

BUILDING FOR OUR FUTURE

STATE OF THE CITY

Friday, Nov. 1, 2024





THE STATE OF THE CITY SHOWS 'KINGSPORT SPIRIT'

Lately I have spent time reflecting on the notion of the “Kingsport Spirit,” our community expression made famous in a quote by J. Fred Johnson after being asked to describe the City of Kingsport. The quote, originally published in 1937, has been a source of inspiration for our city ever since.

Within the quote, Johnson states two traits that continue to define who we are as a city: mutual helpfulness and service above self.

Every day I have the opportunity to work alongside an amazing team of individuals who truly embody the Kingsport Spirit. As a result, the success we have seen over the last 12 months – and the success Kingsport will continue to see – is a result of mutual helpfulness and a desire to place service about self.

This booklet, coupled with today’s State of the City Address, will provide you with information regarding many of the positive things we have been able to accomplish over the last 12 months.

Thank you,

Chris McCartt
Kingsport City Manager

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PROUD MOMENTS

Kingsport Archives marks 30-year milestone

The Kingsport Archives celebrated 30 years of preserving the city's history with an open house hosted by Friends of the Archives. The event welcomed community members to see everything the Archives have to offer, including papers and photographs of individuals, organizations, industry, business and non-current records pertaining to the history of Kingsport for preservation and research purposes. The Friends also have assembled an Archives Christmas gallery that will be on display at City Hall through December.



Soap Box Derby Car

Kingsport opens state-of-the-art dental clinic

The Kingsport Dental Clinic of the Appalachian Highlands hit a major milestone in 2024 with a grand opening ceremony for the 6,500-square-foot facility. The clinic serves as a rotation site for dental students and offers a full-time Advanced Education in General Dentistry residency. The clinic also will host dental hygiene student rotations from East Tennessee State University. The facility includes 12 treatment rooms and \$1.6 million in state-of-the-art equipment.

Planning for the clinic began in October 2022 when Kingsport, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Ballad Health and East Tennessee State University signed a collaboration that included two public universities, private corporate sponsors and community leaders.



Kingsport Dental Clinic of the Appalachian Highlands

Fire Department earns HazMat designation

The Kingsport Fire Department Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Team has earned a new Type II designation, becoming the first team in the State of Tennessee to receive this designation from the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) under the new standards. HazMat teams are designed to respond to, assess and mitigate a large-scale, complex and sustained-duration incident that may involve multiple hazards comprising known and/or unknown hazardous materials.

Kingsport starts Model City 101 program

The City of Kingsport started its new adult education program called Model City 101. The free, eight-week course provides an overview of various city departments and services with the goal being to better educate the public on the government's role within the community. The program includes presentations and discussions at different city facilities by city staff, hands-on activities and Q&A sessions.

Kingsport Senior Center sees record membership

The Kingsport Senior Center reached a historic milestone of active members on its roster. During the pandemic, membership at the senior center dropped to just over 3,200 and has now reached 5,000 in 2024.

Located on the first floor of Kingsport Renaissance Center at 1200 E. Center St., the center offers membership for those ages 50 and older and provides a wide range of activities. The center also has seven branch sites.



Kingsport Senior Center trip to Niagara Falls



CITY AWARDS & HIGHLIGHTS

Kingsport earns state grant for park improvements

Kingsport received \$2.9 million from the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation's Local Parks and Recreation Fund earlier in 2024 with improvements slated at Bays Mountain Park and the Brickyard Complex.

"These dollars will go a long way in making key improvements to two of our most popular facilities, and we believe the public will be excited to see the finished product," Assistant City Manager Michael Borders said.

"This grant would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors, Board of Mayor and Aldermen, our legislators, Bays Mountain Park Commission,

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, our staff, TDEC and the unwavering support of our citizens."

Kingsport will match the \$2.9 million grant with \$1.6 million in sponsor funds and \$1.3 million in city funds for a total of \$5.8 million in the following improvements over the next three years.

Bays Mountain Park: Arrival and entry walk into Nature Center; expanded and ADA-accessible Kid's Cave; event terrace facing lake; and new otter habitat.

Brickyard Complex: Development of bike trails to include skills area and natural surface trails; and construction of a lighted parking lot expansion and ADA connections.

Bays Mountain museum receives \$75,000 for ADA upgrades

The City of Kingsport has been awarded \$75,000 in grant funds from the Tennessee State Museum with proceeds allocated for ADA improvements to the Farmstead Museum at Bays Mountain Park.

The grant will be matched with \$40,000 from the Bays Mountain Park Commission and \$15,000 from the Bays Mountain Park Association to add ADA-accessible parking, for which construction has been completed.

The Tennessee State Museum received 170 applications with \$12.5 million in requests. With \$5 million in available funds, the Tennessee State Museum made full or partial awards to 108 museums representing 58 counties. Kingsport requested \$100,000 and received \$75,000. Future ADA phases yet to be funded include improvements to the restroom and the addition of a chair lift.

"It was a highly competitive grant process, so we're thrilled to have received 75% of our request," said Tyler Wicks, chief ranger at Bays Mountain Park.



Farmstead Museum



Women in Water

Women in Water gather for business conference

City of Kingsport utility services staff members attended the 2024 annual luncheon for Women in Water (WIW) at the Tennessee Association of Utility Districts (TAUD) Business Conference. The event, held in August, empowers, inspires and connects women within the industry, celebrating their achievements and promoting opportunities for development and growth.

"In the Kingsport utilities department, we have women in very diverse roles across the water industry, including administration, engineering, construction, laboratory and technical positions," said Niki Ensor, utilities director for Kingsport. "This event allows us to connect as a department and with other women in our industry."



Public Information and Communications Department earns awards



The City of Kingsport's Public Information and Communications Department earned awards for a campaign, blog post and event.

The 27th Annual Pinnacle Awards, held in May, honored the region's top tourism industry professionals. The Best PR Campaign award went to GOATS! – part of a fundraising effort for a Kingsport arts festival with 10 fiberglass goats offered to the public to sponsor the event.

The department also earned two Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) awards for the blog post, "Can you survive Zombieland?" and best event award for events lasting longer than eight days for "Christmas in Kingsport."



Mayor Paul W. Montgomery

Kingsport elects Montgomery as mayor

In 2024, Kingsport voters elected Paul W. Montgomery as mayor. Montgomery was sworn into office Sept. 3.

Voters returned Darrell Duncan and James Phillips to another term on the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) and elected Morris Baker to his first term on the BMA. The six members of the BMA selected Gary Mayes on Sept. 17 to serve the remaining two years of Montgomery's alderman seat.

Southern Living salutes Kingsport Farmers Market

Everyone in Kingsport knows what a gem the Kingsport Farmers Market is, and now so do the readers of Southern Living magazine! The farmers market was recognized in 2024 as one of the "12 Farmers' Markets in The South You Should Visit this Season."

The article noted: "Must-visit spots for farm-fresh fanfare and specialty goods. Nothing beats the bounty of fresh produce we get in the South, but shopping at your local supermarket just isn't the same as meeting a local farmer face to face. If you love Saturday morning markets as much as we do, with all their farm-fresh fanfare and specialty goods, consider this list of must-visit farmers' market stops across the South."



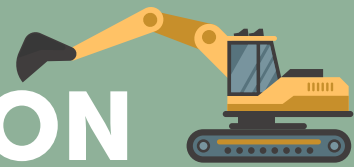
Farmers Market



Farmers Market Winner



UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Paving remains priority for coming year

The City of Kingsport continued its emphasis on street resurfacing in 2024, allocating \$3.8 million to repave in the Fairacres, Tellico Hills and Highland neighborhoods.

Kingsport's paving efforts also were bolstered with two additional funding sources this year – \$2.5 million from the Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (KMTPO) and \$4.5 million from the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).



Paving Update

KMTPO funds went toward repaving portions of Fall Creek Road, Cooks Valley Road, Moreland Drive and the Hawkins County portion of Netherland Inn Road. Work began this fall and should wrap up in spring 2025.

TDOT began its summer paving program with Fort Henry Drive (State Route 36) from Eastman Road to Summerville Road, as well as the Airport Parkway (State Route 357).

In total, the Model City experienced approximately \$10.8 million in street resurfacing work in 2024 – more than 16 miles of city and state roads. During fiscal year 2025, approximately 15 miles of streets will be paved by city crews and contractors.

For the past eight years, Kingsport has used a data-driven approach to resurfacing by ranking all city streets from 0 to 100 based on condition. That creates an annual paving plan where the lowest-ranked streets are given priority.

By following this program, Kingsport has repaved an average 17 miles of streets every year since 2017.

For more information on Kingsport's paving schedule, updated road condition maps or to view the latest presentations, visit pavekingsport.com.

Kingsport Aquatic Center completes maintenance

The Kingsport Aquatic Center closed from Sept. 1-29 for needed maintenance and key improvements to the locker rooms, family bathrooms, lazy river and all of the pools at the facility.

DWR Aquatics performed the work for the city, which included:

- New starting blocks installed for Olympic-sized lap pool.
- All indoor pools drained, recaulked, cleaned and repaired as needed.
- Locker rooms and family bathrooms painted, with new shower fixtures installed.
- Fresh paint on outdoor water slides and lazy river.
- Many other maintenance projects.



Before: Kingsport Aquatic Center

The maintenance and improvement project cost approximately \$500,000. The Kingsport Aquatic Center typically shuts down every three to four years for maintenance/repairs with the previous project taking place in 2019.

"We strive to have a world-class aquatics facility, so this shutdown will help us achieve this goal," said Jessie Charlton, the center's assistant manager.



After: Kingsport Aquatic Center

Current Land Use Plan approaches update

The City of Kingsport's current Land Use Plan is set to expire in 2030. Adopted by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in 2010, the plan refers to both the physical attributes and the functional uses of land.

The first step is to update the land use plan and also create a comprehensive document regarding growth and development as it relates to the city's urban growth boundary. Land use decisions drive development patterns and impact revenues, service delivery, transportation options and environmental integrity.

Kingsport opens new convenience center

The City of Kingsport is adding a new and larger convenience center for residents to drop off recyclables in a safer, more controlled environment.

The facility, located at 300 Industry Drive, is roughly one-eighth of an acre in size. It includes a paved parking lot, Sullivan County recycling containers relocated from the previous Industry Drive location and a city dumpster for small amounts of construction debris.

Construction began earlier this year on the facility, which will open to the public this fall. Recyclables accepted include cardboard, mixed paper, aluminum and tin. The facility is only for city residents and will be open Monday through Friday and a half day on Saturday.

Library moving to Fort Henry Mall amid renovation

The Kingsport Public Library will relocate temporarily to the Fort Henry Mall for a renovation project that will bring key improvements.

"We envision a library that is not only a place for books, but also a vibrant and interactive hub for learning and engagement," Library Manager Mary Thomas said.



Kingsport Public Library

Earlier this year, city and elected leaders approved \$7 million toward the project, which includes doubling the size of the children's area, installing a new elevator for increased accessibility and creating dedicated space for genealogy, teens and children's programming.

Construction documents will be completed by the end of the year, and the project will go to bid in early 2025.

Main Street rebuild on track for spring finish



Main Street Rebuild

The Main Street rebuild project made significant progress over the last six months with new ADA-compliant sidewalks completed from Sullivan to Cherokee streets. Landscaping work has continued through the fall, and community residents and visitors now have driving access on Main Street from Sullivan to Cherokee. The project is on schedule to be completed by April 2025.



www.ChristmasInKingsport.com

QUALITY OF LIFE

ConnectKingsport app use surges

The ConnectKingsport app – the quickest and easiest way to report an issue within Kingsport – reached a milestone in 2024 with more than 10,000 downloads.

To download the app, go to the App Store or Google Play and search “ConnectKingsport.” You also can access the tool via kingsporttn.gov/connectkingsport or seeclickfix.com.



Two city parks get new playground equipment

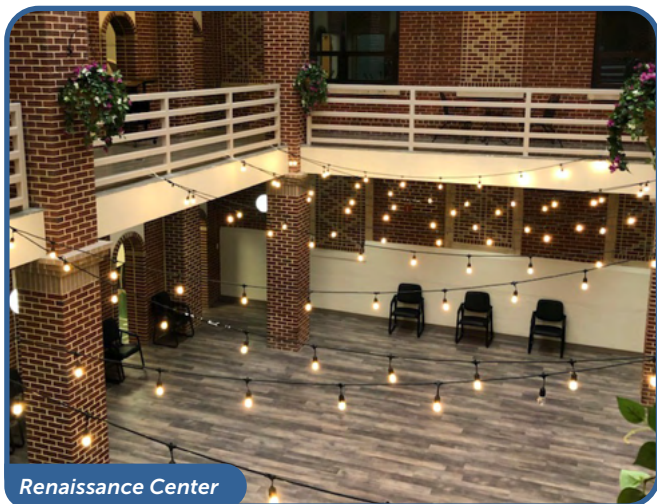
The City of Kingsport has installed new playground equipment at Riverview Park and Riverfront Park.

Riverview Park received a Track Rider, VistaArc Sphere, X-pod steps and Hanging Pod Links through an \$80,000 Healthy Built Environments (HBE) grant from the Tennessee Department of Health.

Riverfront Park received a new seesaw and swings, including one specifically for an adult and child to use.

Book the perfect venue

Whether you need space for a birthday party, sports tournament, wedding or arts and craft fair, the City of Kingsport has thousands of square feet available for rent.



Allendale Mansion: Mansion, two barns, picnic pavilion, Heron Dome and a 2,000-square-foot amphitheater.

Kingsport Aquatic Center: Rooms for parties, outdoor cabanas, individual swim lanes or large groups.

Bays Mountain Park and Planetarium: Nature Center, planetarium, Farmstead Museum and Lily Pad Cove.

Carousel: Birthday parties and events.

Kingsport Farmers Market: Indoor, outdoor and hybrid options for multiple events.

Parks & Recreation: Courts, fields, gymnasiums, meeting rooms and picnic shelters for small and large gatherings.

Kingsport Renaissance Center: Conference and meeting rooms, gallery, studio, rehearsal hall, gym and theater.

Click the Venues tab at thisiskingsport.com for information and to book venues online.

Interactive map highlights art trails

Kingsport Cultural Arts revealed a new interactive map to view various art displays throughout the Downtown Kingsport footprint. Current displays include the 14th Annual Sculpture Walk and the painted fiberglass goats. Visit artskingsport.org/trails to access the map.

Traffic boxes share Kingsport history



A new style of public art that transforms something ordinary into something eye-catching can now be found throughout Downtown Kingsport, showcasing iconic images from the Model City's past.

Kingsport Cultural Arts, in partnership with the Kingsport Archives, has wrapped seven downtown traffic control boxes in vinyl containing images from Kingsport's past. Each wrap has a QR code that can be scanned for more information about the featured image.



KINGSPORT SPIRIT



Riverwalk Park earns major funding for expansion

Kingsport received a \$7.8 million grant from the BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Foundation earlier this year for the enhancement of a city park along the South Fork of the Holston River. The BlueCross Healthy Place at Riverwalk Park is located on 8.8 acres near the intersection of Netherland Inn Road and Industry Drive.

Designs call for an inclusive play area, community pavilion, sports courts, water features, fitness area, recreational water access, art installations and restrooms.

