

LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD
Ruston, Louisiana

REGULAR SESSION
Tuesday, March 7, 2017 6:00 p.m.

The Lincoln Parish School Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Parish School Board Central Office, 410 South Farmerville Street, Ruston, Louisiana. Members present were Ms. Debbie Abraham, Mr. Otha Anders, Mr. Michael Barmore, 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. Lisa Best was absent.

President Mitcham called the meeting to order, and the invocation was given by Mr. Barmore. Ms. Abraham led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Mr. Mitcham welcomed visitors to the meeting.

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

Upon a motion by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Dowling, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on February 7, 2017, as distributed.

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

1. Retirement of the following administrators effective June 30, 2017:

Mary Null, Assistant Superintendent; and

Donna Doss, Testing/Accountability Coordinator.

2. Employment of Betty Fowler as Food Service Supervisor effective March 8, 2017, replacing Doris Marzett who resigned.

Superintendent Mike Milstead expressed sadness because of the retirement of the administrators, but wished them well. He introduced Betty Fowler to those present.

George Murphy, Business Manager, reported that sales tax collections for the month of February 2017 were down \$3.7 million year-to-date, 24.94%, and 11.47% for the month. Recoveries through audits were going well with \$198,154 being collected so far in the fiscal year, which was above last year's collections.

Moving on to the January 2017 financial report, Mr. Murphy noted that as a result of the legislative auditor passing new procedures, five new lines were added to the bottom of the statement: year-to-date budget to actual revenues and expenditures and budget revenues, expenses, and the difference. He believes they are concerned about deficit spending and want to make sure the school system was staying within its budget. Mr. Murphy reported that the budget to actual comparisons looked pretty good with no deficit spending. He reiterated that the Unassigned Fund Balance was good at \$14.6 million; however, the Total Fund Balance was down about \$2 million compared to the same month last year. Fund balances were decreasing primarily due to reductions in the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) and the sales tax funds. A report was received from the state last week telling the administration that preliminary figures showed Lincoln Parish could probably expect to have a reduction in their MFP of \$5.4 million for 17-18. Reasons given were the Grambling charter school and increases in sales taxes over the past few years. Mr. Murphy praised the Board and the previous Superintendent for building up the healthy fund balance for occasions such as this, but stated the cut in MFP funds

will cause a hardship over the next couple of years. He believes a 14th check can still be given next month with the Board's approval. At the Sales and Use Tax Commission meeting last month, he heard that oil and gas activity will be picking up again.

Mr. Milstead said a 16% reduction in MFP funds was significant. Both he and Mr. Murphy have contacted those in the state and in the legislature expressing their displeasure with taking \$5.4 million from the \$33 million that was expected.

In his update on the Health Plan for January 2017, George Murphy said the fund was up \$324,873 for the first month of the calendar year. Much of that could be attributed to the net change in estimated claims incurred but not reported. He assured board members that he monitors the plan each month because of fluctuations. Mr. Murphy will meet with David Charpentier later in the month to discuss how to deal with the increase in retiree in costs. A recommendation will likely be brought for the Board's consideration later in the year that will not be popular, but will be an attempt to keep the health care plan solvent.

In his Construction Report, James Payton, New Construction Coordinator, said the end was in sight for the four big projects at Ruston High with mainly interior and cleanup work remaining. He said:

The New Tech building may be completed by the end of the month.

The soccer complex may be finished by the first week in April depending on the weather. He noted that a beautiful bronze sign had arrived and should soon be mounted on a column near the soccer buildings. It commemorated the 1936 James family donation of property for the Ruston High School football field.

Not much work was remaining on the spirit building. A special sound system had been ordered. He estimated a mid-April or third week in April date for completion of that project.

Quite a bit of interior work was remaining on the freshman locker facility. May is when he expects that project to be finished.

Plans are to request permission to execute substantial completion documents on the above-named projects and approval of final change orders at the April board meeting.

Eight revised policies and one new policy had been studied for a month and were brought back for a vote. Lisa Bastion, Chief Academic Officer, asked for approval of the revised and new policies.

Upon a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Ms. Abraham, the Board unanimously voted to approve the revisions to: DJA – *Authorized Signatures (formerly DJAA)*; EFA – *Acceptable Use For School Computer Systems and the Internet*; JBC – *School Admission*; JBCC – *Student Assignment*; JCDAB – *Dangerous Weapons*; JGCD – *Administration of Medicine*; JQE – *Expectant and Parenting Students*; and BH - *School Board Ethics* and the addition of: BH-E - *Code of Conduct for Louisiana School Board Members*.

Four additional policies had been updated to reflect the school system's recent unitary status. Ms. Bastion asked members to study the following until the next meeting: GBD – *Employment of Personnel*, JBCB – *Admission of Non-Resident Students*, JBCE – *Student Transfer and Withdrawal*, and JBCE – *Public School Choice*.

President Joe Mitcham announced that Mike Milstead's current term as Superintendent would expire on June 30, 2017. He turned the floor over to Lynda Henderson, Chairperson of the Executive Committee, whose committee consists of Danny Hancock and Curtis Dowling. On behalf of the Executive Committee, she said she would like to recommend

that Superintendent Milstead's contract be extended for an additional four (4) years and that his salary be increased by \$10,000.00 effective July 1, 2017.

Joe Mitcham repeated the Executive Committee's recommendation and added that all others terms and conditions of the original contract would remain the same. He asked for public comments or questions.

After a few questions from the public and one comment by a board member, the Board unanimously voted by roll call to extend Superintendent Mike Milstead's contract for an additional four (4) years, to increase his salary by \$10,000.00, and for all of the other terms and conditions of the contract to remain the same.

Mr. Milstead thanked the Board for their support and for the opportunity to continue serving with a group that is truly vested in the children. He looks forward to the next four years.

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

1. Spring Break is next week from March 13 through March 17.
2. Board members were electronically sent a Superintendent's Evaluation document. He asked them to complete it and turn it in.
3. By the end of the month he hopes to complete the creation of some focus groups to talk about several items including a year-round-school and a 6th grade center. Meetings should be complete by the end of April, which should allow him to come back to the Board with a recommendation in May.
4. He knows there is a numbers problem related to the west side of the district compared to the east side. A map was displayed on the screen, and he pointed out the large geographic area for Glen View and Cypress Springs compared to the one for Hillcrest and Ruston Elementary. The two elementary schools on the west currently have 1,135 students, and the two on the east currently have 607 students. The numbers would be more equally balanced if the lines were reconfigured using Highway 167; that would probably change the

current numbers to 970 on the west and 772 on the east. He plans to ask the Board at the next meeting to change the attendance zones for the four city elementary schools. Mr. Milstead did note that current students would be grandfathered at their current schools if they so desired until all grades there were completed.

President Mitcham asked members to be thinking about having local training sessions for board members in lieu of attending the Louisiana School Board's Association's 2018 annual conference. Although worthwhile, money could be saved if training was held locally.

Trott Hunt commended the superintendent for both initiatives, the year-round-school option and redrawing district lines. Having meetings, getting input, and making sure concerns were addressed were the way to go before the changes were proposed he opined.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Hunt, the meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Mike Milstead, Secretary

Joe E. Mitcham, Jr., President