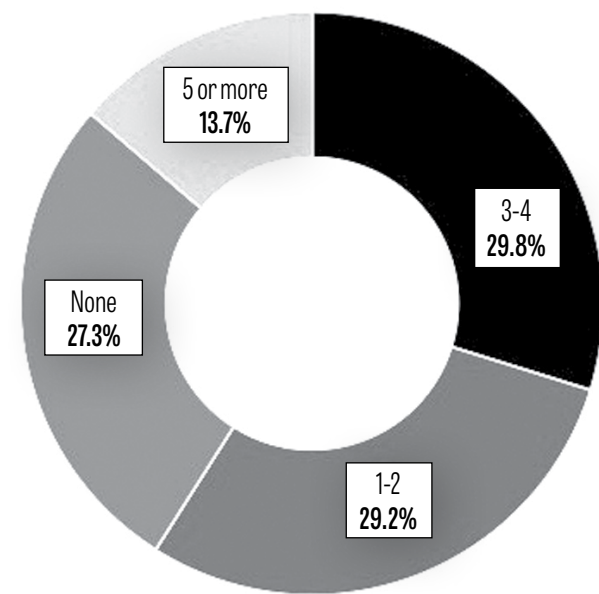


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EDITORIAL

# Pre-K for all would be beneficial to Ky. families

It would be unacceptable for half of a business’s employees to show up for work without prior knowledge of their job description. Likewise, it is unsatisfactory that nearly 54% of the commonwealth’s 5-year-olds are unprepared for kindergarten, according to the Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS), an agency within the Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet.

“Before they even step through the door, they are behind. This creates an achievement gap that is nearly impossible to close. To increase kindergarten-readiness, we need to offer pre-K for every 4-year-old across the state of Kentucky,” Gov. Andy Beshear said Wednesday when he was joined by state and local officials, educators, business leaders and parents to launch the Pre-K for All initiative, which aims to advance the commonwealth’s public education system and grow the economy.

The governor stressed that, in addition to preparing Kentucky’s children for school, Pre-K for All would eliminate child-care deserts in 79 of the state’s 120 counties, which don’t have access to enough child care to serve every family in need. Pre-K for All also has the potential to save families out-of-pocket child-care costs. He pointed out that it is a nonpartisan issue and that 18 states, including neighboring West Virginia, Alabama, Colorado, Florida and Georgia, already offer Pre-K access to all 4-year-olds. Proponents of Pre-K for All tout the economic benefits the initiative would provide, such as increasing the state’s workforce by 40,000 to 70,000, per U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

In fact, a Yale study found that offering free Pre-K increased the earnings of parents and caregivers by almost \$9,000 per year and that every dollar invested in Pre-K generates \$10 that cycles through Kentucky’s economy. This week, Beshear issued an executive order creating the 28-member Team Kentucky Pre-K for All Advisory Committee, which is comprised of leaders from across the state including former Frankfort Rep. Derrick Graham and Council on Postsecondary Education President Dr. Aaron Thompson.

“Investing early improves learning outcomes and ultimately contributes to a stronger economy and a stronger Kentucky,” Thompson explained.

We believe that Pre-K for All would give 4-year-olds from all walks of life a quality educational foundation and that it would be a win-win for all Kentuckians.

# Celebrating Frankfort’s Public Works Dept.

May 19-23 was National Public Works Week, and at the City of Frankfort, we love any reason to celebrate our Public Works Department.

This department consists of four divisions, in addition to the city’s fleet maintenance garage, building maintenance, and administrative staff. They have over 70 employees and represent the second largest department in the city in terms of personnel. They handle everything from solid waste to road maintenance, stormwater engineering to special event shuttling. They are the backbone of city infrastructure, and we’re lucky to have such a strong Public Works Department in the City of Frankfort.