The foundation is providing \$6.5 million for the project and an additional \$1.3 million for a maintenance fund. This is the second BlueCross Healthy Place located within the city, with the first being the BlueCross Healthy Place at the Kingsport Miracle League Complex, which opened in 2020.

Kingsport Carousel to celebrate 10 years



The Kingsport Carousel will celebrate its 10th birthday in July 2025 with special events, new merchandise and a new Carousel animal being carved for the milestone.

'Drool Party' brings out the dogs

The Kingsport Aquatic Center (KAC) once again hosted a two-day "Drool Party" in early September for the city's furry friends, offering dogs of all breeds & sizes a chance to run, play and socialize in the outdoor water park.



The KAC also offered a new special session for dogs weighing 25 pounds or less to give the smaller ones a chance to splash and swim.

"We were excited about adding a third session to this year's party, one specifically aimed at small breeds, such as terriers, dachshunds and Chihuahuas," said Madison Gump, program coordinator at KAC."

For more than 10 years the Kingsport Aquatic Center has ended its summer season by inviting dogs to enjoy an afternoon of running, jumping and playing in the toddler play area of the outdoor water park.

New arts festival arrived in spring

Kingsport Cultural Arts held a new, two-day arts festival last spring to highlight the best artists, musicians, performers and dancers from across the Tri-Cities region. The Kingsport Arts Festival was hosted by Kingsport Cultural Arts in partnership with Engage Kingsport.



Storm drain art raises awareness

Each year the City of Kingsport's Stormwater Department, with help from Kingsport Cultural Arts, seeks local artists to hand-paint five storm drains within the city. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness about the importance of protecting rivers, stream habitats and aquatic wildlife. Five wonderful artists brightened the city in 2024 with their artistic talents.

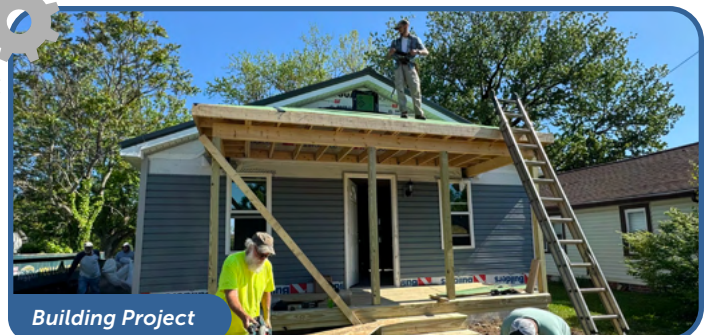
Home Builders Association partners with TCAT

The Home Builders Association (HBA) of Greater Kingsport partnered with the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) to offer students hands-on experience in the renovation of a house in the Highlands neighborhood.

The association purchased the house and under the partnership, students in the college's construction program worked with local professionals for approximately six months to redo the house from the inside out, including demolition, framing walls, installing insulation, plumbing, electrical work and flooring.

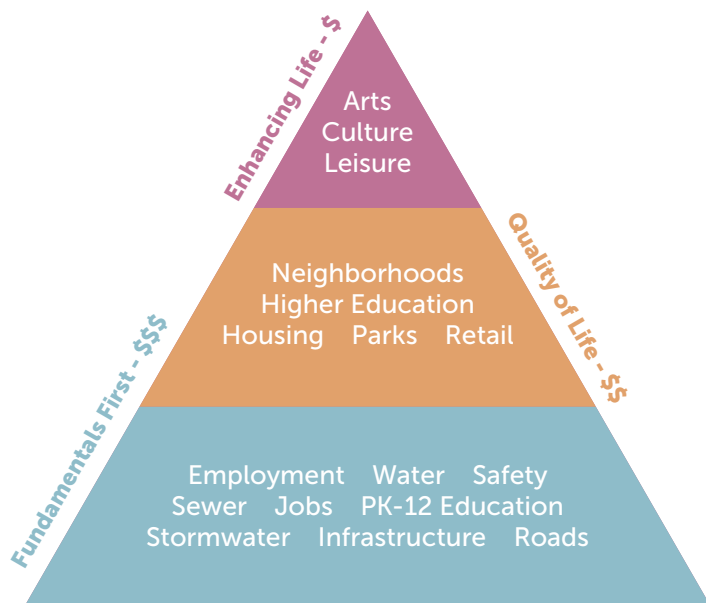
More than a dozen students got a chance to shadow the association's plumbers, electricians and HVAC workers, ask questions and see how professionals perform their trade while on the job site.

