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Classroom Reaganomics Federal budget cuts threaten Title I program

Last week Rep. Carl Perkins said the Nicholas County school system had "one of the best Title I programs in the country."

But that program, like federally funded education programs across the nation, has been placed in jeopardy by budget cuts proposed by the Reagan administration. President Reagan has proposed a 24 percent reduction in Title I funding.

Title I is a federally funded program designed to help "educationally disadvantaged" children. At the local school system that means a lower student-teacher ratio — one adult instructor for every six students — and spending "no expense to provide the children with the materials they need to learn," according to Bill Guthrie, federal program coordinator for the local board of education.

If the 24 percent cut in Title I makes it through Congress, Guthrie said, "I sincerely believe I will become a thing of the past."

Guthrie is a strong believer in the benefits of Title I, as, he says, "is anyone who has been involved in the program." Testing conducted last spring showed a marked drop in scores for local students in Title I classes.

Guthrie said that in addition to the lower student-teacher ratio and the increased amount of educational materials, Title I allows children with special educational needs to be placed "in an environment where there's nothing embarrassing about what they can do or can't do."

The local school system is one of a few across the nation that offers Title I instruction in grades one through twelve. Some 47 percent of the students in Nicholas County are eligible for participation in the program.

But that specialized attention for students with individual learning needs is now threatened with extinction.

"Ultimately," Guthrie said, "we'll have to start turning people loose. We'll have to cut instructional personnel."

Guthrie said that one of the main budgetary problems with Title I the current time is that "salaries keep going up, while grants keep falling."

Last fiscal year salaries for Title I employees totaled \$75,194, or 30 percent of an already reduced budget. And when salaries rise, so do associated fixed charges that cover things like insurance and retirement benefits. Those charges are up \$1,886 over last year.

The local board has already stopped replacing Title I aides when they leave the system. There are currently 11 positions in the local system supported by Title I funds.

But Guthrie said that the local system is in much better shape than a lot of school systems are facing the outlook. "Mr. Elder has never been one to go out and buy personnel just because we have the money... if the need is not there."

Guthrie said many Title I programs have been fighting the salary problem in their budget by shifting all of the experienced teachers out of the program, and staffing it with newly graduated instructors.

The money saved can be considerable. A beginning teacher in Nicholas County receives a salary of \$11,267. But a first 11 teacher with 19 years experience commands \$19,140, according to required pay scales.

"We haven't considered doing that," Guthrie said. He said that practice in "dumping grounds" for teachers who can't cut it in a regular classroom... a sort of shelter. "And the children are the ones who suffer."

Guthrie said that Rep. Perkins assured him last week in a visit to Carlisle that he would fight the Title I cuts "tooth and nail."

Guthrie is not one to play chicken. "I tend to be more optimistic than most people. Last year we heard rumors of everything from a 12 percent to 30 percent cut. We wound up with a five percent cut. But I am not naive enough to think that will happen again."

Even last year's five percent cut has made an impact on the local Title I program. Entire spending categories have been eliminated.

No longer provided for in the Title I budget are things like first aid and health supplies. There is no more money for student body activities and field trips. Audiovisual equipment, magazines, and newspapers used in the classroom have also been cut.

The largest category to be eliminated is the community services fund. That money was used to provide clothing, medical, dental and eye care to those children whose family couldn't afford it.

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Charlene Harris, a Title I instructor at the local elementary school, helped a first grade student with his course work Monday afternoon.

Congress gets USDA report on changing tobacco program

Secretary of Agriculture John Block has released details of a USDA report to Congress which recommended methods for achieving a "market-oriented" tobacco program.

Among the proposals are the establishment of a fee which would be collected from every producer marketing tobacco, and the elimination of a ceiling on the amount of money producer associations may deduct from price support advances made to tobacco farmers.

The proposed fee would be used to offset losses to the Commodity Credit Corporation arising under the tobacco price support loan program.

The deduction, previously limited to one dollar per hundred pounds consigned to the associations, it would help the associations meet their administrative costs. If the deduction does not completely cover an association's expenses, the association borrows the difference from the CCC.

Block said removing the limitation will reduce the need to borrow additional amounts from CCC to cover those costs.

The USDA report was filed in response to a provision of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 that required USDA to carry out the tobacco price support and production adjustment program "no-net-cost" to taxpayers.

Block also recommended administrative actions that would allow the net gains realized by a tobacco producer association when a crop of tobacco produced as security for a CCC price support loan is sold for more than the amount needed to fully repay the loan and accrued interest.

Current loan agreements between CCC and producer associations specify that all net gains realized from the sale of loan tobacco from each crop year must be distributed to producers by the associations unless another disposition is requested and approved by the CCC.

In addition to the proposed program, the report requested legislative authorization for the USDA to adjust price support levels for the various blocks of tobacco.

Block said the infeasible support formula mandated by current law does not afford discretion to adjust price support levels to compensate for changing economic and marketing conditions.

Food prices rise again

Kentucky's retail food prices had a five-month decline in February, jumping 15 percent over January levels, according to the latest Kentucky Farm Bureau marketbasket survey.

A selected grouping of 48 food items cost shoppers an average \$62.18 in February 1981, compared to \$57.27 in January 1981.

Significant price increases in pork, potatoes, eggs and fresh vegetables more than offset smaller declines in...

—See Food prices, page 12

Fiscal court to prosecute some delinquent accounts

The fiscal court authorized County Attorney Joseph H. Conley to prosecute some of the overdue accounts for rock purchased from the county quarry.

After reviewing all of the delinquent accounts for amounts over \$20 that have been outstanding for more than one year, the court gave Conley the authorization to prosecute cases after individual court members advised Conley on particular cases in their respective districts.

Several cases were authorized for prosecution by the court. The main reason for not prosecuting was the judgment that the individual involved did not have the ability to pay the debt.

Magistrate Harrod D. Mitchell expressed concern over the discretionary prosecutions. "I don't know that we should decide who can and can't pay," he said. He questioned making exceptions.

The court had earlier authorized Conley to send letters to those accounts over one year old informing them that they would be prosecuted if payment was not made by a specified date.

Cases in which the individuals involved are making an effort to work out a payment schedule were not authorized for prosecution.

The court also authorized the hiring of two employees. Mark Soupp was selected to oversee the rock cracker at the county quarry, and Road Superintendent John Ector was given the authority to hire Billy Wayne Watkins whenever he felt he would be needed.

Before the two were authorized for hiring, Ector told the court that he was adequately staffed at the present time, but that he would need help when the weather breaks and road work picks up again.

Magistrate Melvin Fryman recommended Soupp for the job, and told the court he had informed Soupp that the county would pay the same rate that had been paid to the last man operating the cracker, five dollars an hour.

That operator moved from the cracker to driving the dumpster truck. Ector told the court that he didn't have any current employees that were eager to take over the cracker operation. "You won't make anyone find it as a person and put him on the cracker," he said in response to Fryman's question.

Magistrate Earl Lee Plank objected strongly to the five dollar an hour wage Fryman suggested. "No way," Plank said. "I don't know what the county does that we don't make that." County employees normally start out at minimum wage.

—See Court, page 12

New physician coming to town

Dr. Timothy R. Scott will be opening his medical practice in Carlisle by June of this year. Dr. Scott will complete a residency program in Family Medicine this June, and will then be eligible for certification by the American Board of Family Practice.

He will enter practice in association with Dr. Wendell R. Kinney with offices at 101 Chestnut Street.

A native Kentuckian, Scott was raised near Bedford, Ky. and graduated from Timbisha County High School in 1971. He received his B.A. in 1975 from Centre College of Kentucky, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and graduated with highest distinction.

His medical degree was from the University of Kentucky in 1979, where he was named Alpha Omega Alpha. Dr. Scott has spent the past three years in northern Kentucky in the Family Practice Residency program of St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Covington.

He and his wife Linda presently live in Erlanger with their two daughters, Beth, age three, and Sarah, age two months. They say they are looking forward to their new home in Nicholas County.



Dr. Tim Scott

Nicholas upsets Clark County 68-64

Jackets take two of three as district tourney nears

Nicholas County's boys basketball team picked up two wins in three games last week and prepared to enter their final week of regular season play with the district tournament just one week away.

The Jackets scored one of their biggest upsets in recent history when they shocked Clark County 68-64 in Winchester Saturday night.

The Jackets' opponent Denning 42-46 earlier in the week, and then fell to a hot-handed Mayaville team 78-57 Friday.

"It was just a super game," Jacket Coach Mike Kenney said of the Clark County upset.

"I think we were waiting all night for them to show us out, and they were waiting for the same thing," he said. "But the game stayed close down to the wire."

The Jackets moved into the lead for the first time at the end of the third quarter 14-16. And things stayed tight throughout the final quarter. With two minutes remaining in the game, the Jackets had a two-point lead.

A Steve Anderson steal and bucket pushed the lead to four, and a pair by Cliff Mattia pulled the Jackets out by six.

But the final seconds ticked off the clock, both Dave McCullify and Mike Webb fouled out of the contest, and Clark had a chance to go ahead at the charity stripe.

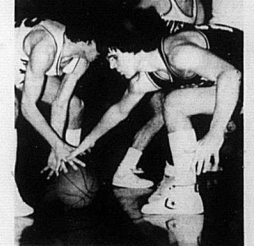
They led the score before Steve Anderson stole the ball and raced in for a bucket that gave the Jackets a two-point lead.

Clark missed a last-second shot to tie the score, and Mike Woodley was fouled on the rebound. He hit both ends of a bonus, and led the best spot for Nicholas.

"I really helped our confidence a lot," Kenney said of the upset, and that confidence is what he said will be the most important factor in the team's performance in the district tournament next week.

"Typically we're in good shape, probably the best shape we've been in all season. But we're very inconsistent."

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Steve Anderson battled a Mayaville player for a loose ball during second half action of Friday night's game. —Mercury photo.

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