Centerville, Louisiana

August 11, 2022

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in regular session on Thursday, August 11, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana, with the following members answering to roll call:

**Present:** Mr. Joseph C. Foulcard Jr., Ms. Tammie L. Moore, Mrs. Ginger S. Griffin, Ms. Marilyn P. LaSalle, Mr. Michael E. Taylor, Mr. Dwight D. Barbier, Mrs. Alaina L. Black, Mr. Roland H. Verret, Mr. Kenneth E. Alfred.

**Absent:** Mr. Wayne J. Deslatte, and Mrs. Pearl B. Rack.

# Invocation

Ms. Estay gave the Invocation.

# Pledge of Allegiance

President Alfred led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

# Approval of Amended Agenda.

Mrs. Griffin made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to approve the amended agenda.

# Approval of Official School Board Minutes.

Mr. Taylor offered the motion and Mr. Barbier offered the second to approve the official school board minutes from the regular meeting held on July 14, 2022, as presented. All in favor and the motion carried.

# Approval of Consent Agenda.

President Alfred stated that Board Members can remove any of the items on the consent agenda for further discussion in the regular proceedings. Superintendent Bagwell read aloud the items on the consent agenda as follows:

# New Business

## Personnel:

### **Item 1.** \*Approval of policies from Forethought Consulting

1. School Board Ethics (BH)
2. Bids and Quotations (DJED)
3. School Bus Scheduling and Routing (EDD)
4. Equal Opportunity Employment (GAAA)
5. Employee Dress (GAMB)
6. Equal Education Opportunities (JAA)
7. Student Absences and Excuses (JBD)
8. Bullying and Hazing (JCDAF)
9. Student Dress Code (JCDB)
10. Discipline (JD)
11. Expulsion (JDE)
12. Student Health Services (JGC)
13. Administration of Medication (JGCD)
14. Student Voter Registration (JM) **NEW**
15. Expectant and Parenting Students (JQE)

### **Item 4**. \*Approve the 2022-2023 Pupil Progression Plan

### **Item 9.** **\***Grant authorization to “piggyback” on the Chemical Bid awarded to Auto Chlor for multiple parishes.

### **Item 10.** \*Approve banking resolutions authorizing signatories at various schools as a result of recent appointments.

Mr. Barbier made a motion and Mr. Verret offered a second to approve remaining items on the Consent Agenda, as presented by Dr. Bagwell. All in favor and the motion carried.

# Appearances:

The Beverly Woods Fishing and Hunting with Kids Foundation.

Mr. Robbie Bowers from Patterson, Louisiana, announced that he has been a board member for the past three years with the Beverly Woods, Fishing and Hunting with Kids Foundation. Mr. Bowers is in the process of creating a new locally 501(c)(3) non-profit organization called, “The Bayou Outdoors Foundation for Kids.” The foundation would provide underprivileged, special needs, and sick kids between the ages of 8 to 15 with exciting hands-on experiences in fishing, hunting, and other Southern outdoor activities within the United States, at no cost to their family. Kids would be accompanied by a guardian or parent, who could care for that child if they have special needs. Mr. Bowers asked for the Board’s permission to provide information on the newly created organization to principals and special education teachers.

Dr. Bagwell asked Mr. Robbie Bowers to email more details about how the trips are organized, and she would definitely share the information with school administrators.

# Business Affairs:

### **Item 2.** Approve Contract/Exhibit A of Employment for Promotional Appointment pursuant to L.R.S. 17:444.

Ms. Estay indicated that the two promotional contracts previously presented for board approval have been revised per the advertisement of Hammonds and Sills. Performance objectives were added as an “Exhibit A”, while a separate contract for principals is needed given their role in the hiring process and administration of the affairs of the school.

Ms. LaSalle made a motion to approve the Contract/Exhibit A of Employment for Promotional Appointment pursuant to L.R.S. 17:444. Mr. Foulcard made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 3.** Approve changes of Child Nutrition Clerk Typist II position from part time to full time.

Ms. Estay stated that Ms. Chaisson has requested to increase a Clerk Typist II position from part-time to full-time in the Child Nutrition Department, which requires additional work hours to complete tasks that are required by the department and the state. If approved by the Board, the clerk will be afforded the time to complete all required tasks, and accept the addition of new responsibilities to ensure continued efficiency with the Child Nutrition Department.

Mrs. Black made a motion and Mrs. Griffin made a second to approve changes of Child Nutrition Clerk Typist II position from part time to full time.

Mr. Barbier inquired about the increase in salary.

Mr. Perry replied that the salary increase is estimated at $12,000 to $15,000 for the full-time position.

All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 5.** Receive Group Health Insurance update Agency, Inc.

Mr. James Perez of DJW Insurance Agency, presented the Premium to Claims Summary for the fully insured Group Health Plan updated through July 2022. Mr. Perez noted since May there has been an increase in utilizations of total claims. However, year-to-date remains at a simple loss ratio under 76 percent, and about 83 percent after expense adjustments. The standard fully insured Health Group Plan renewal is expected to be received by October 15th, which will include a self-funded option. In preparation of receiving that renewal, Mr. Perez provided the Board with a hypothetical self-funded year-to-date summary, with the same funding for premiums and claims as the current fully insured Health Group Plan. He noted that that stop-loss premium, aggregate stop-loss premium, administrative fees, and RX rebates are hypothetical projections only.

Mr. Taylor indicated that the Board has previously discussed switching to a self-funded plan several times but was never presented with the right time to switch. However, it would be beneficial to the Board to roll over the existing plan if claims continue to remain low for the next few months.

Mr. Perry mentioned that the loss ratio for the fully insured plan in January 2022 and February 2022 was very favorable, due to the transition to United Health Care. However, the loss ratio will be much higher if you removed those two months.

President Alfred asked Mr. Perez if he could provide the Board with four full years of loss ratios.

Mr. Perez replied that the last few years won't be relevant because the plan was with United Healthcare, and their discounts are different. The hypothetical projections he extended out for several years in the future was based off claims from Blue Cross.

Ms. LaSalle inquired about updating the retiree’s medical fee.

Mr. Perez responded that will be one of his recommendations to the Board when it is time for renewal.

### **Item 6.** Approve proposed Employee Meal Prices for the 2022-2023 school year.

Ms. Chaisson indicated that each year School Food Service incurs a significant cost from the discount of employee meals. The School Food Authority is not required by the state to offer discounted meals to staff. With the increasing and everchanging cost of food and supplies, an increase of 75 cents per meal for employees is proposed for the 2022-2023 school year, which is less that the current visitor price.

Ms. LaSalle made a motion to approve the Employee Meal Prices for the 2022-2023 school year for an increase of 75 cents per meal. Mr. Foulcard made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 7.** Approve Visitor and Extra Meal Prices for the 2022-2023 school year.

Ms. Chaisson reported that the average prior year cost of breakfast was $2.78, and $4.14 for lunch. The current charge for visitor’s breakfast is $3.05 and $4.50 for lunch. At this time, the current meal prices meet the state’s requirements.

Mrs. Griffin made a motion to approve the visitor and extra meal prices for the 2022-2023 school year, as presented by Ms. Chaisson. Mr. Barbier made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 8.** Approve Community Eligibility Provision Participation for the 2022-2023 school year.

Ms. Chaisson stated that this is the third year of a four-year cycle that all St. Mary Parish Schools have participated in the Community Eligibility Provision Programs (CEP), which allowed us to use June 2020 data for those years. She recommended that the Board continue using June 2020 data for the 2022-2023 school year to include all schools with a 99.66 percent reimbursable rate.

Mr. Verret made a motion and Ms. LaSalle made a second to approve the Community Eligibility Provision Participation for the 2022-2023 school year.

