

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD  
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION  
Tuesday, September 6, 2016 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 6, 2016, 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. Mike Barmore, Ms. Lisa Best, Mr. Curtis Dowling, Mr. David Ferguson, Mr. Danny Hancock, Ms. Lynda Henderson, Mr. George Mack, Jr., Mr. Joe Mitcham, and Ms. Susan Wiley.

Mr. Trott Hunt was absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order, and Mr. Curtis Dowling gave the invocation. Ms. Lynda Henderson led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Mr. Mitcham welcomed those in attendance.

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. Hancock, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on August 2, 2016, as submitted.

Representatives Patrick Jefferson, District 11, and Rob Shadoin, District 12, told the Board that there was one Regular Session and two Extraordinary Sessions for the Louisiana Legislature and newly-elected Governor John Bel Edwards in 2016. They began the First Extraordinary Session on February 14, 2016, and it ended on March 9, 2016. In December 2015, they thought there was a \$497 million budget deficit, but in reality it was a \$947 million deficit. Some people believed revenue measures should be considered, others clamored for cuts, and others for overhauling the entire budget. The next session started on March 14 at which time no fiscal matters could be addressed – although budgetary issues did pervade everything. On June 6, they adjourned from the

Regular Session at 6:00 p.m. At 6:35 p.m. they began the Second Extraordinary Session. About \$1.5 billion was raised in the First Special Session and about \$500 million was cut. At the insistence of some of the leadership in the House, all of the revenue measures had a sunset provision, making them expire on June 30, 2018. In the Second Extraordinary Session, a little over \$257 million was raised to address fiscal year 16-17. If diligent fiscal reform is not done in the 2017 Legislative Session, an even bigger problem will occur. They said it's even more important for their constituents to stay in touch and up-to-date on the issues. Lines have been drawn and loyalties to political parties are becoming more of a norm. Although the men were frustrated, they are both thankful for the privilege to serve, are committed to addressing the challenges and making progress, and pledged to do their best for the people in their parishes and the entire State of Louisiana. They thanked the Lincoln Parish School Board for their hard work and being in the forefront and invited board members to come down and attend a session next year.

The Finance Committee met prior to the start of the Regular Session at 5:45 p.m. Chairperson, Lisa Best, said the Business Manager presented the proposed budget to the committee. She shared the Committee's recommendation to adopt the proposed budget for 2016-2017 and asked George Murphy to summarize it for the Board.

Prior to that, President Mitcham declared a time of public hearing and said there would be a time coming for comments on the proposed budget.

Mr. George Murphy:

Called attention to Exhibit "A" that showed a projected deficit fund balance of \$284,335. He used conservative estimates of revenues and expenditures in preparing the budget, but had a difficult time determining how much sales tax revenue to include. He ended up budgeting 10% less than last year, but said it may have to be larger. Pretty adequate reserves are being kept. It is a challenging year with the large MFP cut, and Mr. Murphy reiterated that a \$4 million cut is expected next year. He expected to end the 16-17 fiscal year with a \$37.7 million ending fund balance.

President Mitcham thanked the entire Business Department for the work that went into the preparation of the budget.

The Board unanimously voted by roll call to adopt the 2016-2017 proposed budget as presented, grant permission for the administration to amend the budget as needed throughout the year, and bring a final revised budget to the board for approval at year end.

The school system experienced a very good opening of school for 16-17, reported Mary Null, Assistant Superintendent. Much planning and work was done during the summer, and she believes that was the main reason for the smooth opening. Currently, compared to October 1, 2015, the district had 393 fewer students; 42 of Lincoln's students and another 351 of the new charter school's. Of the 351 students at the charter school, the district lost 39 more students to the charter school through 15-16. She reminded board members that the official MFP count is done on October 1 each year, and these decreased numbers will affect the MFP allotment/payment. The school system has 6,002 students without about 300 pre-k students who don't count for MFP purposes.