The Transit Division keeps Frankfort on the move, by providing reliable public transportation throughout the city. With 22 dedicated employees managing 27 fleet vehicles across four routes, the transit team runs deviated-fixed bus routes daily, as well as demand response rides within city limits of Frankfort. This on-call service provides door to door service for medical appointments or other specific needs. The city’s iconic trolley also runs through the Transit Division. The trolley operates Tuesday-Saturday on an hour loop, providing a free narrated historic tour of Frankfort that is a favorite of city residents and tourists alike.

The Transit Division operates out of the city’s new, state of the art transit center on Clinton Street, which provides a safe waiting area with public restrooms, access to transit employees, and a central, accessible location. Find more information, including a route schedule, at [transit.frankfort.ky.gov](http://transit.frankfort.ky.gov).

The Streets and Floodwall Division is the first to arrive when snow blankets our streets and the last to leave when floodwaters threaten our homes. With just 19 dedicated employees, the Streets and Floodwall Division of Public Works truly is the jack-of-all-trades. From maintaining city roads and clearing drainage ditches to managing storm drains and operating our vital flood protection system — they

can do it all. They make special events possible, as the ones who work behind the scenes setting up barricades, placing signs and assembling the city stage.



**Blair Hecker**  
Guest columnist

During this year’s flooding, their expertise operating our four Kentucky River pumping stations and the floodwall system proved absolutely essential in keeping the Frankfort community safe. This hardworking team keeps our city running smoothly even in the harshest circumstances.

A lesser known division of Public Works is the city’s Fleet Maintenance Garage. The maintenance garage staff serves as the vital, yet often unseen force that keeps the entire city running smoothly. With just seven dedicated professionals, this team manages a fleet of over 100 city vehicles — from trash trucks and fire engines to ambulances, transit vehicles, heavy equipment, and even lawn mowers. By handling maintenance and repairs in-house at their facility off Bald Knob Road, they streamline city operations and ensure essential services continue without interruption.

Their value becomes especially apparent during emergencies like the recent flood, where their ability to quickly service and return equipment to service proved invaluable. The entire Public Works Department simply couldn’t function without these skilled professionals who ensure that the vehicles and equipment serving our community remain in optimal condition day after day.

The Solid Waste Division works daily to keep the city clean and safe. This team of 16 operating nine trucks handles every sanitation need within the City of Frankfort. They provide weekly curbside recycling and garbage collection for every residence in the city. They work outside of normal hours to provide special collection events at Rouse Avenue, and to provide solid waste

services for all of the city’s special events.

This staff is dedicated to not only handling municipal solid waste, but also to reducing our community’s environmental impact by providing valuable environmental education and community outreach programs. The Solid Waste Division handles all of Frankfort’s waste in-house, which proves invaluable in special circumstances like flooding and storms.

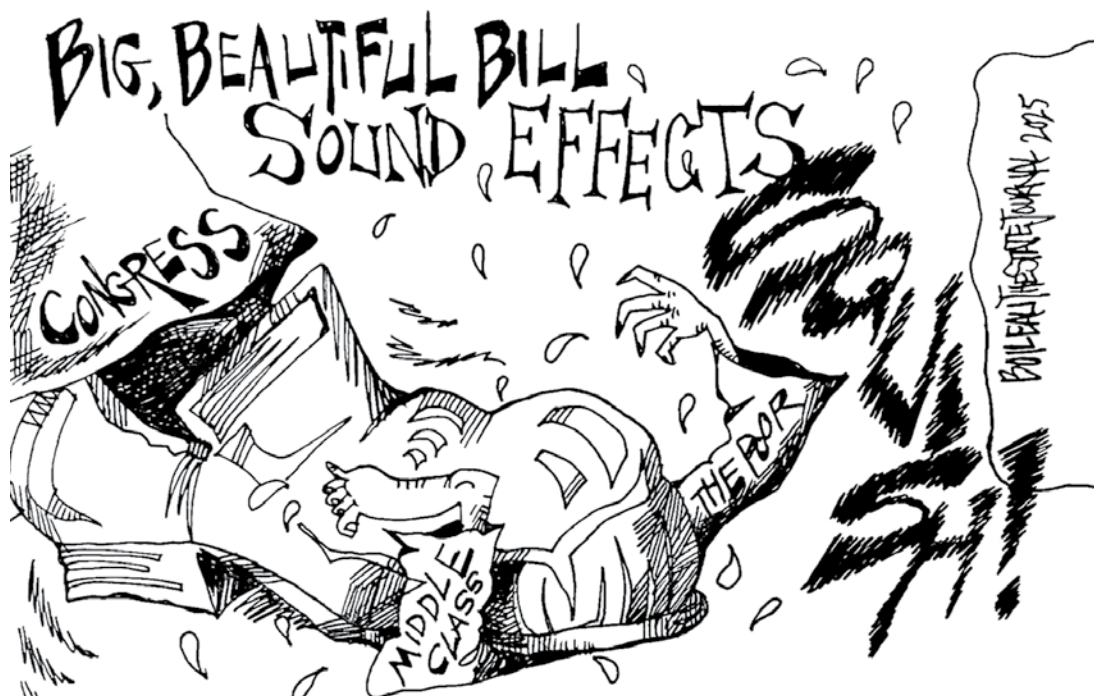
This team is able to react quickly and rise to meet whatever sanitation need exists in our community.