President Alfred mentioned that the Community Eligibility Provision Participation Program allows 100 percent of all St. Mary Parish students to eat breakfast and lunch for free.

All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 11.** Approve Intergovernmental Agreement between St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office and St. Mary Parish School Board for School Resource Officers (K-9 Services).

Dr. Bagwell reported that the St. Mary Parish School Board has an annual contract with an outside contractor for K-9 services. Now, the school board has the opportunity to use the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Office to conduct searches within the schools at a lower cost.

Mr. Chris Veillion reported that the sheriff's office has increased from one K-9 to five K-9’s, which allows them to have multiple drug dogs out during the day. In the past they were not able to provide the services, due to lack of resources. The Sheriff’s Office now has the resources and would like to propose their services to the school board at a lower cost.

Mr. Taylor made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office and the St. Mary Parish School Board for School Resource Officers (k-9 Services). All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 12.** Receive updates regarding the School Resource Officer program and considerations for possible expansion.

Dr. Bagwell stated Mr. Holmes will provide the Board with an update on the School Resource Officer (SRO) serving the Patterson areas. She was also approached by the city of Morgan City, regarding the use of an SRO inherent to that city. This information will be presented by Judge Kim Stansbury.

Mr. Holmes reported years ago in the early 2000’s, each In-School Suspension Center throughout St. Mary Parish, was outfitted with a police officer. Over the years, since the origination of In-School Suspension Centers, Law Enforcement Agencies for various reasons, due to shortages and personnel could no longer afford to have one of their officers for In-School Suspension Centers. Except for Patterson, who was able to maintain a police officer in their In-School Suspension Center. About four years ago, when the new Patterson Junior High School was built, the In-School Suspension Center, was moved from the campus of Patterson Junior High to the campus of Patterson High School, which is outside the city limits of Patterson. Therefore, at that time Superintendent Armato, Mayor Grogan, and the police chief at that particular time reached a verbal agreement to allow the in-school suspension officer to convert over into a School Resource Officer. In-School Suspension Centers were originally implemented in St. Mary Parish, with an agreement between the local law enforcement agencies, and they also have to subsidize the cost of those police officers. However, there was no cooperative agreement between the St. Mary Parish School Board and the City of Patterson at that particular time. After speaking with Mayor Grogan, he wants the board to know that he is willing to do whatever is necessary to maintain the School Resource Officer to service Hattie Watts Elementary School and Patterson Junior High School.

Ms. LaSalle inquired if the School Resource Officer in Patterson only serves in the In-School Suspension Center.

Mr. Holmes replied they do not serve the In-School Suspension Centers at all, because it is housed at the Patterson High School.

Ms. LaSalle stated there needs to be some work on visibility and what the School Resource Officer’s actual duties are if the school board is going to compensate them to be in the schools.

Mr. Holmes replied that is why Dr. Bagwell wants to make certain that if they maintain that School Resource Officer position, that a cooperative agreement is signed, and that the officers are trained to implement the same guidelines that school resource officers, Officer West and Officer Shepherd are required to implement.

Dr. Bagwell stated this is to provide information of the current status, and what is being presented to the Board as the district evaluates and decides how to move forward in the role of School Resource Officers in St. Mary Schools.

Judge Kim Stansbury indicated that he had a conversation with Dr. Bagwell to establish a School Resource Officer at the Morgan City Schools, with an officer of the Morgan City Police Department. However, there were some miscommunications, he really wanted someone from the Morgan City Police Department. He feels it is extremely important to have an officer from the Morgan City Police Department, because the City of Morgan City has already assigned a police officer to his juvenile court, and they have established a great working relationship. He stated that the Sheriff’s Department does not patrol in Morgan City, they patrol all of the unincorporated areas. The police officer should be there to establish relationships with the students, as well as, the sheriff’s office is not in those schools or in the public of Morgan City. He stated that the school board has done a horrible job with truancy because they do not have the resources to do it, and they cannot get the parents to respond, but he can. Judge Stansbury said if the school board wants to utilize their money and get the best results, then it needs to be someone from the Morgan City Police Department. He said, he is not saying that the sheriff’s office cannot do it, but they cannot do it as well as the right police officer from the Morgan City Police Department. The sheriff’s office does not have the personnel to have someone in Morgan City every day.

Ms. Moore questioned how this placement would impact on the roles of the current School Resource Officers. She referred to Officer West to answer her question.

Officer West stated within the last few years, he actually visited Judge Stansbury’s court as the sheriff officer, to discuss some of the challenges that were happening within the parish. Officer West mentioned to the Board, that it has been said that more law enforcement is needed in schools. However, you cannot place people within the schools without further training. Officer West stated that Morgan City is an awesome department, and the statement he is about to make is not solely about Morgan City Police Department. It is about the fact, when he took over this position in 2015, it was not to take over anybody’s department. After meeting with the former Superintendent Armato, there was not any Memorandum of Understanding in place for the 14th Amendment when due process was being provided. He and Mr. Walter Shepherd got together without anybody asking, without the Board’s approval, and they went across the parish to put certain procedures in place. Officer West suggested the Board communicate with attorneys before they decide to vote on the matter, have a very clear Memorandum of Understanding that includes the roles and duties of the officer, who is going to be accountable for these officers, and make sure they are properly trained.

This item was information only and does not require any action from the Board.

### **Item 13.** Proclamation(s):

A. Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (September)

Ms. Mitchell read aloud the Suicide Prevention Awareness Proclamation for the Month of September as follows:

**~Suicide Prevention Month Proclamation~**

The St. Mary Parish School District’s Proclamation recognizes suicide as a serious public health problem, and suicide prevention as an important responsibility, and designates September as Suicide Prevention Month across the district. This month overlaps World Suicide Prevention Day which is recognized internationally and supported by the World Health Organization. The 2022 World Suicide Prevention Day is Saturday, September 10th.

**WHEREAS,** in Louisiana suicide is the second leading cause of all death among individuals between the ages of 10 to 14 across the nation; and,

**WHEREAS**, in Louisiana suicide is the third leading cause of all death among individuals between ages 15-34; and,

**WHEREAS,** suicide was the tenth leading cause of all death in the United States in 2019; and,

**WHEREAS,** suicide is now the eleventh leading cause of all deaths in the state of Louisiana; and,

**WHEREAS,** in the United States, one person commits suicide every 11 minutes; and,

**WHEREAS,** the suicide rate increased 33% from 1999 to 2017, and the suicide rate for those 10-14 years old has doubled in the last two decades; and,

**WHEREAS,** the stigma associated with mental illness and suicidality works against suicide prevention by discouraging persons at risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help and further traumatizes survivors of suicide; and,

**WHEREAS,** district suicide prevention efforts should continue to be developed and encouraged to the maximum extent possible under HB 719, also known as The Jason Flatt Act which was signed into law on June 16, 2008 under Governor Bobby Jindal and required mandatory youth suicide awareness and prevention training for all school personnel; and,

**WHEREAS,** the St. Mary Parish School District is committed to promoting a safe environment for all students where suicide awareness and prevention education and resources are readily available throughout the district; and,

**Now therefore be it resolved** that the **St. Mary Parish School Board** does hereby recognize the month of September as ***Suicide Prevention Month*** as a symbol of the year-round struggle against suicide.

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Dr. Teresa T. Bagwell, Superintendent Kenneth E. Alfred, President

St. Mary Parish Schools St. Mary Parish School Board

August 11, 2022

Date

Ms. Mitchell stated that updates to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has designated 988 as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This code was effective across the United States as of July 16, 2022.

Ms. Moore made a motion and Mr. Foulcard made a second to approve the Suicide Prevention Proclamation for the month of September, as presented by Ms. Mitchell. All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 14.** Award Substantial completion for Phase I Reroofing at Centerville School.

