

KENTUCKY NEWS

Bardstown substitute teacher facing sexual abuse charges

BY KATELYN NORRIS
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

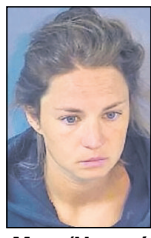
Bardstown City School substitute teacher Mary “Hanna” Mattingly was arrested for first-degree sexual abuse and procuring or promoting a minor by electronic means.

Bardstown Police Department arrested Mattingly, 31, Monday morning. A department statement indicated an investigation after

they were informed Mattingly was in an inappropriate relationship with a student at the school.

Mattingly is being charged with first-degree sexual abuse and procuring or promoting a minor by electronic means. Mattingly was released on a \$20,000 cash bond.

Detective Eric Williamson said the department received



Mary ‘Hanna’ Mattingly

a detailed anonymous letter on Thursday, March 26, which prompted the investigation.

The news release said Mattingly, while in a position of special trust as teacher at the school, engaged in sexual contact with a high school student. She also communicated with the same student electronically, including allegedly sending

partially nude photos to the student.

Bardstown City Schools Superintendent Ryan Clark sent a message to families about the accusations on Monday.

“In an effort to maintain transparency with our parents and the entire school community, I want you to know that on Thursday, March 26th, we received an anonymous letter alleging inappropriate conduct by a female substitute

teacher and a Bardstown High School juvenile. Bardstown City Schools immediately initiated an investigation, removed the individual from her job duties, placed her on administrative leave, and alerted the authorities.

“On Monday, March 30th, we learned that Mary Mattingly was arrested and charged by the Bardstown Police Department. We are unable to comment any further due to this being a

personnel matter and an active investigation.

“As a school district we always take any report seriously and investigate thoroughly. We are committed to the safety and education of our students. As always, we encourage our students, parents and staff to report to District Administrators anything they see or hear that is alarming or inappropriate.”

Williamson said the investigation is ongoing.

Foster care system strained by home shortages

BY ZOE LEWIS
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

As Kentucky’s foster care system struggles to keep up with demand, thousands of children are left waiting for stable homes amid a growing shortage of foster families.

Earlier this month, Kentucky Auditor Allison Ball and Ombudsman Jonathan Grate released a report on the number of foster care kids sleeping in the Cabinet of Health and Family Services offices and other non-traditional placements. In that report, it notes there are approximately 8,700 children in foster care and fewer than 4,600 approved and available foster care homes.

Department of Community-Based Services Commissioner Lesa Dennis said there has always been a need for foster homes. She said the department’s biggest need is for foster parents who can take in kids ages 12 and up, sibling groups and those with complex needs-like behavioral health.

“We have always needed foster homes that are willing to care for youth 12 and up and sibling groups. But what we have seen, especially since the pandemic, is that children are having more complex behavioral health needs, and those are children of adolescent age,” Dennis said. “The pandemic put a strain on an already strained system

Reuben Watson, a Logan County native and a former foster youth, said he fit in this demographic when he was in the foster care system. He said that he was abused and neglected when he was younger, in his biological parents’ home and in some foster care homes and experienced the struggles an adolescent in foster care may face.

“With kids that are a little older [like I was], you’ve got a hardened shell because you’ve had to do that to survive. Part of your survival mechanisms is using tools and things that probably wouldn’t serve you well if you’re in a healthy environment, but to survive from the trauma that you’ve experienced, there’s a shell you have to put on,” Watson said.

He said older kids and those with behavioral and mental health issues can be seen as “damaged goods,” and some foster care parents may misunderstand them, resulting in them not lasting long in the home or not taking them in.

“I think some people think that if I choose a child that is under a certain age, I can shape and mold them to be what I want them to be...I’m of the belief that those children are not beyond repair. Being the one who caused chaos and issues, and yet my [adoptive] parents chose me,” Watson said. “When you talk

about teenagers that have the opportunity to be loved and cared for, they’re as deserving as the babies.”

He said he encourages those considering fostering teenagers to take them in, but there has to be understanding that it might take them longer to heal and open up.

“My hope and challenge would be for those who are considering fostering teenagers is that there is hope on the horizon, and that has to be understood and communicated,” Watson said. “Those kids are worthy of love and understanding.”

Watson said it is important for the foster families to know that they are “building” the foster kids up.

“You’re laying the foundation and planting seeds and knowing that this child may leave your home, but your hope would be that you plant enough seeds that when those difficult times come, the foundation you helped build will sustain them,” Watson said.

Dennis said to combat these needs, DCBS is bringing awareness to the shortage and reaching out to the community and its partners — like faith-based organizations. She said each placement is going to be different, but fostering can be “life-changing.”

“You get to open up your heart. You get to open up your home. You get to love

on a child who at that particular time needs it most. [You get to] be a part of their story, be a part of their success and be a part of helping them reach their full human potential,” Dennis said.

Dennis said the state has also streamlined the process for relatives providing kinship care to reduce the shortage of foster parents. She said a relative goes through the same process as a regular foster parent, but they have waived the non-safety guidelines to give kids an out-of-placement home and to keep kids in their families.

She said there are resources for foster parents, and their team tries to support the foster families at all times, whether that’s setting up medical appointments, enrolling the child in school or answering questions about the judicial process.

“We really want to make sure our foster parents feel included, part of the team and have the support they need to care for Kentucky’s children,” Dennis said.

Both Dennis and Watson encourage those interested in fostering to reach out to DCBS; however, they understand that fostering might not be for everyone.

“Being a foster parent is a calling for sure,” Watson said. “Caring for a child is not. What I mean by that is, we can’t all foster, but we can all do something.”



