



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 6:30 PM. The meeting took place at Newport High School, 900 E. 6th Street, Newport, KY.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ramona Malone asked for a roll call. The following were present: Ramona Malone, 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

The following employees were recognized by their peers on their upcoming retirements:

Donna Reinhart – Teacher, Newport Intermediate School
Jennifer Mariani – Teacher, Newport Primary School
Irv Schulkers – Custodian, Newport High School
Greg Fenhoff – Maintenance, Districtwide
Jane Eltzroth – Teacher, Newport Intermediate School
Laura Booher – Instructional Coach, Newport Primary School
Kelly Grayson – Administrative Assistant, Central Office
Tim Grayson – Principal, Newport High School
Dennis Maines – Director Facilities, Transportation, Safe Schools, Central Office
Lisa Rizzo, Food Service Director
Kim Guffey – Food Service Manager, Newport Primary School

Julie Kaeff proudly introduced Ty' Jeanah Crossty and presented her with her high school diploma in recognition of her graduation.

Teacher and Student of the Month:

Newport Primary School – Collin Murray, Student
Newport Intermediate School – Haley Meredith, Student – Justin Dobbs, Staff
Newport High School – Allah Lewis, Student – Julia Hurst, Faculty

Kate Neikirk -

- Unified Bocce Ball team – Aydian Stachel, Kaylen Hartness, Kyle Lee, Ka'Maryia Larkins-Hutton, Aujiana Cook, Kobe Vorhees, Kayden Lynn, Damian Morales, Cameron Meredith, Enrique Agustin
- Snow Cats Ski Team – Kelsey Turner, Chad Wells, Ricky Tomlinson, Marty Varias, Zachary Howard
- Unified Track – Kayden Lynn

Stephanie Anthrop, Pam Kaising, and Madison Kaising -

- Better Speech and Hearing Month contest winners - Liam Guilkey, Breann Larken, Cristofer Coronado-Lopez, Oak Edwards

Bonnie Stacey & Dustin Hinson -

- Newport High School STLP students - Kendall Hayden, Mariyah Payne, Mikah Hawkins, Colton Bush, Alison Ramirez, and Evelyn Morales
- Newport High School SkillsUSA students – Alexis Long, Alyvia Loveless, Carlos Ramirez, and Joey Mueller
- Newport Middle School STLP students – Fable Brewer, Jefferson Marcario-Pablo, Yovani Perez-Coronado, Caleb Bush

Deirdre Murphy –

- Newport Intermediate STLP students – Frankie Dowell, Evelyn Smith, Tailor McEriane, Ellie Goldman, Blake Ashcraft, Carleigh Stewart, Christopher Dowell, Kamil Bolt, Marilyn Marcaria Avila, Mia Hambrick, and Abner Trenton

Stacey Reese –

- Newport Primary School STLP students – Zoey Reinhardt, Jolene Burchell, William Erin Hambrick, Jr., Chase Hunley

15 MINUTE BREAK TO GREET INVITED GUESTS

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Several guests signed up to address the board:

1. Brandi Raleigh – investigation into the district's finances and citizens demanding forensic audit
2. Jan Kneppshield – state of the district
3. Tricia Tobergte – history with Newport schools, fiscal integrity, and failure of the superintendent and board of education
4. Andrea Janovic – lack of fiscal oversight by the board
5. Chris Myers – TANK, staff cuts, funding for stadium
6. Jerome Bowles – commitment to stand with the district, reinforce relationships. Supt. Watts has brought in diversified staff and has tried to build on that energy.
7. Esther Fatsy – thanked the board for the work that has been done so far. There is more to do. Made recommendations for the next superintendent selection committee. Continue to fight for Newport Schools.

MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2025 REGULAR MEETING, MAY 7, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING, MAY 14, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING, MAY 15, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING AND MAY 21, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING

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

1686 – MOTION CARRIED 4-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY DAVIS the bank reconciliation for April was approved and will be filed for audit.