On behalf of Firmin Architects, Mr. Wiese asked for Substantial completion for the Phase I Reroofing projects of the old and new elementary buildings at Centerville School. These projects were funded by ESSER Funds.

Mr. Barbier made a motion and Mr. Foulcard made a second to award Substantial completion for Phase I Reroofing project at Centerville School. All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 15**. Award Substantial completion for Morgan City High School 1st Floor HVAC Replacement

Phase III base bid excluding alternate #1 Generator installation.

On behalf of Firmin Architects, Mr. Wiese asked for Substantial completion for Morgan City High School 1st HVAC Replacement Phase III.

Mr. Barbier inquired about the completion date for the Generator installation.

Mr. Wiese replied that the expected delivery date is July 2022, and another change order will be presented for the Generator at a later date.

Mr. Verret made a motion to award Substantial completion for Morgan City High School 1st Floor HVAC Replacement Phase III base bid excluding alternate #1 Generator installation. Mr. Barbier made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 16.** Discuss and take appropriate action regarding the sale of J. A. Hernandez Building.

Mr. Wiese reported that he received bids on August 3, 2022 at 10 a.m., to sell the J. A. Hernandez Building. One bid was received from Mt. Zion Faith Ministry of Franklin, Louisiana for the amount of $45,000, plus the 5 percent security deposit of $2,250.00. This does not meet the minimum bid amount required, which would be at least 85% of that $74,400. Mr. Wiese asked that the Board reject the bid and grant him permission to rebid the sale at a decreased amount.

Mr. Taylor made a motion and Mr. Verret made a second to reject the bid of $45,000 and rebid the sale of J. A. Hernandez Building. All in favor and the motion carried.

### **Item 17.** Consider amending the expense reimbursement policy (DJD) regarding meal allotments.

Mr. Foulcard indicated that the current meal allotments for out-of-parish meals should be increased by $10 or $15 per meal.

Mr. Foulcard made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to increase the overnight meal allotment for out-of-parish (In-state cities with exception of New Orleans) from $30.00 to $40.00, New Orleans and out-of-state cities from $40.00-$50.00, and no overnight lodging from $15.00 to $25.00.

Mr. Perry mentioned if the meal allotment increases higher than the Internal Revenue Service’s rates, then the difference will be taxable to the employees. The current Internal Revenue Service rates are $64.00 per day in parish and $74.00 per day for out-of-parish travel.

With no further discussion, the motion failed by a vote of two yeas, seven nays, and two absents.

### **Item 18.** Executive Session- Consider the case of *Patrina Coulon v. St. Mary Parish School Board*, Docket No: 2:21-CV-000019; USDC; Western District of Louisiana, Lafayette Division

# Board Enters Closed Session:

With a motion from Ms. Moore and a second from Mr. Barbier the Board went into closed session to address the litigation as listed above.

# Board Returns to Regular Session:

Mr. Barbier moved that the Board return to regular session. Mr. Foulcard gave a second and the meeting resumed.

# Recommendations from the Board regarding Executive Session:

Mrs. Griffin made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Legal Counsel. Ms. Moore made a second. The motion carried with Mr. Barbier voting nay.

# Committee Reports:

## Ad Hoc Committee

The Ad Hoc Committee met on Thursday, July 21, 2022 to discuss and take appropriate action regarding the superintendent evaluation.

President Alfred opened the floor for a public comment request from Mr. Scott Babin.

Mr. Scott Babin indicated he thought the superintendent evaluation used to be on a scale from zero to one hundred. He heard that the Ad Hoc Committee may be considering a one to five scale, which he believes would decrease the evaluation and expectations of the superintendent. He recommended the Board increase the scale to make the superintendent evaluation more rigorous, and vote against changing it to a one to five scale.

Mrs. Griffin stated that the Ad Hoc Committee met a few times to analyze and make revisions to the superintendent evaluation form. On July 21st, the committee approved the revisions, and at that time provided board members a copy to review. It is now being presented for the full Board’s approval.

