

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, January 4, 2016 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, January 4, 2016, 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. Curtis Dowling, Mr. David Ferguson, Mr. Danny Hancock, Ms. Lynda Henderson, Mr. Trott Hunt, Mr. George Mack, Jr., Mr. Joe Mitcham and Ms. Susan Wiley.

No board member was absent.

President Anders called the meeting to order and delivered the invocation. The ladies led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

Mr. Anders welcomed board members, staff, media, and other guests to the meeting.

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

Upon a motion by Ms. Abrahm, seconded by Ms. Henderson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on December 1, 2015, as distributed.

The Election of Officers for 2016 was the next item on the agenda. Mr. Anders turned the floor over to the Secretary, Mike Milstead. Mr. Milstead declared the floor open for nominations for President. Ms. Henderson nominated Joe Mitcham.

Mr. Anders moved that nominations cease; therefore, Mr. Milstead declared the time for nominations closed and asked for a vote. Mr. Mitcham was unanimously selected as President for 2016 by a show of hands vote. He congratulated Mr. Mitcham.

Mike Milstead asked for nominations for Vice President. Mr. Hunt nominated Ms. Henderson. Mr. Anders moved that nominations cease; therefore, Mr. Milstead declared the time for nominations closed and asked for a vote. By a show of hands vote, Ms. Henderson was unanimously selected as Vice President for 2016. Mike Milstead congratulated her.

Mr. Mitcham and Ms. Henderson thanked the Board for their vote of confidence and the honor of serving the school system.

Because a group of hard working and talented young men had reached the level of achievement they had, Tim Nutt, Child Welfare and Attendance Officer, recognized them at the meeting instead of waiting for the reception that would be held at the end of the year. He congratulated the four-time state championship boys' swim team from Ruston High School for their dedication and hard work. Mr. Nutt asked their principal, Ricky Durrett, to say a few words.

Mr. Durrett was also very complimentary of the students and their parents and said the RHS swim program was respected all across the state. He was proud to recognize the students for their drive and determination as they competed, but also for excelling in the classroom. Principal Durrett

introduced Jackson Boersma for his selection as the outstanding male swimmer in Division 2 and the two young men, Joseph Hamm and Robert Kyte, who had been a part of all four of the state championship teams. Mr. Durrett introduced and commended their great coach, Paulette Butterfield.

Ms. Butterfield said the boys had accomplished amazing things in the 7 years since the school had instituted a swim team. She thanked Mr. Durrett, Mr. Milstead, who was principal of RHS at the time, for authorizing a boys' swim team and the Lincoln Parish School Board for their recognition. Swimming is a year round sport, she noted. Ms. Butterfield introduced the 12 members of the boys' state championship swim team and her new assistant this year, Lacy Waskom.

Mr. Mitcham expressed the Board's pride in the students for their dedication and drive as they trained for the new sport. He thanked the coaches and parents for their commitment and support and said they had accomplished amazing things in a very short time.

Lisa Bastion, Chief Academic Officer, was pleased to recognize three former principals whose schools had exceeded their accountability growth targets in 2014-2015 and were eligible to received \$2,000 one-time increments. Former principals and their schools growth were as follows:

Shavonne Garner-Price	I. A. Lewis	+9.0
Tim Nutt	Ruston Junior High	+6.5
Lillie Williams-Hearne	Simsboro School	+6.0

Ms. Bastion reminded board members that all three of them had been promoted to positions in the Central Office.

President Mitcham said all of the hard work and extra effort of teachers in the schools and with the administration are appreciated. Not only did the former principals excel, but each of their teachers excelled.

Following an advertisement for bids to purchase six new buses, three bids were received from Kent Mitchell Bus Sales, Scott Truck L.L.C., and Ross Bus Sales. Transportation Supervisor, James Payton, said careful analysis and comparison led to his recommendation to accept Scott Truck's bid of \$73,425.00 for each bus.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hunt, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to accept the bid from Scott Truck L.L.C. for \$73,425.00 each for the purchase of six new 2017 conventional school buses.

Mr. Payton also said the district will have five fewer buses in the near future. Kay Bradford, Grant Writer, received a grant for \$100,000 from the EPA after destroying the older buses. After disabling them so they will not run, he can turn around and sell them for scrap and get a little more money to help toward future bus purchases.

Following a month of studying revisions to the *Alcohol and Drug Testing - General Employees - GAMEA* and *Suspension - JDD* policies, Mary Null, Assistant Superintendent asked for a vote on the proposed changes.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to approve the revisions to the above-listed policies.

It was time to issue the third series of bonds from the vote of the Ruston District back in 2013 according to George Murphy, Business Manager. In 2014, \$8,000,000 was issued, \$5,000,000 in 2015, and this \$8,000,000 is the last of the series to be issued in 2016.

Mr. Schlueter, Bond Attorney, called attention to a Resolution advertising for bids for the purchase of \$8,000,000 of school bonds. The receipt of bids would be scheduled at the school board meeting at 10:00 a.m. on February 2, 2016, at Glen View Elementary. Upon successful sale of the bonds, he anticipates delivery of the bonds on March 9, 2016, after which funds would be available in the construction account.

Upon a motion by Ms. Wiley, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted by roll call to adopt the following:

Resolution

Authorizing the advertising for sealed bids for the purchase of \$8,000,000 of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2016, of Ruston School District No. 1 of the Parish of Lincoln, State of Louisiana, and providing for other matters in connection therewith.

As the Ruston High School baseball complex project was drawing to a close, Mr. Payton announced that it was time to consider a change order to close it out. The contractor was also requesting 22 rain days (11 for May and 11 for June);

however, only 3 were needed for the contractor to meet his Substantial Completion date. Items included in the credit change order for \$2,652.00 were:

- Request "A" Delete the 2 Bearcat logos and replace with 1 "R" letter cut out of 3/16 aluminum with a powder coat finish - credit of \$6,174.00;
- Request "B" Add 1 grease trap at the new concession building (required by the health dept.) - add \$945.00;
- Request "C" Re-route the 2" irrigation line - add \$1,427.00;
- Request "D" Electrical service change - add \$3,850.00;
- Request "E" Add sidewalk - add \$3,300.00; and
- Request "F" Contingency and hardware allowance - credit of \$6,000.00.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Henderson, the Board unanimously voted to approve credit change order #1 in the amount of \$2,652.00 for work at the Ruston High School baseball complex with the addition of 3 rain days.

Also as it was nearing time to wrap up the Ruston High School baseball complex project, James Payton, suggested that Substantial Completion documents be executed after thorough review by the architect and him.

Upon a motion by Ms. Abrahm, seconded by Ms. Wiley, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission and authorize the superintendent, his staff, and the architect to execute the Substantial Completion documents for the Ruston High School baseball complex project.

In 2012, a joint grant application by the LSPB and City of Ruston was awarded to build sidewalks around I. A. Lewis

and to host walking and bicycle safety and awareness classes, thereby providing a method to promote healthier lifestyle choices for students in the area. Unfortunately, Kay Bradford reported that the City of Ruston never received and signed the required contracts to complete their portion of the project. She received notification in October 2015 of a renewal of the contracts on the project with the Board approved for \$15,849.50 and the City approved for \$249,432.00. Ms. Bradford learned in late November that the City of Ruston had also received their contracts. To proceed with the grant, the funder requires a current original Resolution authorizing the Superintendent to execute the documents on behalf of the Board.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mack, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Resolution authorizing the superintendent to sign and execute the grant documents submitted by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development on behalf of the Lincoln Parish School Board.

Since all of the playground equipment had been installed at Choudrant Elementary, Cypress Springs, Dubach, Early Childhood Center, Glen View, Hillcrest, Ruston Elementary, and Simsboro Elementary, James Payton announced a change order was needed to close out the accounting on the project. Items included in change order #1 were: changes made to Choudrant Elementary (credit of \$732.60) and a \$5,000.00 credit from the Contingency Allowance. He asked for approval of the same.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Dowling, the Board unanimously voted to approve the \$5,732.60 credit change order #1 on the playground improvements project.

That project was also nearing completion, so James Payton asked permission to execute Substantial Completion documents.

Upon a motion by Ms. Abrahm, seconded by Mr. Hunt, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission and authorize the Superintendent, his staff, and the architect to execute Substantial Completion documents for the playground improvements project.

Eight policies were being recommended for revision. Mary Null asked members to peruse the following revised policies until the next meeting at which time a vote would be taken: *School Board Ethics - BH, Hazardous Substances - EBBG, Employment of Retired Personnel - GBDA, Annual Leave - GBRK, Home Study Program - IDCH, Instructional Materials - IFA, Textbook Selection and Adoption - IFAA, and Academic Achievement - IH.*

Six items were combined to form change order #1 on the Ruston School District security improvement project. James Payton asked the Board to approve the same for \$41,063.00 with 104 days being added to the contact time and including the following items:

1. Add window tint to various windows at RJHS, Glen View, Hillcrest and Ruston Elementary - add \$1,263.00;

2. Paint 248 lineal feet of curbs at RHS - add \$550.00;
3. Reading Lab at Glen View - add \$25,000.00 (had been approved at the Sept. 2015 meeting);
4. Reading Lab at Hillcrest - add \$23,000.00 (had been approved at the Sept. 2015 meeting);
5. Pour flowable fill into wash-out at east gate at RHS - add \$1,250.00; and
6. Use \$10,000.00 from the Contingency Allowance - subtract \$10,000.00.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to approve change order #1 in the amount of \$41,063.00 and the addition of 104 days for the Ruston School District security improvement project.

That project was also nearing completion. Mr. Payton again asked the Board to grant permission for Substantial Completion documents to be signed.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dowling, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission and authorize the superintendent, his staff, and the architect to execute Substantial Completion documents for the Access Control and Security Improvement project in the Ruston School District.

Superintendent Milstead reminded those present that the same type of security improvements would be happening in the outlying schools within the next 6 months to a year.

Preliminary plans for both the Ruston High School spirit building and freshman football locker room were reviewed at an earlier meeting. The architect and engineer had completed the construction documents for both buildings, reported James Payton. He asked for permission to advertise for bids for both buildings as one project.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Abraham, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to advertise for bids for the Ruston High School spirit building/freshman football locker room project.

The October report was a little late this year because of PARCC and setting the standards and scales, but the results of last spring's testing had been released during the week of December 17. Accountability Coordinator, Donna Doss, said the administration was very excited about the schools' scores and the District Performance Score of 95.5; that was only 4.5 points from their goal of an "A." Lincoln Parish was #3 in North Louisiana and #17 in the State - up from #23 last year. The district keeps improving and moving forward, she noted. Ms. Doss summarized the areas of improvement. After noting that Glen View Elementary and Hillcrest Elementary shared their receiving schools' (Cypress Springs and Ruston Elementary) letter grades, she communicated the following:

School	Letter Grade
Choudrant Elementary	B
Choudrant High School	A
Cypress Springs Elementary	C
Dubach School	C
Glen View Elementary	C
Hillcrest Elementary	C
I. A. Lewis	B
Ruston Elementary	C
Ruston High School	A
Ruston Junior High	B
Simsboro School	B

She explained how school and district performance scores were calculated for the different grades. Ms. Doss was thrilled to

note there were no schools deemed *academically unacceptable* or earning a "D" or "F." That was very unusual in the state. She expressed appreciation to the Board for their support, commended the principals and their staffs as they diligently strive to provide all students with a quality education, and said it was a team effort.

In her Personnel Report, Dr. Doris Lewis, Human Resources Director, verbalized:

1. Resignation of the following:

Rayna McCarty, reading interventionist at Glen View, effective December 12, 2015; and

Kevin Nutt, social studies teacher at I. A. Lewis, effective November 30, 2015.

