

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, March 5, 2019 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 5, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Parish School Board Central Office, 410 South Farmerville Street, Ruston, Louisiana. Members present were Ms. Debbie Abrahm, Mr. Michael Barmore, Dr. David Gullatt, Mr. Danny Hancock, Ms. Lynda Henderson, Mr. George Mack, Jr., Mr. Joe Mitcham, Mr. Hunter Smith, and Ms. Susan Wiley.

Mr. Otha Anders and Mr. David Ferguson were absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order, and Mr. Smith gave the invocation. Ms. Lisa Mangum, Elementary Supervisor, led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Mr. Mitcham welcomed visitors to the meeting.

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

Upon a motion by Dr. Gullatt, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on February 5, 2019, as distributed.

Becky Stutzman, Pupil Appraisal Supervisor, stated that while the pupil appraisal department has a wide umbrella of responsibilities, including performing disability evaluations for public and private schools and providing 504 services, one of its major focuses is the provision of mental health counseling for the parish's students. Any time a student reports either suicidal or homicidal ideations of any kind, a counselor or other pupil appraisal designee performs a threat assessment to gauge any potential danger to the student or others. It could be

something as small as a child writing, “I don’t want to be here anymore” in their journal or a child being angry and saying, “I’m going to kill you.” We must take these seriously and do a threat assessment to determine what that means for that child. In addition to these threats, Ms. Stutzman said parish students also face issues like teen pregnancy, domestic and dating violence, bullying and cyberbullying, an increase in chronic health conditions, human trafficking, and substance abuse.

She shared that the school board employs four mental health professionals offering counseling services to students. There are a few other mental health professionals in the district acting as guidance counselors or working with pupil appraisal, but the majority of their time is devoted to tasks other than therapeutic. The district has partnerships with local entities such as Lincoln Health Foundation and Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home to help provide the needed services. Another partnership is with The Center for Counseling and Psychological Services who came to us because Medicaid is paying a lot for mental health. Counselors can see the student at school, then bill Medicaid for the services. If LPSB can get that going, we can then start to sustain what we are doing.

Ms. Mangum gave an update on the Reading Recovery program. Last August, upon kindergarten teacher recommendations, about 100 first graders were tested. The lowest performing were selected to receive the STAR services. This year there was a higher number of very low performing students. Some could write only their name, some recognized only four or five letters, and some could not read or write. Several students had to be recommended for further testing. Presently, 50 students are being served. They were eligible for 100 lessons, consisting of both individual and small group. These students are pushed hard and usually are

reading on grade level by the end of the year. Ten have already been dismissed because they were reading on grade level. Some do have to be recommended for further testing. Ms. Mangum stated they are in the process of dismissing and adding additional students to the program. She ended by saying how rewarding the program was because students who enter the program reading far below grade level are able to become readers.

Lillie Williams-Hearn, Testing Supervisor, shared information regarding testing. She stated the tests are computer and paper based or a combination of the two, based on grade level. The largely state-mandated testing windows began February 4, and the last testing period will end May 17. There only two days in that entire stretch that do not fall under one window or another. That does not mean each student will be testing the entire time. Just because a testing window is in place does not mean the tests would be administered every day in that period. The first window is for the English Language Proficiency Test and LEAP Connect/LAA 1, for example, which is for English learner students and students with significant cognitive disabilities. Other testing periods include the ACT, ACT WorkKeys, LEAP 2025, End-of-Course exams, and Advanced Placement testing. The state requires all 11th grade students to take the ACT.

She shared that Lincoln Parish School Board was participating in a pilot for Innovative Assessment that looks at a different way to assess English and Social Studies. Currently students are tested at the end of the school year. With Innovative Assessment, students are taught a certain amount of subject matter, are tested, and then the process is repeated three times. There would be three testing periods throughout the year, with an average score of the three, instead of one test at the end of the year. Seventh grade is being

piloted this year and will go live next year, sixth through eighth grade will be piloted next year and then go live the next, with all grades being phased in by 2024. As grades are phased in, they will no longer take the LEAP 2025. There would be a five-year grace period with some flexibility regarding accountability.

The following personnel items were reported by Dr. Doris Lewis, Director of Human Resources:

1. Retirement of Kathleen Mitchell, itinerant special education (homebound) teacher, effective May 25, 2019.
2. Employment of Brooklynn Coley, math teacher at Ruston High School, effective February 8, 2019, replacing Nicole Vermaelen who resigned.
3. Point of Reference of Natalie Trosclair, from cafeteria technician at Choudrant Elementary to cafeteria clerk/technician, effective March 4, 2019, replacing Harriett Dunn who retired.
4. Resignation of Virginia Sanderson, cafeteria technician at Hillcrest Elementary, effective February 19, 2019.

Mr. Murphy reported that sales tax collections for the month of February 2019 were \$1,238,729, down 7.95% compared to this month last year. Year-to-date receipts are down \$1.6 million, or 12.85%, compared to this time last year. Recoveries through audits were up for the year. He called attention to a report from the Sales and Use Tax Commission detailing the categories of all sales tax receipts, specifically oil and gas extraction that was down over \$101 million for the year of 2018 compared to 2017.

Moving on to the January 2019 financial report, Mr. Murphy stated the Total Fund Balance was down about \$1.4 million compared to January 2018.

Next George Murphy reported on the Health Care Fund, stating the balance was up \$58,931. This was good news and a great way to start the year. Plans are to monitor the fund,

and sales tax funds could be used to supplement if needed later in the year.

Six revised policies and one additional policy had been studied for a month and were brought back for a vote. Lisa Bastion, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer, asked for approval of the revised and additional policies.

Upon a motion by Dr. Gullatt, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to approve the revisions to: GBC – *Recruitment*; GBD – *Employment of Personnel*; GBDA – *Employment of Retired Personnel*; GBRIB – *Sick Leave*; GBRIC – *Maternity and Adoptive Leave*; and JBCC- *Student Assignment* and the addition of JCED – *Student Sexual Harassment*.

The multi-parish consortium was authorized to bid out food, paper, and supplies, but they do not handle equipment or produce; therefore, in the absence of Betty Fowler, Supervisor of Food Services, Mr. Murphy requested permission to advertise and accept the lowest bids for purchases of kitchen equipment and produce for the school food service department for 2019–2020. He also requested permission to bid on a van with a lift gate to transport meals to the Youth Rescue Center, which the consortium does not handle.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Barmore, the Board unanimously voted to approve the advertisement for and the acceptance of the lowest bids meeting specifications on purchases of equipment, produce, and a van with lift gate for the school food service department for 2019-2020.

Superintendent Mike Milstead proposed to open the application process for Principals of I.A. Lewis and Ruston High School on Wednesday, March 6, 2019. The application period will close at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, March 19, 2019. Advertisements for the positions will be sent to all LPSB schools, placed on the LPSB website, and printed in the Board's official

journal. Interviews for the positions will be held on March 20-March 22, 2019, and a hiring report will be presented to the Board at its April 2, 2019, meeting. The five-member interview committee will consist of active principals and administrative staff appointed by the Superintendent.

Upon a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted to advertise and interview for Principals of I.A. Lewis and Ruston High School as explained above.

Board members were asked by Ms. Bastion to study the following policy revision until the next meeting: GAEAA – *Sexual Harassment*.

May supplement checks are funded through sales taxes and the 2000 parish-wide millage. Mr. Murphy said recurring revenue was adequate to keep the supplement check the same as last year. Last year the amount was increased by \$500 for certified personnel and \$250 for support personnel.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Hancock, the Board unanimously voted to approve the payment of salary supplement checks on May 24, 2019, in the amounts of \$5,825 to certified personnel and \$2,913 for support personnel.

Because the state mandated numerous testing and testing makeup dates as well as the way holidays fall in the coming year, Lisa Bastion reported very little flexibility in the school calendar for 2019-2020. She asked the Board to adopt the proposed calendar that includes 170.5 instructional days and 8 professional development days, as well as several specific vendor site visits. This calendar exceeds the required instructional minutes as described in Bulletin 741.

Upon a motion by Dr. Gullatt, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously

voted to adopt the proposed calendar for the 2019-20 school year as follows:

Lincoln Parish 2019 - 2020 School Calendar

Staff Development	August 7-14, 2019
First Day of School-Students (1/2 Day)	August 15, 2019
Labor Day	September 2, 2019
Columbus Day and Fall Break	October 14-16, 2019
Veteran's Day	November 11, 2019
Thanksgiving	November 25-29, 2019
Christmas/New Year	Dec. 23, 2019-Jan. 3, 2020
Second Semester begins	January 6, 2020
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 20, 2020
Presidents' Day	February 17, 2020
Staff Development	February 18, 2020
Spring Break	March 30-April 3, 2020
Easter	April 10-13, 2020
Last Day of School-Students (Full Day)	May 21, 2020
Instructional Staff Workday (Full Day)	May 22, 2020

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

1. KNOE TV had recently done a special emphasizing the importance of early childhood education. He expressed the importance of the district doing all that we can to prepare children for kindergarten, making sure they are prepared when they get there. He provided board members a handout with more details.
2. The LPSB website has an organizational chart posted, listing central office employees and their job titles. He stated that paper copies could be provided if needed.
3. At the April board meeting, he hopes to bring a recommendation to the board for possible uses of the Head Start insurance money. There is about \$4.4 million that must be contracted by September 2020.
5. The April 2 Regular Session of the Lincoln Parish School Board is scheduled at 10:30 a.m. at Choudrant High School.
6. Simsboro Tiger boys' basketball will be playing in the state semi-finals against Hicks in Lake Charles on Wednesday, March 6, at 8:00 p.m. Simsboro School will be dismissed the following day due to the number of students and teachers attending the game in Lake Charles. If they win, they will play Saturday at 4:00 for the championship.

After several comments from board members, upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President