Mrs. Griffin made a motion and Mrs. Black made a second to approve the revised superintendent evaluation form, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mrs. Black indicated that the new instrument actually aligns to how teachers are assessed and evaluated, and it also aligns with the superintendent’s contract.

After a lengthy discussion, all in favor and the motion carried.

## Athletic Committee

Mr. Barbier stated that the Athletic Committee Members meet on August 11th at 4:00 p.m., prior to the regular school board meeting, to examine coaching salaries and make recommendations to present to the full Board for approval. Items were voted on individually by the Board as follows:

Item 1. Principals shall not coach. Assistant principals may coach only after their assistant principal duties have been completed. Exceptions may be granted by the principal. Assistant Principals may coach at any school, including their own.

Mrs. Black made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to approve the recommendation of item 1, as submitted by the Athletic Committee.

Mrs. Griffin asked if the principal would have the option to say “NO” if they do not want the assistant principal to coach at their school or any school.

Dr. Bagwell replied that the recommendation states, “the assistant principal may be able to coach” but “not shall be able to coach.” That should be a decision made by the principal of that school.

After debate, Mrs. Black moved to withdraw from the main motion and Ms. Moore withdraw the second, to modify the wording of Item 1.

Mrs. Black moved to amend the motion by inserting the phrase *“with approval from the principal”* at the end of the first sentence of Item 1. The motion would read, Principals shall not coach. Assistant principals may coach only after their assistant principal duties have been completed, *with approval from the principal.* Exceptions may be granted by the principal. Assistant Principals may coach at any school, including their own. Ms. Moore offered a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Item 2. Eliminate maximum percentages for athletic directors, head coaches, assistant coaches, and junior high coaches. Pay them whatever the coaches' salary schedule dictates. Note: Coaches may coach a maximum of three (3) sports with the athletic director position serving as one of those.

Ms. Moore made a motion to approve Item 2, as described above. Mrs. Black made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Item 3. Pay CECP, non-faculty and college student coaches $1400.00 for football assistant coaches and $1200.00/sport for other high school sports and $950/sport for all junior high/middle school sports. (Current-HS-$800; JHS/MS-$550)

Mr. Verret made a motion to approve Item 3 as presented. Mrs. Black made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Item 4. Change the percentage for each sport coached to the next higher whole number; or next higher whole number plus .5%; or next higher whole number plus 1%. Example: 6.33% would become 7%, 7.5%, or 8%.

Ms. Moore made a motion and Mrs. Black to approve Item 4 as presented. All in favor and the motion carried, with Mrs. Griffin voting nay.

Item 5. Allotments: change Class A from 4 to 6 allotments (two coaching supplements).

Mrs. Black made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to approve Item 5 as presented. All in favor and the motion carried.

Item 6. Allotments: for junior high/middle school supplements, change small junior highs from 2 to 3 supplements (two schools).

Ms. Black made a motion and Mr. Foulcard made a second to approve Item 6 as presented. All in favor and the motion carried.

Item 7. Each coach will receive a $100/week stipend for each week in the playoffs starting with the week of the first playoff game.

Mrs. Black made a motion and Ms. Moore made a second to approve Item 7 as presented. All in favor and the motion carried.

Item 8. All approved changes will be reflected on the first check at the end of September.

President Alfred provided a recap of the total cost for Option 3 as follows:

* Eliminate coaching cap - $11,176.89
* Increase CECP, non-faculty coaches and college student coaches - $37,600.00
* Change percent of coaching pay - $127,666.00
* Change Class A allotment from 4 to 6 - $12,000.00
* Change small junior high school allotment from 2 to 3 (2 schools) - $10,000.00
* Playoff stipend - $20,000.00
* Total cost of Option 3 -$218,442.89

## Set time and date for new Ad Hoc Clerical Committee:

Mr. Taylor reported that the new Ad Hoc Clerical Committee will meet on Thursday, September 8, 2022, at 4:00 p.m., prior to the regular school board meeting, at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.

