



LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Lincoln County Board of Education
305 Danville Avenue
Stanford, KY 40484
Phone: (606) 365-2124 Fax: (606) 365-1660
bruce.smith@lincoln.kyschools.us

Bruce Smith, Superintendent

Dear Lincoln County Stakeholders,

As many of you know, there has been discussion regarding the future of Highland Elementary. I understand that this is an emotional issue for students, families, staff, and the Highland community. Any conversation about the future of a school should be handled carefully, respectfully, and transparently.

Some of you may remember that, as a former school board member, I voted in 2022 to keep Highland Elementary open. I understood then, as I do now, how important Highland is to the families and the community it serves.

However, my role today is different. As superintendent, my responsibility is not to advocate for one outcome over another. My role is to provide the Board of Education with accurate information, answer questions, identify financial and operational considerations, and carry out the decisions made by the board. I want to be very clear, I am not pushing for the closure of Highland Elementary. My responsibility is to make sure the board has the facts it needs if it chooses to have that discussion.

There has been discussion about emails I wrote that I believe may have been taken out of context. For that reason, I am attaching them here for public review. I want the community to be able to see for itself that these communications were intended to provide information, not to advocate for a specific decision.

The Board of Education has a difficult responsibility. Board members must consider the needs of students, families, employees, communities, facilities, staffing, transportation, and the long-term financial health of the district. Good fiscal decisions are not always easy, and they must be weighed alongside the deep emotional and historical value a school holds for its community.

No decision has been made. Since the matter has been placed on the board agenda it should be discussed openly, with facts available to the public and with opportunities for people to express their thoughts respectfully.

I care about Highland Elementary, its students, its staff, and its community. I also care about the entire Lincoln County School District and the responsibility we have to serve all students. My commitment is for transparency, fairness, and making

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sure any discussion is based on accurate information rather than rumor or assumption.

I ask that everyone approach this conversation with patience, respect, and understanding. This is an important issue, and it deserves a thoughtful and honest process.

Sincerely,

Superintendent
Lincoln County Board of Education

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Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at 12:14:51 PM Eastern Daylight Time

Subject: Re: Vacancies
Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 11:07:22 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Smith, Bruce
To: Board Members
Attachments: image001.png, image002.png

There have been some other things brought to my attention that we want to share with you in addition to the principal vacancy, counselor vacancy, and instructional coach:

- Highland and Waynesburg will be sharing special education staff next year due to allocations.
- Highland did not get 21st Century Grant for next year.
- Septic system issues.
- No HVAC in school/gym.
- Save operating cost, one SRO, one nurse.

Thanks!

Bruce Smith
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From: "Smith, Bruce" <bruce.smith@lincoln.kyschools.us>
Date: Monday, April 20, 2026 at 2:11 PM
To: Board Members <BoardMembers@lincolnkyschools.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Vacancies

I want to make you aware that we are going to have a principal vacancy at Waynesburg due to Mr. Wheeler and his family moving. We have a counselor vacancy at Highland due to a resignation. Highland does not have an instructional coach which that decision was made last year due to budget cuts. I asked Grant if I could share this with you and gather feedback, and he

said it is fine to use these vacancies as a basis to tell you it might be a good time for this discussion because it could be done without possibly having to eliminate/demote tenured staff during a consolidation.

He said that I must remind you this is for individual consideration and discussion with me, but not for discussion among board members outside a board meeting. Once I get feedback from everyone, I can see if it is something that needs to become a future agenda item.

Thanks!

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