

Looking back to Aug. 31, 2018



Photo by Christy Hoots
A group of Bracken County Middle School students play a board game during Arctic Club on Wednesday. The club is open to any BCMS student and runs Monday-Thursday until 6 p.m.

Written by Christy Hoots

The following information was entered into the Aug. 31, 2026, edition of The Ledger Independent:

Arctic Club debuts at BCMS
BROOKSVILLE — A new club at Bracken County Middle School is keeping kids occupied after school.

The Arctic Club is for any student of BCMS and runs Monday-Thursday until 6 p.m.

According to BCMS teacher Stacey Schneller, the students start the afternoon with a snack, followed by 30 minutes of homework help and tutoring followed by recreation time.

“They go through recreation time so they can get up, be active and get the jitters out,” she said. “What we don’t want them to be doing after school is sitting down and listening to a lecture like an extension of the regular school day. This way, they’re active and learning new things.”

Half of the students will go to the academic portion of the club, where they do hands-on learning, while the others go to the enrichment activities, which is different each day, according to Schneller.

Some of the enrichment activities include robotics, construction, photography, Yoga, Zumba, cooking, beginning guitar, painting and coding.

On Wednesday, some students were lined up in a hallway, with a different board game at each group’s station. Inside a classroom, several students were participating in Zumba.

Kaylee Blevins, 11, was playing Bank Account with Devin Pauley, 13. Blevins and Pauley met during the club earlier in the week.

“We’re playing by (Pauley’s) rules,” she said. “We’re playing by different rules,” he said. “We wanted to play it because it’s different, it’s challenging.”

Blevins said she joined the club, because she wanted to meet new people.

“There isn’t much to do after school, so I wanted to meet new people,” she said. “That’s how we met.”

After about 40 minutes, the students moved to a classroom in which BCMS teacher Cody Evans began some hands on learning activities.

“It’s a reading program, so we’re going to do some reading activities,” he said. “They split time with another teacher, so we plan it all together.”

Another group of students played games in the gymnasium.

Ashton Buchanan, 11, while chasing down a ball through the gym, said he joined the club in order to have something to do after school.

“I joined the club because I didn’t really have anything to do after school and I wanted to interact with other people,” he said. “I’ve met some new people and made some friends.”

Once the kids are finished with their activities, they are served dinner before going home.

“Then, we have a dinner and we dismiss,” she said. “The club is over at 6 p.m. and the buses will usually be on the road for about an hour afterward.”

There are four buses that run in the afternoons to drop off kids, according to Schneller.

Bracken County Schools Superintendent Jeff Aulick said the buses are usually on the roads until about 7:30 each evening and will drop the kids off at their homes.

Aulick also said he was pleased to see the students enjoying the club after school.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for students to get enriched through hands on activities,” he said. “From robotics to career related fields, it is a great opportunity for our students.”

AG Coleman asks US Supreme Court to let Kentucky breathe a sigh of relief

Submitted by the Office of Attorney General Russell Coleman

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 28, 2026) — Attorney General Russell Coleman announced today he is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse a devastating inflationary Biden-era EPA air quality regulation that has raised costs for Kentucky manufacturers, utilities and farmers. Leading a 25-state coalition with West Virginia Attorney General JB McCuskey, General Coleman argues the overly stringent standards wouldn’t improve public health but will raise costs and could effectively block new economic activity or job creation in large parts of the country.

In 2024, then-President Biden’s EPA implemented an unprecedented limit on tiny particles in the air in an attempt to solve an air quality problem that doesn’t exist. AGs Coleman and McCuskey have led the fight against this rule since early 2024.

After President Trump was elected in 2024, the EPA changed its position on the rule and now half of the AGs from across the country are seeking to repeal the regulation.

The Biden-era EPA rule could: Block the permitting of new manufacturing facilities and drive good-paying jobs out of Kentucky and overseas; Stop new infrastructure construction and leave Kentuckians on unsafe and congested roads and bridges; and

Require small businesses, farmers, restaurants and even homeowners to pay for costly new equipment.

Kentucky’s low-cost energy is central to the Commonwealth’s competitive advantage in attracting business investment.

“Together with attorneys general across the country, we’re asking the Supreme Court to turn the page of President Biden’s assault on common sense. This regulation was about politics, not public health,” said Attorney General Coleman. “Alongside my talented colleague, General McCuskey, we’re seeking to break the EPA’s chokehold on our states’ economic potential.”

“This regulation threatens the jobs and affordable energy our state depends on. Alongside AG Coleman, I’m proud to lead the coalition asking the Supreme Court to put a stop to it. West Virginia knows firsthand what it costs families and businesses when Washington imposes rules disconnected from common sense. Reversing this regulation is a step in the right direction,” Attorney General McCuskey said.

According to a letter led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and 28 other leading industries,

KBE approves school of innovation designations for Covington Independent, grants waiver requests related to two regulations during special meeting

Submitted by the Kentucky Department of Education

FRANKFORT, KY – Members of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) acted on several waivers requested from Covington Independent and designated eight schools and any other school or educational program operated and/or funded by the district as a school of innovation, opening the door for the district to participate in a pilot project established by lawmakers earlier this year.

Under KRS 156.161, a school district may request a school of innovation designation through waivers for schools or programs for the purpose of providing innovative educational opportunities to students. Covington Independent sought a school of innovation designation for each school and program within the district through a series of seven waiver requests the board considered during a special KBE meeting on Aug. 25. KBE members approved the district’s broader request to designate each school in the district as a school of innovation with a requirement to provide regular reports to the board on finances, operations and student outcomes.

KBE Chair Lu S. Young noted how the board and the Kentucky General Assembly have valued and created opportunities related to innovation for public schools.

“We have repeatedly demonstrated our support for schools and districts that are willing to rethink traditional approaches and pursue meaningful transformation in ways that better serve today’s students,” Young said. “We want to support districts like Covington and others who will follow that have a compelling vision for transforming the educational outcomes for all students, and we want to work within the framework established by the General Assembly to make innovation possible.”

Leaders with Covington Independent – school board Chair Tom Haggard and new Superintendent Cortnei Flucas – said they were seeking resources

made available to the district through a pilot project established by Senate Bill 263 earlier this year, including \$2.5 million in funding in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The legislation required Covington Independent to file waivers for the school of innovation designation by Aug. 1 for consideration by the KBE.

KBE members addressed seven specific waivers requested from the district, including requests dealing with school calendar requirements, school-based decision making councils, salary schedules, assessments, truancy reporting requirements and educator certification requirements for career and technical education. Most of the district’s waiver requests were denied with a few exceptions.

The board approved the district’s requests related to:

- A waiver of Section 2 of 701 KAR 5:100, a regulation on the timeline for establishing an alternative model for school-based decision making;
- A partial waiver of 702 KAR 7:140, school calendar regulations, to allow the district to modify its calendar to add instructional time without permitting a calendar that provides less than the minimum required instruction time per day.

The waivers granted by the KBE will expire on June 30, 2029.

KBE members noted that the district already had the ability to engage in some proposed practices without any waivers.

“We have a responsibility as the state board to ensure that the requests before us meet the requirements established in law and provide us with a reasonable basis for determining that the proposed changes will in fact actually advance student outcomes,” Young said during opening remarks to board members.

Districts interested in pursuing waiver requests should seek out information on the process on the Kentucky Department of Education’s Kentucky Laws and Regulations page.

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