARK WINDS 4
SCREAM 7
READY OR NOT 2
HAMILTON
CRIME 101
MAGELLAN

LIBRARY SERVICES

Rentals of Books, Audio Books, DVDs (3 day and 3 week), CDs, and Magazines
Magazines, eBooks, audio books, shows and more through Libby and

Hoopla. They're free and we'll help you set them up!

Learn a new language with Mango Languages! It's free to use through the library. Get started at Mango Languages now (<https://learn.mangolanguages.com/login>).

Public computers (daily limit of 2 hours)

Public notaries, fax services, scan-to-email services, and copies.

Daily and weekly newspapers

Ask about our Interlibrary Loans service! As long as your account is in good standing, we can request books we don't have from other libraries in the state. Check with your branch to find out how!

You can get help with school work, writing a paper, and more with Tutor.com! Check it out at www.tutor.com/webstercpl/

LIBRARY HOURS & CONTACT INFO

Monday - Wednesday, Friday: 9 am - 4 pm

Thursday: 9 am - 6 pm

Saturday: 9 am - 2 pm

*Hours of operation are subject to change.

Webster County Public Library (Dixon)

101 St Rt 132 E
Dixon, Ky 42409

Ph: 270-639-9171
Fax: 270-639-6207

Providence Branch Library
230 North Willow St
Providence, Ky 42450

Ph: 270-667-5658
Fax: 270-667-6368

FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK PAGES

Providence Branch Library
Webster County Public Library

AARON

FROM PAGE A1

have supported me during my journey in Webster County. I cut my teeth as an educator in this district and am so grateful of the relationships I have forged along the way. The outpouring of support I have received through this trial has been simply overwhelming and instrumental in helping me navigate what was one of the most difficult periods of my life. I am truly grateful for the support and I will not forget it. The impact that this community has had on me cannot be understated and is something that will take with me.

Over the last few months I have sat in this room and others listening to a variety of people weigh in on my performance as a superintendent, my character, my family and a host of other topics. It has felt like we

have heard from everyone about me but me. But I am not going to waste any time tonight with a defense because it would be meaningless to those who should hear it and is already understood by those who have taken any time to know me.

I have given my entire professional life and a huge portion of my personal life to this district and community not because I had to but because I love it. I still do and I truly want this district to be as successful as I know it can be. Those who think the "hard part" is done by not renewing a superintendent's contract are sadly mistaken. Until there is a clear vision from this board the challenges will only grow. It also requires clarity and unity. I hope that they are able to develop that and I hope it is in conjunction with the community that has turned out in mass to voice their opinions.

I hope that in the creation

of these things the board chooses honest communication rather than subversion and division. I hope they choose to support the new leadership rather than micromanaging and undermining it. It is impossible to have the good working relationship that has been mentioned by board members while actively working against those you work with.

I hope they choose to treat the new superintendent and administrative team with the professionalism, respect, and humanity that has been lacking here. It is virtually impossible for a superintendent to meet any set of expectations when they are always shifting and are not aligned with any vision. I had board members sit in my office and tell me the curriculum was too difficult for kids, that it was "college level" for kindergartners. And then that same member stated in a public meeting that they had no

issue with the curriculum. I had one board member suggest I fire the athletic director while another one was advocating for him to get a pay increase. I had two board members weighing in on personnel decisions and the placement of school district employees. Unfortunately, it took me too long to realize the expectation was for me to make the individual decisions that they wanted (unclear as they often were) regardless of KRS, board policy or basic common sense. Despite statements to the contrary I only spoke to one of these board members twice this school year regarding any of the issues that were mentioned and never in person because I was told they were too busy to meet with me. On the second occasion I was told that nothing could change their mind no matter what people said or did in public meetings. That is not a recipe for success.

I hope that the vision of

this district includes celebrating the successes of this district in earnest. I hope they make the choice to lift up public education and the people who choose to serve it rather than tear it down. I hope they realize the answer to disagreement and challenge is not to burn it all down and I hope they come to understand that the best board members make their service less about themselves and focus on the one thing that has rarely come up in recent meetings and conversations, kids.

All of this has truly been a shame and extremely costly to the district and the public trust. However, I truly wish Webster County Schools, the faculty, staff and kids the very best. There are many many wonderful people here and they deserve the opportunity to have a district that they can be as proud of as I have been for so many years. I hope that some reflection happens and that

there is a genuine commitment to heal the damage that has been done here. I believe that can happen with true collaboration and a commitment to the common good of all involved. Thank you again, it has truly been an honor to get to serve this district and the community for so many years.



Public Notice
Local/State Board Public Hearing

The Webster County Board of Education and the Kentucky Board of Education have scheduled a local/state board public hearing on the proposed Webster County District Facility Plan for Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 5:30pm CDT in the Webster County Board of Education Boardroom, 28 State Route 1340, Dixon, KY 42409. The District Facility Plan lists the pending capital construction and/or renovation projects that the school district may undertake, and the priority order, if applicable, that projects will be initiated. Copies of the proposed District Facility Plan are available for examination by interested individuals at the Board of Education offices, 28 State Route 1340, Dixon, KY 42409, between 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM through June 16, 2026. Questions may be directed to Aaron Harrell, Superintendent of Webster County Schools, 928 State Route 1340, Dixon, KY 42409 at 270-639-5083.

Those individuals wishing to comment on the proposed District Facility Plan may present oral or written comments at the Local / State Board public hearing.

The local Board of Education, after due process, will forward the approved District Facility Plan to the Kentucky Department of Education for ultimate approval by the State Board of Education.

The local State Board public hearing is being scheduled in accordance with KRS 157.620, and regulated by 702 KAR 1:001.

HARRELL

FROM PAGE A1

McCormick then gave Harrell the floor for the superintendent's report.

Harrell, more relaxed than at the previous meeting, informed the board that the work session was his last meeting, as he was taking time to be with his family at the end of the month. He publicly thanked McCormick and board member Venita Murphy for their support and the overwhelming support of the community during the "trial" he had endured this spring with his non-renewal.

"This has been the most painful and difficult period of my life," Harrell added.

Harrell, who has served the district for 21 years as a teacher and administrator, cited his love for Webster County Schools even after the ordeal throughout the spring.

"I have given so much of my professional and personal life to this community because I love it," he explained.

The outgoing superintendent addressed the board one last time with a reflective yet scathing review of his non-renewal process.

"Without a clear vision, the challenges will only

grow," Harrell admonished.

He urged the board to support the new superintendent with honest communication, not with "undermining and micromanaging" behavior. While not mentioning specific board members by name, he criticized those who "cared less for board policy and common sense" and those who told him that "nothing would change their mind no matter what was said in public meetings."

Harrell's challenge was simple: celebrate the successes of the school district rather than "burn it down" for personal gain. "I wouldn't have spent

an entire career here if I didn't believe in this district. It has been the honor of a lifetime," Harrell concluded.

The screening committee is slated to make its recommendations for Harrell's potential replacement on June 11. After that, the board will begin the interview process. The deadline to name a superintendent, or interim, is June 30.

The board heard from Director of Finance Brandi Burnett who reported on several items, including the May financial report, the fiscal year 2027 accounts payable pay date schedule, pay date breakdown and pay date schedule. Burnett

noted that these were "nothing out of the ordinary" and unchanged from last year's procedures. Burnett concluded with the 2026-2027 student fee schedule, which included some increases for some student organizations and sports.

The Journal-Enterprise also reached out to the Office of Educational Accountability ahead of this week's board meeting to check on the status of the investigation of board members that started with the circumstances surrounding Harrell's non-renewal. OEA reported that their investigation is still ongoing.