

Board Notes — September 14, 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, September 14, 2026, in the Board of Education meeting room located at 308 E 1st, Newton, KS.

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

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

Procedural: A. Call to Order

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. Public Hearings

Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing

President Long opened the RNR Hearing. Following no comments, the hearing was closed.

— Adopt by roll call vote Resolution No. 09142026 to exceed the Revenue Neutral Rate.

2026-2027 Budget Hearing

President Long opened the Budget Hearing. Following no comments, the hearing was closed.

3. Presentations/Reports

USD 373 Employee Service Awards

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

- Rebecca Cooper: District-Wide Substitute - 5 years
- Gregory Wood: Project Search Para - 5 years
- Nikketa Mellington: NHS Para - 5 years
- Chelsi Entz: NR Teacher - 10 years
- Lee Llamas: SB ELL Aide - 10 years
- Tricia Lopez: Cooper Admin Assistant - 10 years
- Jessica Olsen: HCSEC Aide - 10 years

4. Comments from the Public

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

5. Consent Agenda

The board voted to:

- Approve the August 24, 2026 minutes as presented.
- Approve the bills as presented.

- Approve the June 2026 Report of Funds.
- Approve the September 14, 2026 Personnel Report as presented.

Last Name	F Name	Position	Location	Effect Date	Hire	Resignation/ Term
Bell	Emanon	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/4/2026		x
Harpool	Brittany	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/28/2026		x
Bigham	Tess	Sp. Ed. Para	SS	9/18/2026		x
Hudson	Tiffany	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/3/2026		x
Hernandez	Rita	1st Shift Custodian	NHS	9/25/2026		x
Hernandez	Judy	1st Shift Custodian	SF	9/25/2026		x
Webb	Melissa	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/3/2026	x	
Craft	Kylie	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/11/2026	x	
Brown	Kiona	Asst Debate/Forensics	NHS	9/11/2026	x	
Longman	Kyndall	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/11/2026	x	
Coultas	Jennifer	Bus Aide	Transportation	9/10/2026	x	
Ray	Micheal	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/10/2026	x	
Hockett	Ana	Reg. Ed. Aide	SB	9/10/2026	x	
Unruh	Emilia	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/10/2026	x	
Reifschneider	Robin	Reg. Ed. Aide	St. Mary's	9/8/2026	x	
Ball	Savannah	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	9/3/2026	x	
Leep	Macy	Sp. Ed. Para	HCSEC	9/3/2026	x	
Rickert	Kendra	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/2/2026	x	
Sutton	Sienna	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	9/2/2026	x	
Johnson	James	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/1/2026	x	
Thompson	Nathan	Bus Aide	Transportation	9/1/2026	x	
Starwalt	Joseph	Sp. Ed. Para	NHS	9/1/2026	x	
Nichols	Jane	Consultant	DO	8/31/2026	x	
Hamilton	Paris	Sp. Ed. Para	NHS	8/27/2026	x	
Neufeld	Tyler	Asst Boys BBall Coach	CMS	8/26/2026	x	
Schmidt	Kimberly	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	8/25/2026	x	
Larraga	Isabella	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	8/25/2026	x	
Last Name	F Name	Position	Location	Effect Date	Change of Assignment/Transfer	
Hershberger	Madison	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	8/12/2026	From 33.75 hrs/wk to 20.11 hrs/wk	
Voth	Rita	Reg. Ed. Aide	OA	8/24/2026	From 35 hrs/wk to 32.5 hrs/wk	
Pauls	Lane	Asst Boys BBall Coach	NHS	8/25/2026	Add Reg. Ed Aide @ NHS	
Curry II	Torrie	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	8/6/2026	From 11.17 hrs/wk to 33 hrs/wk	
Boston-Wedel	Mary	Sp. Ed. Para	HCSEC	8/27/2026	From 3.5 hrs/day to 5.17 hrs/day	
Savage	Tena	Food Service Accts Recv	NHS	8/3/2026	From 40 hrs/wk to 35 hrs/wk	
Negrete	Olivia	Food Service	SB	8/10/2026	5 hrs/day to 7.5 hrs/day	
Peugh	Jessica	Food Service	NR	9/1/2026	Food Service @ NHS	
Valle	Esmeralda	ELL Aide	SF	8/12/2026	From 35 hrs/wk to 33.75 hrs/wk	

Probasco	Heather	ELL/At Risk Teacher	NHS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Event Worker
Scheuermann	Victoria	6th Grade Teacher	SF	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Event Worker
Pearson	Bearnie	ISS Supervisor	NHS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Event Worker
Vanderweg	Nancy	Administrative Assistant	SF	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Event Worker
Nattier	Sadie	Sp. Ed. Para	NR	8/6/2026	From 33.75 hrs/wk to 20 hrs/wk
Jarrell	Carmen	Careers Teacher	NHS	9/1/2026	Add Head MS Cheer Coach
Eason	Anne	Sp. Ed. Para	Cooper	9/10/2026	Add Van Driver @ Transportation
Kerns	Ruth	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Event Worker
Hein	Tony	PE Teacher/Coach	NHS	8/3/2026	Add Freshman Class Sponsor@NHS

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

6. Old Business

The board voted to:

- Approve the 2026-2027 budget as presented. It should be noted in the minutes that as a part of this process the board was included in the needs assessment and state assessment review as follows: The needs assessments were provided and evaluated by the USD 373 board of education. The USD 373 board of education used the needs assessment as part of the process to approve the 2026-2027 USD 373 budget.
- Approve the LOB percentage resolution for 2026-27.
- Approve the revisions to IDAD Title I Programs Regulation, JBCB Foster Care Students Regulation and JDDC Bully Plan and Form as presented.
- Approve the revised 2026-2027 Classified Wage Rates as presented.

7. New Business

The board voted to:

- Approve the gift requests as presented.

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
SMART Technologies	South Breeze Elementary	Smartboard and stand for classroom	\$2,000.00
Excel Industries LLC	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$500.00
Hesston College	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$500.00
Shield AI	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$4,000.00
Moridge Manufacturing Inc.	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$1,000.00
Blaser Swisslube	Newton High School Machining Prog.	Donation of coolant used in CNC machines	\$3,970.00

Gifts Under \$500: For Information Only

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
Bud & Steve Auto Service	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$100.00
O'Reilly Auto Parts	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$100.00
Millennium Machine and Tool	Newton High School Machining Program	Material for machining projects	\$300.00
Faith and Life Bookstore	Newton High School RaileRobotics	Donation for travel and supplies	\$100.00

- Approve director and administrative wage rates as presented.

— Approve the Innovative Assessment Solutions invoice in the amount of \$22,400.

Wage Study

Superintendent Van Ranken shared an informational video of the wage analysis that was conducted over last spring and summer.

Newton High School Out-of-State Trips

Newton High School provided information on anticipated out-of-state trips for the 2026-27 school year. No funds are requested and this item was for information only.

8. Reports

BOE Committee Reports

Melissa recently attended the HCSEC board meeting. Heidi attended the Interagency Coordinating Council and gave an update of the meeting. Mallory attended the first Head Start Policy Council meeting for this year and gave an update.

Building Reports

Building reports for Cooper Early Education Center, Northridge Elementary, Slate Creek Elementary, South Breeze Elementary, and Sunset Elementary were provided to the board for information.

Department Reports

The following reports were provided to the board: Instructional Services Report, Business Office Report, HR/Payroll September Report, Facilities/Maintenance Report, and Harvey County Special Education Cooperative.

Board Comments

Comments included:

- Inquiry about a superintendent wage analysis similar to what was completed on other positions. Superintendent Van Ranken suggested the district complete another wage analysis in about three years to check and see where the district is on wages.
- Reminder that September is Deaf Awareness and Suicide Awareness month.
- Heidi challenged board members to make a donation to the Expendable Endowment fund and that she would match donations made by board members.
- Reminder to parents that this Wednesday is an early release day and encouraged attendance at student activities.
- Bob recently attended the regional KASB legislative session.
- Ian attended the Senate District 31 advisory meeting hosted by Halstead, he also attended the KASB Leadership for Tomorrow conference, visiting Hugoton and Liberal, on September 10-11.
- Reminder of Board Retreat on September 21.
- Reminder that board members can have their picture taken at McKinley on September 18 for their 26-27 photo ID badge.

9. Executive Session

Convene in Executive Session - Personnel

— Move that the board convene in executive session for the purpose of discussing issues concerning an employee pursuant to the KOMA exception regarding personnel matters of non-elected personnel and that the board return to the open meeting in this room at 7:40 p.m. Motion amended to invite Matt Morford if needed.

— Move that the board convene in executive session for the purpose of discussing issues concerning an employee pursuant to the KOMA exception regarding personnel matters of non-elected personnel and that the board return to the open meeting in this room at 9:15 p.m. Matt Morford will be invited if needed.

Matt Morford was invited into the session at 9:05 p.m.

— Move that the board convene in executive session for the purpose of discussing issues concerning an employee pursuant to the KOMA exception regarding personnel matters of non-elected personnel and that the board return to the open meeting in this room at 9:35 p.m. Matt Morford was invited to the session.

Matt Morford left the session at 9:30 p.m.

10. Closing of Meeting

Adjournment

Move to adjourn at 9:37 p.m.

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