



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 6:30 PM. The meeting took place at 30 W. 8th Street, Newport.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ramona Malone asked for a roll call. The following were present: Ramona Malone, Tim Curl, Ed Davis, Sylvia Covington, and Bobbie Stubbeman.

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

RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Student & staff members of the month:

NPS

- Alayna Shackelford, Student
- Bridget Rice, Teacher

NIS

- Emmalynn Smith, Student
- Evan Snapp, Instructional Assistant

NHS

- Joseph Mueller, Student
- Leslie Duzan, Teacher

After recognitions, the meeting was relocated to the Intermediate School cafeteria at 95 W. 9th Street, Newport, due to a larger-than-expected turnout.

PRESENTATIONS

Dwight Salsbury from RSA Advisors, was present to discuss bonding for Phase II of the stadium renovation. He discussed the Board's outstanding local debt service, he reviewed the funds available for projects, and the projected series 2025 issue. The funds available for future projects is \$313,307. Dwight explained that this money can also be used to reimburse the general fund thru a Capital Funds Request that the board must approve. He shared the guidelines for a Capital Funds Request as well as the form that the board would be presented for approval in the case of such request.

Ms. Stubbeman inquired about other potential uses for a CFR. Mr. Salsbury responded that, according to KRS 154.420, Section 7, a CFR can be allocated for school maintenance or repairs, property insurance, the purchase of school buses (either through KISTA or cash), and technology for educational purposes only.

The board thanked Mr. Salsbury for his presentation.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Several guests signed up to address the board:

1. Amber Onkst addressed the board regarding allocations and staff cuts;
2. Cara Stewart addressed the board regarding the budget;
3. Robin Bomkamp addressed the board regarding allocations, staff cuts, and the impact on students;
4. Holly Macario addressed the board regarding staff cuts;
5. Chelsea Stewart addressed the board regarding staff cuts;
6. Donovan Marcario addressed the board regarding staff cuts;
7. Esther Fatsy addressed the board regarding allocations, staff cuts, trips, ESSER money, programming, gifted students, central office cuts, and a teacher committee to work with board. On behalf of the teachers, she asked for a vote of no confidence for the superintendent.

MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2025 REGULAR MEETING & FEBRUARY 12, 2025 WORK SESSION

On MOTION BY DAVIS AND SECONDED BY COVINGTON the board approved the minutes as written

1637 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

(Mr. Curl abstained from voting for the minutes of January 22, 2025 since he was not able to attend this meeting.)

TREASURER'S REPORT

On MOTION BY CURL AND SECONDED BY DAVIS the financial statements for December 2024 and January 2025 were approved.

1638 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Before approving the invoices, Ms. Stubbeman asked about the Fusion Registration that appears on the MasterCard statement. Ms. Stewart explained that, by law, Title 1 funding must be allotted to private schools in the district if they choose to participate, and this particular charge covered registration for a conference that staff from one of the private schools attended.

On MOTION BY COVINGTON AND SECONDED BY DAVIS the bills were approved for payment.

1639 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Mr. Watts' report covered:

- Mr. Watts reviewed the staffing allocation guidelines outlined in 702 KAR:246. He explained that while the allocations presented tonight represent the minimum required for board approval by March 1st, final staffing allocations must be approved by May 1st. If the budget permits, the superintendent may submit Section 7 requests to the board for the hiring of additional staff beyond the minimum allocations. Additionally, staff members whose contracts will not be renewed must receive notification by no later than May 15th.
- ESSER and Title funding – ESSER funds have helped to place additional staff in the buildings over the last few years. However, those funds ran out in the fall of 2024 which means staff must be reduced. Title funds are unknown at this time which also impacts staffing. If funds are available, principals will present rationale for additional staff before May 1st and decisions will be made accordingly.

Ms. Stubbeman asked about staff cuts to date. Districtwide, 21 cuts are being considered – the intermediate school is 8, the high school is 9, and the primary school is 4.

Ms. Brown presented her report and opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Malone asked Ms. Brown to elaborate on the Targeted Support Improvement Recovery Leader from KDE. Ms. Payne took the floor and explained that a rep from KDE visits the district once a week. This collaboration is designed to accelerate school improvement by providing targeted data analysis, intervention strategies, and sustainable improvement verification. This partnership strengthens our commitment to education excellence, ensuring that every learner is supported through data-driven practices leading to student success.

