

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, October 2, 2018 10:30 a.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 10:30 a.m. at Simsboro School, #1 Tiger Drive, Simsboro, Louisiana. Members present were Ms. Lisa Best (arrived after the meeting began), 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.

Ms. Debbie Abrahm, Mr. Otha Anders, and Mr. Mike Barmore were absent.

Prior to the meeting, a Meet and Greet with Resident Teachers was held in the library.

President Joe Mitcham called the meeting to order, and Mr. Hancock gave the invocation. Mr. Hunt led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

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

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Wiley, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on September 4, 2018.

Principal of Simsboro School, Rusty Farrar, welcomed guests to the school, which has about 527 students attending and is the only Pre-K through 12th grade school in the district. He said it was an honor to have the board meeting at Simsboro. Mr. Farrar thanked Superintendent Milstead for his support not only for Simsboro but for all the schools in the district. He also thanked the board for their support, mentioning Mr. Dowling, board member for the Simsboro

district. He introduced Ms. Angela Hoffman, Mr. Patrick Findley, Dr. Shelia Nugent, Ms. Monica Locke, and Ms. Leigh Ann Williams, stating he could not do his job without the help of these employees. He also thanked Melane Slocum, school librarian, for preparing the library for the board meeting. He stated how proud he is of his faculty, staff, and students.

Mr. Farrar shared that having a full time nurse on staff was an exciting new addition this year.

He took a minute to commend Simsboro School stating they are projected to be a “B” school when the School Performance Scores come out. He voiced that the school had great things happening in and out of the classrooms, including last year’s Class B boys’ basketball state championship and being the state runner up in boys’ track.

Mr. Mitcham thanked Mr. Farrar for the hospitality and refreshments were provided. He stated that the students to be recognized next had not arrived yet and proceeded with the next item on the agenda.

Approximately 20 Resident Teachers were introduced by Julie Stephenson, Teacher Pipeline Lead/University Liaison. She explained this was the fifth year for the Resident Teacher program. Although the goals and vision were the same, there were updates this year. Lead Mentors have been added to provide training, coordinate communication, and lead professional learning for mentors and residents throughout the year. Mentors and residents would be recognized monthly based on their commitment to student learning and personal growth. This formal recognition program would launch today when Mr. Milstead announced the Superintendent Spotlight Award. In May, the Annual Lincoln Teacher Residency Impact Award would be given to a resident and mentor who had significant impact on teaching excellence,

professional growth, and student achievement throughout the year. In addition, she expressed the hope that the partnerships with Louisiana Tech, Grambling State University, and the University of Louisiana Monroe would help Lincoln Parish attract, hire, and retain the best teachers.

Mr. Milstead voiced what a value the co-teaching process was for our district. This co-teaching model allows two teachers in many of our classrooms, which produces nothing but positive results. He then presented lead mentor Karla Doss and resident teacher Bailey Chenault, both of Simsboro School, with the September Superintendent Spotlight Award, praising both for what an awesome job they were doing.

President Mitcham thanked the Resident Teachers for working in our school system and hoped that the mentoring will result in permanent hires next year. Several board members commented on what a great program this was and reiterated the hope that the program would result in new hires.

Following a month of studying two policy additions and one policy revision, Lisa Bastion, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer, asked board members to approve the proposed changes to the policy manual.

Upon a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Dowling, the Board unanimously voted to approve the additions of EBBB – *School and Student Safety* and JGCF – *Behavioral Health Services for Students* and revisions to EBBC – *Emergency/Crisis Management*.

Ms. Best entered the meeting.

George Murphy, Business Manager, introduced David Charpentier, Vice President with Brown & Brown Insurance, and Jason Huffman also with Brown & Brown, who he had been

working with to determine changes that need to be made with the health care plan. These changes were needed in order for the plan to break even. The year started off good, but August was not a good month, we are just about to the break even point for the year. Changes we made last year helped, but there are changes moving forward that need to be made.

Mr. Charpentier stated the changes he was recommending existed in order to meet the goals of the health plan that had been set over the years. If we made no changes, then costs would continue to creep up and eventually jump out of control. Changes need to be made annually to make adjustments to keep growth in costs to a manageable level. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) had forced all to be subject to the maximum out-of-pockets expenses. Because all costs, including drug copays, go toward the maximum, many members are meeting the maximum out-of-pocket in February or March and are paying nothing the rest of the year. Due to this, the major change he would recommend is to increase the amount of the maximum out-of-pocket expenses. He stated if the incremental costs are too high, members might not get the treatment they need or purchase prescriptions. Mr. Charpentier shared the following recommendations to the plan effective January 1, 2019. If approved, the following changes would bring our health care plan in line with the rest of the marketplace:

1. Continue the Wellness Program.
2. Limit Specialty Drug Fills to the PBM-owned Specialty Pharmacy (Accredo).
3. Pharmacy deductible remains at \$350.
4. Increase pharmacy copays from:
 - A. \$20 generic to \$25.
 - B. \$60 preferred name brand to \$65.
 - C. \$100 non-preferred name brand – no change.
 - D. \$250 Specialty – No change.
5. Implement an Active Diabetes Management Program.
6. Increase the In Network individual deductible from \$750 to \$800 and the family deductible from \$2,250 to \$2,400.

