

Board Notes — October 12, 2026

A meeting of the Newton Unified School District 373 Board of Education convened in open and public session at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 12, 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. Presentations/Reports

City of Newton

Zach McHattan from the City of Newton provided information on projects the Reinvestment Housing Incentive District (RHID) is working on.

USD 373 Employee Service Awards

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

- Dawn Archer - 5 years, HR Assistant
- Nancy Gonzalez Rojo - 5 years, Paraeducator
- James Janzen - 5 years, Substitute
- Patrice Olais - 5 years, Coach
- Hannah Schaffer - 5 years, Substitute
- Garrett Schulte - 5 years, Sub Bus Driver
- John Arreguin Jr - 10 years, Food Service Driver

3. Comments from the Public

Carol Sue Stayrook Hobbs shared about the positive experience Prairy has with a high school student working there.

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 7:30 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 7:45 p.m.

5. Consent Agenda

The board voted to:

- Approve the September 28 and October 1, 2026 minutes as presented.
- Approve the bills as presented.
- Approve the July 2026 Report of Funds.
- Approve the October 12, 2026 Personnel Report as presented.

Last Name	F Name	Position	Location	Effect.Date	Hire	Resignation/ Term
Solorio-Negrete	Jesus	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	9/25/2026		x
Finley	Di'Anna	Food Service Substitute	District-Wide	2/13/2026		x
Jones	Lisa	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	9/21/2026		x
Meza Quinonez	Alma	Bus Aide	Transportation	10/1/2026		x
Rojas	Julia	Nurse	Cooper	10/23/2026		x
Southern	Tammy	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	10/6/2026		x
Ling	Jennifer	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	10/8/2026	x	
Stark	Kyle	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	10/8/2026	x	
Ross	Ashley	Bus Aide	Transportation	10/6/2026	x	
Gomez Perez	Aurora	1st Shift Custodian	NHS	10/2/2026	x	
Clayton	Amber	1st Shift Custodian	NHS	9/29/2026	x	
Bisping	Josie	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	9/29/2026	x	
Last Name	F Name	Position	Location	Effect. Date	Change of Assignment/Transfer	
Garcia Servin	Maria	Food Service	NHS	9/29/2026	From 31.25 hrs/wk to 27.5 hrs/wk	
Jackson	Katerina	Reg. Ed. Aide	SB	9/15/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ SB	
Eason	Anne	Sp. Ed. Para/Van Driver	Cooper	9/28/2026	Remove Van Driver	
Martindale	Jewel	Sp. Ed. Para	OA	10/6/2026	Sp. Ed. Para @ CMS	
Thompson	Nathan	Bus Aide/Sub Van Dr	Transportation	10/7/2026	From 4 hrs/day to 6 hrs/day	
Jones	Christina	Counselor	CMS	10/12/2026	Add Asst Girls BBall Coach @ CMS	
Blackwell	Narissa	Rule 10 Coach	CMS	11/1/2026	Add Asst Girls BBall Coach @ NHS	

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

6. Old Business

There was no old business.

7. New Business

Gifts and Grants

- Approve the gift requests as presented.

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
Dustin Remme State Farm	Santa Fe and Chisholm Science Olympiad	Assist with Science Olympiad supplies, tools, kits & chemicals	\$500.00
Frances Gatz	Newton High School CTE	Assist with CTE Scholarships	\$10,000.00
Bridges, Inc.	Newton High School CTE	Assist with CTE Scholarships	\$500.00
AGCO Corporation	Newton High School CTE	Assist with CTE Scholarships	\$500.00
Newton Medical Ctr	Newton High School CTE	Assist with CTE Scholarships	\$1,000.00
Bridges Construction	Newton High School FFA	Assist with National FFA Convention	\$500.00
Lehman Harvesting	Newton High School FFA	Assist with National FFA Convention	\$500.00

Harvey County Farm Bureau	Newton High School FFA	Assist with National FFA Convention	\$1,200.00
---------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------

Gifts Under \$500: For Information Only

Donation From	To Building/Dept	Description	Value/Amt
ISP Technologies Inc.	Newton High School	T-shirts for Railaires	\$400.00

Railer Mascot Discussion

Board members discussed the possibility of the district adopting the Railer as the official mascot for all schools. The board agreed on gathering information from school site councils and administrators, getting an estimate on costs and looking into the history of the high school mascot. The board will continue this discussion at their January board meeting.

Preliminary Enrollment Numbers for Current School Year

Superintendent Van Ranken and Matt Morford provided information on preliminary enrollment data for 2026-27 and how it relates to state funding. Heidi Hoskinson asked for a talking points handout to be used when having conversations within our community.

Newton High School Out-of-State Trip

Newton High School provided information on an out-of-state trip for the RaileRobotics team October 23-24, 2026.

Professional Development Evaluations – Aug-Sept 2026

Evaluations for Professional Development days from August-September 2026 were shared with the Board of Education for information.

8. Reports

BOE Committee Reports

Rachel attended the Head Start Policy Council last week and reported that they are at full enrollment and are in need of hygiene products, clothing donations, and volunteers. The Cooper character walk is scheduled for October 29 and their winter program will be on December 8.

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

Department reports from Instructional Services, HR/Payroll, Business Services and Maintenance/Facilities were provided to the board for information.

9. Closing of Meeting

Board Comments

Comments included:

- Heidi gave a shoutout to fellow board members for donations to the Expendable Endowment fund of just under \$600.00.

- Encouraged attendance at student activities, excited for the large crowd at football games.
- Taste of Newton is this Thursday and there are several student groups that will be selling food.
- Gave reminder of the campaigning rules in regards to board and staff members.
- Board members should continue to be advocates for our school district and students, be well informed of issues/topics at the state legislative level.

Action: B. Adjournment

Move to adjourn at 8:39 p.m.

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