Ms. Stubbeman inquired about the Marzano Highly Reliable School Conference that both Ms. Payne and Ms. Brown attended. Ms. Brown clarified that NKCES (Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services) funded the expenses for the curriculum department's participation. The conference, research-based and designed for educators and school leaders, aimed to empower them to make sustainable improvements in student learning. The framework emphasized five core pillars that align closely with Newport's mission and strategic literacy plan.

In response, Mr. Curl requested specific bullet points detailing the actual work being implemented based on the knowledge gained at the conference and its application within the district.

Ms. Stewart presented her report and opened the floor for questions. Her report covered enrollment, attendance, Support Education Excellence in KY (SEEK), truancy, and Title 1. She also reviewed hold harmless fund projections that were provided to school principals and the superintendent in January.

The amended calendar for the 2024-2025 SY is being presented for approval under new business as well as the 2025-226 SY calendar.

The SEEK Roadshow has been rescheduled to March 19th for all finance officers, superintendents, and DPPs. This event will be held at NKCES at no charge.

Mr. Maines submitted his report and invited any questions or concerns. He mentioned that the MOU with the City of Newport for our School Resource Officers is under new business for approval. He reminded the board this was discussed and reviewed at the work session earlier this month.

Ms. Swanson submitted her report. She highlighted the winter games ski competition held on January 28th at Perfect North Slopes. She has invited the participants to the May meeting to be recognized. Ms. Malone asked about the alternate services locations in regards to the Restore Program. Ms. Swanson said this is the new name given to what was the Phoenix Program.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Malone read the resolution that is on the consent agenda for approval regarding the issuance of bonds. There were no questions. Ms. Malone asked that Mr. Maines to explain surplus items. Mr. Adams addressed the technology surplus items he is asking the board to approve.

On MOTION BY CURL AND SECONDED BY DAVIS consent item #11 was removed from the agenda.

1640 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

1. Personnel report.
2. Staffing allocations 25/26 SY

3. MOU with the City of Newport regarding the School Resource Officers (SROs)
4. Revised BG-1 – Phase II Stadium Renovation
5. BG-2, BG-3, BG-4 – Emergency boiler & piping replacement
6. Municipal Advisory Services Agreement with RSA Advisors
7. A resolution of the Board of Education of Newport Independent Schools (“Board”), authorizing and approving the issuance of general obligation bonds, Series 2025 in a principal amount of \$1,465,000 (subject to an increase or decrease of up to \$145,000) (the “bonds”) the proceeds of which are to be used for a public school projects; authorizing the establishment of certain funds to provide for the collection, to the extent required, of the proceeds of a direct annual tax on all taxable property within the school district, in addition to all other taxes; authorizing the execution of the bonds and the disbursement of the proceeds thereof; authorizing the investment of funds pursuant to KRS 66.480; providing for delegation by the board of education of authority to the secretary of the board to determine certain matters relating to the bonds; and authorizing such other documents, agreements, and certificates necessary or required for the issuance of the bonds.
8. Technology surplus
9. 24/25 amended calendar
10. 25/26 calendar
11. ~~Monthly Budget Analysis Contract with Maddox & Associates~~
12. Fidelity bond of treasurer

On MOTION BY CURL AND SECONDED BY COVINGTON the consent agenda was approved as presented.

1640 – MOTION CARRIED 4-1

Roll call: Ms. Malone, yes
Mr. Curl, yes
Ms. Covington, yes
Mr. Davis, yes
Ms. Stubbeman, no

BOARD COMMENTS/CONCERNS/ UPDATES

Mr. Davis emphasized that tonight’s staffing allocations are tentative, and the district is working diligently behind the scenes to make the best possible decisions for the community. He expressed his gratitude to everyone who attended, stating that it will take the collective effort of all to navigate through this challenge. "We will make this work and emerge stronger on the other side," he assured.

Mr. Curl shared his deep connection to Newport, noting that he has lived here his entire life, graduated from Newport, and has been an educator for 40 years. He reassured the community that he would never take actions to reduce faculty unless absolutely necessary. He mentioned a planning meeting in March, where everyone would share ideas on how to make cuts without solely affecting teaching staff. He mentioned it may be a long meeting.

Bobbie Stubbeman expressed her appreciation for the strong turnout, recognizing it as a sign of the district's strength. Having had two students graduate from Newport and two currently enrolled, she underscored the board's commitment to preserving as many positions as possible. She stated they will review central office and program areas to ensure we retain as many teaching positions as we can. Our goal is to ensure the success of every student.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY CURL, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM

1641 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary