

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, April 4, 2017 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Lincoln Parish School Board Office, 410 South Farmerville Street, Ruston, Louisiana. Members present were Ms. Debbie Abrahm, Mr. Otha Anders, Mr. Michael Barmore, Ms. Lisa Best, Mr. David Ferguson, Mr. Danny Hancock, Ms. Lynda Henderson, Mr. Trott Hunt, Mr. George Mack, Jr., Mr. Joe Mitcham, and Ms. Susan Wiley.

Mr. Curtis Dowling was absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order, and the invocation was given by Ricky Edmiston, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services. Ms. Best led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Mr. Mitcham welcomed guests to the meeting.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the agenda as printed.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on March 7, 2017, as distributed.

Cathi Cox-Boniol, Lincoln ACHIEVE Coordinator, was delighted to inform the Board that another Ruston High School scholar had been selected as a National Merit Finalist. She summarized the steps the student had taken prior to making it to the top 0.5% of seniors in the nation. Ms. Cox-Boniol had the privilege of introducing Hannah Scheaffer and presented a plaque to her in recognition of being selected as a National Merit Finalist. She congratulated the student,

wished her well as she continued in the competition, and had her make comments to the Board and introduce her guests.

Miss Scheaffer thanked the board for the recognition and the opportunities awarded to her. She was pleased to introduce her parents.

Mr. Mitcham applauded her and her achievements.

The Board was reminded by George Murphy, Business Manager, that each year schools are allocated monies from the 1979 sales tax fund to purchase instructional supplies. These amounts are distributed on a per pupil basis through the business department. He proposed the same per pupil allocations from the previous year, but noted the total amount was slightly lower than last year because of a decrease in students. The \$74,504.50 distribution Mr. Murphy recommended was:

Art	PK-12-	\$1.75 per student
Physical Education	PK-12	- \$1.75 per student
Library Supplies	PK-5	- \$1.25 per student
	6-12	- \$1.75 per student
Music	PK-5	- \$1.25 per student
	6-12	- \$1.75 per student
Magazines & Newspapers	PK-6	- \$3.00 per student
	7-12	- \$3.25 per student
Science	PK-6	- \$1.50 per student
	7-8	- \$3.00 per student
	9-12	- \$4.50 per student

Upon a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Hancock, the Board unanimously voted to approve the distribution of \$74,504.50 from 1979 sales tax monies for instructional supply money as mentioned above.

The multi-parish consortium was authorized to bid out food, paper, and supplies, but

they do not handle equipment; therefore, George Murphy requested permission to advertise and accept the lowest bids for purchases of equipment for the school food service department for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

Upon a motion by Mr. Barmore, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to approve the advertisement for and the acceptance of the lowest bids meeting specifications on purchases of equipment for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

In order to comply with state law, Ricky Edmiston voiced the annual request for permission to advertise for bids in order to purchase duplicating paper, toilet tissue, dust mops, gasoline, and diesel for the next school year.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to advertise for bids for the purchase of duplicating paper, toilet tissue, dust mops, gasoline, and diesel for 2017-2018.

Debbie Pender, Technology Coordinator, said a Request for Proposal, a form 470, had been filed and certified with the USAC's Schools and Libraries Division. Within the request for services for the 2017-2018 year, the school system was seeking to expand and/or upgrade areas within the schools' present wireless network. Those services included adding additional wireless access points, related components, switches, and racks to accommodate the switches. Services were also being requested for basic maintenance of the internal connections. She noted that proposals would be due April 25, and that the awarding of contracts would be contingent upon approval of E-RATE funding.

The subsequent personnel items were shared by Dr. Doris Lewis, Director of Human

Resources:

1. Retirement of the following effective May 26, 2017, unless otherwise noted:

Susan Norred, teacher at Choudrant Elementary;

Nicky Weaver, social studies/business teacher at Choudrant High;

Maryjane Hawley, gifted teacher at Cypress Springs, effective June 6, 2017;

Lisa Hixon, teacher at Cypress Springs;

Mary Lee, special education teacher at Dubach School, effective June 16, 2017;

Debbie Cramer, P.E. teacher at I. A. Lewis;

Bobbi Conner, math teacher at Ruston Junior High; and

Leska Nelson, special education teacher at Simsboro High.

2. Resignation of the following effective May 26, 2017, unless noted otherwise:

Jane Wallace, science teacher at Choudrant High;

LaFreda Best, paraprofessional at Cypress Springs, effective March 20, 2017;

Kenya Morris, teacher at Glen View;

Renee Laird, reading interventionist at Glen View;

Daniel Flores, special education teacher at Howard School;

Shawn Talley, science/coach at Ruston Junior High;

Karen Dowling, teacher at Simsboro Elementary;

Jessica Falke, ELA teacher at Ruston High;

Erin Simpson, math teacher at Ruston High; and

Tricia Van Winkle, math teacher at Ruston High.

3. Retirement of Brenda Bolton, custodian at Cypress Springs, effective June 1, 2017.
4. Resignation of Larry Drayton, craftsman in the maintenance department, effective March 22, 2017.
5. Retirement of Wilma Pruitt, food service technician at Cypress Springs, effective May 25, 2017.

March 2017 sales tax collections totaled \$1,460,101 reported George Murphy. That was a 1.27% decrease compared to the same month last year. Year-to-date the fund was down \$3.7 million or 22.83%. Audit recoveries for the year were \$198,385, which was more than the total collections for 2015-2016. Although March was the twelfth straight month showing a decline in sales taxes, he said the decrease was quite a bit less than it had been.

In his financial update for the month ending February 2017, Mr. Murphy communicated that the Total Fund Balance was down \$1.1 million compared to February 2016. Once again there was no deficit spending. He reported that the MFP mid-year adjustment would go down another \$2.7 million the next four months of the year.

For the month ending February 2017, George Murphy reported that the health plan had a \$402,960 loss for the month and a \$78,086 loss year-to-date. A meeting was recently held with David Charpentier, and a separate plan for retirees was discussed. He will report to the Board later in the year on the same.

Copies of four revised policies were again distributed. Mary Null recommended approval of the revisions.

Upon a motion by Mr. Barmore, seconded by Ms. Abraham, the Board unanimously voted to approve revisions to *GBD-Employment of Personnel*, *JBCB-Admission of Non-Resident Students*, *JBCD-Student Transfer and Withdrawal*, and *JBCE-Public School Choice*.

Three bids were opened at 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2017, for the outlying schools' access control/security work. In James Payton's absence, Ricky Edmiston said bidders were: Cody Phillips Construction of Ruston, Ragan Builders of West Monroe, and Triad Builders of Ruston. After reviewing the bids ranging from \$538,000.00 to \$720,000.00, the administration recommended acceptance of the lowest bid from Triad Builders.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to accept the bid of \$538,000.00 submitted by Triad Builders and award them as the contractor for the access control/security project at Choudrant Elementary, Choudrant High, Dubach School, and Simsboro School.

Due to the growing student numbers in the two most western city elementary schools, Glen View and Cypress Springs, the administration felt that a change in school zone boundaries was needed. Those two schools were about to reach building capacity with numbers almost double those in the two eastern schools, Hillcrest and Ruston Elementary. Superintendent Mike Milstead noted that making a slight change in the boundary line could more equally distribute the students. He proposed, effective with the 2017-2018 school year, revising the lines having students in kindergarten through fifth grade who live north of I-20 and east of Highway 167 attend Hillcrest and Ruston Elementary, and those who live north of I-20 and west of Highway 167 attend Glen View and Cypress Springs. According to GIS data, there were approximately 180

students currently attending school who would be affected if the change was made. If approved by the Board, the parents whose children would be affected would receive letters in the next few weeks advising them of the boundary changes and giving them the option to change schools or stay at their current school through the highest grade taught there. Maps of the *current* school attendance zones and the *proposed* attendance zones were shown.

