

METCALFE COUNTY SCHOOLS

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For Immediate Release

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STUDENTS INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF SCHOOLS IN NYC

EDMONTON, Ky. (April 16, 2026) – A group of Metcalfe County High School students traveled to New York City over Spring Break to help shape the future of schools.

Senior Aubrey Glass, junior Abby Shirley, and sophomore Leah Kerr were selected to attend the New York City Carnegie Future of Schools Summit at Columbia University.

The Summit brought together students from Kentucky and New York who have shown a strong commitment to civic dialogue and democratic learning. They participated as co-learners and ambassadors, sharing perspectives on schooling while learning alongside peers.

"Participating in this program has not only given me the opportunity to meet so many new people but also has offered a new perspective on many issues regarding school systems and working with others to fix them," Kerr said. "The institute provided us the opportunity to use deliberative democracy to solve issues and make real change for future generations. Overall, seeing the similarities and differences between schools in New York and Kentucky made me think deeply about the common and contrasting issues students face."

Kerr, Glass, and Shirley were among a larger group of students from across South Central Kentucky who have been participating in an ongoing study about the future of schools at the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative in Bowling Green. Eight of those students were invited by the Columbia Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) to serve as Kentucky delegates in NYC.

MCHS sponsor Autumn Shirley said, "Walking the campus of Columbia University was inspiring in itself, but what made the experience truly meaningful was watching our Kentucky students collaborate with peers from New York City to build a campaign for the future of schools. This experience furnished them the platform to turn their ideas into impact."

Kerr added, "The institute gave me a new sense of hope and confidence that, with effort, change can happen through student voice. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity and the ideas that I plan on bringing back to Kentucky."

The students' campaign will be published later this month.

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About Metcalfe County Schools

The mission of Metcalfe County Schools is to foster true, long-lasting, deeper LEARNING in the SAFEST possible environment resulting in a first-class STUDENT EXPERIENCE. Our vision is to offer options and opportunities for the success of all Metcalfe County students. Visit www.metcalfeschools.com to learn more, or follow us @MetcalfSchools on Facebook, X, and Instagram. #MetcalfHornetsEver