Kentucky Judicial Branch receives clean audit opinion

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT – The Kentucky Judicial Branch announced Wednesday that it has received an unmodified opinion, the highest level of assurance an auditor can provide, on its Fiscal Year 2026 financial statement.

The independent audit was conducted by Dean Dorton, which found that the Judicial Branch's financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements and changes in fund balances for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2026.

"Maintaining public trust in the Kentucky Court of Justice's management of taxpayer dollars is of prime importance," said Kentucky Supreme Court Chief Justice Debra Hembree Lambert. "This latest clean audit underscores the Judicial Branch's ongoing commitment to responsible fiscal stewardship, accountability and transparency. The independent auditor's report reflects the integrity of our financial operations."

Dean Dorton reported no significant difficulties, disagreements or uncorrected misstatements during the audit and found no deficiencies in internal control or compliance issues.

The financial statement and the independent auditor's report are available on the Kentucky Court of Justice website at: https://www.kycourts.gov/AOC/Audits/Pages/default.aspx. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) publishes the Kentucky Court of Justice financial statement each year. The statement is audited by an external auditor in accordance with Section 4 of Supreme Court Administrative Order 2024-35.

The AOC, which is located in Frankfort, is the operations arm of the state court system. The AOC supports the activities of nearly 3,300 court system employees and 412 elected justices, judges and circuit court clerks. As the fiscal agent for the state court system, the AOC executes the Judicial Branch budget, as adopted by the Kentucky General Assembly.

ELECTIONS

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Democratic challenger Chelsea Kirk with 7,266 votes (57.3%), while she received 5,414 votes (42.7%).

Statewide, Konstantopoulos earned 54.4% of the vote.

On the Facebook page "Daniel Konstantopoulos for State Representative 73rd District," Konstantopoulos expressed enthusiasm.

"WE DID IT! I am truly humbled and honored that the voters of the 73rd District have placed their trust in me to represent them in Frankfort," he said. "I commend my opponent, Chelsea Kir, on a hard fought race and wish her the very best. To all our volunteers, supporters, friends, and family(,) THANK YOU!"

The Clark County Property Valuation Administrator (PVA) race featured incumbent Jada Brady (R) against former PVA Jason Neely (D).

While numbers looked good for Neely early on as precincts were read aloud in the Fiscal Court chambers of the Clark County Courthouse, results soon favored Brady.

Ultimately, she came away victorious with 6,712 votes (52.61%) compared to 6,047 (47.39%).

"First and foremost, I want to thank God for giving me peace and strength through not just one, but two elections this year. Through it all, I've felt His presence, and I'm incredibly grateful," Brady wrote on Facebook via the Jada Brady Clark County PVA Page. "I also want to thank my opponents. Competition and different perspectives challenge us to grow, think differently, and ultimately make the office better…lastly, but most importantly, to the people of Clark County: THANK YOU."

In the race for Clark County Detention Center jailer, incumbent Frank "Squatty" Doyle, a Democrat, defeated Republican challenger Chris Grant.

Doyle received 7,631 votes (60.48%) compared to 4,987 (39.52) for Grant.

"Thank you to the people of Winchester and Clark County for their support. I appreciate them, and everybody stepped up," he said, also showing gratitude toward his staff. "They're what makes it all come together. It takes a team to make it happen, and I appreciate everybody doing that."

In the race for Magistrate of the 1st District, Republican Scott Hisle emerged victorious over Democratic challenger Jeannie Hall Gwynne, receiving 1,702 votes (54.31%) to 1,432 (45.69%).

"It is truly an honor to have earned your trust and the opportunity to serve our community. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported, encouraged, and believed in me throughout this campaign. Your kindness and support have meant more than you know," Hisle wrote on Facebook via Scott Hisle for Magistrate-District. "A special thank you to Jeannie Gwynne for running an excellent campaign. I appreciate her dedication to our community and her willingness to serve."

Gwynne, like many candidates, responded on her personal Facebook page.

"When you have this kind of support - you are a TRUE WINNER! No matter the election outcome, we celebrated!" she said, pictured with others at an after-party at Woody's Sports Bar and Grill. "For everything there is a season(,) and there is a reason for everything - I'm a true believer of that!"

In the 4th Educational District vote for the Clark County Board of Education position, incumbent Ben Dorsey prevailed with 726 votes (78.23%). Combined, write-in candidates Valerie Frost and Katie Brashear Jones received 202 votes (21.77%).

"I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our community through this term and will do everything I can to keep the primary focus on the kids, while working with the Board to continue creating as many opportunities for our children as they learn and develop," said Dorsey. "We absolutely want to keep 'Growing Greatness' in Clark County."

In congressional races, results were also mixed.

Former U.S. House Representative Andy Barr, a Republican, won the race for United States Senator, taking over for the retiring Mitch McConnell, both locally and statewide.

In Clark County, Barr finished with 7,598 votes, equal to 58.89%. Charles Booker, the Democratic Challenger, received 5,005, or 38.79% of the vote, while Christopher Campbell of the Kentucky Party received 2999 votes (2.32%).

Statewide, Barr received 784,867 votes (55%), Booker received 612,349 votes (42.9%), Campbell received 29,892 votes (2.1), and a small number of write-in votes were also accumulated.

At the local, Clark County level, in the U.S. House of Representatives' 6th District Race, Republican Ralph Alvarado received the most votes with 6,984 (54.36%).

However, statewide, Democratic challenger Zach Dembo was victorious, receiving 138,777 votes (52.7%). Alvarado received 114,030 votes (43.3%). Independent candidate Jay J. Bowman finished with 6,710 votes (2.5%), while Kentucky Party candidate Pete Lynch received 3,836 votes (1.5%). A small number of write-in votes were also accumulated.

Competitive judicial races also occurred.

In the race for the Judge of the Court of Appeals in the 5th Appellate District 1st Division, Lucy Ferguson VanMeter won both locally and statewide.

Locally, she defeated challenger Will Moynahan with 6,925 votes (70.82%) compared to 2,853 (29.18%).

Statewide, she received 108,065 votes (58.6%) compared to 76,414 votes. (41.4%).

In the race for District Judge in the 25th Judicial District, 1st Division, Tyler S. Frazier defeated Darrian D. Botts locally and statewide.

Locally, Frazier won 5,767 votes (66.39%) to Botts' 2,920 votes (33.61%).

Statewide, he received 22,333 votes (71.0%) to Botts' 9,110 votes (29.0%).

Several uncontested races, including Clark County Sheriff and Coroner, were also decided.

Further results can be found at https://vrsws.sos.ky.gov.

SHEARER

Continued from 1A

As for the parade, Shearer Elementary School staff made sure to remember students from last year's exams who have since moved on to Baker Intermediate School.

"We collaborated with (Principal) Mounts and Baker…to help make it happen," said Campbell, noting they got to be part of the parade.

With hundreds lining the streets, students were excited to be recognized during the parade.

"When we turned on Main Street and saw all of those people…that's the epitome of greatness," added Campbell. "We are making good citizens, tying that back to our Clark County Portrait of a Learner. All of those competencies were present during the parade on Friday…we had our staff being empowered leaders, our community stepping up and supporting our kids. That's being an engaged citizen…as a community and as a district at Clark County Public Schools."

Also, acting as "committed collaborators," another tenet of Clark County's Portrait of a Learner, the school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) purchased green shirts for all students and staff to wear.

Dianna Jackson, Principal at Shearer Elementary School, provided some closing thoughts.

"We challenged our students to persevere and be resilient learners. We're so proud of their hard work and accomplishments. Our incredible staff work tirelessly to provide a top-notch education for all students," she said.



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