



The Paducah Sun

Saturday, February 20, 2021 | www.paducahsun.com

Vol. 125, No. 51

McCracken schools do second COVID-19 vaccine



McCracken County Public Schools had COVID-19 vaccination clinics on Friday for 650 staff members. It marked the second vaccine dose for most of them. The school system plans to go to a four-day, in-person school week starting March 1, but families will still have the virtual option.

KELLY FARRELL | The Sun

Four-day, in-person weeks to start March 1

BY KELLY FARRELL
KFARRELL@PADUCAHSUN.COM

Hundreds of employees of McCracken County Public Schools received their second COVID-19 vaccine doses Friday, as the school system plans to start offering in-person learning four days a week soon.

Starting the week of March 1, the four day in-person schedule will be Tuesday through Friday. Monday is reserved for virtual learning and "deep cleaning of school buildings," as stated by McCracken County Schools Superintendent Steve Carter in a letter Thursday.

"We've been monitoring local COVID-19 data closely, preparing for the time we could safely

return to more frequent in-person learning," Carter said, in the letter.

"That time finally came. McCracken County is no longer 'in the red,' with an incidence rate of 12. This means McCracken (has) seen only 12 average new daily cases for every 100,000 residents over the last seven days."

Six-hundred-fifty COVID-19 vaccinations were planned Friday at Reidland Middle School, along with a location at McCracken County High School. The school system's first clinics were held in late January, where 650 COVID-19 vaccinations were administered for the first dose.

In his letter, Carter explained the second round of vaccinations further improves conditions to allow for safe, in-person learning.

"We are beyond grateful to Baptist Health and the team of school nurses, staff and administrators who made this unprecedented vaccination effort possible," he said.

"We will continue our current hybrid schedule until the week of March 1 to allow time for staff inoculations to take full effect. We're so excited to welcome our kids back to school more often and to finish out the school year strong."

The group of staff members

SEE **VACCINE/PAGE A9**



Photo provided

Fancy Farm Elementary Principal Janet Throgmorton inspects her school bus prior to departing for her route in January.

Bus-driving principal appears on 'Drew Barrymore Show'

BY LEANNE FULLER
NEWS@PADUCAHSUN.COM

Did you catch a west Kentucky educator on "The Drew Barrymore Show" this week?

Janet Throgmorton worked at Fancy Farm Elementary for 25 years — more than a decade of that time as the school's principal. And she found herself wearing yet another hat because of the pandemic: filling the role of bus driver.

"You do whatever is necessary to get the job done so that kids are safe and loved and learning," Throgmorton said in an interview in January. "And that's what we're all here for."

Throgmorton's service to her school and its students was seen across the country after she appeared on "The Drew Barrymore Show" this week.

Three years ago, Throgmorton earned her commercial driver's license to help drive the bus during field trips and to serve as a substitute bus driver if

needed. Now, because of the pandemic, that's a need she's filling on a regular basis. Speaking with WPSD Local 6, Throgmorton said two of the school's bus drivers contracted COVID-19. While one bus driver had recovered, the other remained in the hospital on a ventilator.

Appearing on "The Drew Barrymore Show" via video chat from her office at the school, Throgmorton said the bus driver who was hospitalized remains there on a ventilator. She has been driving the bus every afternoon. "Today I started driving in the morning as well," Throgmorton told Barrymore. "So it's definitely added to my job, but I enjoy it, because it ensures that our kids get to and from school safely and we have them here so they can learn."

Barrymore asked the principal what she says to students and parents to calm and encourage

SEE **PRINCIPAL/PAGE A9**

Winter storm threatens road crew budgets

BY TEMI ADELEYE
NEWS@PADUCAHSUN.COM

Local and state agencies will crunch the numbers to see how much the recent winter storms cost now through next week.

They are looking at employee overtime, supplies, potholes and much more, but they won't know a final tally until next week.

McCracken County Road Department Engineer Randy Williams is already figuring out some numbers, but he too needs time. This week's snowstorms had his employees working overtime.

"It's been a little excessive compared to what we're used to," Williams said.

He said each of his employees worked about 20 hours overtime in the past week and a half.

The department also needs to

repair its snowplows and salt trucks.

"Snow is really hard on the trucks, it does cause a lot of wear and tear," Williams said.

One of the biggest costs for the department will be repairing potholes next week. Williams showed one forming in the road department's parking lot.

"This is our parking lot and we're not immune to potholes either. What happened is apparently it froze up underneath this, it heaved the pavement up some," he said.

The department's brine mix and salt supply has gone down immensely since Tuesday.

Williams said they spent about \$50,000 on salt, sand and snow blades, all within their budget.

SEE **STORM/PAGE A9**

Chilly weather causes pipes to burst, HVAC problems

BY THOMAS CAPPS
NEWS@PADUCAHSUN.COM

We have all become accustomed to having water on demand with a flip of a handle or a turn of a knob, but winter weather is making that a challenge for some.

Horroric images out of Texas show just how much damage can be done by cold weather and frozen water pipes. The extreme cold temperatures have caused water pipes in homes and businesses to freeze and burst across the country, causing a lot of damage.

Thankfully there have not been widespread power outages and burst pipes locally, but there are more reports of that than usual in public buildings and homes.

Since Feb. 12, the Paducah Fire Department has responded to 90 calls. Of those 90 calls, 10 have been frozen sprinkler systems that burst,

three water leaks, and three water main breaks. In a typical winter, PFD responds to a few water pipe related calls for the entire season.

"The cold weather has stayed around longer than usual," Assistant Fire Chief David Denton said Friday. "We don't believe we are totally done yet, because pipes are starting to thaw out."

Frozen pipes aren't the only maintenance issues caused by the winter weather. Anna Copeland, with Paducah Heating and Air Conditioning, said they've been getting a lot of calls about heat pumps and gas systems having problems.

"A lot of calls about them making hard, loud noises," Copeland said. "The ice build on them which they do themselves and then go into a defrost cycle, and was freaking them out."

SEE **WEATHER/PAGE A9**

NEWS

MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

Biden declares 'America is back' to allies **Page B7**



NEWS

MARS LANDING

Landing team 'awestruck' by photo of descending rover **Page A8**

INDEX

Classifieds **B9** Deaths **A6**
Comics **B10** Lottery **A2**
Crossword.. **B10** Opinion..... **A4**
Dear Annie.....**B6**

FORECAST

TODAY



High: 36 Low: 23