7. Increase the In Network individual maximum out-of-pocket from \$4,500 to \$5,000 and the family maximum out-of-pocket from \$10,500 to \$15,000.
8. Increase the Out of Network individual deductible from \$1,000 to \$1,600 and the family deductible from \$3,000 to \$4,800.
9. Increase the Out of Network maximum out-of-pocket from \$9,000 to \$10,000 and the family maximum out-of-pocket from \$27,000 to \$30,000.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hunt, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to approve the above health plan recommendations effective January 1, 2019.

Mr. Milstead reminded the board that of the total budget of \$77-78 million, health plan costs are \$10 million.

Cathi Cox-Boniol, Lincoln ACHIEVE Coordinator, felt privileged and honored to recognize Ruston High School seniors Michael Bishop, Davis Glen Ellis, and David Griffin who were the only three students throughout all schools in Lincoln Parish to be announced as one of the approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 64th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Ms. Cox-Boniol provided background information on each young man and presented a plaque to all three in recognition of their outstanding achievement.

Mr. Mitcham expressed the board's pride and congratulations to these young men's accomplishments, stating they were among the elite of the elite.

Change order #1 on the Choudrant High School baseball lights was presented by James Payton, New Construction Supervisor. He said due to wet conditions at the job site, extra days needed to be added to the contract time. Twelve days would be added to the contract time if approved.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Mack, the Board unanimously voted to approve change order #1 for the Choudrant High School baseball light project, adding twelve

days to the contract time and no change to the contract price.

Mr. Murphy explained that Simsboro First Baptist Church needed to build a new power line and had requested that the Lincoln Parish School Board enter into a Right of Way Agreement since the line crosses our property. He stated that Lewis Jones, LPSB Attorney, had reviewed the document.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dowling, seconded by Ms. Wiley, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Right of Way Agreement with Simsboro First Baptist Church.

In the absence of Ricky Edmiston, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services, James Payton voiced that Ruston High School and Choudrant High had items that were no longer needed. The items were listed below:

- 1) 2006 Kawasaki Mule
- 2) 6 Creosote light poles
- 3) Moveable wood building located on recently purchased Morrison property.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dowling, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to declare the above-mentioned items as surplus and dispose of them in accordance with state law and local policies.

Two policies were being recommended for revision, along with one new policy. Ms. Bastion asked board members to study the proposed changes to *Bullying and Hazing* – JCDAF and *Acceptable Use Policy for School Computer Systems and the Internet for Students* – IFBGA. *Threats of Terrorism and Violence* – JCDAH was a proposed new policy. She voiced if anyone had questions regarding policies, to please contact her. A vote would be taken at the next board meeting.

Most of the work at the Choudrant High baseball light project was complete except the final punch list items. Mr. Payton suggested that Substantial Completion documents be executed based on the recommendation of the architect after his final punch list and other appropriate documents. Substantial Completion means the owner can use the lights and the owner becomes responsible for insurance.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Henderson, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission and authorize the superintendent, his staff, and the architect to execute Substantial Completion documents for the construction at Choudrant High School.

The following personnel items were communicated by Dr. Doris Lewis:

1. Retirement of Letitia Freeman, special education teacher at Ruston Junior High School, effective September 11, 2018.
2. Rescission of Acceptance by Pam Price, special education paraprofessional at Choudrant High School effective August 15, 2018.
3. Employment of the following effective September 10, 2018, unless otherwise noted:

Ashley Butler, teacher at Cypress Springs effective September 24, 2018, replacing Joia Crowe who transferred;

Tiffany Hill, teacher at Hillcrest Elementary, replacing Amanda Simmons who retired;
and

Lillie Williams, business teacher at Ruston High School, replacing Harryette Tinsley who transferred.
4. Point of Reference of Joia Crowe from regular education to special education at Cypress Springs effective September 24, 2018, replacing Amy Owens who resigned.
5. Retirement of Grady Blair, custodian at Ruston High School, effective August 20, 2018.
6. Point of Reference of Angela Jackson as custodian at Ruston High School effective September 1, 2018, replacing Grady Blair who retired.

