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▲ PHOTO | ANGELA BRIGGS
A large crowd gathered at Caverna Independent last week to celebrate with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the district's new tennis courts.

the district's new tennis courts.

The idea for this project came when Terry Bunnell, CEO of The People's Bank, used the courts for a tennis lesson. Noticing their terrible condition, Bunnell told the crowd, "I couldn't let them stay that way."

Bunnell began formulating a plan, reaching out to the community, as

well as the U.S. Tennis Association of Kentucky and others, to gauge community support and to raise money. The cost of repair and resurfacing comes in around \$124,000, with Bunnell adding that to date, they had raised 62% of the total.

When speaking of the district, Superintendent Amanda Abell



▲ PHOTO | ANGELA BRIGGS
The new tennis courts at Caverna are painted purple.

said, "The future is bright here at Caverna."

Wilma Bunnell, who has been a tireless advocate for the district and for young people, recently retired from the district and said the outpouring of support was not a surprise to her.

"We are a close-knit community,

and when there's a need, everybody comes together and we are here today to celebrate that," Wilma Bunnell said.

The new purple courts will be named after Terry Bunnell, honoring his commitment to making the new courts a reality. Caverna alumna Danielle Carver is the tennis coach.



▲ Jaden Carney was the Caverna High School Student of the Month



▲ Terry Bunnell was recognized and honored for his continuous work on funds for the new tennis courts.



▲ Landon Coats was the Caverna Middle School Student of the Month

CAVERNA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tennis Courts Open

By **Katrina England**
News-Herald Reporter

The Caverna Board of Education met in regular session on Thursday, September 11, 2025. Board Members Gina Lyon, Allison Dennison, Jennifer Briggs, and Jennifer Ballard were in attendance, as well as Superintendent Amanda Abell.

The meeting opened with the reading of the District's vision and mission, as well as the Pledge of Allegiance, invocation, and a moment of silence in observance of September 11th.

In a single public comment, Brian Dennison addressed the Board to express pleasure with the new tennis courts.

Superintendent Abell reported that the

District was grateful for the amount of alumni and community members who came out to support the ribbon cutting for the tennis court upgrade.

Recognitions

Terry Bunnell was recognized and honored for contributing his time and dedication to the Caverna Independent School District, and working to help reconstruct the tennis courts, where over 62% of the funds for the project have been raised from outside sources of matching, grants, foundations, and individuals and businesses. The funds raised went directly to resurfacing the courts and painting the fence.

Bunnell spoke on upcoming programs, including adaptive programs for those

who are visually impaired or otherwise have challenges.

"The greatest thing of it is that the tennis team can begin having home matches in the spring," said Bunnell.

The tennis courts are now open to the public, with Abell expressing they desire for them to be community courts.

Student of the Month recognitions included Caverna Elementary School Student Ana Davis, Caverna Middle School Student Landon Coats, Caverna High School Student Jaden Carney, and Athlete of the Month Jayanah Nuckols.

Staff Members who were honored with Core Value Awards for Nurturing were Sable Pedigo and Kathy Mitchell. Both recipients were gifted

awards created by Graphic Design students.

Presentations

Director of Pupil Personnel Ken Cook provided the attendance report, stating that from August 18 through September 5th. Attendance percentages were as follows: 94.63% for elementary students, 94.15% for middle school students, and 93.7% for high school. Additionally, Cook reported that among the 47 fall athletes, the attendance percentage was 94.2%.

"This confirms our athletes don't have a truancy issue," said Briggs. "It helps to support that they are invested in their academics as well."

A parent in attendance also complimented Mr. Cook for his presence

in the car rider line.

Abell discussed the discrepancy of chronically medically absent students, and Cook explained they would even work with doctor's offices to help remedy extreme situations.

The Board heard results of an internal staff communication survey from Melissa Tobin, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher, which essentially showed the biggest concerns were that staff wanted timely communication without information overload. A strategic plan is already in the works to address concerns.

129 people participated in a separate external survey at Readifest, according to Tobin. Survey results showed that 85% of

families considered the District had good communication to home, 69% agreed that they felt informed and connected to their child's school, and 64% of families felt connected at a district level. The survey also showed that families preferred immediate electronic communication as opposed to paper copies, and that once families are involved, they have positive experiences.

Principals presented Walk-Through Data, which provides a snapshot of the school, and then the Board discussed exploring the potential options of a second School Resource Officer.

The next meeting of the Caverna Board of Education will be Thursday, October 9.

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