President Mitcham read a portion of a statement based on advice from Attorney Bob Hammonds that stated, “Race is not and cannot be a consideration related to school makeup and under no circumstances should even be discussed as the basis for any of the Board’s decision making. The decision to redraw the attendance zones for the 4 city elementary schools is strictly a facility-capacity issue. With 1135 students at Glen View and Cypress Springs, additional classrooms would have to be added to both schools in the near future if changes aren’t made; however, the Ruston Elementary/Cypress Springs district could handle growing from their current number of students, 607, to 772.”

Following brief questions from the public, upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Ferguson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the following to become effective at the start of the 2017-2018 school year:

1. The revision to the school attendance lines for the four city elementary schools having those students who live north of I-20 and east of Highway 167 attend Hillcrest and Ruston Elementary and those who live north of I-20 and west of Highway 167 attend Glen View and Cypress Springs; and
2. Allowing students affected by the above change to finish the highest grade at the school they currently attend if their parents so desire.

Because of the vital role of school bus drivers, lunchroom workers, custodians,

secretaries, clerical personnel, teacher aides, bus aides, maintenance workers, paraprofessionals and others in the efficient operation of the school system, Ricky Edmiston recommended that the Board adopt a Resolution designating April 24-28, 2017, as Support Personnel Week.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Mack, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the following:

RESOLUTION

That the Lincoln Parish School Board designate the week of April 24-28, 2017, as Support Personnel Week in Lincoln Parish and copies of this Resolution be sent to each school in Lincoln Parish and also made a part of the official minutes of the Lincoln Parish School Board.

Sales tax collections have decreased significantly during the fiscal year through February; however, George Murphy believes the decrease will not continue to be sustained. Funds were available to fund the May salary supplement at the same level as last year, \$5,325 to certified and \$2,663 to support employees.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Hancock, the Board unanimously voted to approve the payment of salary supplement checks on May 26, 2017, in the amounts of \$5,325 for certified staff and \$2,663 for support staff.

Mary Null asked the Board to study revisions to the JBCE – *Public School Choice* policy following the repeal of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Formal action will be to be taken at the May meeting.

In a Report of the Superintendent, Mr. Milstead:

1. Said more and more policy changes will probably be coming down the wire as NCLB is replaced with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

2. Noted that a Tier 3 Personal Financial Disclosure Statement was included in packets. They are due May 15.
3. Announced a FEMA grant was awarded that will help with the cost of generators for the schools and at the bus barn, maintenance shop, and Central Office. That project should be completed within the year at a cost of \$216,535 of which \$162,400 will be paid by FEMA.
4. Reminded board members of the April 29 date for three tax millage renewals in the Consolidated School District No. 1. He has been speaking at all of the schools and to community groups in an effort to inform. The approximate \$8 million the millages bring in is crucial to the school system.
5. Voiced that renovations to the restrooms at Dubach School will be added to the project consisting of renovations to the restrooms at Ruston Junior High and the replacement of the auditorium ceiling at Ruston High School. Although the latter will be paid for with remaining 2013 bond issue money, the Dubach restrooms' renovations will be paid from the Dubach Maintenance & Operation fund.
6. Communicated that he and some of the principals had recently met with Judge Tommy Rogers, District Attorney John Belton, and Assistant District Attorney Laurie James in an attempt to curtail tardiness and absenteeism at the elementary schools. They are formulating plans to combat the problems.
7. Invited everyone to view Ruston High School's eco-car that will be featured at Railroad Park on Saturday.
8. Declared that a meeting was scheduled with the Ruston-Lincoln Chamber of Commerce on April 28 to get ideas on how to improve the district and make things better. Following that meeting, he plans to meet with teachers, parents, and students. He said he had recently heard a presentation by a school that he plans to visit in the future, which had added 30 days to their calendar. He feels like that might be a viable option for the voluntary year-round school, which he hopes has a magnet component and offers dance, music, drama, and visual arts. His goal is to be ready to open the year-round school in August 2018.
9. Summarized the high points of the Mayor's plan for an Athletic Complex south of town and the benefits to the school system. In addition, he mentioned that the Board might be asked to contribute to the project, but the value to the school system would be worth several millions of dollars.

After comments from two board members, upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President