

Union County Board Of Education Meets; Hears Reports, Summer Feed Update

The Union County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday night with Superintendent Dr. Terra Hancock and all board members in attendance.

In a session that lasted more than two hours, board members heard the superintendent's report, an update concerning the summer feed program, and overview of spring sports season at Union County High School, made recognitions, approved several items on the consent agenda, and presented the superintendent's evaluation.

Prior to the start of the business session, Dr. Hancock recognized Charles Lynch from Saturn Machine as a community supporter. She expressed her appreciation to Lynch for his commitment to the Union County Schools. Lynch was not present at the meeting.

A second recognition

went to board member Chad Hagan who received a pin in recognition of his five years of service on the Union County Board of Education.

In her report to the board, Dr. Hancock presented a short review of her two years as superintendent of the local school district and the 2025-2026 school year as the foundation is laid for education in the Union County Public Schools. Dr. Hancock had a slide presentation showing the commitment of administrators and staff members to provide a positive, impactful learning experience for the children of Union County. Dr. Hancock stressed that work is continuing in every district school to "build a Brave".

Food Services Director Nikki Hancock updated the board on the summer feed program, which kicked off about three weeks ago. Ms.

Hancock called the program "a huge success." She added, "The food service team is working very hard." The program is currently serving two meals a day to 990 children in Union County.

Mason Holloran, athletic director at Union County High School, updated the board on the springs sports teams, which included baseball, softball, track, and tennis. He told members that several individuals received region and/or state recognition for their athletic accomplishments this season. In addition, the UCHS baseball team was the recipient of a sportsmanship award from the region umpires' association. He added that preparations are underway for the fall seasons with a coaches meeting scheduled for today (Wednesday). Halloran con-

cluded by telling members that efforts are continuing to compile a history of team and individual statistics for Union County High School. Board members approved the financial report presented by Finance Officer Amy Morris. Members also approved the payment of bills and expenses for the superintendent's office.

The board also approved a 20 item consent agenda which included the travel report, requests for fund-raisers, trip requests, leaves of absence, 2026-2027 policy and procedure updates, UCMS request to weed library books, petitions for early enrollment, student handbook changes, a grant contract, a food service program assistant, proposal for a districtwide facility survey, revisions to the 2026-2027 salary schedule, and three finan-

cial matters presented by Ms. Morris.

At 6:55 P.M., the board went into a closed session to discuss the evaluation for Dr. Hancock. That session lasted until 8:03 P.M. when members returned to the open session and presented their findings. (See separate story in this week's paper).

Following the presentation of the superintendent's evaluation, board member Donnie Gatten presented a motion to increase the superintendent's annual pay by three percent. That motion received a second from board member Greg Clifton and was approved unanimously.

No further business came before the board, and the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting of Union County Board of Education will be Monday, July 27, 6:00 P.M.

Vaught's Views

By Larry Vaught

Malachi Brown's father played college football at Marshall University and his uncle played for Ole Miss.

"Malachi always had a football in his hands," said Torino Brown, Malachi's father. "His uncle was about 6-foot-5 and Malachi always prayed for height and the other abilities that God has blessed him with. He was always doing drills as a kid and I told him if he kept working, he could be special. He took me seriously and put in the work at a young age."

The 6-foot-4, 265-pound Brown, age 17, is now one of the nation's elite defensive linemen. He had 62 solo tackles, including 11 tackles for 11 and eight quarterback sacks, at Corbin High School in 2025. He's a four-star recruit ranked as one of the nation's top 300 overall players by Rivals Industry Rankings.

He recently committed to Kentucky over offers from Alabama, Miami, Ohio State, Tennessee, Indiana and many others.

"We told Malachi just to keep his eyes open and if he saw what he liked, then go for it," his father said. "I am not going to play. My wife is not going to play. Coach (Will) Stein and his guys were amazing. He went to practices and made unofficial and official visits. He fell in love with Kentucky."

"Big Blue Nation has been good to him. He will be a better player than I ever was. He will far surpass me with his talent."

Torino Brown played at Marshall with current Corbin coach Luke Salmons, who came to Corbin in 2024 after 13 seasons as head coach at West Virginia's Cabell Midland High School.

"I played tackle and graduated (from Marshall) in 2004 but a couple of injuries set me back," Torino Brown said. "I am grateful Malachi played the same position as me. I had a good career but

he has had a chance to learn what I didn't."

When Salmons got the job at Corbin, Malachi Brown's family decided to make the move to Kentucky also. Salmons' son, Mason, is Corbin's quarterback and completed 113 of 177 passes with just two interceptions for 2,401 yards and 30 touchdowns last season and ran for 503 yards and eight scores.

"I have coached Mason for four years. We were always together and getting ideas off each other. We liked being around each other. I knew they had a great school system here in Corbin, so we made the move his sophomore year and it has been great," Torino Brown said.

Malachi Brown has one edge over most young athletes — his father is a chef.

"He's always been much bigger than other kids but I have been able to make sure he has proper nutrition," Torino Brown said. "We go out to dinner here and there but mainly prepare meals at home. We have eggs, rice and some protein with beef, chicken or turkey. My wife (who is a nurse practitioner) and I prepare different foods for him. He fell in love early with brisket and steaks but his favorite food is chicken tenders. He will pick that over steaks. He has a big appetite. He loves to eat so we make sure he eats the right foods and he understands that."

Malachi Brown tried other sports when he was young. He played soccer and basketball, the sport his mother wanted him to play.

"He had different abilities and talent but football was always number one with him and basketball was second," Torino Brown said. "Basketball did help with his footwork and that transitioned to the football field."

The UK commit has trained with his father three or four times a week for the last year.

"He loves the work. He takes the approach

if you want to be the best you have got to train. He's really taken that to heart," Torino Brown said. "I think he's really glad he has made his college choice. Now he can do his workouts, eat the proper food and get in extra training. He can focus on all that and not take a flight or travel (to other schools)."

"I told coach Stein he was getting a great player. My high school won a national championship. I know how far sports can take you and what you can accomplish and achieve. Malachi has always said he wanted to go to the NFL. Millions of kids say that. He has taken that to heart and he believes Kentucky is the school that can help develop him to get there."

Kentucky defensive line coach Anwar Stewart came highly recommended.

"A guy I played with in college played in the Canadian Football League with him. He said he was a tremendous guy who really coaches kids up," Torino Brown said. "Malachi fell in love with him. He gained relationships with a lot of coaches but coach Stewart means business. We know he can help Malachi get to where he wants to be." * * *

What is new Kentucky men's basketball coach Mo Williams like?

He is a 13-year NBA veteran who was the head coach at Jackson State the previous four years before joining coach Mark Pope's staff at UK this season. He's already making a name for himself with his recruiting prowess.

"He's been great. He's a winner," UK red-shirt sophomore center Reece Potter. "He came from the NBA and just his stories and stuff about how much we all want to get to the next level. It's another person for us to listen to. We have coach Pope that has played (in the NBA) and now we get to listen to another great coach being able to push us."

Recruits have praised Williams for the relationships he establishes and recent UK commit Ryan Hampton, a top 10 player in the 2027 class, admitted it was Williams who closed the deal with him. He's been nicknamed the "Closer" and Potter believes it is a great nickname.

"He's loving it, so I feel like that's a great nickname for him. The Closer is pretty sick and he was able to close some deals and it was pretty awesome for us," Potter said.

Potter calls him a "fun-loving coach" who can also be a "hard ass" when needed.

"I feel like all coaches are a little hard ass when it comes down to it. They have to be if we are not doing the right things," Potter said. "We're still young men, so sometimes we aren't the most focused. But him being able to teach us every single day ... he did it at the highest level and was a very impactful player at that level. He's able to work with all of us and help us experience stuff that makes us better." * * *

Notre Dame transfer Morgan Gaerte, a 6-foot-5 junior hitter, was a first-team all-ACC player last season when she had 497 kills in 28 matches. That was the most kills by a Notre Dame player in the rally-scoring era (2008-present) and third-most overall in all scoring eras.

Gaerte and teammate Asia Thigpen recently went on a trip to Costa Rica with UK All-American gymnasts Creslyn Brose and Delaynee Rodriguez for del Sueno Mar Beachfront Hotel.

"Morgan is absolutely amazing and so easy to talk to and very easy to be around," Brose said. "She is definitely somebody that I feel close with now. Same with Asia (Thigpen). They are both awesome but Morgan is very outgoing and very kind."

Brose and Rodriguez did not play volleyball against Gaerte

and Thigpen in Costa Rica where the two UK volleyball players held a clinic for local girls but did retrieve balls for them during the youth clinic.

Brose said it was a "great opportunity" for the gymnasts to spend time with athletes from another sport in Costa Rica.

"I love opportunities like that because we actually get to expand from our team a little bit," Brose said. "Obviously, we do so much with our team but then you're on campus and around people that you wish were friends with you and wish you knew more," Brose said. "But with these kinds of things we were able to share experiences together, and I feel like that created a special bond between the four of us."

"We even talked about it when we were there. We're like, 'When we come back, we should do bonfires at each other's houses and just hang out. Just that kind of stuff. So definitely I feel like getting close with athletes from other teams is awesome.'" * * *

Quote of the Week: "I want them to know that they're important; that every

single one of our fans matter. The strength of Big Blue Nation comes down to one individual and that person showing up in whatever way they can," new UK athletics director J Blatt on the support of Kentucky fans.

Quote of the Week 2: "He understands that my best games and plays are in front of me. I know he can help me develop on the field and in the weight room and turn me into a monster on the field. I know he can be tough but I 100 percent like that kind of coaching," UK commit Griff Galloway on Kentucky defensive line coach Anwar Stewart.

Quote of the Week 3: "We're excited to open the season against Kentucky. Playing one of the premier programs in college basketball is exactly the kind of challenge we want. This is the kind of game that speaks to the tradition and pride of our squad," Manhattan coach John Gallagher on opening the season Nov. 3 against UK in Rupp Arena.

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The business to be licensed will be located at 211 N Morgan St. Morganfield, KY 42437 doing business as KT'S SMOKE SHOP.

The owner is as follows: Owner/Manager, Umang Patel of 1450 Chelsa Drive, Madisonville, KY 42431.

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