



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 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 Jaxx Messer as their student of the month and Jayme Powell as the staff member of the month.
- NIS recognized Lillie Reckers as their student of the month and their building custodians as their staff members of the month: Justin Dobbs, Micah Simpson, Diego Raxuleu, & Debbie Wright.
- NHS recognized Willie Messer as their student of the month and Nate Green as their staff member of the month.

Superintendent Atkins presented his Capstone Presentation. Mr. Atkins opened his presentation with a heartfelt thank you to the board of education for the opportunity to serve the district, his mentors, Scott Hawkins, Director of Executive Coaching and Mentoring from KASA and Misty Middleton, Superintendent of Bellevue Independent Schools, as well as his leadership team, and his family. The Kentucky Department of Education requires every new superintendent to undergo a superintendent training and mentoring program, which concludes with a capstone project highlighting their first year in the role. KDE assigns the Kentucky Association of School Administrators the task of performing the training and providing each first-year superintendent with a mentor. The presentation highlights the standards by which the board of education will use to evaluate a superintendent. Those standards are Strategic Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Cultural Leadership, Human Resource Leadership, Managerial Leadership, Collaborative Leadership, and Influential Leadership. Mr. Atkins shared the vision of what helped guide him thru his first year along with evidence of work for each standard listed. His vision to keep the district moving forward is:

Consistency

- Implementing high quality instructional materials to fidelity in reading and math

Coherence

- Aligning K-12 systems and establishing districtwide Professional Learning Communities
- Formalizing academic and behavior expectations K-12 to ensure a productive learning environment

Belonging

- Revising our District's Portrait of a Learner and developing a strategic plan
- Increasing teacher leadership and voice opportunities

Mr. Hawkins commended the board on hiring Matt. He said it is very evident that Matt has a heart for the community and the school district. He is humble and genuine and prioritizes prudence over expediency. Mr. Hawkins feels like the district is in very good hands with Matt's leadership skills.

Holly Macario-Avila addressed the board regarding financial assistance for several students to attend the FCCLA national competition in Washington D.C. (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America). She gave an overview of the program and highlighted awards that have been received this year by various members. Holly also noted that she is the first state officer in Newport High School history. Two members received FCCLAs highest honors, the Agnes Foster Award: Jasmine Thompson and Donovan Macario-Avila.

Next, Newport High School's Student Council presented to the board. Prior to this year, Student Council had not been an active club for several years. When asked to sponsor the group this year, Ms. Packwood agreed. She admits to being pleasantly surprised that over 30 students joined in. Their presentation included:

- Important events that took place this school year such as a Youth Mental Health Awareness Event, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, School Spirit Events, and participating in the River City Schools Student Empowerment program. This is a collaboration with Educate NKY and the River City Schools where students meet with community organizations to pursue initiatives and ideas that develop collaboration and leadership skills.
- Future Events in the planning process include: donation bags for patients at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, lunchtime sessions to reach all students, continue to improve school spirit, ongoing work with the River City Schools Empowerment program, and developing more community events.

The board commended the students for attending the meeting & doing such a fantastic job with both presentations. The board made it clear that they want to support these students so if there is a need, please let them know.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

None

MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2026 AND APRIL 15, 2026

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

1805 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

1806 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Mr. Atkins, Superintendent, provided the Board with his monthly report. In addition to a couple of other new business items, he is asking for board approval on: staffing allocations, surplus items, and the donation to FCCLA for their national competition in Washington DC. He also noted that Donovan, our student board

rep, was out this evening competing at the Campbell County track championships. Donovan wanted to share the following information with the board:

- The high school had 3 students compete at Skills USA this month, two of them placing 1st and 2nd in their events.
- This Friday all the district's STLP teams will be competing at Rupp Arena.
- This upcoming week Newport FBLA we be competing at the Galt House in hopes of qualifying for the National Leadership Conference that will be held in San Antonio, Texas.
- Newport FCCLA had two newly elected regional officers and a state officer. Tomorrow will be the regional spring meeting where they will be installed, and our two current regional officers will lead the region for the last time.
- Newport's Drama department is presenting You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown on April 30th, May 1, and May 3.
- The Senior class is selling popcorn to raise funds for senior activities.

Ms. Slankard presented her report. District priorities shifted from the assessment readiness and highlevel visioning toward active assessment administration, fiscal planning, and continued curriculum evaluation. Efforts focused heavily on overseeing SAT execution, preparing organizational frameworks for Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) testing, and participating in comprehensive spending plan reviews to ensure districtwide financial and instructional coherence. These actions continue to align with our guiding priorities of consistency, coherence, and belonging as we finalize spring testing and prepare for end-of-year transitions.

Ms. Slankard participated in an Office Hour for a Lunch and Learn with KDE and Frankfort Independent Schools to prepare for the Portrait of a Learner framework. Newport will be featured in a webinar available to district leaders across the state regarding our process. During the Office Hour, Ms. Slankard emphasized that Newport is in the beginning stages of this work, and the KDE facilitator shared that it is important for other districts to see that a relaunch is possible.

Ms. Slankard reported that she continued close coordination with Building Assessment Coordinators, actively assisting and overseeing SAT testing and accommodations at both Newport High School and Newport School of Innovation while simultaneously, holding weekly planning meetings with NIS and NHS testing teams to ensure coherence for the upcoming KSA administration

In Ms. Stewart's absence, Ms. Kaeff presented her report. Ms. Kaeff noted that she and Adam Heidrich attended the Gear Up Kentucky Convening training in Frankfort on April 15th and 16th along with our Newport High School Gear Up site coordinator, Vanessa Moore. Newport High School is the only urban Kentucky school that received funding during this cycle. During the convening, they learned about the programming and supports available to students through Gear Up. The grant award is through 2032.

Newport Schools will be partnering with OneGoal. This agency partners with Kentucky school districts to improve postsecondary readiness. Essentially, the program provides a two-year leadership series for educators to close equity gaps and support student transitions to college, technical school, or apprenticeships. There is no cost to the district for this program.

Ms. Malone asked about the Code of Conduct Revision Team. The code of conduct is the school and district guide for acceptable student behavior and discipline, revised and approved annually to keep current with law and board policy. This year, the district is actively looking for parent volunteers to be part of a revision team. A parent's perspective on acceptable conduct is vital because they see the impact of school policies at home and parental input ensures that expectations are fair, easy to follow, and effectively communicated. There are three sessions scheduled in May to complete this work.

Ms. Malone noted that working parents may not have an opportunity to participate based on the time of the meetings. Ms. Kaeff assured her that this year is a little rushed but planning for following years will look different so that more parents who do want to have input will have an opportunity to do so. Ms. Kaeff added that there will be a lot of focus on alternatives to punitive punishment. Ms. Malone said she has been hearing a lot about restorative practices and she supports this idea.

Ms. Niemann provided her report. April is recognized nationally as Autism Awareness Month. Autism continues to be one of the fastest-growing disability categories in education. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1 in 36 children in the United States is identified with autism, reflecting a significant increase over the past decade. She gave each board member a pin to wear as a visible sign of their commitment to students and individuals with autism.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no old business items.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel report
2. Hire emergency certified substitute teachers for the 26/27 SY.
3. Surplus table skirts – last used in 2015-2016
4. 26/27 final staffing allocations
5. Contribute \$2,100 to FCCLA National Competition in Washington DC (registration fees, city tour, and KY Trading Pins)

On MOTION BY CURL AND SECONDED BY STUBBEMAN consent agenda items 1-5 were approved.

1807 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

BOARD COMMENTS/CONCERNS/ UPDATES

Mr. Davis said he was happy to see the students presenting tonight. They did an excellent job. Ms. Stubbeman said she appreciates all the work happening in our schools.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY STUBBEMAN AND SECONDED BY CURL, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 PM

1808 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary