



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held at 30 W. 8th Street, Newport, KY.

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.

PRESENTATIONS

Each school recognized a student and staff member of the month.

NPS recognized Raelynn Herald as their student of the month and Kristen Edwards as the staff member of the month.

NIS recognized Andrea Ambrocio-Chun as their student of the month and Clarissa Wilson as the staff member of the month.

NHS recognized Neveah Felgar as their student of the month and the English Department as their staff members of the month – Angela Kennedy, Beth Kuhnell, and Jessica Vaught.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Theresa Walker, parent/guardian, addressed the Board regarding student behavior at the intermediate school. She encouraged parents/guardians to work collaboratively with the school to address concerns and improve the situation. Ms. Walker expressed support for the school's efforts and emphasized that parents/guardians must be part of the solution, working with administration to create a safer and more effective learning environment.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 27, 2025 REGULAR MEETING & SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 WORK SESSION

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

1730 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY DAVIS the bank reconciliation for August was approved and will be filed for audit and the invoices were approved for payment.

1731 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Mr. Atkins, Acting Superintendent, provided the Board with his monthly report.

In addition to his report, he informed the board that Newport's preschool program has received a 5-Star rating. A 5-Star rating for preschool refers to a high-quality designation within a state's tiered quality rating system. He also highlighted the success of Homecoming Week, noting that the pep rally was the best in years and that the parade and dance were equally well-received. He commended the high school for making the week such a success.

On Thursday, September 18, the high school sustained water damage that required the district to close schools. Thanks to the efforts of many staff and volunteers who cleared the library, cleaned the kitchen, and addressed other affected areas, the building was able to reopen on Friday, September 19. Damage to the electrical and fire panels was repaired by Silco, and a professional restoration team was brought in to mitigate moisture in the walls and floors. That work is still ongoing.

Mr. Atkins also provided an update on his activities related to Standard 5 (Managerial Leadership) in his professional growth plan for the 2025–2026 school year.

- Budget meetings
- Staffing meetings
- Cohort 14 New Superintendent Training in Frankfort to gain a better understanding of SEEK formula
- Collaborated with KDE, the Director of Curriculum and the high school leadership team to revise the expenditure of the remaining SIF funds
- Collaborated with the finance director on the working budget
- Collaborated with the federal program coordinator on the expenditure of Title resources
- Met with RSA Advisors to discuss potential of refinancing any of our bonds.

Ms. Malone asked about the Eleot training mentioned in the monthly update. Mr. Atkins explained this is a walk-through observation tool approved by the state. It is student centered and focuses on engagement and learning.

Autumn Slankard presented her report to the board. She mentioned since submitting her report last week that KDE has awarded a contract to the College Board to administer the SAT as the state-funded college admissions exam beginning in the spring of 2026. Newport High School will transition to using the SAT exclusively in place of the ACT. She also mentioned that the funds from the KyCL25 Grant will not be received until November; October was the original intended date of receipt.

Ms. Stubbeman asked about the Ignite GT Program. Ms. Slankard explained that this is name Dr. Hemmerle has chosen to refer to our gifted program. Dr. Hemmerle is the Gifted Coordinator at the district-level and over-sees the program. Newport is currently serving 27 identified students but have received 80 nominations. 4th graders will complete the CogAT screener in October. This is the assessment given to students to determine who qualifies for the gifted program. The lower number of identified students is due to the district's inability to hire a teacher with an endorsement in gifted education for more than a year and a half. Dr. Hemmerle will work with our gifted education teacher to support the identification of high-achieving students and implement differentiated educational programs and services designed to increase their academic growth and potential.

Mr. Davis said he was excited to see the Young Women Lead Club (YWL) as part of the after-school programming being offered at Newport High School.

Next, Ms. Slankard gave an overview of iReady. This is an online program used in reading and math to help identify student strengths and needs. The assessment is given three times a year and shows how students are progressing toward grade-level expectations. Results are reported as a grade-level band in subjects and domains as well as overall percentiles, which compare students' performance to students nationwide. iReady places students on personalized instructional pathways at their own skill level. Data is used to determine where groups or individual students need more focus.

All three schools reviewed their most recent iReady data in reading and math and presented their plans for improvement.

In reading, NPS students are performing:

5% above grade level, 11% on grade level, and 85% below grade level.

In math, NPS students are performing:

3% above grade level, 6% on grade level, and 91% below grade level.

In reading, NIS students are performing:

7% above grade level, 11% on grade level, and 82% below grade level.

In math, NIS students are performing:

2% above grade level, 6% on grade level, and 92% below grade level.

In reading, NHS (7th and 8th grade) students are performing:

12% above grade level, 11% on grade level, and 77% below grade level.

In math, NHS (7th and 8th grade) students are performing:

5% above grade level, 8% on grade level, and 88% below grade level.

District goals are:

- Students and groups at the 50th percentile
- Provide targeted instruction to address and need not in current content standards
- Alignment and celebration

Next steps:

- Goal setting for schools, grades, classes, students
- Targeted instruction of content not addressed in core instruction
- Student/teacher/administration alignment

Mr. Curl asked if there are students that are deficit in more than one domain. Ms. Slankard said yes. Ms. Stubbeman asked if we still teach science and social studies. Ms. Slankard said those subjects are still part of student's curriculum. Ms. Malone asked when the test was administered. The test was administered in August, and will be given again in December and April. Mr. Davis asked if students can take the iReady assessment at home. Ms. Slankard said no because they do not want the students to receive help.

Ms. Stewart presented her report to the board. She presented the new enrollment and attendance dashboards to the board and informed them that the dashboards are live on the district website. Her office would like to have a behavior dashboard in the near future.

The DPPs office continues to investigate residency verifications and review information to ensure accuracy in enrollment.

In her report, Ms. Stewart included the survey results from teachers on whether to return SBDM authority to our schools. She met with staff at all schools to discuss Site Based Decision Making authority as compared to the current advisory structure as each school has exited within the two-year time frame. Based on the results of the survey, she recommends:

1. Maintain the district's current governance plan while we prepare for transition;
2. Provide targeted professional development to staff on KY SBDM roles, responsibilities, and procedures;
3. Increase the role and capacity of school advisory councils to serve as preparatory structures for full SBDM councils;

4. Intent to consider formal transition back to SBDM governance at the school level prior to the end of the current school year, contingent on completion of training, policy alignment, readiness checks, and staff feedback on leadership.

Ms. Malone asked how parents will be chosen for advisory or SBDM councils? Ms. Stewart reported that stakeholders will make that decision.

Ms. Niemann presented her report to board. The 2025 parent survey results show that Newport tends to have a higher response rates in almost every area over the state average. Under new business, Ms. Niemann is asking the board to approve a letter of engagement with Ms. Teresa Combs of Fowler Bell Law for legal services for special education issues. Ms. Combs is the premier special education attorney in the state of KY. Services will not exceed \$10,000 for the 2025-2026 SY.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no old business items.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel report
2. MET Life Renewal
3. District Planning Committee
4. Working budget FY 2026
5. Purchase 2 new busses
6. District's governance plan to continue under the guidance of the Board while providing SBDM training for staff and increasing the leadership role of school advisory councils; and further direct the Superintendent/designee to present a readiness report to the Board prior to the end of the current school year so the Board may consider reinstating SBDM authority to individual schools that meet readiness criteria.
7. Hire a permanent sub at the high school
8. Letter of Engagement with Fowler Bell Law
9. New positions funded thru Title funds:
 - NHS – Behavior Intervention educator/coach
 - NHS – Behavior Intervention IA
 - NIS - .5 Interventionist
 - NIS - .5 Interventionist
 - NIS - .7 – IA – focus on targeted support and improvement GAP group in reading/math
 - NIS - .5 IA – student improvement in reading/math
 - NPS – 2 IAs – supporting student in literacy, math, closing achievement GAPS and behavior needs
 - NPS - .5 instructional resource personnel to address student need & transitions into and out of Primary

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

1732 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

BOARD COMMENTS/CONCERNS/ UPDATES

Ms. Stubbeman thanked everyone for the informative reports. Everyone's efforts are appreciated.

Mr. Curl said he is anxious to see how the iReady scores look in December after implementing the improvement plans in place.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY CURL, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

1733 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary