

PEOPLE

Pharrell Williams and Clipse to sing at Grammys

Grammy nominees **Clipse** and **Pharrell Williams** have been announced as performers at the 2026 Grammy Awards, joining artists including **Addison Rae** and **Leon Thomas**. Organizers of the Grammys announced the Feb. 1 ceremony at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles will feature a performance from hip hop duo Clipse – brothers **Gene “Malice” Thornton** – as well as 13-time Grammy winner Williams. Clipse are nominated for five awards this year: Album Of The Year, for “Let God Sort Em Out;” Best Rap Performance, for “Chains & Whips;” Best Rap Song, for “The Birds Don’t Sing;” Best Rap Album, for “Let God Sort Em Out;” and Best Music Video, for “So Be It.” Williams, who produced “Let God Sort Em Out,” is nominated alongside Clipse for for Album Of The Year, Best Rap Performance and Best Rap Song. He is also nominated in the category of Best Music Film, for “Piece By Piece.” Previously announced performers for the ceremony also include **Alex Warren, KATSEYE, Lola Young, Olivia Dean, SOMBR, The Marias, and Sabrina Carpenter**. The 2026 Grammy Awards will air Feb. 1 on CBS and will stream live and on demand on Paramount+. **Trevor Noah** will host the ceremony.

KSU says it is reviewing security, will hire more police officers after shooting

BY MONICA KAST  
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The president of Kentucky State University told lawmakers the school has reviewed processes on campus and will hire more police officers following the fatal shooting that occurred on campus in December. At the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education on Thursday, KSU President Koffi Akakpo was asked by Rep. James Tipton, R-Taylorsville, about safety on campus. “Our hearts go out to everyone in that situation, and I know some people have expressed concerns about safety and security on campus as students are coming back,” Tipton said. “Could you address a little bit about safety and security on campus, and maybe steps to just let people know that there is a safe environment on campus now?” On Dec. 9, De’Jon Fox Jr., a 19-year-old KSU student, was killed in a shooting that took place outside Whitney M. Young Hall, a dorm on the south side of campus. A second student was injured in the shooting. Jacob Bard, 48, was arrested and charged with murder and first-degree assault after the shooting. Bard told investigators he and his wife were on campus to remove their two sons from the school because of safety concerns, and charges against him were later dropped. More than 20 people gathered in the lobby of the dorm before “violently and vicious-



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The Kentucky State University campus is photographed Thursday, Aug. 1, 2024, in Frankfort, Ky. Koffi Akakpo has also worked to launch several new educational programs, including an engineering degree and a fully virtual degree program, that includes psychology, nursing and cybersecurity since he was appointed president of the school on July 1, 2023.

ly” attacking Jacob Bard, his wife and two children, who were being escorted by two armed campus police officers, their lawyers said. “The campus is a safe place,” Akakpo said during the meeting. “What happened was just an isolated incident, unfortunately.” KSU’s campus crime records showed five reports of assault, five reports of theft and two reports of harassment in Young Hall from August to December 2025. Specifics of each report are not listed, and it’s not clear if any are directly connected to the Dec. 9 shooting. Bard’s lawyer said the family went to campus police that day to report that their son had been assaulted

on campus. Reports of assault, harassment and theft were also reported in other on-campus dorms throughout the semester. In the wake of the shooting, Akakpo said Thursday the university has reviewed “every single process on campus.” That includes looking at the state of security in dorms, including doors into the dorms. Additionally, the school is looking to hire more police officers, he said. “We have posted positions for more police officers, and we’re hiring more security officers, as well as enhancing processes on campus to prevent this from ever happening again,” Akakpo said. The university previously

declined to comment on any security measures on campus after the shooting, citing an ongoing investigation. Public colleges and universities that receive federal funding are required to disclose campus crime data under the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act. As a result, schools must publish an annual security report, issue timely warnings related to security threats on campus and publish a daily crime log. Earlier this month, KSU’s crime log had not been updated since October 28, 2025. Following questions from Herald-Leader reporters, it was later updated to include crime data through De-

cember, and currently shows updates through January 16. In addition to the Clery Act, Kentucky state law requires each postsecondary education institution to “make, keep, and maintain a daily log, written in a form approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education that can be easily understood.” Entries in the crime log must be made available to the public within 24 hours, and “readily accessible and open for public inspection,” according to state law.

**FATAL SHOOTING ON DEC. 9** Bard’s lawyers said while the family was given a campus police escort to move their children out of the dorm, they were “violently and viciously” attached when they arrived. Bard’s lawyers said the shooting was in self-defense. Campus security footage and a video on social media showed several people running frantically, including one person who was holding a baseball bat, before police say Bard opened fire just after 3 p.m. Bard’s lawyers said this took place after months of burglaries and attacks on campus against Bard’s children. A Franklin County grand jury declined to indict Bard, dropping the charges against him. The same day a jury declined to indict Bard, the parents of Fox — Chardnae Lashaun Cleveland, 37, and De’Jon Darrell Fox, 38 — were arrested and charged with intimidation in Evansville, Indiana.

