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Justices again side with GOP

Democratic candidates objected to campaign ad rate change

Maureen Groppe
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The Supreme Court once again sided with the Trump administration in a dispute over radio and television advertising rates in the run-up to the November midterm elections that will determine control of Congress. Democrats are challenging a new federal policy that allows political parties to benefit from the same low advertising rates that broadcasters must offer to candidates. Republicans, who are trying to fend

off a blue wave to protect their majorities in the House and Senate, are expected to benefit from the high court’s intervention because their political committees have raised considerably more money than Democrats’ party committees have. That could help the GOP close resource gaps in key races where Democratic candidates have out-raised Republicans. A lower court said the Federal Communications Commission was engaging in “gamesmanship” to prevent the courts from being able to review the policy change before the election.

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But the Supreme Court on Oct. 14 blocked the lower court from ordering the FCC to respond to the Democrats’ objections, extending a previous pause on the order. In September, the court also ruled for Republicans when it said the Virginia-

based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals could not block the policy before the FCC completed its internal review of the Democrats’ complaint. In the lead-up to an election, stations are required by federal law to give their lowest ad rates to “any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office in connection with his campaign.” In March, the FCC said that applies to ads run by political parties in coordination with candidates – not just to ads paid for by the candidates themselves. Four Democrats running for the House or Senate in battleground races –

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2026 EDUCATION TEST SCORES

JCPS sees growth in reading, stagnation in other subjects



Students at Carrithers Middle School board buses at the end of the first day of school in JCPS on Aug. 6. JCPS reported modest gains in reading and relatively stagnant math performances that lagged behind state averages for the 2025-26 school year, according to assessment data released Oct. 15. MICHAEL CLEVINGER/COURIER JOURNAL

Math an area requiring ‘urgent attention,’ says superintendent

Kathryn Muchnick
Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Jefferson County Public Schools reported modest gains in reading and relatively stagnant math performances that still lagged far behind state averages for the 2025-26 school year, according to assessment data released Oct. 15. When compared to the rest of Kentucky, fewer JCPS students are performing at grade level, arriving ready for kindergarten or graduating high school within four years. Like the statewide results, JCPS saw small reading proficiency improvements across the board. Math perfor-

“Overall, proficiency remains below where our students deserve it to be. Reading scores are improving, but far too many students are still not reading at grade level.”

Brian Yearwood JCPS superintendent

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How Kentucky students scored on state assessments in 2026. **6A**

mance grew by one percentage point for elementary schoolers, remained the same for middle schoolers and fell by one percentage point for high schoolers.

The district’s overall performance rating, which incorporates a variety of indicators, is at the “orange” level, the second lowest of five levels. That ranking is the same as 2024-25. “The results that are being discussed today really reflect encouraging signs of improvement across our district, especially in reading achievement and school performance ratings, even as we remain focused on addressing areas where student outcomes must improve quickly,” Superintendent Brian Yearwood said at a press conference before the public release of the data. Beyond proficiency rates, the district’s attendance rate improved to 91.4% in 2025-26, just below the statewide average. The percentage of students who are chronically absent – defined as missing more than 10% of school and often referenced as a key obstacle to academic success – fell from

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Janet Garrison, right, holds a banner made by the “We are Mason County” Facebook group on Aug. 2, 2025. SARAH HENRY/FOR THE COURIER JOURNAL

Meta strikes data center deal for northeastern Kentucky

Initial Mason County development will house 400-megawatt building

Matthew Glowicki
Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Meta plans to bring a hyperscale data center project to northeastern Kentucky. Mason County government and Meta, the California-based parent company of Facebook and Instagram, have finalized an agreement to locate a data center campus on nearly 3,000 acres in the community about an hour’s drive southeast of Cincinnati. Initial development would focus on one nearly 400-megawatt data center building between 600,000 and 800,000 square feet, with a full build-out of up to six buildings, according to the agreement approved Oct. 13 by the county’s fiscal court. The initial phase is expected to create at least 100 full-time jobs, while the full five-phase development is expected to create 400 full-time jobs once fully built. In a statement, Mason County Judge Executive Owen McNeill called the agreement a “transformational and generational moment.” “I certainly understand the fear of

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