

Board Notes — August 10, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Education of Newton Unified School District 373 convened in open and public session at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2026, in the Board of Education meeting room located at 308 E 1st, Newton, KS.

Members Present: Bob Diepenbrock, Heidi Hoskinson, Ian Long, Mallory Morton, Melissa Schreiber, Ericia Stevens

Members Absent: Rachel McDaniel

Others Present: Superintendent Fred Van Ranken, Assistant Superintendent Joe Sample, Director of Business Matt Morford, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk Joni Jantz, and Director of Communications Carly Stavola

1. Opening of Meeting

Ian Long called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ian Long led the Pledge of Allegiance.

— Adopt the agenda as presented.

2. Presentations/Reports

Bond Update

Gary Holler and Michael Meyer from Schaefer gave an overview of the school bond renovations and new construction as well as a project timeline.

USD 373 Employee Service Awards

The district recognized those staff that have 5-year work anniversaries in August 2026.

5 Years

Donna Sweeden: NR Aide
Nancy Thomas: HCSEC Special Ed Teacher
Mark Unruh: USD 373 Substitute
Michele Van Buren: SS Aide
Beulah "Faye" Dahna: SC Aide
Veronica Decker: SC Interventionist
Kari Dickson: Cooper Para
Jacqueline Flood: SC Teacher
Shelby Friesen: NHS Teacher
Sarah Fryhover: OA Aide
Jacklyn Gerk: CMS Teacher
Page Hiebert: CMS Teacher
Christina Janzen: Cooper Para
Daphne Keese: HCSEC SLP
Bryant Klusener: SF Teacher
Mandy Knoll: NHS Teacher
Amy Koop: HCSEC SLP
Myriah Nicholson: SB Media Ctr Specialist
Marilyn Noll: HCSEC Para
Sara Ott: CMS Teacher
Rene Park: USD 373 Substitute
Jennifer Parrott: HCSEC Para
Justin Schneider: CMS Teacher
Joshua McClure: SF Special Ed Teacher

Gabriel Libel: Maintenance
Herica Ramirez: Cooper Family Consultant
Madeleine Riley: NHS Teacher

10 Years

Felicitas Cantu: SF Para
Michael Doerksen: Athletic Worker
Adriana Grajeda: SB Admin Assistant
Tami Hiebert: HCSEC Para
Emily Lumpkins: SS Teacher
Katelin McEachern: SC Teacher
Sean Monaghan: NHS Teacher
Kelsi Morrison: Food Service
Cheryl Nash: NR Teacher
Charity Potter: NHS Admin Assistant
Frederick Schmidt: NHS Teacher
Toshia Widener: NR Teacher
Kaitlin Williams: SB Nurse
Bethanie Wedel: NR Teacher

15 Years

Shawna Adkins: SC Teacher
Amy Vogt: HCSEC Para
Lisa Golubski: USD 373 Substitute

20 Years

Laurie Behymer: OA Teacher
Ronda Dugan: CMS Teacher
Trisha Fast: SS Teacher
Sara Friesen-Guhr: SS Social Worker
Johannah Hein: HCSEC Special Ed Teacher
Tony Hein: NHS Teacher

25 Years

Elizabeth Gunn: NHS Teacher
Greg Bergman: Band Teacher
Nicholas Sisson: Rule 10 Coach
Amber Warsnak: SPED Assistant Director

3. Comments from the Public

Carol Sue Stayrook Hobbs shared a Newton High graduate success story.

4. Consent Agenda

The board voted to:

- Approve the July 27, 2026 minutes as presented.
- Approve the bills as presented.
- Approve the August 10, 2026 Personnel Report as presented.

Last Name	F. Name	Position	Location	Effect. Date	Hire	Resign/ Term
Krueger	Brenda	Sp. Ed. Para	NR	5/21/2026		x
Thiessen	Sharilyn	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	5/22/2026		x
Wharton	Joanne	Reg. Ed. Aide	NHS	8/3/2026		x
Casey	Tina	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	5/21/2026		x
Wells	Alexus	Sp. Ed. Para	NHS	5/21/2026		x
Dills	Sierra	Sp. Ed. Para	HCSEC	5/20/2026		x
Phillips	Stephanie	Food Service	CMS	7/8/2026		x
Lewis	Ernie	Bus Driver	Transportation	5/21/2026		x
Fitzjarrald	Lacretia	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	8/6/2026		x
Nun	Morgan	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/7/2026		x
Probasco	Heather	ELL/At Risk Teacher	NHS	8/12/2026	x	
Schmidt	Jace	Asst. Boys Swim Coach	NHS	11/1/2026	x	
Martin	Mitchell	Assist MS Boys Bball Coach	CMS	8/6/2026	x	
Meier	Haley	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/6/2026	x	
Rivera	Delmy Escalante	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/6/2026	x	
Anderson	Elizabeth	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/5/2026	x	
Harpool	Brittany	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/5/2026	x	
Johnston	Hannah	Sp. Ed. Para	NR	8/5/2026	x	
Thrift	Hannah	Sp. Ed. Para	SC	8/5/2026	x	
Waltner	Mallory	Sp. Ed. Para	Cooper	8/5/2026	x	
Musselwhite	Kimberly	Sp. Ed. Para	Cooper	8/5/2026	x	
Chen	Yangyang	Sp. Ed. Para	Cooper	8/5/2026	x	
Underwood	Allee	Sp. Ed. Para	SC	8/5/2026	x	
Breon	Tasha	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/5/2026	x	
Nun	Morgan	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/5/2026	x	

Haskew	Heather	Reg. Ed. Aide	Cooper	8/5/2026	x	
Barron	Amanda	Sp. Ed. Para	HCSEC	8/5/2026	x	
Shryock	Barbara	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/5/2026	x	
Flores	Shari	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/5/2026	x	
Thacker	Tyler	Bus Aide	Transportation	8/5/2026	x	
Fowler	Teri	Bus Driver	Transportation	8/5/2026	x	
Schwarz	Kathleen	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	8/6/2026	x	
McBeth	Sydney	Nutrition Program Coord.	NHS	8/17/2026	x	
Meridith	Laura	Sp. Ed. Para	HCSEC	5/21/2026	x	
Gormley	Lance	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	7/29/2026	x	
Kaul	Timothy	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	7/29/2026	x	
Last Name	F. Name	Position	Location	Effect. Date	Change of Assignment/Transfer	
Rogers	Janel	Sp. Ed. Para	NR	8/3/2026	P/T Social Worker @ NR	
Hunninghake	Corbin	3rd Grade Teacher	SS	8/5/2026	Add Head Cross XC Coach@CMS	
Entz	Schyler	2nd Grade Teacher	SB	8/5/2026	Add Asst Volleyball Coach@CMS	
Kennell	Brian	History Teacher	NHS	8/7/2026	Add Asst Pep Club Sponsor@NHS	
Coppinger	Kaliana	Bus Driver	Transportation	8/6/2026	Add Reg. Ed. Aide @ SC	
Thaw	Toria	Science Teacher	CMS	8/5/2026	Add Asst Softball Coach @ NHS	
Burke	John	PE Teacher/Coach	SS	8/5/2026	Add Asst MS Track Coach @ CMS	
Blincoe	Edward	Sp. Ed. Teacher	NHS	8/5/2026	Add Asst MS Track Coach @ CMS	
Llamas	Lee	ELL Aide/Bus Aide	SB	8/6/2026	Remove Bus Aide Only	
Eason	Anne	Sp. Ed. Para	Cooper	8/6/2026	Add Sub Bus Drvr & Sub Bus Aide	
Bigham	Tess	Sp. Ed. Para	SS	8/6/2026	From 8.25 hrs/wk to 12.5 hrs/wk	
Unruh	Mark	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	8/6/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ HCSEC	
Laswell	Lori	Reg. Ed. Aide	SC	8/6/2026	Reg. Ed. Aide @ SS	
Yoder	Jim	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	8/6/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ SC	
Meier	Christi	Food Service	CMS	8/6/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ CMS	
Hein	Tony	PE Teacher/Coach	NHS	8/1/2026	Remove Asst Pep Club Sponsor Only	
Charrier-Willis	Renee	Media Specialist	NR	8/6/2026	Reg. Ed. Aide @ NR	
Kerns	Ruth	Food Service	CMS	8/6/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ CMS	
Pearson	Bernie	Girls Basketball Coach	NHS	8/6/2026	Add ISS Aide @ NHS	
Ratt	Esther	Reg. Ed. Aide	OA	8/6/2026	Railer Rise Aide @ NR	
Ives	Amy	Vocal Teacher	NHS	8/1/2026	Add Senior Class Sponsor	

Resignation/Termination/Transfer/Change of Assignment shall be deemed accepted upon approval of this report by the Board of Education.

- Approve the food service yearly program renewal as presented.
- Approve the 3-year renewal of GoGuardian as presented.
- Approve the technology purchases as presented.
- Approve the disposal of instructional materials, old/unused textbooks, and other items in the district during the 2026-27 school year.

5. Old Business

The board voted to:

- Approve the Chisholm Middle School Staff and Student Handbooks, Opportunity Staff and Student Handbooks, and the NHS Staff Handbook for 2026-27 as presented.
- Approve the Cooper Family and Staff Handbooks for 2026-27 as presented.
- Approve revisions to policies DFE, EBBE, EE, IDAD, IHF, JB, JBC, JBCB, JBCC, JGFGA, JGFGAA, JGFGBA, JQKA and JRB as presented.

Update of HB 2299

Superintendent Van Ranken provided a brief update on HB2299 and Online Activities. A draft of the social media and communication platforms was provided with a recommendation for approval at the August 24 board meeting.

6. New Business

The board voted to:

- Approve the gift requests as presented.

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
GAF	Newton High School CTE	Equipment	\$3,866.00
GAF	Newton High School CTE	CTE Scholarship program	\$5,567.00
Newton Medical Center	Newton High School CTE CNA/ EMT Students	Scrubs for student clinicals	\$2,500.00
Northview Developmental Services	Harvey County Special Education Cooperative	Donation to special ed classroom teachers	\$45,000.00

- Approve the contracts with Simpson Construction Services as presented.
- Ratify the 2026-2027 Negotiated Agreement between the Newton Education Association and USD 373 Board of Education.

7. Reports

BOE Committee Reports

Ian reported on the Senate District 31 School Board Advisory Committee that Senator Stephen Owens is facilitating. These monthly meetings will be a time for discussion to gain clarification on legislative action in regards to public schools and to strengthen the relationship between public schools and the Legislature.

8. Closing of Meeting

Board Comments

Comments included:

- Welcome students and families to the new school year.
- Thank you to the Chamber for hosting the new teacher breakfast
- Families should be checking school calendars for back-to-school events.
- Appreciated the Welcome Back convocation on August 7.
- In light of the new cell phone policy, it was recommended to read the book *The Anxious Generation* which explores childhood in the digital age.
- Appreciated the bond update by Schaefer.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn at 8:16 p.m.

Background information on agenda items may be found in BoardDocs at:
<https://go.boarddocs.com/ks/usd373/Board.nsf/Public>