

Lexington high school students may face discipline if they join ICE walkout

BY VALARIE HONEYCUTT SPEARS
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At least two Lexington high school principals told families in separate letters Wednesday that students would be counted absent and could be subject to discipline if they walk out of class to protest ICE.

The warnings came after several days of rumors of planned walkouts in Fayette County, including a letter circulated by a group called Kentucky Youth For Change, which urged all Fayette County high school students to walk out of class at 1:40 p.m. Friday.

“Students from all across the district are organizing walkouts to protests against the Trump Administration blatant disregard for the constitution and the vile actions recently committed by Immigration Customs and Enforcement department of the DHS,” the group wrote. “This is district-wide, and we would like as many schools as possible to participate.”

The potential protests would be the latest nationwide in opposition to ICE crackdowns. Agents have been met by protesters in many U.S. cities, and they shot and killed two people in separate, high-profile incidents in Minneapolis in recent weeks.

Principals at Lafayette and Paul Laurence Dunbar high schools acknowledged the potential protests in letters to parents.

At Lafayette, principal Anthony Orr told parents he was aware of “community discussions regarding a potential student wal-

kout protesting recent ICE activities soon after our return to school,” apparently referring to the several-day cancellation of in-person classes due to winter weather.

“At Lafayette High School we value our student’s voices and their right to free expression,” Orr wrote. “Our primary goal is to support their engagement with important issues while ensuring a safe focused environment for all. While we respect the desire to be heard, LHS does not sponsor walkouts.”

Students who leave class without authorization will receive an unexcused tardy or absence, Orr said.

“A first time skipping class results in reteaching expectations and a notification sent home,” Orr wrote. “For the safety of our students, those who leave school grounds cannot re-enter the building or use school bus transportation at the end of the school day. Leaving campus will result in a referral and a school consequence following the student code of conduct.”

At Dunbar, principal Scott Loscheider wrote in a letter to parents that students may be “planning to exit the building to protest recent activities involving U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.”

Loscheider, like Orr, noted that the high school does not sponsor walkouts, and he outlined similar potential punishments for students who walk out of class.

District leaders did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday.



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Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, who is running for reelection, speaks at a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of a new section of U.S. Highway 641 between Murray and the Kentucky-Tennessee state line in Hazel, Ky., on Thursday, Oct. 12, 2023.

Beshear’s approval rating among KY voters higher than Trump’s, surveys show

BY PIPER HANSEN
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Gov. Andy Beshear is still the country’s most popular Democratic governor, with 65% of registered voters in Kentucky approving of the job he’s doing, according to recent survey results released Tuesday.

President Donald Trump, who easily won the Bluegrass in the last three presidential election cycles, by comparison, has the stamp of approval from 55% of registered Kentucky voters.

Both surveys were conducted by Morning Consult among registered Kentucky voters. The governor approval ratings survey was conducted in October through December and released Feb. 2, whereas the Trump approval ratings survey was done in September

through November and released Dec. 5.

The findings come as Beshear, 48, begins his role as chair of the Democratic Governors Association, in which he will support other governors, candidates and policies of the party through the 2026 midterm election cycle. It’s also a position likely to grow Beshear’s name ID as national Democrats look for the party’s next leader.

“The positive approval rating is a reflection of the good things going on in Kentucky,” Beshear said in a Tuesday statement to the Herald-Leader. “Better jobs, expanded access to health care, safe roads and bridges, good schools and safe communities are things all Kentuckians support — and it shows in the numbers.”

He’s ahead of the other Democratic governors who are often mentioned

in the same sentence as Beshear as being potential 2028 presidential candidates: Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro who has an approval rating of 62%, California Gov. Gavin Newsom who has an approval rating of 60% and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer who also has an approval rating of 60%.

Along with Newsom, the “home-state popularity” of Shapiro, Beshear, Hawaii Gov. Josh Green and Maryland Gov. Wes Moore stand out among the potential 2028 contenders, the pollster said.

Of all the country’s state leaders, Beshear is the third most popular, behind Vermont Gov. Phil Scott, who is a Republican with an approval rating of 74%, and Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon, who is also a Republican but with an approval rating of 68%.

Beshear has a disap-

proval rating of 28%, roughly the same it’s been since the start of 2024 when he began his second term.

Kentucky Republicans say Beshear’s approval ratings are actually a reflection of “Republican accomplishments he takes credit for at ribbon cuttings and check presentations.”

“If he were actually able to enact his own agenda, his numbers would look very different, because Kentuckians have consistently rejected the far-left radicalism he supports,” said Republican Party of Kentucky Communications Director Adam Hope in a statement to the Herald-Leader.

“The reason he’s floated as a presidential contender isn’t his record — it’s the absence of one,” he added. “Republican leadership has driven economic growth and prosperity across the Commonwealth, often by overriding his vetoes, but he never misses a photo opportunity tied to that success, even when he opposed the very policies that made it possible.”

Founded in 2014, Morning Consult specializes in online survey research technology. The firm collects data from more than 250,000 registered voters nationwide to assess popularity of politicians in all 50 states.

