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MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2026 | OAKRIDGER.COM

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Kennedy’s name obscured at performing arts center

Bart Jansen
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The court fight has rekindled over the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts after the board voted that President Donald Trump’s name must go on, even if the show doesn’t for a few years of construction.

U.S. District Judge Christopher

Cooper had ordered Trump’s name removed from the building’s facade in May because Congress hadn’t authorized it. Cooper also blocked the administration from closing the venue for two years of construction because the plans for the project were adopted too hastily.

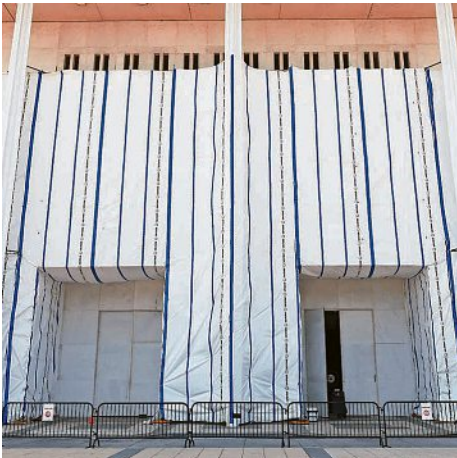
But the Kennedy name has remained obscured by scaffolding and tarps as the litigation grinds on. The board stacked with Trump allies voted Aug. 13 to re-

store his name to the facade – twice. So Rep. Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, asked Cooper in an emergency request Aug. 20 to block the latest renaming.

“It’s déjà vu all over again,” said Beatty, who serves on the Kennedy Center board.

Updates in the court battle offered some behind-the-scenes details about

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Scaffolding and a tarp block the view of the name on the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Aug. 13. KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS



Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs, left, gives a hug to Marsha Blackburn as she makes her way on stage during Blackburn’s election night party at the Knoxville Convention Center on Aug. 6. BRIANNA PACIORKA/NEWS SENTINEL

What happens to Blackburn’s seat if she becomes governor?

Vivian Jones
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Republican gubernatorial nominee Marsha Blackburn has said that if elected in November, she intends to remain in the U.S. Senate until her inauguration in January, enabling her to personally choose who fills her Senate seat.

Whenever there’s a vacancy in one of Tennessee’s U.S. Senate seats, the state constitution allows the governor to choose a person to fill the seat until the next statewide general election — which for Blackburn’s seat will be in 2028. If Blackburn was elected governor and then resigned her seat before her inauguration, Gov. Bill Lee would make the pick.

Republicans are seeking to defend their razor-thin Senate majority during midterm elections this year. President Donald Trump will likely weigh in on who should replace Blackburn.

Blackburn has remained in office while campaigning for Tennessee governor and told the Nashville Banner earlier this month that she would remain in the Senate until her inauguration, giving herself the power to choose her re-



Damon Hinger, dinner chairman, holds up a campaign sign for Blackburn during the Tennessee Republican Party’s Statesmen’s Dinner at Music City Center in Nashville on June 15, 2024. ANDREW NELLES/THE TENNESSEAN

placement.

Who would Blackburn pick?

With Blackburn a favorite in the governor’s race since before she announced her bid, speculation has swirled about who will take her place.

Three names are considered to be top

contenders: U.S. Rep. Tim Burchett of Knoxville, former CoreCivic CEO and major Republican donor Damon Hinger, and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs.

All three were considered potential primary rivals for Blackburn before she made her campaign official.

And all three have been vocal supporters of Blackburn, and familiar faces at campaign appearances and official events.

Hinger, a longtime Republican donor, chaired the Tennessee Republican Party’s annual Statesmen’s Dinner fundraiser in 2024 and gifted each attendee with whiskey glasses engraved with the state party’s logo as keepsakes of the event. This year, Hinger launched a political nonprofit called Believe in Tennessee to raise money “to help support both issues and people in this state that are ... aligned with the values that have made this state really, really great.” Hinger and his wife have contributed \$1.75 million to Republicans and GOP PACs since 2024.

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Several high schools near Oak Ridge ranked in top 100

Caitlyn Meisner
For The Oak Ridger
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Several high schools near Oak Ridge rank among the top in Tennessee, according to the new annual U.S. News & World Report ranking. One even made it into the top 50.

Oak Ridge High School placed 35th in the state in the 2026 ranking, keeping its spot from the 2025 list. The school, which enrolls nearly 1,700 students, has a graduation rate of 92% and is ranked No. 2,207 nationally. Oak Ridge High placed No. 6 in the Knoxville metro area.

Roane County High School clinched the No. 77 spot in Tennessee. Roane County boasts a 94% graduation rate with around 630 enrolled students.

Next up is Clinton High School with a 128th-place finish this year in the state. Clinton enrolls more than 1,000 students with a 90% graduation rate.

Anderson County High School clinched No. 185 in the state of Tennessee, followed by Rockwood High School at No. 201, Harriman High School at No. 204 and Midway High at No. 213. Anderson County Innovation Academy placed No. 232 and Oliver Springs High School finished at No. 235.

Anderson County Career Technical Center, Clinch River Community School and Midtown Educational Center went unranked.

2026 Top Tennessee high schools

1. Central Magnet School (Murfreesboro, No. 1 nationally)
2. Merrol Hyde Magnet School (Hendersonville, No. 27 nationally)
3. Hume Fogg Magnet High School (Nashville, No. 32 nationally)
4. Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet School (Nashville, No. 85 nationally)
5. L&N STEM Academy (Knoxville, No. 219 nationally)
6. Brentwood High School (Brentwood, No. 220 nationally)
7. Ravenwood High School (Brentwood, No. 283 nationally)
8. Valor Flagship Academy (Nashville, No. 421 nationally)

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