A personnel report was the next item on the agenda. Dr. Doris Lewis, Human Resources Director, voiced the following:

1. Resignation of the following:

Rexie Roberts, special education teacher at Choudrant High, effective July 26, 2016;

Robbie Burnham, special education paraprofessional at Cypress Springs, effective August 1, 2016;

Jessica (Tolar) Bradshaw, secretary/bookkeeper at I. A. Lewis, effective July 28, 2016;

Chaunce Davison, social studies teacher at I. A. Lewis, effective August 4, 2016;

Defacto resignation of Deborah Melton, paraprofessional at Lincoln Center, effective July 31, 2016;

Belinda Burch, teacher at Ruston Elementary, effective July 27, 2016;

Jonathan Hardy, math/coach at Ruston High, effective July 26, 2016;

Steven Ehrhard, social studies teacher at Ruston High, effective August 19, 2016;

Bakari Beckwith, head men's basketball coach at Ruston High, effective August 1, 2016;

Missy Wooley, STEM/New Tech at Ruston High, effective August 1, 2016;

Elizabeth Kent, science teacher at Ruston Junior High, effective July 26, 2016;

Katherine Venable, music teacher at Simsboro High, effective July 27, 2016; and

Yulonda Conley, math teacher at Simsboro High, effective August 4, 2016.

2. Points of Reference/Transfers of the following effective August 8, 2016, unless noted otherwise:

Scott Hiers, from Ruston High to special education teacher at Choudrant High, replacing Rexie Roberts who resigned;

Otilla Johnson, from LPECC to special education paraprofessional at Glen View, replacing Erin Taylor who resigned;

Shelby Mall, from paraprofessional to secretary/bookkeeper at I. A. Lewis, effective July 28, 2016;

Liz Silmon, from I. A. Lewis to special education paraprofessional at LPECC, replacing Otilla Johnson who transferred; and

Kayla Martin, from Dubach Elementary to special education paraprofessional at Ruston Elementary because of special education numbers.

3. Employment of the following effective August 8, 2016, unless otherwise noted:

Adrian Storey, special education teacher at Cypress Springs, in a new position due to increasing special education numbers;

Emily Warner, social studies teacher at I. A. Lewis, replacing Chaunce Davison who resigned;

Tori Parks, teacher at Ruston Elementary, replacing Belinda Birch who resigned;

Michael Sutton, math teacher at Ruston High, replacing Melissa Sullivan who resigned;

Risa Kendrick, math teacher at Ruston High, replacing Rachel Matthews who resigned;

Robert Cochran, math teacher at Ruston High, replacing Jonathan Hardy who resigned;

Whitney Wheelis, social studies teacher at Ruston High effective August 25, 2016, replacing Steven Ehrhard who resigned;

Caitlin Pittman, science teacher at Ruston Junior High, replacing Elizabeth Kent who resigned;

Lauren Mauer, ELA teacher at Simsboro High, replacing Ben Quinnely who resigned; and

Kayln Jordan, teacher at Simsboro High, replacing Katherine Venable who resigned.

4. Retirement of bus driver in the Choudrant area, Sue Bowden, effective August 9, 2016.
5. Employment of the following effective August 11, 2016:
  - Caleb Chipmon, bus driver in the Choudrant area, replacing Sue Bowden who retired; and
  - Dana Lewis, bus driver in the Ruston area, replacing Brandon Umeri who resigned.
6. Resignation of Ce'Nedra Bourgeois, school food service clerk/technician, effective August 1, 2016.
7. Point of Reference/Transfer of Tameka Patton from Simsboro to school food service clerk/technician at Cypress Springs effective August 1, 2016, replacing Jackie Burks who transferred.

She also said the annual Hiring Summary was placed in board members' portfolios.

Sales tax collections for August 2016 were down 22.36% over the same month last year with a total of \$1,446,461 being collected, according to George Murphy. Year-to-date sales tax figures were down 33.36%. Recoveries through audits during the month were \$24,254.00, and those were down 50% compared to the same month last year. Year-to-date those were down 64%.

Although June and July 2016 financial statements were included in packets, Mr. Murphy said he'd summarize the July report. The Total Fund Balance was \$39,696,533, which was just about where he thought it should be for this time of year. The only big surprises so far were the decreases in sales taxes.

In July 2016, the Health Care Fund was down \$231,341, but it was still looking pretty good with \$1.3 million year-to-date. He reminded board members that, as he had mentioned in the Finance Committee, recommendations for changes should be coming in later in the month. If they do, they will be placed on the agenda for the October meeting. In answer to a question, Mr. Murphy said about 50% of the costs seem to be coming from retirees as the plan members are aging. Pretty drastic suggestions may be brought for the Board's consideration after being considered by an Insurance Committee.

In his construction update, Mr. Payton communicated that things have not moved as rapidly as projected due to a rainy August. Specifically, he said at:

1. Ruston High's New Tech addition – the dirt/foundation and work on the walls had just about stopped. It had begun to pick up, and they were working on construction of forms for the foundation walls. That should be done in a day or two after which plumbing, electric and pouring the slab will follow. Blocking will be next and pretty soon a building will be seen.
2. The RHS auditorium roof was basically finished. Punch list items were being work on. After noting it was the worst school roof in the parish, he communicated that 60 places (not necessarily leaks) needed to be repaired. The contractor agreed to fix the rest of the roof even though it was not part of their contract and scope of work for the RHS auditorium. Hopefully that will take care of the roof issues at RHS.
3. The RHS parking lot was finished, and instead of 81 new places, they were able to add 89.
4. They were about to start interior blocking on the boys' soccer facility at RHS. The slab was poured on the girls', and they are about to put the walls up. That project was moving along quite well.
5. They were finishing the interior masonry on the RHS freshman locker room. On the outside, they were waiting for the bricks to arrive. The next step will be to put on the roof.
6. Exterior blocking has been done on the RHS spirit building. On the inside, they were putting the final top coat of paint and finishing up the electrical and plumbing work. The bricks, that will match those on the Childress Fieldhouse, have been ordered. Sidewalk work will begin after the bricks are in place.
7. At Ruston Junior High, they were in the final stage of finishing the south side, and he may be ready to execute substantial completion documents by mid-October. Earlier in the day they were forming the concrete driveway and sidewalk to the greenhouse. They were waiting on cabinets and doors to be delivered. Leaking connecting corridors between the old parts of the buildings have been replaced with a pitched, metal roof. On the north end, they were about a month behind the south end. They were working in the gym – completing duct and electrical work. The installation of the ceiling grid to hold the tiles will be the next big project. The fire marshal deemed the new bleachers ready to use.
8. The RHS girls' gym has a new floor, and it was being sanded. One coat of sealer will follow, and the court will then be laid out and the lines will be painted. Three coats of sealer will finish that project. In addition, all of the windows in the gym were tinted to help with sun light. It is going to be a nice facility with a beautiful floor, Mr. Payton opined.

The time had arrived to levy millages announced George Murphy. With 2016 being a reassessment year, he proposed that the millages be lowered as appropriate. Mr. Murphy read in full the Resolution to levy the millages.

President Mitcham announced that this was the time specified for a public hearing and for public comments regarding tax millages for 2016. Hearing no comments or questions, he closed the public hearing and asked for the Board's pleasure regarding the matter.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Ms. Henderson, the Board unanimously voted by roll call to adopt the resolution to levy millages for 2016 as follows:

*Resolution*

<i>Constitutional Tax (La. Const. Art. VII, Sect. 13)</i>	<i>3.91 mills</i>
<i>Special Maintenance &amp; Operation</i>	<i>4.57 mills</i>
<i>Special Repair &amp; Equipment</i>	<i>4.57 mills</i>
<i>Parish wide Maintenance &amp; Operation</i>	<i>9.47 mills</i>
<i>Parish wide Maintenance &amp; Operation</i>	<i>7.84 mills</i>
<i>Ruston School District #1</i>	<i>2.28 mills</i>
<i>Simsboro School District #3</i>	<i>2.99 mills</i>
<i>Dubach School District #5</i>	<i>3.25 mills</i>
<i>Choudrant School District #6</i>	<i>2.64 mills</i>
<i>General Obligation Bonds Ruston SD #1</i>	<i>11.00 mills</i>
<i>General Obligation Bonds Simsboro SD #3</i>	<i>7.75 mills</i>
<i>General Obligation Bonds Choudrant SD #6</i>	<i>20.00 mills</i>

Voting by roll call FOR the above motion: Debbie Abraham, Otha Anders, Michael Barmore, Lisa Best, Curtis Dowling, David Ferguson, Danny Hancock, Lynda Henderson, George Mack, Jr., Joe Mitcham, and Susan Wiley.

Voting AGAINST the motion: None.

Absent and not voting: Trott Hunt.

The Maintenance Facility has 7 window HVAC units and 4 portable buildings that are no longer needed. Ricky Edmiston, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services, asked for permission to dispose of the items in accordance with state bid law and applicable school board policies

Upon a motion by Mr. Dowling, seconded by Ms. Abraham, the Board unanimously voted to

declare the 7 window HVAC units and 4 portable buildings (sizes: 24' x 95', 20' x 48', 24' x 60', and 14' x 28') as surplus and grant permission to dispose of the items through the bid process.

In order to continue to provide safe and efficient bus service and to adequately meet the demands of extracurricular activities such as athletics and field trips, Mr. Rik Cason, Transportation Coordinator, said it was vital to continue to purchase new buses each year. He asked for permission to advertise for bids to purchase 7 new conventional school buses and 1 special needs lift school bus.

After a few questions, upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to advertise for bids for the purchase of 7 new conventional school buses and 1 new special needs lift bus.

According to the State Department of Insurance, each school system must include in board minutes a consent item authorizing the Superintendent to sign the Uninsured Motorist form. Mr. Murphy asked the Board to adopt a Resolution authorizing the same.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the Resolution authorizing the superintendent to sign the Uninsured Motorist form.

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

1. A couple of items related to questions at a previous meeting were included in packets.
2. As a reminder, the October 4 Regular Session of the Lincoln Parish School Board was scheduled at 10:30 a.m. at Hillcrest Elementary followed by lunch after for those interested in staying.
3. He is working on and trying to finalize the Capital Outlay Plan. Mr. Milstead hopes to present the plan, which is rooted in the Academic Program, at the October meeting.
4. He also believed it was a great opening of school as he had heard many positive comments about the beginning.
5. The students were out of school earlier in the day, as scheduled, for the teachers and administrators to take part in staff development. Other staff development days were placed in the school calendar for 16-17 as new

Louisiana Student Standards are being implemented.

6. Called attention to how fortunate Lincoln Parish is to have been spared the weather-related problems that many of the school districts to the south are facing - from schools' temporary closings to shared schools with staggered times because of recent flooding.
7. He'd like the Chief Academic Officer, Lisa Bastion, to briefly share about the school system's AP scores.

Ms. Bastion revealed that in August the administration received word that Lincoln Parish was being recognized for having the 4<sup>th</sup> highest ranking in the state for the number of students who passed Advanced Placement exams while in high school. Students are scored 1-5 on those exams, but no college credit is received unless a 3 or above is attained. Many of the 5, she noted, actually get credit for 2 college classes or 6 hours instead of 3. The students did very well in English language, U.S. history, English lit, and human geography, which goes along with the national norms. Out of 221 students tested, some in certain new math and biology areas, 105 actually received college credits, or 48%. Of those, 52 scored a 3, 35 scored a 4, and 18 scored a 5 on an exam. Many of the high school students will begin college with 3 to 6 college credit hours with these exams, and that was exciting. Ms. Bastion was happy to report that the school system has exceeded the state's passing percentage every year for the past four years.

Mr. Milstead noted that these Advanced Placement tests are not limited to seniors and some juniors as dual credits are; anyone can take an AP exam and receive college credits. Ms. Bastion said you don't even have to take the course, you can just take the exam.

After Ms. Wiley thanked the superintendent for his leadership and support in the celebration honoring Coach Robert "Demp" Smith, upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

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Mike Milstead, Secretary

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Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President