Behind every successful operation is an incredible team that keeps everything running smoothly, and that’s the administrative staff of the Public Works Department. Based out of City Hall, the administrative team consists of six dedicated professionals including the director, deputy director, stormwater inspector, administrative assistant, project manager and engineering technician. They oversee all utility work and paving projects within the city. They manage major engineering initiatives like TIGER, Holmes Street, and the Transit Center.

They provide the maintenance for every city facility and building, issue right-of-way and construction permits, and provide exceptional customer service for all Public Works divisions. With three professional engineers on staff, this powerhouse team coordinates the entire Public Works Department and keeps our community infrastructure strong. They’re the backbone that makes everything else possible.

Local government is a service-based industry, making our employees and equipment essential to providing the best possible service to the residents of Frankfort. The City of Frankfort Public Works Department is a shining example of exemplary service and the City of Frankfort is lucky to have them!

*Blair Hecker, of Frankfort, is the city's community engagement project director. She can be emailed at [bhecker@frankfort.ky.gov](mailto:bhecker@frankfort.ky.gov).*



# THE State Journal

**Joe Imel**, Publisher  
270-783-3273  
[joe.imal@bgdailynews.com](mailto:joe.imal@bgdailynews.com)

**Chanda Veno**, Editor  
502-209-6340  
[chanda.veno@state-journal.com](mailto:chanda.veno@state-journal.com)

**Hannah Brown**, Design Editor  
502-209-6339  
[hannah.brown@state-journal.com](mailto:hannah.brown@state-journal.com)

NEWS

**Linda Younklin**  
502-209-6336  
[linda.younklin@state-journal.com](mailto:linda.younklin@state-journal.com)

**Phil Case**  
502-682-5995  
[phil.case@state-journal.com](mailto:phil.case@state-journal.com)

**Linda Boileau**, Editorial Cartoonist  
[linda.boileau@me.com](mailto:linda.boileau@me.com)

ADVERTISING SALES

**Meri Latek**, Director of Advertising  
502-395-3434  
[meri.latek@state-journal.com](mailto:meri.latek@state-journal.com)

**CLASSIFIEDS/LEGAL NOTICES**  
[classifieds@state-journal.com](mailto:classifieds@state-journal.com)  
[public.notices@state-journal.com](mailto:public.notices@state-journal.com)  
502-871-4559

MAIN OFFICE

**Sheri Bunker**, Director of Customer Service  
502-209-6305  
[sheri.bunker@state-journal.com](mailto:sheri.bunker@state-journal.com)

**Jim Wainscott**, Bookkeeper  
502-209-6301  
[jim.wainscott@state-journal.com](mailto:jim.wainscott@state-journal.com)

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