

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, November 1, 2016 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, November 1, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at the Lincoln Parish School Board, 410 South Farmerville Street, Ruston, Louisiana. Members present were Ms. Debbie Abraham, Mr. Otha Anders, Mr. Michael Barmore, Ms. Lisa Best, Mr. David Ferguson, Mr. Danny Hancock, Ms. Lynda Henderson, Mr. Trott Hunt, Mr. Joe Mitcham, and Ms. Susan Wiley.

Mr. Curtis Dowling and Mr. George Mack, Jr., were absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order and welcomed guests. Mr. Hunt gave the invocation, and Ms. Wiley led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

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

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on October 4, 2016.

Three policy revisions had been proposed at the last meeting. Mary Null, Assistant Superintendent, asked the Board to make a decision regarding revisions to:

GAAA – Equal Employment Opportunity;
JAA – Equal Education Opportunities; and
JCDAF – Bullying and Hazing.

Upon a motion by Mr. Barmore, seconded by Ms. Henderson, the Board unanimously voted to approve revisions to the following policies: *GAAA – Equal Employment Opportunity, JAA – Equal Education Opportunities, and JCDAF – Bullying and Hazing.*

The series 2010 Choudrant District General Obligation Bonds were refunding candidates based on current interest rates according to Grant Schlueter, Bond Attorney with Foley

& Judell. He distributed a two-page handout that dealt with the refinancing. Mr. Schlueter explained the process involved in refinancing them at a lower interest rate (from up to 4.125% to 2.14%) without extending the maturity date; it would simply reduce the amount that property tax payers would pay each year and would not produce any additional funds for the school system. If approved by the Board, he estimated savings to property tax payers after all costs on the 2010 bonds of over \$285,000. Since 2012 in refinancings undertaken by the Lincoln Parish School Board, a grand total of savings to property tax payers after all costs and including the 2010 Choudrant bonds was over \$1,949,000. Mr. Schlueter asked the Board to approve a resolution providing for the issuance of \$5,595,000 of General Obligation School Refunding Bonds for the Choudrant School District.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted to approve the resolution giving preliminary approval to the issuance of \$5,595,000 of General Obligation School Refunding Bonds, of Choudrant School District No. 6 of the Parish of Lincoln, State of Louisiana; prescribing the form, fixing the details and providing for the rights of the owners thereof; providing for the payment of the principal of and interest on such bonds and the application of the proceeds thereof to the refunding of certain bonds of said School District; and providing for other matters in connection therewith.

Mr. Schlueter did want to note that the AA- bond rating by Standard and Poor's, which was higher than most school boards' in the state and earned by the school system's maintenance of a good fund balance, was what translated into the low interest rates and savings for the property tax payers in Lincoln Parish.

Business Manager, George Murphy, communicated that the almost \$2 million in savings to the tax payers was a direct result of Grant Schlueter's efforts and work.

Mrs. Null had six more policies that had been recommended for revision. She asked members to study the following policies until the December meeting: DJE – *Purchasing*, EBBH – *Use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED)*, GAEAA – *Sexual Harassment*, GBA – *Contract and Compensation*, GBN – *Dismissal of Employees*, and IDDF – *Education of Students with Exceptionalities*.

A public announcement of the Notice of Public Meeting was required in order for the Board to adopt on December 6, 2016, a resolution calling an election on April 29, 2017, for the renewal of ad valorem taxes. George Murphy read the following public announcement of the Notice of Public Meeting:

Notice is hereby given that at its meeting to be held on Tuesday, December 6, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at the Parish School Board Office, 410 S. Farmerville Street, Ruston, Louisiana, the Parish School Board of the Parish of Lincoln, State of Louisiana, plans to consider adopting a resolution ordering and calling an election to be held within Consolidated School District No. 1 of the Parish of Lincoln, State of Louisiana, to authorize the renewal of ad valorem taxes.

Director of Human Resources, Dr. Doris Lewis, continued with a personnel report.

She communicated the:

1. Resignation of the following:

Shavonne Garner-Price, Title I Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, effective November 5, 2016;

Lisa Harris, teacher at Ruston Elementary, effective October 10, 2016; and

Becky Sutherland, teacher at Ruston Elementary, effective October 31, 2016.

2. Point of Reference/Transfer of Sunny Mitchell from special education to regular education at Ruston Elementary, effective October 31, 2016, replacing Becky Sutherland who resigned.

