

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION

Tuesday, December 1, 2015 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, December 1, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. at the Lincoln Parish School Board, 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, Mr. Trott Hunt, Mr. George Mack, Jr., Mr. Joe Mitcham, and Ms. Susan Wiley.

Mr. Curtis Dowling and Ms. Lynda Henderson were absent.

President Anders called the meeting to order, and Mr. Mitcham gave the invocation. Ms. Abrahm led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag followed by Mr. Anders' welcome to board members, staff, media, agenda participants, and visitors.

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

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on November 3, 2015, as distributed.

In her STAR Reading report, Lisa Mangum, Reading Recovery Coach, provided a brief overview of data from the intervention program. She noted that many of the first graders reading at the lowest levels have made great gains; however, the goal is to have 85% to 90% of them reading at mid-first-grade level by the end of their 20 weeks in February. Ms. Mangum was very pleased to report

that 42 students in 7 schools already had an average gain of 4.7 levels and had read in excess of 6,000 books since the beginning of the program. She was very excited.

Dr. Doris Lewis, Director of Human Resources, communicated the following personnel changes:

1. Retirement of transportation secretary at the bus barn, Cherri Barmore, effective June 30, 2016.
2. Resignation of the following effective November 29, 2015, unless otherwise noted:

Britton Kilpatrick, math teacher at Ruston High;

Krystal Phillips, defacto resignation effective November 2, 2015, as science teacher at Simsboro High; and

Dana Tilley, math teacher at Simsboro High.

3. Retirement of Patsy Dade, custodian at Choudrant High, effective November 10, 2015.

Sales tax collections for November 2015 were down over \$330,000 compared to the same month last year, but compared to two years ago the collections were higher than any month. November 2014 collections were the highest collections of the year. Considering that, it was a good month, and the collections were still up \$2.7 million compared to last year. "It's a record year," communicated George Murphy, Business Manager. Recoveries through audits for the month of November were down 94% and 37% year-to-date. He told the Board that \$759,228 was collected in the '67 and '79 sales tax fund, and \$911,072 in the '93 and '00 fund.

In his financial update for October 2015, Mr. Murphy noted the school system was having a really good year financially. Comparing the Total Fund Balance from October 2015 with October 2014

showed an excess of \$6.1 million.

George Murphy said the health care fund was down \$160,320 for the month of October 2015 and over \$1 million year-to-date. Recently approved changes to the health care plan will start January 1, 2016.

A construction update was the next item on the agenda. James Payton, Transportation Coordinator, communicated that there was not a whole lot of work left on the track project at Choudrant High School. The repairs had been made to the four areas where it was breached, but the asphalt had not been replaced where it was cut. Weather had certainly been a factor on that project. He asked Paul Riley, Engineer, to explain further.

He began with the good news that the remaining work could all be done at the same time. With two or three weeks of good weather, the project could be close to completion. Major items remaining were some painting on the building, the stone parking lot, and irrigation and sod in some areas. In the third week of December, rubber and glue are to be placed on the track. Bleachers are to be placed and fencing installed next week. A new fence was included in a change order to be considered later in the meeting. He believes they were successful repairing the damaged areas. Thursday or Friday hot mix should be laid.

Mr. Payton moved on to Choudrant Elementary. Their new basketball court was finished.

Safety tiles and playground equipment had been installed at all of the other elementary schools. That project was part of

the playground improvements included in the Capital Improvements Plan proposed by former Superintendent Danny Bell. Canopies were scheduled to be installed on some of the pads the latter part of the week.

Much work had been completed at Hillcrest with the AC system in the gym, library, corridor in the connecting halls, and drainage work. Remaining work was on the 5-classroom extension. Mr. Payton asked Architect Mike Walpole to elaborate.

Mr. Walpole said the roof was in the process of being installed and blocks were being laid. He anticipated a late spring completion.

At Ruston Elementary, a large amount of work had been done on the 2-classroom addition extension, playground, parking lot, and roof work according to James Payton. Their storage building needs to be completed and bricked.

Mike Walpole noted that block work was almost finished on the Ruston Elementary project, which was part of the Hillcrest and I. A. Lewis project. That job was actually three to four weeks ahead of the Hillcrest project. They have had no major issues, and he anticipated being finished in the spring.

James Payton reported that a tremendous amount of drainage work had been done at I. A. Lewis along with a new drive way, car line pick up, basketball court, new roof on the gym and what was left of the 9 full-sized classrooms, 2 ½-sized classrooms, and toilets.

The good news according to Mr. Walpole, was that even with

the recent rains in the past few months the drainage issues seem to be solved. Although there were no big issues to report, the large project was a long way from being finished; he believes that will occur in the summer.

Weather had surely been an issue at Ruston Junior High as well according to Mr. Payton. Plans are to build a south addition with 2 art classrooms, 2 family and consumer science classrooms, cooking lab, sewing lab, one auxiliary classroom, ag classroom, and a shop. On the north end, the girls' half gym will be enlarged and locker facilities will be added for boys, girls' softball and soccer. In addition, some bleachers will be added in the athletic complex north of that and roof work will be done on the main building.

Mike Walpole said ongoing issues with the flat connecting corridors should be alleviated with the insertion of a pitched roof.

Work was nearing completion on the Ruston High baseball complex. In fact, Mr. Walpole believed it would be ready for Substantial Completion documents to be approved and signed at the next meeting of the board. Triad should be completely finished with the project by the end of the year.

At Glen View, James Payton said they were basically finished with the new 3-classroom addition and carport on the car line pickup. A sidewalk will be extended to the playground after a portable building is moved.

Mike Walpole said because of the throw or swing distance required for code, a large area was required for the new swings.

Safety tiles were down, and the playground project was complete at Cypress Springs per Mr. Payton.

Playground equipment and three different safety pads were installed at Simsboro; one will have picnic tables and a cover according to James Payton.

Mr. Payton noted that at Dubach School playground equipment was fully functional and being used.

Things were a little different at Lincoln Parish Early Childhood Center reported Mr. Payton. Their playground equipment was ordered especially for the special education students and will be movable. In addition, a 4' fence will be installed to contain the students and the equipment in the play area. It will also be covered by a canopy.

At the November meeting, the revision of eight policies, *ABCF-Removal from Office*, *GAK-Personnel Records*, *GAMFA-Employee Communicable Diseases*, *GBRIA-Personal Leave*, *IDCJ-Supplemental Educational Services*, *II-Testing Program*, *JBD-Student Absences and Excuses*, and *JGCC-Student Communicable Diseases*, and the addition of two new policies, *GBRIJ-Leave without Pay* and *JGFH-Student Identification*, were proposed by Mary Null, Assistant Superintendent. She asked board members to approve those policy changes.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to approve the revision of: *ABCF-Removal from Office*, *GAK-Personnel Records*, *GAMFA-Employee Communicable Diseases*, *GBRIA-Personal Leave*, *IDCJ-Supplemental Educational*

Services, II-Testing Program, JBD-Student Absences and Excuses, and JGCC-Student Communicable Diseases, and the addition of GBRIJ-Leave without Pay and JGFH-Student Identification.

The administration at Choudrant High School requested a chain link fence to separate the softball complex from the new track facility. James Payton presented change order #4 on that project adding the same with a cost of \$2,690.77, but said no additional time would be needed.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to approve change order #4 adding \$2,690.77 to the Choudrant High School track project.

In an attempt to make the schools as safe as reasonably possible, the administration felt the non-Ruston School District #1 schools (Choudrant Elementary, Choudrant High, Dubach School, and Simsboro School) would benefit from similar security upgrades as the just-completed ones in the Ruston School District #1 schools. Superintendent Milstead recommended securing the services of Architect Mike Walpole who would handle the following phases: schematic design, design development, construction document, bidding, and construction.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hunt, seconded by Mr. Mack, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to enter into a contract with Architect Mike Walpole for security improvements at Choudrant Elementary, Choudrant High, Dubach School, and Simsboro School.

Board members are required to receive six continuing education hours *annually* because of Act 705 of the 2010 legislative

session. An additional responsibility had been imposed by revised statute 43:1170, requiring elected officials to receive a minimum of one hour of education and training on the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act during each *term* of office. Finally, a press release giving the training status of each member must be published in the official journal each year. Mr. Milstead asked for permission to publish the board members' 2015 training hours; they all met or exceeded the minimum requisite.

Upon a motion by Ms. Wiley, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to enter board members' 2015 training certificates into the official minutes of the Board.

Two additional policies were being recommended for revision. Ms. Null asked board members to study the following until the next meeting at which time a vote would be taken: *GAMEA-Alcohol and Drug Testing - General Employees* and *JDD-Suspension*.

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

1. A memo from him was included in packets with suggested meeting date and time changes for the January and February meetings. The changes had been verbally approved by the President and Vice President. In order to receive an update on the desegregation suit from Attorney Bob Hammonds, he proposed changing the January 5 meeting to January 4. Because a second board meeting didn't seem necessary in February, but to allow the viewing of a STAR reading session, he suggested changing the time of the February 2 meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. and moving it from the Central Office to Glen View Elementary.
2. He is considering adding interventionists, similar to those working with the STAR reading program, to the lower performing schools to help struggling first grade students. They could

possibly receive help with math, language, science, and social studies. He and the Federal Programs Director have discussed the possibility of adding 3 - 4 additional people next year and paying them with federal funds.

3. Training is ongoing in Lincoln Parish with new teachers, principals, and aspiring principals. In fact, he is currently meeting about an hour each month with principals who are working their way through the book *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*. He feels very positive about the learning that is taking place and the opportunity to share. Their next book to study will be *The Twenty-One Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* by John Maxwell.

Another part of the administration's concerted effort to develop leaders in the school system, a Leadership Academy has been established. He asked Lisa Bastion, Chief Academic Officer, to be responsible for it and to give a brief report on it and the new teacher book study.

Ms. Bastion reported that the Leadership Academy was also going well. They meet about 1.5 hours each month with sessions that are very specific to Lincoln Parish. She believes it is very worthwhile, and she's getting a lot of positive feedback.

For the 33 new teachers hired this year with 2 years or less of teaching experience, a 1 hour book study is being done each month with all grade levels. They are studying Todd Whittaker's and Annette Breaux's *Seven Simple Secrets*. The new teachers seem to be getting very practical information from their sessions with Sherry Boyd, Lisa Mangum, Lillie Williams-Hearne, and her.

After brief comments from President Anders and following a motion by Mr. Best, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Otha L. Anders, President

