



The Newport Board of Education held a work session on March 12, 2025, at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held 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.

STAFFING

Ms. Malone explained that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to get a better understanding of how positions in the district are funded. Roles and responsibilities will be discussed so that the board has all the information needed if cuts become necessary.

Ms. Malone opened the discussion by asking the superintendent to clarify why Newport is responsible for the education of students at the Campbell County Juvenile Detention Center. Mr. Watts explained that when he became superintendent, he was informed that Newport was mandated to provide educational services to the incarcerated students at this facility due to its location within the district. He further explained that the district enters into an annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Juvenile Justice, which outlines the required scope of services. Funding for these services comes through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Kentucky Education Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC), along with Title 1 Part A and Title 1 Subpart B funds, which help offset some of the costs. However, the remaining expenses are covered by the district's general fund. If there are no students at the center, teachers are reassigned elsewhere within the district, though this is an extremely rare occurrence. Ms. Stubbeman inquired whether any positions could be shared between the detention center and other schools. Mr. Watts explained that a special education teacher, who also works at the high school and the School of Innovation, is assigned to the center, along with a school counselor from the School of Innovation. Additionally, the district shares the administrative assistant with the preschool program. Ms. Stubbeman then asked if four positions are necessary at the detention center. Mr. Watts clarified that staffing levels are determined by the number of units in operation at the facility.

Mr. Curl confirmed we have a total of two teachers, one head teacher, and one administrative assistant who also works with the preschool.

Ms. Malone inquired about the number of teachers at the School of Innovation. Mr. Watts responded that the school currently has one teacher and one counselor. Ms. Stubbeman then asked if these roles could be combined with the high school. Mr. Watts acknowledged that this is under consideration and will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Ms. Malone asked about bus drivers and monitors. Mr. Maines explained that drivers and monitors are contracted by the board to work 5 hours per day. Their 5 hours entail pre and post trip requirements, morning, mid-day, and afternoon runs. Ms. Stubbeman asked if TANK could be eliminated and start high school earlier to save money. Mr. Maines said this is a possibility and will require work on logistics.

Mr. Davis asked about the bus drivers who work after hours; for example, trips to basketball games, etc. Mr. Maines explained drivers are paid over-time once they reach the required hours to qualify for that additional pay.

Ms. Stewart was asked about the positions under her purview on the organization chart. After explaining job duties, Ms. Stewart assured the board she is willing to do whatever they suggest to keep 1st line workers employed for the children of Newport.

Regarding the finance department, Ms. Stubbeman asked Ms. Snapp if the dual role of Director of Finance and Payroll Clerk was sustainable in the long term. Ms. Snapp explained that, although she has only been handling both responsibilities for just over a month, she has been able to manage them. However, she expressed her willingness to work on restructuring the department to ensure that the workload is manageable with the current staff.

Ms. Stubbeman asked about consolidating technology roles. Mr. Watts explained we have had those conversations. We will not be replacing one position in that department due to a retirement.

Ms. Malone explained that the board hired former finance director, Tete Turner, to look over the budget in hopes no cuts will be necessary but we are preparing ourselves for the worst. The purpose for tonight's meeting is to educate ourselves so we know what positions are necessary to operate this district efficiently & effectively; giving our students the best education possible. Once we are satisfied that we have the current budget information, conversations can start if needed.

Ms. Stubbeman asked if the Director of Special Education could explain the roles and responsibilities of the employees in her department. Ms. Swanson proceeded to explain the duties of the school psychologist, district diagnostician, and the administrative assistant. Ms. Stubbeman asked if these positions are paid thru the general fund. Ms. Swanson explained that because of the rules regarding Medicaid reimbursement, salaries must come from the general fund. Reimbursements are then added back to the general fund.

Ms. Stubbeman asked Ms. Payne to review her roles and responsibilities as Chief Academic Officer for the district as well as Ms. Brown, Director of Districtwide Services. Ms. Stubbeman asked if these roles can be combined. Ms. Payne answered no because she provides curriculum-based services and Ms. Brown provides support services.

The position of Energy Manager was discussed. Mr. Maines said that he now serves in that role and thus the duties of the energy manager have been reduced as well as the stipend the board pays.

Ms. Malone questioned the difference between Instructional Assistant I and Instructional Assistant II. Ms. Snapp explained there is no difference in job duties, it just indicates the size of a school.

Mr. Curl reiterated Ms. Malone's earlier point, emphasizing the importance of the board understanding everyone's responsibilities as they await information from Mr. Turner, especially in the event that cuts become necessary. He clarified that no decisions have been made at this time. Mr. Curl also shared that both he and his children received an excellent education in Newport and the board will do everything to protect education in the district.

Ms. Stubbeman asked Ms. Stewart about the funding for the School Based Health Center. Ms. Stewart explained the district has a MOU with Christ Hospital and funding comes from the general fund. Some funding may be recouped by another department but she is unsure of that. Both students and employees have access to these services which has been a great benefit to everyone.

Before adjourning, Mr. Davis thanked everyone for coming out this evening. The dedication and patience of everyone in the district and community is deeply appreciated as we work thru this process together. Ms. Stubbeman thanked the teachers who continue to work with students daily and Mr. Watts thanked everyone for attending and said we will get thru this together.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY COVINGTON the meeting adjourned. Time: 7:38 PM

1644 - MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary