

Board Notes — September 28, 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 28, 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, Melissa Schreiber, Ericia Stevens

Members Absent: Mallory Morton

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. Presentations/Reports

Kansas Teacher of Year Nominees

The Board recognized Kirstyn Weibert, Santa Fe 5/6 Center teacher, and Kim Tate, Chisholm Middle School teacher, as 2028 KTOY nominees.

Bond Update

Representatives from Simpson Construction (CMAR provider) and Schaefer Architecture provided an update on the bond covering renovation and new construction plans, summary of cost estimates and a timeline for the projects.

CTE Program Update

Diane Moser and eight students presented information on CTE classes and pathways at Newton High School.

3. Comments from the Public

No comments.

4. 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 8:10 p.m. Fred Van Ranken and Brandon Simmelink are invited to join the executive session.

— 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 8:25 p.m. Fred Van Ranken, Brandon Simmelink and Julia Rojas are invited to join the executive session.

Julia Rojas left the executive session at 8:14 p.m.

Fred Van Ranken and Brandon Simmelink left the executive session at 8:17 p.m.

— Move to approve not waiving the liquidated damages as requested by Julia Rojas regarding her resignation.

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 8:41 p.m.

5. Consent Agenda

The board voted to:

- Approve the September 14 & 21, 2026 minutes as presented.
- Approve the bills as presented.
- Approve the September 28, 2026 Personnel Report as presented.

Last Name	First Name	Position	Location	Effective Date	Hire	Resignation/ Termination
Bedlington	Lori	1st Shift Custodian	NHS	10/13/2026		x
Abrego Delcid	Nelly	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/11/2026		x
Ray	Micheal	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/15/2026		x
Flores	Shari	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	10/8/2026		x
Reynolds	Dakota	Reg. Ed. Aide	OA	9/8/2026		x
Shafto	Lavonda	Substitute Teacher	Sped@Halstead	9/25/2026	x	
Harper	Dante	Asst Girls Wrest Coach	NHS	11/1/2026	x	
Riddick	Victoria	Asst MS Cheer Coach	CMS	9/22/2026	x	
Vogt	Gabriella	Reg. Ed. Aide	SB	9/22/2026	x	
Saltmarsh	Eric	Groundskeeper	Service Center	9/22/2026	x	
Molina Pina	Teresa	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/22/2026	x	
Solorio Negrete	Jesus	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/22/2026	x	
Hudson	Tiffany	1st Shift Custodian	SF	9/23/2026	x	
Roux	Rhonda	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/21/2026	x	
Franz	Gayle	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	9/21/2026	x	
Castillo	Araceli	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/17/2026	x	
Harthorn	Grace	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/17/2026	x	
Auman	Erin	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/17/2026	x	
Meza Quinonez	Alma	Bus Aide	Transportation	9/17/2026	x	
Shook	Crystal	Reg. Ed. Aide	SS	9/17/2026	x	
Johnson	Jane	Substitute Tchr	District-Wide	9/16/2026	x	

Hodge	Adah	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/15/2026	x	
Poe	Ashley	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/15/2026	x	
Last Name	First Name	Position	Location	Effective Date	Change of Assignment/Transfer	
Decker	Isabella	Psychologist	Cooper	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Vancuren	Brent	5th Gr ELA Tchr	SF	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Fryhover	Kerry	7-12 Teacher	OA	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Morlan	Theresa	Math Teacher	NHS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Cook	Christina	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Cantu	Felicitas	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Harvey	Mara	Sp. Ed. Teacher	NHS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Gonzalez	Chywonna	Substitute Tchr	District-Wide	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Hanchett	Chloe	Sp. Ed. Para	SS	9/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker	
Maldonado-Galdamez	Maribel	Food Service	CMS	8/17/2026	From 4.5 hrs/day to 7 hrs/day	

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

6. Old Business

Retreat Feedback and Next Steps

President Long asked board members to share their thoughts on the 9/21/26 Board Retreat that was led by Dr. Britton Hart from KASB. In general, the board felt it was time well spent and look forward to meeting again.

7. New Business

Gifts and Grants

— Approve the gift requests as presented.

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
Millenium Machine & Tool	Newton High School CTE	Funds for CTE Scholarships	\$1,500.00
Precision Pallet	Newton High School CTE	Lumber for woods/carpentry classes	\$1,500.00

Grants Under \$20,000: For Information Only

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
Central Kansas Community Foundation	Parents as Teachers	2026 KidsFUND Grant	\$2,500.00

Discussion Around KSBOE's Draft Technology Policy

Superintendent Van Ranken provided information on the draft Technology Policy from the recent Kansas State Board of Education meeting. District administration will be working on editing the policy to meet the needs of our district.

8. Reports

BOE Committee Reports

No reports.

Building Reports

Building reports for Santa Fe 5/6 Center, Chisholm Middle School, Newton High School, Opportunity Academy and USD 373 Athletics were provided to the board for information.

9. Closing of Meeting

Board Comments

Comments included:

- appreciation for the CTE presentation and students who shared, KTOY recognitions and bond presentation.
- appreciation for the homecoming week activities and enthusiasm within our community for all events. Thank you to Carly Stavola and Jen Lehman for their work on the parade.
- reminder of the Endowment giving match challenge from Heidi Hoskinson. The deadline for match giving is Wednesday.
- President Long presented challenge coins to each board member to reflect on the discussion from the Board Retreat.
- Melissa Schreiber asked to add a discussion item to the October 12 board agenda on unifying the railer mascot across all buildings.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn at 9:26 p.m.

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