7. Employment of Moshuma Keesee as custodian at Ruston High School effective September 17, 2018, replacing Angela Jackson who transferred position.
8. Resignation of Toniqua Torbor as bus operator effective August 16, 2018, in the Ruston area.
9. Employment of Sandra Holloway as bus operator effective September 17, 2018, in the Ruston area, replacing Toniqua Torbor who resigned.
10. Retirement of Tressia Smith as cafeteria manager at Ruston High School, effective January 5, 2019.
11. Employment of the following effective September 24, 2018:

Taylor Pate, cafeteria technician at Cypress Springs, replacing Lisa Carter who transferred;

Chandani Foret, cafeteria technician at LPECC, replacing Kathy Tatum who retired;
and

Alethea Gipson, cafeteria technician at Ruston High School, replacing Margaret Pierce who was terminated.

Superintendent Milstead reported every year at this time the board was updated on the anticipated School Performance Scores (SPS) and District Performance Scores (DPS). In early November, we would get the announcement on how schools rate based on several different factors. The State had changed the calculations for these rating, as they often do. He stated it was understood that this was done as a process of moving to a 2025-26 goal. The process would begin this year with dramatic changes in how the calculations were made. For example, prior to this year grades 3-8 scores were based on a test, now there was a 25% component of student growth. One positive from this was almost all schools showed growth. Our goal is for elementary schools to grow to an SPS of C or B and eventually an A. At the high school level, prior to this year, if a student had an ACT score of 18, schools earned 100 points per student, the state had changed

that to an ACT score of 21. Even with that change, at this time all three high schools are rated an A. He said that we have grown as a district and will continue to grow, and he was proud of our schools, the principals, and the entire district.

Mrs. Bastion reminded the board members that over the last four or five years we have put an emphasis on literacy, and it was exciting to see the growth for the last three years in the ELA scores. We see the same is true for this year.

Another area we have shown growth in was the high school SPS. The areas in which we continue to improve are the strength in diploma (students taking AP and CLEP exams) and graduation rates. She shared graduation rates are almost 100% at all three schools.

She said our elementary and middle schools have done an excellent job in “growing students,” even though the scores do not reflect how well we have done in progress points. We have been recognized for gains in that area, and those gains had helped us on our SPS this year.

Mr. Milstead shared that although our results may be different due to the changes made in how SPS were calculated, Lincoln Parish would continue to be competitive with all other parishes. We had the highest SPS last year than any other school in north Louisiana, and we hope to accomplish that again this year. He congratulated teachers and administrators, stating the central office was making sure all principals and schools knew what was expected of them, teaching the standards and using the curriculum we require. We must teach what the state requires so we can meet our goal.

In a construction update, Mr. Payton stated that work on the STEM project was halted for the time being due to recent heavy rains. The site should be ready for the slab to be poured by the third week of October. Once the slab is poured, progress can continue regardless of the

weather conditions.

He also reported that the Lincoln Parish Police Jury had begun work on the access road at Choudrant Elementary. He should have pictures at the next meeting showing progress on both of these construction projects.

George Murphy, Business Manager, reported that sales tax collections for the first three months of the year were down \$471,000. He explained that oil and gas extraction is down which was the primary driver for sales tax collections. He reported there are good reserves in that fund so the 13th and 14th checks would not be affected. The recoveries through audits were up compared to last year.

In a Financial Update for August of 2018, Mr. Murphy communicated that the Total Fund Balance was up \$634,000 for the month, but down \$5.6 million compared to August 2017.

The Health Care Fund was down \$367,000 for the month of August 2018, and it was up \$66,000 for the first eight months stated George Murphy.

Mr. Milstead commented that he had talked to the mayor regarding some exciting projects planned in the future for Ruston, which should bolster sales tax income. Hopefully these would provide a steady source of tax collections related to Ruston's economic development so fluctuating oil and gas extraction would not impact us so greatly.

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

1. The Morrison property adjacent to Choudrant High School had been transferred on September 19. The property was now officially owned by Lincoln Parish School Board and would be ideal for future growth.
2. Board members would find an LSBA survey in their packets. There was a new director and she would like feedback regarding new ideas and future conventions.

3. He encouraged school board members to visit LPECC language immersion program where 30-40 students were being taught all subjects in French. This was a voluntary program and was quite entertaining and encouraging to watch four year olds speaking French.
4. He would be coming to the board members in the near future regarding ways to enhance school safety. Significant steps had been taken, but there was still work to be done. There were still six schools that did not have SRO officers, which leaves these schools vulnerable. Money will need to be spent in the next six to nine months to make schools as secure as they can be.
5. Choudrant Elementary School roadwork had begun. An MOU was recently signed with the police jury, they would provide the labor and LPSB would provide materials. The total cost should be \$25,000 – \$50,000, which was a small investment for a big return. This project would get school traffic off the railroad tracks and out of the lineup on Highway 80, making it much safer for parents and students.
6. Business After Hours, recently held at RHS, was a success and thanked those board members that attended. All the district schools were highlighted, and there had been great community response. He thanked supervisors, principals, Ms. Bastion, and Ms. Cox for organizing the event.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President