Storm poses big threats to power grids across US

BY IVAN PENN AND REBECCA F. ELLIOTT  
NYT News Service

As arctic cold and snow squalls threaten much of the United States this weekend, managers of electric grids from the Midwest to the East Coast have issued warnings that many homes and businesses could lose power. Grid managers have instructed the country’s largest electricity providers to postpone routine maintenance on power plants and lines to ensure that those resources are available during and after the storm. Heavy snow and freezing rain weigh down tree branches and power lines, causing failures that can cripple energy systems. Frigid cold also drives up electricity demand as heating appliances require more energy and run longer. Extreme winter weather has expanded utility peak demand in the United States beyond summer to include winter. As a result, utilities have less time to maintain and upgrade equipment, making the grid less reliable and raising energy costs for consumers. “When you get one day of cold weather, it’s not as significant. But we’re talking about three or four days here of very low temperatures,” said Douglas

Giuffre, who leads U.S. power and renewables research for S&P Global Energy. The utility industry has been preparing for extreme weather by, among other things, upgrading equipment and trimming trees around power lines. Before the storm, power companies said they had activated line crews to help restore power when equipment was damaged. Exelon, a utility with customers from Illinois to New Jersey, said it was prepared. “Exelon is currently investing \$38 billion to modernize and harden our transmission and distribution systems to make the grid more resilient, flexible and better able to withstand increasingly severe storms,” said Mike Innocenzo, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Exelon. The energy secretary, Chris Wright, said Thursday that the federal government had ordered that unused backup generators at data centers and “other major facilities” be made available to grids to help prevent blackouts. The coming storm will arrive about five years after a massive winter storm caused extensive blackouts across much of Texas. The state’s electric grid, which is largely isolated from grids in the rest of the country, was ill pre-

pared for that storm, according to a report published by the University of Texas at Austin. Grid managers did not anticipate the severity of the storm and underestimated how much demand for electricity would rise when the weather turned bad. All kinds of power sources failed during that storm, but the state’s natural gas power plants and pipelines played a central role. A lot of pipelines and power plant equipment froze or malfunctioned, forcing generators offline and leaving many residents shivering in their homes for days. The state has estimated that more than 200 people died because of that storm. “We’re better prepared in some respects, but we still could be better prepared in others,” said Joshua Rhodes, a research scientist at the University of Texas at Austin. Rhodes remains concerned about the system for transporting natural gas from production sites in West Texas and elsewhere to the power plants that burn the gas to generate electricity. Much like household pipes, natural gas pipelines and other equipment that is not properly insulated can freeze, interrupting the supply of fuel to power plants. Up to two-thirds of natural gas processing plants in the Permian Basin,



JEFF SWENSEN Getty Images

Traffic moves through the mountains surrounded by iced trees after freezing rain fell on Feb. 6, 2025, in Somerset County, Pa.

which lies in Texas and New Mexico, experienced an outage during the winter storm five years ago, the University of Texas report found. “When it happens to the big guys, that’s when there’s a noticeable loss of gas going to the power plants and people’s houses,” said Suzie Boyd, whose company, Caballo Loco Midstream, operates networks of small natural gas pipelines in West Texas and New Mexico. Caballo Loco was injecting antifreeze into its systems, wrapping equipment with tarps and preparing to heat pipes if needed to keep them warm through the freezing rain forecast for its area beginning Friday. Boyd’s son even planned to sleep on a cot in a field office, she said. “We’re bracing ourselves.” The potent winter storm that has meteorologists and residents on edge was expected to begin Friday in the Rocky Mountains and make its way across the

country through the weekend, bringing wintry precipitation to more than 160 million people from the Southwest into New England. Officials in Texas and neighboring states were especially concerned by a forecast for a dangerous combination of freezing rain, sleet and snow that could coat trees, power lines and roads. Even if electric grids can withstand the bad weather, consumers are likely to feel the impact for weeks to come. Natural gas prices have already begun to rise. Production often falls during storms like this, sometimes considerably. “It’s not necessarily the temperature itself, it’s the rate of change of temperature that’s important, and then being able to respond to that,” said Sarah Fenton, an executive vice president at Pittsburgh-based EQT, one of the country’s largest natural gas producers.

The dangerous conditions are likely to take a bigger toll on lower-income Americans, many of whom live in poorly insulated homes and have struggled with rising energy costs. Losing power during a storm could make them even more vulnerable. “A major storm isn’t just a reliability event – it’s an affordability shock,” said Mark Wolfe, an economist and executive director of the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, an organization of state officials who administer the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. “Vulnerable families are more likely to face outages, lost wages, spoiled food and higher bills in the weeks that follow, making shut-off protections and bill-payment relief critical to recovery.”

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