



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held via Google Meet.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Malone called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call. The following were present: Ramona Malone, Dr. Julie Smith-Morrow, Melissa Sheffel, Aaron Sutherland, and Sylvia Covington.

Ms. Malone asked those in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance and pause for a Moment of Reflection.

PRESENTATIONS

Matt Atkins, Principal at Newport Primary School, Dennis Maines, Principal at Newport Intermediate School, and Mike Hunter, Principal at Newport High School all joined the meeting to recognize the board since January is designated as *Board Appreciation Month*. Each one thanked the members for their support and dedication to the district. They thanked the board for their leadership by always putting students first and always providing the resources to make school a better place for students and staff. Mr. Hunter told a personal story about Ms. Covington and her deep commitment to Newport students. Mr. Hunter also added his thanks for taking such good care of our facilities. He receives numerous compliments from other visitors quite often for the board's proactive decisions to keep improving Newport's facilities and making the district a place to be proud of. Mr. Watts echoed his thanks to the board for everything they do.

Paul Maddox, Maddox and Associates, joined the meeting to give an overview of the June 30, 2021 year end audit.

Mr. Maddox thanked the board for the opportunity to work with Newport's finance department thru this process. This is the first time this firm has performed an audit for Newport and Mr. Maddox felt everything went well. He thanked Ms. Hoover for her support in providing all documents requested in a timely manner and for being readily available to answer all questions. Mr. Maddox felt the audit process went well. The district received a clean, unmodified opinion. There are no material weaknesses or deficiencies in internal controls nor are there any instances of noncompliance with laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements. The only management comment pertained to publishing the annual financial statement in year-end procedures.

The presentation included:

- Assets, liabilities, and net position comparisons over the last 3 years;
- Revenues and expenditures comparisons over the last 3 years;
- Revenue source comparisons for the last 3 years;
- Expenditure source comparisons for the last 3 years;
- Expenditure percentages for 2021.

Upon completion of the presentation, Mr. Maddox asked if anyone had any questions about the material he had presented. There were no questions.

Ms. Malone extended her appreciation to Mr. Maddox for joining the meeting this evening and thanked him for the audit presentation.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2021, JANUARY 5, 2022, AND JANUARY 12, 2022

On MOTION BY SHEFFEL AND SECONDED BY SUTHERLAND the minutes were approved as presented.

1288 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

Questions were answered prior to the meeting pertaining to the bills. There were no further questions.

On MOTION BY SMITH-MORROW AND SECONDED BY COVINGTON the financial report was accepted and will be filed for audit and the bills were approved for payment.

1289 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Ms. Hoover's report also included:

- Credit card expenditures
- Administrator expense report
- Monthly report
- Tuition Reimbursement
- EFT paid warrant report

Ms. Hoover explained the EFT document represents a more efficient way to reimburse employees. This eliminates printing checks and waiting sometimes months for employees to cash and/or deposit them.

Dr. Smith-Morrow asked how many students were participating in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program. Ms. Hoover said there are currently 414 children receiving these books.

In response to a request by Dr. Smith-Morrow, Ms. Hoover updated the board on HB1, HB 125, the governor's proposed 5% salary increase to all school employees, the bill regarding SFCC and the vocational education bill. Decisions regarding many of these bills may not come before March.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND LEARNING SERVICES

Mr. Watt's gave the board a legislative update on the following bills:

- SB 25 - provides another 10 days of remote learning per school until June 30, 2022 and allows superintendents to assign individual groups, classes or schools to remote instruction, if they experience significant absences related to COVID-19.
- Retired Return to Work (RTW) temporary adjustments.
- SB 5 and HB 5 – immediate tornado relief for KY school districts affected by the devastating tornadoes in December.
- SB 1 – roles of SBDM councils. This bill will require that the superintendent determines curriculum after consulting with the principal, school council, and stakeholder response. This bill will also alter the principal hiring process requiring the principal to be selected by the superintendent after consultation with school council.
- SB 9 – Read to Succeed - early literacy
- HB 44 - would require local school districts to provide a policy granting excused absences for students for mental or behavioral health days.
- HB 1 – funding full day kindergarten, TRS, transportation costs, raises, mental health counseling, and CTE programming.
- SB 59 – this bill would no longer require a college admission exam in the 10th grade and would amend the postsecondary readiness indicators in the accountability system.
- HB 126 – the bill would require students to complete the FAFSA college financial aid request form in order to graduate high school.
- HB 194 – this bill would provide a student enrolled in a district-operated alternative education program be eligible to seek a high school equivalency diploma under certain conditions.
- HB 121 – in regards to public comments at a regular meeting held by the board of education.

Brandon Voelker, board attorney, said that HB 121 should not affect this board as they already go above and beyond to be transparent regarding school business in all open meetings. The agenda has always allowed for public comment. As far as SB 1, this bill will require SBDM councils to align their policies to school board policies.