3. Employment of the following:

Rhonda Thomas, special education teacher at Ruston Elementary, effective October 31, 2016, replacing Sunny Mitchell who transferred; and

Lauren Prescott, Spanish teacher at Ruston High, effective October 24, 2016, replacing Victoria DeLaCalle who transferred.

Sales tax collections for the month ending October 31, 2016, were \$1,477,753 which was down 30.47% compared to the same month last year and 29.36% year-to-date, according to George Murphy. After only four months, the collections were down \$2.4 million. Reserves will be relied upon until sales tax collections stabilize. Recovered through audits was \$4,052, which was down 53% year-to-date.

Moving on to the September 2016 financial update, Mr. Murphy said the only surprise was how much sales taxes had dropped during the period. The Total Fund Balance was still \$38.7 million.

George Murphy noted the self-insured health care fund had a really tough month. It was down \$1.1 million for the month of September 2016, but up \$50,000 year-to-date. He called attention to the Net Change – Estimated Claims IBNR (Incurred But Not Reported) of \$860,000 that was the main reason for the change.

In a construction update, James Payton, New Project Coordinator, narrated pictures on the screen and reported that:

1. The asphalt parking lot at Choudrant looked good. There were a few items that need to be fixed, but it's something to be proud of.
2. Substantial completion on the south end of the construction at Ruston Junior High had been delayed because the contractor had trouble with a sub-contractor on the delivery of interior doors; delivery date was set for November 21. Work had been done on the outside, and the greenhouse was up. A covered walkway was nearing completion. On the north end, they were in the process of installing the floor in the gym.
3. A roof had been placed on the New Tech classrooms at Ruston High, and they were in the process of blocking the interior and exterior. Electrical and plumbing work was also being done; however they hadn't breached the wall to the other part of the classrooms. Storefronts and window and door frames

would be put in. Finally, it would be bricked. There should be no problem getting the bricks, and some had already been delivered.

4. Interior blocking on both the RHS girls' and boys' soccer facilities was nearly finished. Fire walls were being installed. Composition roof shingles were scheduled to be put on later in the week. He noted two bricked columns were part of a gateway memorial to the late T. L. James and his family who donated the land for the stadium and the football field. For the boys' facility, the electrical contractor did run the underground service from the pole to the building.
5. Ceramic tile work was ongoing on the Spirit Building at RHS. The big delay there was the bricks. The contractor said blonde bricks were only made by a few plants, and there was a backlog on production. He hoped some bricks would be delivered later in the week.
6. The RHS freshman locker room was ready for the foam portion of the mansard roof. He hoped within a week the roof would be completed.
7. The new parking lot at RHS was money well spent, in his opinion. It was almost full every day and was very beneficial. The City of Ruston had graciously installed two 400 watt halogen lights on both ends, which was especially good for parents picking up students at night after athletic events.

In a Report of the Superintendent, Mr. Milstead said:

1. Johnathan Newton, from the Department of Justice, will be visiting the schools on November 14 to verify the final numbers that had been submitted. He complimented Ms. Null on the work she had done on the desegregation suit and asked her to share.

Mary Null summarized a small portion of what the four city elementary principals had been doing in the quest for the school system to be declared unitary. Numerous lists, information, and documents had been sent to Washington over the last few years. She thanked Lisa Mangum who had helped with the data.

Mr. Milstead said hopefully this time next year it would be a non-issue and decisions for the future of the school system could be made. The Board's deseg attorney offered to take some of the administrators to court on the day the Judge was to rule; it would be a great day.

2. He and James Payton had met with Architect Mike Walpole about the Capital Outlay Plan following the last meeting of the Board. They were trying to determine the most efficient way to prioritize and manage the projects. He hopes to hear from FEMA soon regarding reimbursement for the generators and to be able to shift approximately \$300,000 for them from year 1 and

replace it with another project.

3. At the October BESE meeting, they approved year-long residencies for all student teachers. He reiterated the benefits of having student teachers in the classrooms for an entire school year instead of a quarter or a semester. In addition, some grant money would be available. Lincoln was way ahead as it was in its third year of the Believe and Prepare program. He was very thankful to the State of Louisiana and Louisiana Tech University.
4. Mike Walpole should have plans completed in January for security upgrades for the outlying schools. The goal is for the upgrades to be done at Dubach School, Choudrant Elementary, Choudrant High, and Simsboro School in the summer of 2017.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned

at 6:30 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President