Work wrapped up this fall, and the HBA intends to sell the house by the end of the year and use the proceeds to purchase another house for a similar project in 2025.



Building Project

FISCAL SUCCESS



The pyramid illustrates the hierarchy of needs that city officials use to guide Kingsport’s capital budget and prioritize improvements.

City sustains fiscal success

- \$240.7 million budget in supporting schools, infrastructure, operations and more.
- General Purpose School Fund: \$104 million.
- City Funds: \$137.9 million.
- Tax rate: \$1.9983.
- S&P Global: AA rating.
- Moody’s Investor Service: Aa2 rating
- Debt: 6.92% of taxable assessed value with debt limit 3.08% below the city’s self-imposed maximum and 13.08% below state’s imposed maximum.
- Won Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Budget Award again in FY 2024 to make 25 years in a row.

Budget Bites

Kingsport’s budget is the guiding financial document for the city.

It must be voted on, and passed twice, by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen before going into effect.

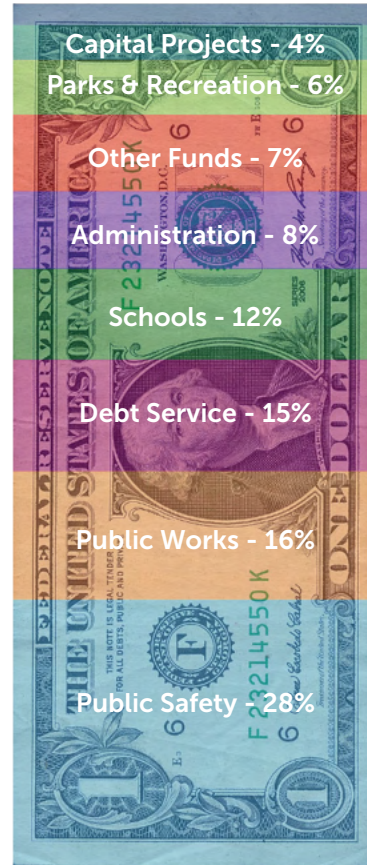
The city’s 2025 budget runs from July 2024-June 2025.

The budget includes:

- General Fund (operating and capital funds)
- Water and Sewer Systems
- School Fund (general purpose and nutrition)
- Other Funds (such as Bays Mountain and MeadowView)

Where do my property taxes go?

Public Subsidies & Grants - 4%



SCHOOLS

Kingsport City Schools earn recognitions

District Recognitions

- 2023 Top Composite Score of 5 in Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) in system-wide numeracy, science, social studies and overall composite score.
- 2023 Tennessee Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) Award: Becky Clark (District).
- 2024 National Athletic Trainers' Association Safe Sports School Award: Kevin Trivette and Bri Hippenstiel, Dobyns-Bennett High School.
- 2024 Tennessee National Outstanding Assistant Principal: Dr. Melissa Seaver, Sevier Middle School.
- 2024 Tennessee Teacher of the Year: Bryan Kerns, Dobyns-Bennett High School.

School-Level Recognitions

- Adams Elementary: 2023 U.S. News & World Report Best Elementary Schools in Tennessee.
- Adams, Jefferson and Johnson Elementary and Dobyns-Bennett High School: 2023 Top Composite Score of 5 in TVAAS.
- Adams and Jefferson Elementary: 2023 Tennessee Reward School.
- Jackson and Johnson Elementary: Continued as Leader in Me Lighthouse School by Franklin Covey Education.
- Kennedy Elementary: 2023 Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School by Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.
- Washington Elementary: Became member of inaugural Northeast Tennessee STEM Innovation Hub leadership team.
- Robinson Middle: 2023 U.S. News & World Report Best Middle Schools in Tennessee.
- Dobyns-Bennett High School: 2024 U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools in Tennessee.
- D-B EXCEL: Received STEM re-designation through Tennessee STEM Innovation Network.