Mr. Sutherland said he is watching SB 14 which seeks to limit elementary and secondary public schools from teaching about race, sex, religion, or systemic racism. Brandon said the bill would also include public colleges and universities. The state could dock school district funding for each day a teacher violates the law.

Mr. Sutherland questions whether critical race theory even exist in our school system or any other school system? Brandon said this is mainly a topic taught in higher education and not typically in a K-12 school setting.

- SB 50 – this bill will expand the Education Opportunity Act which passed last year. The new bill would allow scholarship tax credits to be used to pay for private school tuition statewide instead of only in large counties; allow the annual cap to increase each year up to \$50 million per year; and increase the family income levels that qualify.

Ms. Steidel-Jones presented the curriculum department report. Their report covered:

- District curriculum development
- Monthly instructional meetings
- Assessments

Mr. Sutherland asked when the results for winter MAP testing would be presented. Ms. Steidel-Jones said that information should be ready by the February regular board meeting. Ms. Malone asked about the “climate” around MAP testing. Is the test being taken seriously, are students focused, and are they being encouraged to do their best. Ms. Steidel-Jones said they are very intentional about insuring building leadership encourages staff about the importance of the test and that staff passes the information to students. Mr. Watts said he does talk to the principals about the importance of this assessment as a means of monitoring each student’s progress. When he was principal if a student dropped 10 points or more from one testing period to the next, they had to retake the test. Mr. Watts would meet with the student and if he felt they did not do their best they had to retake it. Many times, this would result in a better score.

Ms. Malone asked the curriculum team to give the board an update on the following next month:

- Co-op program
- Gateway program
- Pathway program
- Senior class – who is on track
- Newport Advisory Council – will attend next work session

DPP/Student Services update:

- Enrollment summary
- Non-traditional instruction and SB 25 which provides up to 10 days of temporary remote instruction per school for school district use at the school, classroom, grade, or group level for the remainder of the 21/22 SY.
- School calendar committee:
 - One district principal – Matt Atkins
 - One district office administrator other than the superintendent – Jennifer Stewart
 - One board member – Melissa Sheffel
 - Two parents – Nadine Cruz and Veronica Harrington
 - One elementary teacher – Autumn Slankard and Emily Kenner
 - One middle or high teacher – Natalie Wolfe
 - Two classified employees – Kristy McNally and Katie Lucas
 - Two community members – Ann Liles and Elizabeth Cunningham
- Service provider reports

In regards to HB 14, Ms. Stewart said she is a committee member of KASAs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion taskforce. They are committed to fostering an inclusive learning environment in which all students receive the same treatment, with the same rights and responsibilities, regardless of their differences, abilities or backgrounds. Anything different would be a direct violation of the teacher code of conduct.

Facilities, Transportation, Safe Schools, and Healthy at Work update:

Mr. Grayson presented his report to the board and asked if there were any questions. In a response to Mr. Grayson’s previous report on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, he updated the document and presented it to the board for their review. There were no questions or comments.

Special Education update:

- Special Olympics Program
- Exception children programming rates

The goal of participating in Special Olympics is to build student confidence and create an environment where all students feel empowered and successful. Newport High School had two students participate in the Special Olympics Regional Bowling Competitions earlier this year. One middle school student participated in the winter Olympics held at Perfect North Slopes. The skiing coaches were Aaron Sutherland and Teresa Smolilo.

Martin Varia won the silver medal in the giant slalom and the gold medal in the beginning slalom. Thanks to Tyler Bompreszi, Aaron Sutherland, Paul Wiggins, Sharon Bresser, and Chris Varia for volunteering their time to help with this event.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

On MOTION BY SMITH-MORROW AND SECONDED BY SHEFFEL items 11-13 will be tabled for further discussion.

1290 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

1. Personnel report
2. FY 2022 Draft Budget
3. 20/21 Annual Financial Audit
4. Revised BG-1 application for NPS kitchen and cafeteria project
5. Revised BG-1 application for NIS and NPS marquees
6. Revised capital funds request for NIS and NPS marquees
7. FRYSC Assurance Certification 2022-2024
8. 2021 Child Nutrition Report Card
9. SFCC Offer of Assistance in the amount of \$43,262
10. Per board policy 08.3 – approve the district calendar committee
11. ~~Newport Independent Schools strategic plan – “Quest to Educational Excellence 2025”~~
12. ~~New mission statement – Newport Independent School District will partner with families and the community to nurture, educate, and instill core values in all students to ensure they reach their fullest potential.~~
13. ~~New vision statement – We envision a day when every student in the Newport Independent School District engages and thrives in educational excellence.~~

On MOTION BY SMITH-MORROW AND SECONDED BY SHEFFEL consent agenda items 1-10 were approved as presented.

1291 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

None

BOARD COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Sutherland thanked the volunteers for helping with the winter Special Olympics. This is an event he would like to see grow and continue in the future. He looks forward to being a part of it.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY SUTHERLAND AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW the meeting adjourned. Time:
7:42 PM

1292 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary