Board Notes — November 9, 2026

A work session of the Newton Unified School District 373 Board of Education convened in open and public session at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, November 9, 2026, in the Board of Education meeting room located at 308 E 1st, Newton, KS. The regular meeting of the Board of Education began at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Bob Diepenbrock, Heidi Hoskinson, Ian Long, Ericia Stevens

Members Absent: Rachel McDaniel, Mallory Morton, Melissa Schreiber

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 6:03 p.m.
Ian Long led the Pledge of Allegiance.
— Adopt the agenda as presented.

Conversation with Legislators

Representative Avery Anderson and Senator Stephen Owens attended the meeting for a question and answer time with board members. Representative Mike King was not able to attend.

Rachel McDaniel arrived at 6:46 p.m.

The work session ended at 6:58 p.m.

2. Opening of Regular Meeting

Ian Long called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
— Adopt the agenda as presented.

3. Presentations/Reports

Student Recognitions

The board recognized the following students who were state qualifiers/medalists: Naomi Koontz in golf and Maggie Kepley in cross country.

USD 373 Employee Service Awards

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

- Amanda Graham - 5 years, Cooper Admin Assistant
- Carly Stavola - 5 years, Communications Director
- Kara Schmidt - 20 years, Library Media Specialist

Simpson CMAR Bid Package Presentation

Josh Vogel with Simpson Construction presented information related to the bid packages for Cooper Early Education Center, elementary storm shelter upgrades and Chisholm Middle School renovations.

4. Comments from the Public

Newton High students thanked the board for supporting RaileRobotics and invited everyone to their 25th Anniversary Celebration and Scrimmage on November 21 from 12:30-3:00 at the high school.
Carol Sue Stayrook Hobbs shared a Newton High graduate success story.

5. Consent Agenda

The board voted to:
— Approve the October 26, 2026 minutes as presented.
— Approve the bills as presented.
— Approve the November 9, 2026 Personnel Report as presented.

Last Name	First Name	Position	Location	Effective Date	Hire	Resignation/ Termination
Holmes	Carol	Reg. Ed. Aide	SC	12/16/2026		x
Fowler	Teri	Bus Driver	Transportation	11/6/2026		x
Fistler	Adalie	Sp. Ed. Para	SS	11/5/2026	x	
Connell	Kathryn	2nd Shift Custodian	CMS	11/5/2026	x	
Mickens	Megan	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	11/5/2026	x	
Rogers	Nancy	Substitute Teacher	District-Wide	11/4/2026	x	
Montgomery	Anastasia	Sp. Ed. Para	SS	11/3/2026	x	
Porter	Brett	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	11/3/2026	x	
Girtz	David	2nd Shift Custodian	NHS	11/3/2026	x	
Soriano	Miranda	Nurse	Cooper	11/9/2026	x	
Leaird	Kenzie	1st Shift Custodian	NHS	10/29/2026	x	

Last Name	First Name	Position	Location	Effective Date	Change of Assignment/Transfer
Bennett	Reese	Sp. Ed. Para	SB	11/1/2026	Add Asst. Boys Basketball Coach @ NHS
Klusener	Bryant	PE Teacher/Coach	SF	11/1/2026	Resign Asst. Baseball Coach @ NHS
Lane	Loren	Sp. Ed. Para	CMS	11/9/2026	Permanent Building Substitute @ CMS
Blackwell	Narissa	Rule 10 Coach	NHS	1/4/2027	IR Sp. Ed. Teacher @ SF
Schulte	Garrett	Substitute Bus Driver	Transportation	11/4/2026	Bus Driver @ Transportation
Durham	Taylor	Asst. Baseball/Asst. Football Coach	NHS	11/4/2026	Resign Asst. Baseball Coach @ NHS
Schauf	Molly	FACS Teacher	NHS	11/1/2026	Add Winter Concessions Manager @ NHS
Botterweck	Krystyna	Rule 10 Coach	NHS	11/1/2026	Add Winter Concessions Manager @ NHS
Yount	Rebecca	Reg. Ed. Aide	SS	11/1/2026	Add Athletic Worker
Kaul	Timothy	Sp. Ed. Para	SF	11/9/2026	Add Bus Aide @ Transportation

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

— Approve the renewal quote of the student information system from Computer Information Concepts as presented.

6. Old Business

Mallory Morton joined the meeting by phone at 7:37 p.m.

Approve Superintendent Contract

— Approve the superintendent's contract as presented.

Mallory Morton left the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

7. New Business
The board voted to:
— Approve the CMAR bids for Cooper Early Education Center for the sum of $1,797,281, Newton Elementary Schools for the sum of $1,348,945, and Chisholm Middle School for the sum of $4,621,594 as presented in the exhibits within this agenda item.
— Approve early graduation requests for Newton High School as presented.

Grant Acknowledgement: Grants Under $20,000 (For Information Only)
The Parents As Teachers and Infant Toddler Programs at Cooper Early Education Center received a grant in the amount of $3,000 from the Central Kansas Community Foundation. The dollars will be used for education tools and student experiences.

2027-28 Capital Outlay Requests
Matt Morford shared about the capital outlay process, available funding, and the committee review process. Final funding recommendations will be presented at the December board meeting.

New Course Proposals
Dr. Sample presented the proposed new course offerings for the 2027–2028 school year at the middle and high school levels as well as information on the review process. Administration will be seeking approval at the next board meeting.

Benchmark Assessment Data Review
Dr. Sample presented results from the first quarter benchmark assessments administered through Innovative Assessment Solutions (IAS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

8. Reports
BOE Committee Reports
Heidi Hoskinson reported on a recent ICC meeting she attended.
Ericia Stevens welcomed the new Technology Director, Chuck Peters, and looks forward to getting technology meetings scheduled again.
Ian Long continues to meet with the Senate District 31 School Board Advisory Committee led by Senator Owens.
Superintendent Van Ranken reported that special education student numbers were discussed at the last Special Education Coop board meeting.

Building Reports
Building reports for Cooper Early Education Center, Northridge Elementary, Slate Creek Elementary, South Breeze Elementary, Santa Fe 5/6 Center, Newton High School, and USD 373 Athletics were provided to the board for information.

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

9. Closing of Meeting
Board Comments
Comments included:
- Heidi would like to get another work session scheduled to continue the discussion from the September 21 board retreat.
- Appreciation was given to Superintendent Van Ranken for his work in the district and continuing as superintendent for 2027-28.
- Three board members attended the KASB annual conference November 6-8 and would like to see the entire board team attend next year. There are good sessions to attend and a lot of learning taking place.
- Ian reminded board members of the annual KASB Day at the Statehouse event scheduled for February 11, 2027.

Adjournment
Move to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.

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