Submitted

Reuben Watson said he would not be the man he is today without the support and love from his adoptive family.

Brandeis School of Law increasing focus on Intimate Partner Violence

BY TOM LATEK
KENTUCKY TODAY

LOUISVILLE – The University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law has established the Mary Byron Center and Endowed Chair in Intimate Partner Violence, an effort that stems from the nationally renowned nonprofit Mary Byron Project.

“This initiative establishes U of L as a national leader in educating its students about intimate partner violence,” university President Gerry Bradley said. “Our hope is that the project helps to curb instances of abuse and violence in our community and across the nation.”

Dean and Professor of Law Melanie B. Jacobs said the new Mary Byron Endowed Chair “will not only lead IPV law and policy education but also engage in unprecedented transdisciplinary collaboration to provide opportunities for UofL students to help those impacted by IPV and, just as importantly, to learn how to prevent IPV.”

The 1993 murder of 21-year-old Louisville resident Mary Byron by her estranged ex-boyfriend who was unknowingly released from jail, led to the creation of VINE — Victim Information and Notification Everyday. First used in Louisville, VINE from Equifax is a national automated notification service that provides crime victims, survivors and other concerned citizens with near real-time, anonymous alerts regarding changes to an offender’s custody status. VINE is available in more than 45 states, and according to Equifax, delivered nearly 21.5 million notifications in 2025.

The Mary Byron Project’s mission since 2000 is to foster innovations and programs to prevent intimate partner violence. It accomplishes this through public advocacy, funding groundbreaking IPV initiatives throughout the United States and becoming a national thought leader.

The project’s board wanted to preserve and institutionalize this legacy and selected the Brandeis School of Law to extend the work through the Mary Byron Endowed Chair.

“This chair will advance legal education and policy related to intimate partner violence and help integrate IPV-focused learning throughout the law school and university curriculum to train professionals to better understand and ultimately prevent, IPV,” said Mary Byron Project Founding Executive Director and Board Chair Marcia Roth.

“My daughter Mary’s name lives on,” said Pat Byron. “The important work begun by the Mary Byron Project will continue, helping train the next generation of advocates—lawyers and lay people, alike. With each of these important steps we get closer to making ‘no more’ a reality.”

Fugitive returned to Springfield indicted again for killing her child

BY JANE REID KLEYN
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

A Springfield woman was indicted for the murder of her child by a Washington County grand jury.

Latashia Mullins, 51, of Springfield, was indicted for murder and first-degree criminal abuse of a child 12 or younger.

Mullins previously had been indicted in June 2023 on the same charges, but fled the area.

Washington County Sheriff’s Department, the U.S. Marshal Service and local police in Collin County, Texas, located the woman who was sought as a fugitive from justice.



Latashia Mullins

The Washington County Sheriff’s Office received a tip about her location and contacted federal marshals.

Mullins was arrested without incident by members of U.S. Marshal Service in Plano, Texas. Mullins was transported to Collin County, Texas, by the local police department

before extradition back to Kentucky to face the charges of murder and child abuse.

Bond for Mullins was set at \$500,000.

An indictment by a grand jury is a formal charge and not proof of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent until proved guilty in a court of law.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Request for Proposal

The Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority has issued a Request for Proposal for a Playground Project as follows:

- Playground Equipment to be removed and replaced in the following areas:
 - o AMP 1: Ravine Way, Kentucky Ave., Cox St.
 - o AMP 2: Bell Ct.
- Detailed Proposal packages available at: Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718
- Must be eligible to perform HUD Contracting. Insurance and Bonding required.

The proposals should be clearly marked PLAYGROUND PROPOSAL and mailed to the Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority, Attn: JH, P.O. Box 597, Campbellsville, KY 42718, or delivered in person to 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718. All proposals must be received by 12:00 noon on Thursday, April 9, 2026. The Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. Equal Opportunity Employer.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Bid Notice

The Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority (CHRA) will be accepting sealed bids for a replacement and repair for roofing project funded via Capital Funding KY36P047: 50124 and 50125 as follows:

Replace all roofing on approximately 77 buildings. (see full bid package for specific buildings) Owens Corning TruDefinition Duration shingles (or equal), installed following manufacturer specifications Owens Corning ProArmor Synthetic Roof Underlayment (or equal) Roof starter Remove all vents and replace with full ridge vents *(See full bid package for site specific requirements) Replace all fascia board and trim coil with new. Replace all gutters and downspouts (6-inch gutter) Replace all freeze board metal & re-wrap with new coil. Replace any freeze board that is not structurally sound or showing any signs of rot.

Bid to include all materials and labor. Contractor is responsible for measurements and determination of amount of materials needed.

Color to be approved prior to installation. If pricing varies by color, please include pricing variations with the bid. All labor and materials should be guaranteed for one year from installation completion date.

The following is expected: Remove all shingles and roof starter, inspect decking, valley tin and vents for damage. Install underlayment, roof starter and shingle per manufacturers specifications. Replace all gutters and downspouts. (6-inch gutter) Replace soffit, decking and valley tin that is not structurally sound or shows any sign of rot. Clean up around work areas. Disposal of all removed materials *(See full bid package for site specific requirements)

All labor and materials should be guaranteed for one year from installation completion date. Bid package can be picked up at the Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority, 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718.

The bids should be clearly marked SEALED BID ROOFING, and mailed to or dropped off at Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority, ATTN: JH, 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718. All bids must be received by 12:00 noon on Friday, April 17, 2026 with the bid opening on Friday, April 17, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718. The Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Equal Opportunity Employer.