At the start of 2025, Beshear’s approval rating was 68% and went down to 65% at the end of the fourth quarter. The governor’s highest approval rating was at the start of 2020, just after he’d been elected the first time, when 76% of voters approved of his job performance.

Beshear has a net approval rating of 37, a measure that represents the share of voters who approve of his job performance minus the shares who disapprove. In Kentucky, Trump’s net approval rating is 14.

Surge in Minn. immigration cases pushes judiciary to brink

BY ALAN FEUER, MATTATHIAS SCHWARTZ AND ZACH MONTAGUE
NYT News Service

When it all became too much – the crippling case load, the lack of training and, most of all, the immigrants themselves who had been languishing in jail – Julie T. Le let loose in front of the judge.

Le, a prosecutor for the U.S. attorney’s office in Minnesota, knew that he was angry. She understood that she and her colleagues had violated his orders to release people illegally detained in the state last month. But she had already tried to quit her job, and no one would replace her, so what else could she do?

“The system sucks. This job sucks,” Le exclaimed. While she wanted to improve things, she was just one person, she explained, working around the clock to grapple with the onslaught of cases stemming from the Trump administration’s immigration crackdown.

“Fixing a system, a broken system, I don’t have a magic button to do it,” she said. “I don’t have the power or the voice to do it. I only can do it with-

in the ability and the capacity that I have.”

Le’s outburst Tuesday at a hearing in U.S. District Court in St. Paul was an extraordinary expression of personal frustration from a lawyer on the front lines of the White House’s aggressive immigration sweeps.

The remarks cost her her job at the Justice Department, where she had been working on a temporary basis to help handle habeas corpus petitions, or court filings that compel the government to justify holding someone in custody. But they also opened a window onto a broader problem: how the courts in Minnesota are buckling beneath the weight of a deluge of cases arising from the statewide campaign that the administration has called Operation Metro Surge.

The turmoil in the courts has demoralized prosecutors, outraged judges, exhausted defense lawyers – and left many immigrants languishing in detention in violation of court orders.

“The individuals affected are people,” said Jerry W. Blackwell, the federal judge who convened Tuesday’s hearing. “They live in their communities.

Some are separated from their families.”

When agencies like the Justice Department, the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement ignore judicial orders to release immigrants under their control, Blackwell said, it is an affront not merely to personal liberty, but to the entire criminal justice system.

“The DOJ, the DHS and ICE are not above the law,” the judge declared. “They do wield extraordinary power, and that power has to exist within constitutional limits.”

The hearing was held so Blackwell could grill Le and her supervisor in the U.S. attorney’s office about why they had ignored his orders in cases in which he had determined that immigrants had been illegally detained by federal agents. While the men were all eventually released from federal custody, the judge wanted to get to the bottom of the government’s noncompliance in missing court-imposed deadlines.

Lawyers for some of the immigrants had asked him to hold the administration in contempt. And while Blackwell did not immediately do so, Le, in a darkly

sardonic moment, said she would not have minded if he did.

“I wish you would just hold me in contempt, Your Honor, so that I can have a full 24 hours of sleep,” she said.

“If rogue judges followed the law in adjudicating cases and respected the government’s obligation to properly prepare cases, there wouldn’t be an ‘overwhelming’ habeas caseload or concern over DHS following orders,” said Natalie Baldassarre, a Justice Department spokesperson. “The level of illegal aliens currently detained is a direct result of this administration’s strong border security policies to keep the American people safe.”

The increasingly loud warnings that the Trump administration’s immigration policies are overloading the federal judiciary extend beyond Blackwell’s courtroom.

Last week, Patrick J. Schiltz, the chief federal judge in Minnesota, excoriated the administration for what he said were nearly 100 violations of court orders stemming from the Homeland Security Department’s aggressive crackdown in Minneapolis.

But a growing chorus of judges around the country have also raised concerns about the wave of cases brought on by the government’s immigration raids.

PEOPLE

Coulier is again cancer-free: ‘What a journey’

The Detroit News

Actor and comedian **Dave Coulier**’s tongue cancer is in remission, the former “Full House” star told “Good Morning America.”

Coulier revealed in December that he is undergoing treatment for tongue cancer, unrelated to his previous bout with Stage 3 non-Hodgkin lymphoma. But he came to “GMA” with good news on Wednesday.

“It’s been a roller-coaster ride for sure,” the co-

median said during an appearance on the ABC morning show. “I’m in remission with both cancers. And what a journey this has been.”

Coulier, 66, appeared on the show during World Cancer Day. The tongue cancer was discovered when he was undergoing a checkup for the lymphoma, and early detection “saved my life,” he said.

“I feel as though I can help people,” he said. “I never wanted to be the poster boy for cancer, believe me, but now I feel like I can encourage people to get those prostate exams and mammograms, and just talk to your doctors, and get ahead of this.”

Coulier, who in recent years moved back to his hometown of St. Clair Shores, also talked about AwareMarket, his well-being initiative and marketplace.

Coulier is due to appear at the ninth annual Astronomicon convention, April 10-12, at the Ann Arbor Marriott Ypsilanti at Eagle Crest.

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