2. Point of Reference/Transfer of Rachel Gay from Youth Rescue Center to social studies teacher at I. A. Lewis effective November 30, 2015, replacing Kevin Nutt who resigned.

3. Disability retirement of custodian at Hillcrest, Willie Gunn, effective November 19, 2015.

4. Resignation of Chris McWain, bus driver in the Dubach area, effective December 18, 2015.

5. Disability retirement of Jerry Huey, bus driver in the Ruston area/maintenance effective December 1, 2015.

6. Termination of maintenance employee from the maintenance facility, Lessel Mayfield, effective December 9, 2015.

7. Employment of Sarah Wages as science teacher at Ruston High effective January 19, 2016, replacing Dan Gressett who transferred.

George Murphy called attention to figures on the December 2015 sales tax report and noted that \$1,491,605 was

collected. That was an 11.58% increase compared to the same month last year and 33.31% year-to-date. Recoveries through audits for the month were \$6,767. That was down over 47% compared to the same point last year.

In his financial update for November 2015, Mr. Murphy said the General Fund was still looking pretty good. Compared to November 2014, the Total Fund Balance for all of the funds was up over \$4.2 million. He noted the 2000 sales tax fund did show change because of payment of the 13th checks.

Moving on to the health and dental fund, through the month of November 2015 the fund had a loss of \$92,510. Year-to-date the fund was down \$1,186,659 according to Mr. Murphy. He told members they might begin to receive phone calls from plan members as changes they recently approved begin to be implemented.

President Mitcham recognized Bob Hammonds, attorney with Hammonds, Sills, Adkins and Guice law firm, who was working with the Board with respect to desegregation. Mr. Hammonds requested that the Board go into executive session to discuss strategy on ongoing litigation, *United States of America v. Lincoln Parish School Board, et al*, Civil Action number 12,071.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session at 7:04 p.m.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hunt, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to return to open session at 8:00 p.m.

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

1. A copy of the district brochure done by Cathi Cox-Boniol, containing many of the accomplishments of the school district, was included in portfolios and mailed to many individuals and school districts.
2. A letter to the Board was also placed in portfolios from Otha Anders relating to his many years of service as president. Mr. Milstead made note of his compassion for students, always wanting to do what was right, and helping to steer through some thorny issues through the years was invaluable and greatly appreciated on behalf of the students.
3. A Student of the Year/Teacher of the Year Awards Gala had been scheduled for Thursday, January 7, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at the Ruston Civic Center. Board members were invited to attend and to let Ms. Gemelli know if they would like to do so.
4. The only February board meeting would be held at Glen View Elementary School on Tuesday, February 2, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. to allow the viewing of a short reading intervention lesson. That would be immediately followed by the board meeting at approximately 10:30.
5. The Department of Justice will be in the district on Thursday and Friday. He will take them to eight of the city schools for them to do a comparison with the Grambling lab schools.
6. Ms. Bastion didn't mention the school at which she had previously been principal. Choudrant High School improved from a 110 School Performance Score to a 113.2. The leadership and dedication she showed while principal there were exemplary and outstanding. Kudos to the faculty and staff at Choudrant High School for being on top of the parish scores and staying there two years in a row! He reiterated the district is 4.5 points from being an "A" district, and that is his goal.

Mr. Mitcham reminded board members to turn in their Committee Preference forms for 2016 and to place the revised policies in their policy manual if they are still keeping one.

He and several other board members attending a nice meal prior to Christmas hosted by Sheriff Houck. The sheriff shared his idea regarding a miniature Kid Safe Town to teach the younger children safety factors and that law enforcement personnel are their friends. The estimated cost is \$4.5 to \$5 million, and he believes the LPSB may want to participate as they will be educating our students.

Mr. Hunt said some board members may have received an email because all of them are invited to attend the Fiscal Strategy Briefing that will be held tomorrow from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Louisiana Tech Davison Athletic Center. A state representative will present a fiscal analysis to begin building a consensus for a specific plan to address Louisiana's fiscal challenges.

There being no further business and upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe Mitcham, President