

The Data Center Controversy in Kentucky Continues

By Sara Sparks

Opposition to proposed data centers is spreading across Kentucky as residents and local officials raise concerns about electricity costs, environmental effects, tax incentives and the industry’s long-term economic benefits. At least 30 counties have adopted ordinances or moratoria affecting new data centers. The issue also surfaced in the May primary elections, when some local officials may have lost their seats as a result of their positions regarding data centers. Gov. Andy Beshear recently withheld praise for a \$100 billion data center in Paducah, as his office cited questions about energy costs, environmental impacts and fair taxation.

The debate reflects a broader backlash against large technology companies and the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence. Critics say the industry collects personal data, fuels online dependency and promotes technology that could displace workers. They also object to developers’ use of private negotiations and nondisclosure agreements with local officials.

Affordability is another central concern. Kentuckians already face higher electricity costs through PJM, the regional grid operator, whose charges have risen by billions of dollars amid growing demand from data centers. Opponents fear additional projects could push more infrastructure and power costs onto residential customers.

Environmental worries have also shaped the response. Residents point to the centers’ potential effects on air, water and quality of life, concerns reinforced by Kentucky’s history of



damage from powerful extractive and industrial companies. Skepticism is also rooted in failed development ventures. Braidy Industries and AppHarvest received public support after promising jobs and investment, but both later collapsed. Those experiences have made some Kentuckians wary of new projects backed by public incentives. Kentucky already offers inexpensive land, abundant water, relatively low electricity prices, access to the regional grid and a favorable climate. Even so, lawmakers approved a sales-tax exemption for data-center equipment in the closing hours of the 2025 legislative session. The exemption will remain in effect for 50

years and could cost the state billions of dollars if several hyperscale centers qualify. In 2026, lawmakers did not pass legislation intended to prevent utilities from shifting data-center-related costs to other customers. Questions also remain about promised local tax revenue. While developers emphasize potential benefits for host communities, their lawyers have sought reductions or exemptions from some of the same taxes. Supporters say artificial intelligence will play a major role in the economy, but the scale and profitability of the current build-out remain uncertain. The expansion is heavily financed, and critics warn that a downturn in AI investment could leave communities responsible for underused energy infrastructure. Data centers can create substantial short-term construction employment, though their permanent workforces are generally smaller. For communities seeking jobs, the dispute is increasingly focused on whether those gains justify the public costs and long-term risks. The growing resistance suggests many Kentuckians want a larger role in setting the terms of economic development. Their demands center on transparency, accountability, and assurance that residents—not only developers and technology firms—will share in the benefits.

No Cellphone Rule Implemented at JCPS Elementary Schools



A new student electronic device policy will be in place for the upcoming school year at JCPS Elementary schools. In compliance with Kentucky House Bill 208 and KRS 158.165, student personal electronic devices (phones, smartwatches, tablets, earbuds) are prohibited during the instructional day. All devices must be turned completely off and stored out of sight during school hours. Devices may be stored in a backpack, but not physically on a student, such as in a student’s pants pocket or hoodie pocket. Exceptions will be made for devices to be accessed in instances of documented medical needs (IEP, 504, ADA accommodations) or immediate emergency or safety threats. For regular communication, parents can call the main office for urgent messages, and students can use the school landlines to call home. Consequences will be determined by the number of offenses; 1st Offense will warrant a verbal warning; device goes immediately to the teacher’s desk, the parent is notified, and the device is returned to the student at the end of the instructional day. 2nd Offense: The device is confiscated by the teacher, the parent is notified, and the device will NOT be released to the student; the parent/guardian must come to the school to pick up the device. 3rd Offense: The device will be sent to the principal, and the student will be sent to the principal. Device will be released only to a parent/guardian. A behavior plan and additional consequence will be decided during the principal meeting. These new rules are to better ensure a safe learning environment – We want our students to be successful communicators and actively participate in instruction.

Lets Play Some Football!!!



J.C.H.S. Varsity Football Schedule 2026

Aug. 21st	Berea Home
Aug. 28th	@ Knott Co. Central
Sept. 4th	@ Jellico (TN)
Sept. 11th	@ Casey Co.
Sept. 18th	Lynn Camp Home
Sept. 25th	Holmes Home
Oct. 2nd	Bye Week
Oct. 9th	@ West Carter
Oct. 16th	@ Morgan Co.
Oct. 23rd	Breathitt Co. Home
Oct. 30th	Pineville Home (Senior Night)

2026 JCHS Generals Football Team Roster (KHSAA)

Players	Jersey	Last Name	First Name	Class	76	Gabbard	Steven	Senior	20	Roberts	Caden	Freshman
					95	Gilbert	Elijah	Junior	21	Roberts	Elijah	Freshman
71	Adkins	Tyler	Sophomore	2	Gray	Hunter	Freshman			Rose	Elijah	Senior
97	Bowles	Andrew	Freshman	62	Harrison	Conner	Junior			Sandlin	Tyler	Sophomore
75	Collins	Ethan	Freshman	14	Hisel	Luke	Freshman		5	Schlenk	Deegan	Senior
	Combs	Matthew	Senior		Isaacs	Andrew	Junior		44	Seals	Davin	Senior
15	Coyle	Braxton	Junior	12	Jones	Jacob	Junior		59	Shearer	Chase	Sophomore
8	Dezarn	Kendrick	Sophomore	74	Marcum	Lane	Sophomore			Thompson	Aiden	Junior
7	Dozier	Jayce	Freshman	60	Morris	Landon	Sophomore		64	Turner	Lucas	Junior
11	Dunn	Wyatt	Junior		Muncy	Karson	Sophomore		70	Vaughn	Maddox	Junior
79	Estep	Jerrad	Junior		Nichols	Avery	Sophomore		92	Vickers	Brayden	Senior
50	Etherton	Jayden	Junior	3	Nolasco	Gavin	Junior		42	Wagers	Bobby	Freshman
52	Etherton	Josiah	Freshman		Peters	Gunnar	Senior		73	Wagers	Braylon	Freshman
27	Foster	Maxwell	Freshman	10	Purkey	Hezekia	Sophomore		26	Woods	Logan	Freshman
72	Gabbard	Darrick	Freshman	77	Rivera	Juan	Senior					

NOTICE

Daniel Boone Community Action Agency, Inc., will be having a Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, August 25th at 6:00 pm in Clay County at the central office located at 1535 Shamrock Road in Manchester. The public is invited to attend. Daniel Boone CAA is an equal housing opportunity provider.

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to KRS 61.820, KRS 61.835, KRS 61.872, and KRS 65.065, the Jackson County Conservation District (JCCD) Board of Supervisors does hereby give public notice that their financial records and minutes of action may be examined by the general public at their office located at 1030 Main Street South in McKee, Kentucky, during their business hours which are Monday through Thursday between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Financial information may also be found on the Kentucky Department of Local Government website at kydlgweb.ky.gov, then “Search County Data.”

Board meetings are held in the above-named location on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. With some exceptions (KRS 61.810), these meetings are open to the public when a quorum is present. Special/rescheduled meetings are announced at least one week in advance. More information can be found at JCCDKY.org.