

THE STURGIS NEWS

Delivering
For
Sturgis
and
Union County

141ST YEAR

STURGIS, UNION COUNTY, KENTUCKY, WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2026

NUMBER SEVENTEEN

Board Of Education Hears Reports, Project Updates

The Union County Board of Education met in regular session Monday night hearing an update on the district construction projects,



a motivational presentation from a student, and an update on the Lifewise program at Sturgis Elementary as well as reports of programs and activities by the superintendent.

The meeting opened with student Kevin Simpson, Jr. sharing a motivational talk encouraging both students and teachers to begin the 2026-27 school year with excitement and to be grateful for the success God provides. He encouraged student to “do their best” and not be afraid or hesitant about the start of school.

Simpson’s presentation was followed by a construction project update. Dalton Jackson of Alliance, attended the meeting virtually to provide information and answer questions regarding the construction of the multi-purpose facility and the vocational school. Jackson noted that the multi-purpose building is 70 percent complete and contractors are “making good progress” on the voca-

tional school renovations. He noted that the projects are running on schedule. Jackson also addressed two change orders on the project. Those changes regard additional site excavation and storm drainage work. The remediation project is anticipated to cost about \$69,121.50 with an additional \$6641 for hauling excess dirt and debris. The board plans to conduct a walkthrough of the facilities in September or October.

In other presentations, Brittany Gamboa, who was instrumental in starting the Lifewise program at Sturgis Elementary last year, addressed the board and asked that the program be continued for the 2026-27 school year. She noted that second graders were involved in last year’s program which allowed students to leave school and participate in a program that helps build character, gives encouragement and teaches about Christ. Gamboa said volunteers who work with the program would like to add third graders as well as second graders to this year’s program. About 20 students took part in the program last year.

In her report, superintendent Dr. Terra Hancock praised district employees who have spent the summer at conferences, trainings and leadership events both with and without students. She listed a number of employees who continued to build their professional portfolios outside of regular school hours by attended events that will help them in the classroom.

Hancock also addressed the revised standards for superintendent evaluations. In the past superintendents have been evaluated on seven standards; in 2026-27 that

number will reduce to five standards with the state combining standards that overlap each other. The board also briefly discussed meeting with Hancock in a closed session every other month to work on her evaluation rather than conducting the entire evaluation in June each year. No decision was made on that matter until the legality of such a session is determined.

The superintendent also reported that the board has the opportunity to earn a 40 percent tax credit for a solar project. She asked that the board allow Steve Carter, a consultant for BFW/Marcum Engineering to address the board at their next work session to learn more about the project and determine if it is a project the district wants to participate in as well as determine whether it is financially worthwhile.

Hancock also announced her professional goals for the coming school year. She told the board that she will introduce the ‘rounding for retention’ program that will round every staff member with a district administrator. The program will provide positive conversations to determine what is going well, what staff needs, and how administration can help them achieve their goals as well as who has been especially helpful to them. The conversations are intended to build trust, remove barriers and celebrate staff.

The superintendent also reported that she plans to personally visit every classroom this year to observe student engagement and classroom culture. She noted that “this will take planning and much of her time,” but the pre-planned visits are important for her to learn

more about what is happening in UC classrooms.

The board also received a list of August school related events. That calendar reflects a number of school open houses and staff development days. Opening Day for staff is August 17 with students reporting to classes on August 19.

In Monday night’s session, the board also heard the financial report presented by Amanda Davis. Board members approved the financial report, the payment of bills and expenses for the superintendent’s office before moving to a 29 item consent agenda. That list included approval of handbooks for students, the code of acceptable behavior, updates to special education procedures and a partnership agreement with Educational Neglect Prevention and Family Engagement Program.

Other consent agenda items approved include a bond through Ohio Casualty for the board treasurer, a grant application for fresh fruits and vegetables, memorandums of understanding with Earle C. Clements Job Corps Academy, a service agreement with West Kentucky Pest Control, an independent contractor agreement for mental health services for students, the new athletic ticket plan, a contract with Relevant Speakers Network, a technology recycling plan and a \$20,000 Community Ed grant. District assurances were also approved through the consent agenda along with a memorandum of agreement with John Paul II for extended teacher services, the superintendent’s professional organization dues, an appointment to the sick

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Sturgis City Council Awards Bids For Infrastructure Improvements

The Sturgis City Council met in a called session on Wednesday, July 22 with Mayor Billy Adams presiding. Five council members – Dennis Odom, John Deibler, Charles Garnett, Theresa Greeg, and Allan Collins were in attendance. Council member Hunter Davis was not present for the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was the awarding of bids for two infrastructure projects and approval of a lease for a city-owned building.

Council members approved awarding a bid for waterline improvement project to Youngblood Excavating and Contracting. That bid is in the amount of \$1,129,784. The funds for that work comes from the KYWWATERS grant the city received several months ago.

That work will result in the replacement of waterlines on Main Street from 4th Street to 13th Street and 1st Street to Kelsey Street. The work is expected to begin in September.

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A bid for blacktopping on several city streets was awarded to Scotty’s Contracting and Stone. That bid was in the amount of \$85,125.00. Paving improvements will be made to portions of Lee Street, King Street, 8th Street, 4th Street, 10th Street, the intersection of Jackson Street and 1st Street, and 1st Avenue.

That work is expected to begin later in the summer or the early fall.

In final business, the council approved a one year lease agreement with Monica Foster for the building adjacent to the council chambers. The building is located at 15 West 6th Street. Ms. Foster will operate Daydream Cakery from the building.

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

The next regular meeting of Sturgis City Council will be Wednesday, August 12, 4:00 P.M.

Union County Educator Receives “Classroom To Commerce” Grant

A Union County educator, along with a Jackson County educator, has received the Kentucky Retail Institute’s (KRI) 2026 “Classroom to Commerce” grant during the annual Kentucky Career and Technical Education (CTE) Statewide Summer Conference on July 21 at the Galt House in Louisville.

KRI awarded two \$500 project-based grants to the following high school teachers who sponsor innovative School-Based Enterprise (SBE) programs:

* Sarah McQueen, business administration instructor at Jackson County Area Technology Center (ATC) in southeast Kentucky, received a \$500 grant for the “Click. Create. Conquer: The Generals Expansion Project”, increasing storage options for the school’s General Store to improve operational efficiency and expand production.

* Margie McGraw, computer programming teacher and Perkins/work-based learning coordinator at Union County High School in western Kentucky, received a \$500 grant for the “Unity Market: Connecting Classrooms to Commerce”, expanding the reach of the Braves & Co. school store by offering student-created products and involving multiple pathways in the process.

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“The Kentucky Retail Institute congratulates both Ms. McQueen and Ms. McGraw on these well-deserved grant awards benefiting their respective schools,” said KRI President Cassie Grigsby. “We are proud to invest in these innovative projects that encourage creativity, strengthen work ethic and introduce students to career opportunities in the retail industry. Their work is helping prepare Kentucky’s next generation of retail leaders.”

School-Based Enterprise (SBE) programs are student-led school stores that provide hands-on experience for Kentucky high school students. These enterprises are a form of work-based learning designed to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and practical workforce experience.

Retail supports one in four American jobs and remains Kentucky’s largest private-sector employer. The mission of the Kentucky Retail Institute is to promote the education of students interested in retail careers while strengthening Kentucky’s future workforce. About The Kentucky Retail Institute, Inc.

