



McCracken County Board of Education meeting
August 21, 2025 (5:30 PM)
Meeting Recap

Recognitions

- MCEA recognized Special Education Teacher at Heath Elementary, Adia Noles.

Monthly Reports to the Board:

- **Monthly Financial Report**
 - During her financial report, Mrs. DeJarnett shared an update on the district's progress toward establishing a philanthropic foundation. Feedback gathered through a feasibility study has helped identify focus areas, and the District's Foundation Liaison, Mrs. Kayla Myers, has been meeting with community members to share that the foundation will launch soon. One of the first fundraising initiatives will be an annual giving circle. Additional details will be provided as plans move forward.
- **Attendance**
 - Mr. Heath provided board members with the attendance report for August. The focus was on student enrollment, District-Wide ADA, and District-Wide attendance percentage so far this school year. Mr. Heath also presented information about the School-Based Attendance Team meetings that have started throughout the district and will occur in every building on a monthly basis. He also stated that the state-wide High Attendance Day is Tuesday, September 9, 2025.
- **Technology**
 - Mr. Johnson, Director of Technology reported that McCracken County Public Schools has completed its annual review of data security practices in compliance with 702 KAR 1:170. He highlighted key protections such as 15-character passwords, multi-factor authentication for email and administrative systems, secure networks for staff and students, restricted access to programs with personal information, automated account management, data minimization, encryption, internet filtering, and physical safeguards. He emphasized that these measures reflect the district's ongoing commitment to protecting staff and student information.
- **Food Service**
 - Food Service Director Cathy Lewis reported that McCracken County's Summer Feed Program was a tremendous success. This summer, meals were served at seven schools, with additional weekly bulk bag distribution at two locations—totaling 133,967 meals provided to students and families. Mrs. Lewis highlighted improvements made to menus and meal options across the district, along with staff training to prepare for the new school year. She also shared her continued goals of

enhancing the quality of food served to McCracken students. Student participation in both breakfast and lunch programs has increased, and the district will once again provide free meals for all students during the 2025–26 school year through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

- **Construction Update**

- Mr. Bowland reported that construction continues to progress on schedule at both Heath Elementary and Concord Elementary. At Heath Elementary, the building pad is now complete, and the first footers are being installed this week. Parents and staff can expect to see walls beginning to form as early as the first week of September. At Concord Elementary, work on the building pad is advancing following minor soil remediation. Footers will be installed soon, with block walls to follow shortly after. The district will continue to provide updates to all stakeholders as these exciting projects move forward.

- **Superintendent**

- Mr. Hunt began his report by re-introducing the board members to the Next Generation Effectiveness Standards for Kentucky Superintendents. Each month he will focus his presentation on one of the 7 standards and supporting evidence. Mr. Hunt discussed the success of the first 9 days of school thanking all of the school staff, along with all of the support staff, for the work they do to make MCPS such a special district. He noted that the Ford Next Generation Learning has entered Phase 2, the Envision Phase, and that a great deal of planning will take place over the months of September, October, and November, with the first 3 days of work being 9/17-9/19. Mr. Hunt thanked the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for voting to allow the Chamber to serve as the Convening Organization for the Ford NGL/MCPS work, specifically thanking Sandra Wilson and Molly Thompson. He ended by thanking all those that had worked to make the Opening Day activities such a special event, specifically thanking Mark Joyner, Wealth Management, for sponsoring the event and supplying the gift cards totaling \$2500 for the giveaway.

Consent Agenda and Action Items:

- **Approval of the Acceptance of the New Horizons Pilot Travel Center “Miles of Good” \$10,000 Grant on behalf of McCracken County Public Schools.**
 - New Horizons Pilot Travel Center with the “Miles of Good” Grant program is providing funding opportunities for innovative programs that promote educational programs and higher learning in school districts, such as STEM, but not limited to.
- **Approval of the Acceptance of the Rising Sun Initiative Grant on behalf of Lone Oak Middle School.**
 - The National FFL Organization, through the Kentucky FFA Foundation Board of Trustees, offers grant funding to support agricultural education of up to \$1,000 toward a school that opens a middle school agriculture program. Lone Oak Middle began a program for agriculture during the 2024-2025 school year and was awarded the “Rising Sun Initiative” grant for 2025.

- **Approval of the Acceptance of a Grant Award from the WHAS Crusade for Children on behalf of McCracken County Public Schools**
 - WHAS Crusade for Children grants are made to nonprofit agencies, schools and hospitals that help children with special needs up to age 18. MCPS Special Education applied for supplies and materials for the district's special needs students, namely at Heath Middle School. The district was awarded \$10,000 for playground equipment to be coordinated and implemented by the Director of Special Education.
- **2026 McCracken County Real Estate/Tangible Property and Motor Vehicle/Watercraft Tax Rates**
 - The Board voted to lower the real estate property tax rate for 2025 from 52.5 cents to 51.8 cents per \$100 of assessed value. The tangible property tax rate was set at 52.9 cents, while the motor vehicle and watercraft tax rates remain unchanged at 52.9 cents. This marks the seventh consecutive year the Board has either maintained or reduced the real estate property tax rate.

In comparison to 14 Kentucky districts of similar size or within our region, McCracken County Schools' real estate tax rate remains in the lower half, and well below the state average. At the same time, performance continues to excel: according to 2023–2024 Kentucky School Report Card data for this group of districts, McCracken ranks #1 in average teacher pay and #3 in composite ACT scores, outperforming the state average in both measures.

- **McCracken County Leadership Cohort 2025–26**
In partnership with Murray State University College of Education & Human Services
 - McCracken County Schools and Murray State University have entered into a collaborative partnership through the Institute for School Leadership Development. This three-semester program is designed to prepare future principals by combining university coursework with authentic, school-based leadership experiences. Murray State will lead recruitment, training, supervision, and research opportunities, while McCracken County Schools will recruit qualified teachers, provide clinical experiences, and support candidate assessment. Together, the University, district, and candidates will strengthen instructional leadership and improve educational outcomes.

Selection Process

Applications will be shared districtwide. Our goal is to have at least one candidate from each school, with some schools having multiple participants depending on size and need. 15–20 candidates will be selected for the 2025–26 cohort.

Program Requirements

- **Monthly Meetings:** 10 required sessions (1.5 hours each) beginning September 25, 2025, continuing through fall 2026. Led by Personnel Director, Coye Elliott, with guest speakers including district leaders and community business leaders.
- **Leadership Experience:** 4 shadowing opportunities with district administrators (substitutes provided).
- **Assignments:** Based on Murray State requirements and current McCracken County initiatives.

Benefits to Participants & the District

- Opportunity to enroll in Murray State's Education Administration Program.
- Earn up to two college-level courses through Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) at \$250 per course (a savings of \$2,300).
- Shorten the traditional four-semester program to three semesters.
- Candidates already enrolled at another institution may transfer to MSU (credits considered case by case).
- Candidates who already hold an administration degree may earn elective PLA credit toward an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree at MSU.
- Helps McCracken County Schools grow and invest in future district leaders.

This collaborative program represents an ongoing commitment by McCracken County Schools and Murray State University to prepare strong school leaders and support educational excellence for years to come.

- **Approval of the BG-1 Documents for Roof Maintenance at Central Office**
 - The board approved the BG-1 for Central Office Roof Maintenance. The board discussed that opening the BG-1 would allow for Mr. Edwards to move forward with getting bids for options to replace parts or all of the central office roof. This information will be brought back before the board and voted on in a future meeting before any repair or replacement of the roof takes place.