

# Casey AFJROTC at the National Farm Show.



C/MSgt. Maddy Wilson C/.Tyce Whitis C/SMSgt. Noah Turpin C/1st. Lt Blake Evans C/1st. Lt Landen Bulington

## BOARD

FROM PAGE A1

lot in front of the high school heading into the transportation hub, circling back around to the vocational school and the middle school," Lee said.

He said that it would be best to do it all at the same time so that it looks good, and it was time to proceed with the process.

Assistant Superintendent Kevin Stephens said that a potential process might be to mill the top few inches of the asphalt and place a new surface there. After about a month of curing, the company would come back and seal the parking lots. Lee stated that the

expense might come out of a maintenance fund or a contingency fund, and a decision would be made after bids were received.

The superintendent also announced that the district would soon begin the process of a district-wide facilities plan, which is required to be updated every four years. The board will hire an architect to look at all the facilities, and the district will prioritize future construction or renovation projects.

"What are we going to build? What are we thinking about in the future? If you want it, let's ask for it and put it on the list, then it can help support us when it comes to seeking additional funds," Lee said.

Also in the meeting:

- Prior to the consent

items and construction news, Joe Montgomery, of Montgomery & Montgomery CPAs, said that the district's audit found no issues. There were total expenses of \$32.6 million, with total revenues of \$36.7 million.

"We did not find any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls over your financial statements," he said. He also said that he encountered no problems in working with the district to conduct the audit.

- Lee asked for and received approval to amend school calendars for both this school year and also next school year. This year, due to two weeks of schools being out due to weather, Presidents Day on Feb. 16 was changed to a student

instruction day. Another day, March 12, was added which was previously a staff work day.

Next year's calendar received one change. A school day on May 31, 2027 was removed as an instruction day because it is Memorial Day. Instead, students will be in class on May 24.

"They had (Memorial Day) on the fourth Monday instead of the fifth Monday," Lee explained.

- Hagen Williams, treasurer and director of finance, reported that the ending balance for January 2026 was \$15.5 million, a slight decline from December's total of \$15.6 million. He said that revenues were coming in as expected and he was happy with the financial condition of the

district so far this fiscal year.

"We're pretty much right on target with where we were this time last year, even with the increases in the salary and benefits (expenditures). The increases that were receiving from property taxes, and then the increases in SEEK (state funds) that we are receiving on top of an increase of about \$200,000 that we did not know was coming in, we're in a pretty good position right now," Williams said.

- The board viewed a recent video program developed by Athletic Director Victor Black and cinematographer Chris Humphrey to celebrate the addition of Liberty Elementary School's gymnasium in the Kentucky High School Athletics Hall of Fame Glory Road. The program

at Liberty Elementary School in January impressed the hall of fame and they told Dr. John Price, a former player at Liberty High School and subject of an interview in the video, they would use Liberty's program as a model.

"They said we were the best one they've ever had," Price said. "They've done several in Boyd County, Ashland High School, a lot in the other regions all over the state and they're going to use ours as a template for the whole state of Kentucky."

The next meeting of the Casey County Board of Education would be at 7 p.m. March 9 in the district annex.

## MOUSE

FROM PAGE A4

Accents" is fooling anyone, least of all the cats.

Cats, as we all know, are tiny, judgmental carnivores. They did not spend thousands of years evolving into apex predators of the living room so they could nibble politely at something called "Turkey Dinner in Savory Gravy." Turkeys have never been served in gravy in nature. Mice, however, have always been served fresh, occasionally squeaking. I propose a

bold, visionary, venture-capital-worthy idea: wild, sustainable, mice and rats as the next frontier in premium gourmet cat cuisine.

I have read that New York City is overrun with rats and mice. What a prime source for imaginative and bold cat food companies! They could label the cat food cans with "Free Range" and "Wild Caught". A mouse, in contrast to the little bites of kibble, is honest. It is what it says it is. There are no "natural flavors." There is just mouse. You can't get more transparent than that, unless you count the tail.

Then there is the sustainability issue. Mice and rats are nature's overachievers. They reproduce enthusiastically, optimistically, and with very little concern for zoning laws. Harvesting wild, sustainable rodents would be less an industry and more a public service.

Modern cats suffer from what experts call "Bored But Dramatic Syndrome." They lounge. They yawn. They knock water glasses off tables for cardio. Imagine the psychological uplift of opening a can labeled "Artisanal Meadow Mouse Pâté." The aroma alone would awaken ancestral mem-

ories. Your cat would sit taller. Its pupils would dilate with purpose. It might even forgive you for that time you bought the off-brand litter.

Marketing could be a problem. Some humans are squeamish. "I don't want to handle a can that says 'Field Rodent Feast,'" they'll protest, while simultaneously eating hot dogs without further questions. Perspective is important. Also, branding helps. We don't say "crushed fish bits"; we say "flaked tuna." We don't say "cow muscle paste"; we say "gourmet beef entrée." So we won't say "mouse mush." We'll

say "Heritage Rodent Reduction." Put it in a sleek matte tin. Add a cute mouse silhouette. Charge \$4.99 per serving. People will post unboxing videos on Facebook and TikTok.

By embracing sustainable mice, cat food companies would honor biology, delight customers (the furry ones, at least), and usher in a new era of brutally honest pet cuisine. It's natural. It's eco-friendly. It's deeply on-brand for a species that stares at you while you sleep.

The future of cat food is clear. It's small. It's whiskered. And it squeaks. What a hoot!

## UPDATE

FROM PAGE A4

to develop family-focused diversion plans. It improves accountability, enhances data reporting, and emphasizes engagement over detention for younger status offenders.

In other news, the General Assembly's first bill of the 2026 Regular Session, SB 172, was signed into law.

SB 172 helps address sudden spikes in electric bills caused by sharp increases in fuel costs.

This is something many families know all too well, especially during extreme weather. The bill allows the Public Service Commission, upon request from a utility, to spread fuel cost recovery over several months instead of imposing a large, one-time surcharge. The goal is to provide more stability and predictability for hard-working families, seniors on fixed incomes, and small businesses across our region.

On the Senate floor, my Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 74 passed with strong support.

The resolution directs state agencies to collaborate on creating a comprehensive fiscal map of substance use disorder programs and funding. This effort will improve transparency, identify gaps or overlaps, and help ensure resources are used effectively to support Kentucky families.

Several other important bills also passed the Senate this week:

- SB 9 supports housing development by streamlining regulations and expanding financing tools to help local communities grow and increase access

to affordable homes.

- SB 47 expands state death benefits and tuition waivers to include search and rescue personnel who lose their lives in the line of duty.

- SB 69 creates the Autism Spectrum Disorder Trust Fund and allows voluntary tax refund contributions to support autism research and services.

- SB 85 allows public pension benefits to be placed in a Special Needs Trust to help families protect long-term care while maintaining eligibility for support programs.

- SB 104 establishes a safety zone around first responders and strengthens penalties for those who interfere or threaten them, while protecting constitutional rights.

- SB 141 modernizes public notice laws to improve transparency, expand digital access, and help control costs.

- SB 152 strengthens school leadership by affirming principals' authority while maintaining input from teachers and parents.

- SB 159 improves coordination in missing per-

sons cases to help locate individuals more quickly and support families.

Each of these measures now moves to the House for consideration.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you. I look forward to keeping you updated as the work of the 2026 Regular Session continues. Please contact my office at 502-564-8100 or Brandon.Storm@kylegislature.gov if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas. Learn more about bills, committees, and the Kentucky General Assembly at [www.legislature.ky.gov](http://www.legislature.ky.gov).

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