Student Recognitions

Robinson Middle

- Student named 2024 Tennessee winner in U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation National Civics Bee competition, advancing to nationals.
- 2023 Tennessee Science Bowl Team runner-up.

Sevier Middle

- The Sequoyah Scribe student newspaper won 2023 Pacemaker Award from National Scholastic Press Association.

Dobyns-Bennett High

- 12 National Merit Semi-finalists & Commended Students.
- One perfect AP Seminar exam score (1 of 27 students in the world) in 2023.
- 2023 AP Scholars (152).
- Three 2024 U.S. Presidential Scholar Candidates.
- 49 graduating seniors with a 30+ ACT.
- 1,627 industry certifications earned by 314 students.
- Work-Based Learning students' paid internships earned \$189,700.
- Cyber Tribe Robotics team advanced to fourth consecutive international finalist in 2024.

- Tennessee High School Speech & Drama League champions; six students qualified for 2024 national tournament by National Speech & Debate Association.
- 2024 Mu Alpha Theta School Bowl state champions.
- Three students named 2024 Future Business Leaders of America state champions in Team Business Plan.
- Air Force JROTC earned 16th consecutive Distinguished Unit Award (DUA) in 2024.

D-B EXCEL

- R'Matey's Underwater Robotics team advanced to 2024 World Competition for sixth consecutive year.
- 52 students earned Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt industry certification in 2024.

Music Program Recognitions

Dobyns-Bennett High

- 2023 Metallica Marching Band Competition "Large High School Division" Champion and "Fan Favorite," winning \$25,000.
- 2023 Overtone A cappella group performed with classic rock band, Foreigner.

Athletic Recognitions

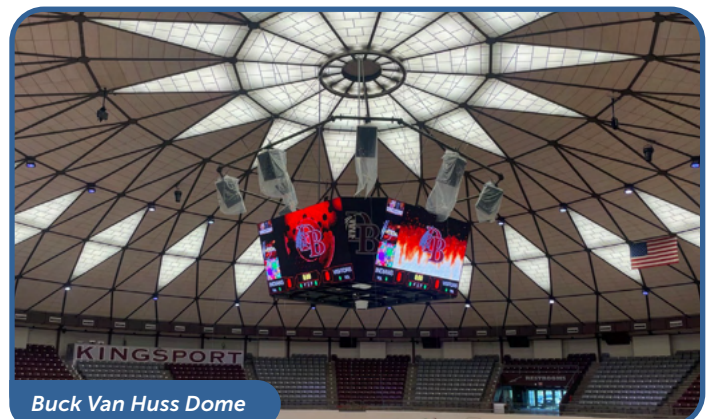
Dobyns-Bennett High

- 2023 Girls Golf team state champions.
- 2024 Unified Sports Bowling team state champions.
- 2024 Boys Wrestling individual state champion.
- 2024 Boys Indoor Track & Field individual state champion, 60m hurdles.
- 2024 Boys Indoor Track & Field individual state champion, high jump.
- 2024 Girls Softball team state champions.
- 2024 Boys Track & Field individual state champion, 1600m.
- 2024 Boys Track & Field relay team state champions, 4x800m.

Capital Construction Projects

Dobyns-Bennett High Buck Van Huss Dome update

- Anticipated completion is March 2025.
- Visit www.k12k.com - About KCS, Capital Construction Projects for details and photos.

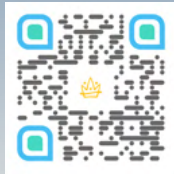


Buck Van Huss Dome



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