1687 – MOTION CARRIED 4-0

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

1688 – MOTION CARRIED 4-0

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Superintendent Watts invited Matt Atkins, Principal at NPS, and Autumn Slankard, Instructional Coach at NPS, to present to the board regarding curriculum resources for the upcoming school year.

Mr. Atkins recommended that the board consider renewing current contracts for the school's reading, writing, and math programs. He also requested the renewal of the i-Ready contract, an online assessment tool administered three times per year. i-Ready has proven to be highly effective in helping teachers identify students' needs and guide them toward proficiency and growth in both reading and math based on assessment results.

The Wonders reading program, developed by McGraw Hill, is a comprehensive K–5 English Language Arts curriculum. It supports literacy development through an integrated mix of print and digital materials. The program focuses on foundational skills, repeated readings of texts to understand author's purpose, word meaning, and text structure, writing, and vocabulary achievement. The program also aligns with educational standards, including the Common Core.

Math in Focus, distributed by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, is a K–8 mathematics curriculum. It promotes conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through a structured, visual, and hands-on approach to math instruction. Both Wonders and Math in Focus are evidence-based curriculum programs. Teachers plan collaboratively using these programs, provide consistent assessments, and are able to revise as needed.

What does it look like to use new materials? Full implementation of new programs takes about 4 years and scheduling PD for new programs now would make it nearly impossible to implement by August. Teachers would need to pilot any new programs by December before considering changes. With this information in mind, Newport Primary is asking the board to keep their current curriculum programs for the 2025-2026 SY.

Ms. Payne presented the Curriculum Department report. There were no questions.

Ms. Stewart presented the DPP report as well as the student services report. There were no questions.

Mr. Maines presented the Facilities, Transportation, and Safety report. He took a moment to clarify the misinformation regarding bus service next year. The district's busses will provide services for all students; there will be a schedule change regarding the start times in the schools but students will be provided transportation.

Ms. Swanson presented the Special Education department report. There were no questions.

Ms. Michael updated the board on the Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring program currently being piloted at the intermediate school called Game Changers. Through mentoring, training, consulting, & education, they equip children and young adults with necessary tools to make positive life changing decisions. The program has had a tremendous impact on the students so far. There is a lot of paperwork for parents to complete which slows down the process but the mentor does plan to return next year and continue the work he started this year.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel report;
2. Tentative budget 2026;
3. Renew the auditor's contract with Maddox and Associates, CPAs, Inc. for audit period 6/30/2025;
4. 25/26 salary schedules:
 - Certified
 - Classified
 - District-Wide extra service
 - Athletic extra service
 - Administrative supplemental services
5. Certified and classified staff 25/26 SY
6. Surplus items from Newport Primary School
7. Eliminate salary schedule for school technology coordinators and include all coordinators on district technology coordinator salary schedule.
8. \$16,140 stipend for athletic director duties
9. Certified Evaluation Plan reflecting changes mandated in HB 48
10. Change order #1 - NHS Stadium
11. Add 90 minutes to drivers' contracts and 30 minutes to monitors' contracts to account for the additional time required for morning and afternoon bus runs due to the elimination of TANK service.

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY DAVIS the consent agenda was approved as presented.

1689 – MOTION CARRIED 4-0

BOARD COMMENTS/CONCERNS/ UPDATES

The board will be having discussions regarding the need for a forensic audit. Ms. Malone said we hear you; meaning the public's concern about the district's financial position. The contract with Christ Hospital matter is not closed; the board has requested additional research on school-based health centers.

She admitted some mistakes have been made but how you recover defines you and the board is determined to get back on track.

Ms. Stubbeman said she appreciates everyone who came out this evening. Unfortunately, the district has been faced with a financial deficit which led to many job and program cuts for the upcoming school year. We have lost many talented teachers due to this situation but we do have so many amazing educators left.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY COVINGTON, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM

1690 – MOTION CARRIED 4-0

Chairman

Secretary