

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

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

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

Ms. Lynda Henderson was absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Dr. Gullatt, and Ms. Doris Lewis, Director of Human Resources, led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Upon a motion by Ms. Best, seconded by Mr. Hancock, the Board unanimously voted, by roll call, to amend the agenda deleting one Report: 5.3 ERATE, and adding one item of New Business: 7.3 ERATE.

Upon a motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Dr. Gullatt, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on January 8, 2019, as presented.

Independent Auditor, Margie Williamson, presented an audit report for the year ending June 30, 2018. She called attention to two reports, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and the Single Audit Report and briefly went over the results of the audit.

In the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the LPSB received an unmodified audit opinion, the best opinion possible, which means that the Board's financial condition, position, and operations were fairly presented in the financial statements. On the statement of net position, she shared that total long-term liabilities due within one year and more than one year were \$257 million, which mostly consist of other post employee benefits (\$121 million), LPSB's share of the state's pension liabilities (\$74 million), and bonds (\$56 million). New accounting standards now require you to include the total of other post employee benefits on your financial statement whereas in the past the amount was amortized over 30 years. Due to this change, a prior period adjustment had to be made reducing the beginning net position by \$53.2 million. The ending net position had a deficit of \$124 million caused by the pension liabilities and other post employee benefits.

The General Fund decreased by \$4.8 million after transfers to the Parishwide Maintenance and Parishwide Capital Project Funds. It had an ending balance of \$18.3 million with 2.7 million restricted for salaries and benefits and \$4 million restricted for salary improvements. Unassigned amounts were \$11.4 million. The 2000 Ad Valorem Fund is restricted and committed for salaries and benefits. Although Special Revenue Funds generally do not have a balance, she reported that School Food Service Fund had an ending fund balance of \$910,000, the Parishwide Maintenance Fund balance was \$389,000, and the Education Excellence Fund balance was \$198,000. The 2000 Sales Tax Fund was \$3.5 million and the 1993 Sales Tax Fund was \$2.9 million; both of those were restricted for salaries and benefits. The Parishwide Capital Projects Fund balance was \$3.8 million and the Ruston Bond Fund balance

had zeroed out at the end of 2018. The Insurance Proceeds Fund balance was \$1.3 million; \$1.7 million was actually received with \$441,000 spent during 2018.

Moving on to the Single Audit Report, the compliance part of the audit, Ms. Williamson said a little over \$8 million was the total of federal grants the district received for 2017-18. The federal programs her firm tested were the Teacher Incentive Fund, Special Education, and Child Nutrition. There were no findings at all. Additionally, she called attention to a management letter included in the audit which stated that procedures were in place for annual inventory of equipment but presently there were no procedures in place for inventory of buildings and vehicles. The auditor recommended an inventory be conducted and updated on these items as needed. In closing, she stated this was a good report. Mr. Milstead added a word of appreciation to George Murphy, Chief Financial Officer, and the finance hall for managing a budget of \$77 million, with no findings in an audit report.

Lisa Wilmore, Middle Schools Supervisor, articulated information regarding the L.P.c.a.r.e.s. program. The program, Lincoln Parish cares about reaching every student, has a mission to ensure that young girls have an opportunity to develop positive skill sets that support them in making healthy choices. The vision of L.P.c.a.r.e.s. is that every girl in the parish will become confident and exhibit high self-esteem, which fosters success in college and/or career endeavors. Mentors work with and provide academic, spiritual, and social support to approximately 60 girls in grades six through eight. Ms. Wilmore thanked community members, Keshia Osborne, and John Young, who support this program and provide leadership roles for these youth. She also thanked Superintendent Milstead; it was his vision

that set the program in place.

In her Personnel Report, Dr. Lewis verbalized the:

1. Retirement of Kay Bradford, Human Resources Coordinator/Grant Writer at Central Office, effective April 7, 2019.
2. Resignation of Jennifer Lewis, elementary teacher at Simsboro School, effective January 7, 2019.
3. Employment of Greta Cole, elementary teacher at Simsboro School effective January 9, 2019, replacing Jennifer Lewis who resigned.
4. Point of Reference of Kim Goree from special education teacher at Ruston High School to transition facilitator, effective January 7, 2019, replacing Harryette Tinsley who transferred.
5. Retirement of Richard Anderson, bus operator in the Choudrant area, effective January 14, 2019.
6. Resignation of Leslie Washington, bus operator in the Ruston area, effective January 25, 2019.
7. Employment of the following:
 - Theodis Johnson, bus operator in the Choudrant area effective January 8, 2019, replacing Richard Anderson who retired; and
 - Richard Garrett, bus operator in the Ruston area effective January 25, 2019, replacing Leslie Washington who resigned.
8. Resignation of Melissa Owens, custodian at Cypress Springs effective January 23, 2019.

According to Mr. Murphy sales tax collections year-to-date were down \$1.5 million, which was a 13% decrease compared to the same month last year. Recoveries through audits were up 15%.