## Permission to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:

President Alfred opened the floor for a public comment request received from Ms. Lindsey Anslem.

Ms. Anslem indicated that Cultural Proficiency, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, are all just different names for Critical Race Theory (CRT). Critical Race Theory (CRT), which was formed in the late 80’s at a university. The theory was never meant to be brought to grade school or high schools. It was taught in a legal and collegial atmosphere to see the different laws through the lens of race and ethnicity stand points. She stated at this point of time, more unity is needed and not division. Her child shouldn’t be taught to divide his friends based on color, because he does not see color, he sees friends. Ms. Anslem said as a Christian, a parent, and a constituent, she chooses not to be silent on this issue and for the Board to have further discussions on this topic.

Ms. LaSalle specified that she created a Diversity Committee about twenty years ago, to teach the community, parents, teachers, and administrators on how to deal with certain issues. This information was never brought into the classrooms.

Ms. Moore acknowledged Ms. Anslem for her comments. Ms. Moore expressed that the intent of this committee is basically to provide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion awareness to the administrators, the faculty and staff, to have a better understanding of all the students they serve and teach. The goal is to increase the learning process by reaching out to everyone and to not single anyone out. Therefore, the intent is definitely not to create division or separation, it is to bring everyone together. Ms. Moore stated in order to teach in an environment or a classroom of diverse students, you need to be aware of your own individual biases and cultural backgrounds of the population and the students that you serve. She said it would impact the students that need it the most if they live in a diverse society. The intent would be to include the same people as before, and provide everyone with equitable resources and opportunities to be heard across the board.

# Staff:

## Chief Financial Officer’s Report

**Sales Tax Update:**

Mr. Perry reported that the sales tax for the first month of collections estimated at $1,949,582 collected, versus $1,445,833 budgeted, with a favorable various of $503,749.

# Financial Statements (Major Funds Only)

The Board was provided financial statements for major funds only to review at their leisure.

# Other Significant Items:

None

# Superintendent’s Report:

Dr. Bagwell reported that St. Mary Parish students returned to school yesterday to great fanfare, as teachers and administrators literally rolled out the red carpet to welcome them to a new school year. The first day count of students in attendance showed an increase of over 500 students from this time last year. The first day of school always elicits as many changes for students as they arrive with the new school supplies and leave school with a packet of information for parents, to review, sign and return to school. Parents are encouraged to carefully read the school's handbook and other important documents in order to stay knowledgeable of any changes and be able to assist their child in getting the most out of their education. Grades 3-8 and a select group of high school students received results of the LEAP 2025 tests from last May. Parents should also carefully review the child's LEAP 2025 scores and request parent conferences with any concerns. St. Mary's mastery plus level performance rating increased by one percent from 28 to 29 in grades 3-8. While high school performance in those highest achievement levels remain stagnant. Additionally, J. S. Aucoin Elementary was cited by the Louisiana Department of Education, as one of the top academic growth schools in the state, which is a tremendous accomplishment given the school's diversity and percentage of English language learners. Graduation rates for the class of 2021 are anticipated to be publicly released very soon and we expect that rates will remain well above the 90 percentile which has trended to the last four years. In closing, Dr. Bagwell thanked the members of the ministerial alliance and those who participated in prayer for our schools as we approach this new school year. Their sincere support for St. Mary’s students and staff is a testament to the prioritization of public education in this community and it is deeply appreciated.

# Any other Business as Allowed by Act 131

None

# Closing

## Resolutions of Respect

Ms. Estay read the Resolutions of Respect for the late Delores Madison Abraham (retired school teacher), Theodora L. Battaglia (retired professional), and Florence LaCoste (retired cafeteria technician).

# Adjournment:

With there being no further business to address, Mr. Foulcard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Griffin made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.