

Kentucky high school student killed in crash. Family remembers her for kindness, faith

BY CHRISTOPHER LEACH
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A 16-year-old high school student died in a car crash Friday night, and members of the community are coming together to support the teenager's family.

The crash happened at the intersection of U.S. 127 and Ashe Road in Lincoln County, according to WKYT, the Herald-Leader's news-reporting partner. The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office told WKYT Brynn Bentley was driving a Mazda 3 and collided with a Chevrolet Silverado while exiting the Dove Cove subdivision and turning left onto the highway.

Bentley had to be extracted from the Mazda and was later pronounced dead by Lincoln County

Coroner Farris Marcum, according to WKYT. The driver of the pickup truck suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Bentley's obituary says she was a student at Boyle County High School. She was a member of the National Honor Society, Youth Salute, a co-captain of the tennis team and also served as president-elect of HOSA.

In a statement posted on Facebook, Boyle County Schools says the news of Bentley's death has deeply impacted the community. Staff has supported students experiencing grief and will continue to offer support as needed.

"Please remember, no student has to navigate grief alone," Boyle County Schools said in the Facebook post. "If any student is struggling, in need of additional support or sim-

ply needs someone to talk to, we are one phone call, email or message away."

Bentley was also involved in the youth program and a member of Young Life at her church, Southland Christian Church, according to her obituary.

"Brynn will be remembered for her kindness, her unwavering faith, and her fierce love for Jesus," her obituary says. "She lived each day with a servant's heart, always placing the needs of others before her own and offering love, encouragement, and compassion to everyone she met."

A GoFundMe webpage has been created to support Bentley's family. As of 7:30 a.m. Wednesday, the fundraiser has collected more than \$11,000, surpassing the goal of raising \$5,000.



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Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer speaks during a labor roundtable with the Florida Democratic Party and union leaders on Monday, Oct. 20, 2025.

High-profile governor to visit Lexington for annual KY Dems fundraiser

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Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer will visit Lexington later this summer for the Kentucky Democratic Party's Forward Together Dinner, the political party announced Tuesday morning.

The dinner, taking place Aug. 15 at the Hyatt Regency in Lexington, is the party's largest annual fundraiser. Whitmer will be the keynote speaker.

"We are honored to provide a platform where Kentucky Democrats can hear Governor Whitmer's plan to build on a growing blue wave," Kentucky Democratic

Party Chair Colmon Elridge said in a news release. "As Republicans openly admit they don't care about your financial situation, Americans are looking for strong leaders like her and Governor Beshear."

Whitmer, who also serves as the vice chair for the Democratic Governors Association, recently attended the Kentucky Derby as a guest to Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear along with other Democratic governors.

Beshear, who chairs the DGA, also attended the Michigan Democratic Party's largest annual fundraiser in April.

"Governor Whitmer has spent her two terms in office helping working families get ahead,"

Beshear said in a news release. "She has expanded access to health-care for nearly 1 million Michiganders, closed a \$2.2 billion budget deficit and increased public school funding — without raising taxes."

"Who your governor is has never mattered more and, with 36 races for governor on the ballot this year, I am proud to be working with Gretchen to make sure Americans have leaders focused on the issues that matter most to our families."

Democratic National Committee Chair Ken Martin was the keynote speaker of last year's Forward Together Dinner.

Fayette school officials reveal how many millions of dollars job cuts will save

BY VALARIE HONEYCUTT SPEARS
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Fayette school officials revealed Tuesday that the 120 job positions the cash-strapped district eliminated will save an estimated \$11 million in the 2027 fiscal year budget.

District officials released the figure as part of written answers to budget questions posed at a live session last week.

District officials are restating or reissuing FY25 budget information because of incorrect information, so "these positions along with other reductions are to balance the FY27 tentative budget," district officials said in one of their written answers.

"The personnel budget savings is approximately \$11 million in positions. This personnel amount reflects the total compensation packages, not just base salaries. This includes the base salary plus all associated employer-paid benefits, such as health insurance, FICA, and retirement system contributions," district officials said Tuesday.

The district's proposed \$711 million general fund budget is based on the cuts. The total budget is \$880 million.

FCPS released details last week on the 120 jobs it cut, consisting of 49 hourly and 71 salaried roles. Of the 71 salaried positions, 16 positions are administrators, district officials have said. In addition, various staff have had the number of days worked reduced.

FCPS officials have previously said the reduction in work days will result in a \$1.9 million savings. The job eliminations caused much consternation among employees. They say the cuts will negatively affect students and academics, though district officials maintain that won't happen as a result of the reductions.

District officials say finances have been misstated for decades. FCPS officials have said they plan to take out a short-term \$110 million loan. "We cannot make payroll, the second payroll in July, without this," Interim Chief Financial Officer Kyna Koch said May 11.



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Fayette County Public Schools officials discuss budget and staffing cuts during a press conference April 28, 2026 in Lexington, KY.

On Tuesday, district spokesperson Miranda Scully issued a statement she said reflected the most current information, saying "funds for employee salaries are secured and prioritized within our budget."

FCPS officials have said the district's contingency fund balance is just 2%, the bare minimum under state law.

How much the district will have to pay to take out that loan is still being negotiated.

MORE FINANCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

FCPS officials answered more written questions about financial operations Tuesday, including:

Q: "The budget includes \$150,000 to support the opening of the Rise STEM Academy. Is this the only increase in funding needed versus prior expenses for Rise? Or is the cost for the new facility creating additional expenses?"

A: "The investment for FY27 to the extent of \$150,000 is in support of the Rise STEM Academy for Girls expansion for 2027-28 school year. In this case, expansion refers to increased classrooms in grades K-6 and the addition of grade 7. "The board investment supports programming and related materials; it is not related to facility needs. We do not have final determination on the future location of the George Washington Carver STEM Academy for Boys beyond the 2026-27 school year."

Q: "Does the tentative budget include \$250 per teacher for classroom

supplies? If not, why has this been eliminated?"

A: "No. We will continue to look into ways to support this area of need."

Q: "Does the tentative budget include expenses for legal/audit fees that are currently being incurred but may not be paid until after the end of FY26 or will they be accrued? Are there any funds allocated for lawsuit settlements that may occur? What are the budgeted amounts for each of these expenses?"

A: "\$1 million has been allocated for legal expenses."

Q: "What is the difference between the expenditures from the general fund (\$711 million) and the \$880 million total budget? Where does that additional money come from if we only have \$711 million in revenue?"

A: "The \$880 million total budget comprises five funds: the General Fund (\$711 million); the Special Revenue Fund, where you find all of the local, state and federal grants (\$56 million); Fund 310, Capital Outlay (3.8 million); Fund 320, the Building Fund (\$77.6 million); and Fund 51, Child Nutrition (\$32 million). Each fund has a designated source of revenue."

Q: "Will FCPS make a pledge to not use the companies we paid to audit our finances since 2008 in the future? Will the district be seeking any re-funds?"

A: "A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new firm has been posted for audit firms to submit proposals."



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