Moving on to the financial statement for December 2018, Mr. Murphy said the

Total Fund Balance was \$27.7 million, down \$5.4 million compared to December 2017. Compared to the same time last month, the balance was down \$922,000.

The health plan was down \$470,000 year-to-date. Last year at this time, the plan was down \$1.5 million. Mr. Murphy believes the changes made last year have helped with the deficit. He also believes changes the Board made that took effect in January 2019 will continue to turn the health care plan around.

In a construction report, James Payton, New Construction Coordinator, narrated several pictures and said weather had been a factor this last month:

1. The RHS baseball field, located at the City of Ruston Sports Complex, was now ready to be used. LPSB did not construct the field; however, they have exclusive use of the field from January through May. The softball field will not be ready until next year, but we will also have exclusive rights to that field as well. When the tennis courts are completed, we will be able to practice there and schedule tournaments but not have exclusive use.
2. Progress was being made on the Tarbutton Road Bridge. When complete, this will help the district with traffic flow and traffic patterns at RJHS, the STEM building, and the bus barn.
3. The STEM building should be complete in June or July of this year. It will be a very energy efficient building, with most interior walls being cinder block.

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

Upon a motion Mr. Anders, seconded by Ms. Best, the Board unanimously voted to approve revisions to *Tax and Bond Elections* – DFD and *Purchasing* – DJE.

In the absence of Ricky Edmiston, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services, Mr. Payton

voiced that Ruston High School had a 24' x 60' portable building that was no longer needed.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Ms. Abrahm, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission to declare the above-mentioned item as surplus and dispose of it in accordance with state law and local policies.

Six policy manual revisions and one addition had been recommended by Forethought, the policy manual service. Ms. Bastion asked members to study revisions to *Recruitment - GBC*, *Employment of Personnel - GBD*, *Employment of Retired Personnel - GBDA*, *Sick Leave - GBRIB*, *Maternity and Adoptive Leave - GBRIC*, *Student Assignment - JBCC*, and the addition of *Student Sexual Harassment - JCED* until the next meeting.

Debbie Pender, Technology/Data Coordinator, shared that the Lincoln Parish School District had submitted a Form 470 for ERATE discounts on Category 2 services to be provided during the 2019-2020 school year. The service types requested were internal connections and basic maintenance of internal connections. These include wireless access points, cabling, switches, racks in which to house those switches, battery backups, and other related components. The Form 470 was the beginning application. After contracts were entered into with vendors, the second application, Form 471, will be submitted which will detail the exact number of Category 2 services needed to determine the exact cost of the project. ERATE, a federal government program, funds about 85% of the costs for the district's broadband technology. Following a 28-day waiting period, three proposals were submitted. Ms. Pender requested approval to enter into contract with the top two vendors, based on cost, experience, references, and several other criteria.

Upon a motion by Ms. Abraham, seconded by Dr. Gullatt, the Board unanimously voted to enter into contract with Transformyx for racks, switches, battery backups, and related components and Howard Technology Solutions for wireless access points, cabling, and related components. Mr. Milstead interjected how important technology was because all standardized testing in grades five and above were now done online.

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

1. L.P.c.a.r.e.s. and Adopt-A-School brochures were placed in members' portfolios. Committee assignments and the annual district brochure were placed there as well.
2. Registration information for the LSBA convention was placed in portfolios. Many hours of training can be obtained, including the one hour of Campaign Finance Disclosure that is required each term of office.
3. He appreciated board members who attended the Student and Teacher of the Year Award Gala that was held last month. Those who won would go on to compete at the regional and state levels.
4. A lease agreement with Head Start had been re-signed extending the lease to June 25, 2019.
5. A Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the city would be signed soon giving Ruston High School exclusive use of the baseball field at the City of Ruston Sports Complex for the duration of the agreement.
6. A Louisiana STEM Initiative brochure could be found in the portfolios. The goal is to ensure all Louisiana students have exposure to STEM courses and credentials starting in elementary school and continuing through college. LPSB is in the center of the "Cyber Corridor," an area zoned for cyber research and development. The district's new STEM Center will expose students and teachers to many enrichment and teaching activities. Students can take advantage of curricular implementation at the center. It is projected that there will be millions of job opportunities in the STEM field in

the next few years. Our parish and students will be on the “cutting edge” when this happens.

7. The Center for Counseling and Psychological Services will offer mental health activities for students in schools and bill Medicaid as services are rendered. We will start with one mental health specialist and hope to add more in the future. The mental health of our children must be addressed, so offering this service will be very beneficial. Becky Stutzman, Pupil Appraisal Supervisor, will speak next month on how important it is that these issues be addressed.
8. Next week is School Counseling Week. If you see a school counselor, please thank them for the job they do. They do a super job and are underappreciated. The counselors in our district are amazing.

After several comments, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m. on a motion by Ms.

Best.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President