Centerville, Louisiana

February 11, 2021

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in regular session on Thursday, February 11, 2021, 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. Sylvia K. Lockett (Virtual not voting), Mr. Kenneth E. Alfred, Mrs. Ginger S. Griffin, Ms. Marilyn P. LaSalle, Mrs. Pearl B. Rack, Mr. Dwight D. Barbier, Mrs. Alaina L. Black, Mr. Roland H. Verret, Mr. Michael E. Taylor.

Absent: Mr. Wayne J. Deslatte

Mr. Stadalis gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the

United States of America.

# Introduction of Students and Employees of the Month

## Bayou Vista Elementary School:

Principal Kiante Gunner introduced 5th grader Aubree Bach as “Student of the Month” at Bayou Vista Elementary School. She is accompanied by her parents. Aubree currently has a 4.0 grade point average. She is a member of the Junior Beta Club, she plays softball, is learning to play the saxophone in band this year and enjoys going fishing with her dad. Aubree and her family also volunteer at the Purple Lemon in Bayou Vista. Aubree plans to attend Nicholls State University and earn a degree in culinary arts. She says that after she opens her restaurant, she plans to serve free meals once a week to the homeless.

Principal Kiante Gunner introduced Special Education Teacher Mary Soileau as “Employee of the Month” at Bayou Vista Elementary School. She is accompanied by her husband and daughter. Mrs. Soileau has over 20 years of teaching experience, of which 13 of those years she has been a resource teacher at Bayou Vista Elementary School. She is one of the hardest working people in the building. She is prepared to teach every student every day. She knows exactly what skills each child is working on and is able to address their needs with or without a para. Mrs. Soileau is also very patient with her students no matter the mood they are in when they come into her classroom. Her calming spirit helps the students refocus on their learning. Mrs. Soileau is respected by her peers at Bayou Vista Elementary School.

## Centerville Junior High School:

Principal Kristi Estay introduced 8th grader Brianna Ackman as “Student of the Month” at Centerville Junior High School. She is accompanied by her dad, sister, and cousin. Brianna has been a student at Centerville School since PreK. She is now in 8th grade and is an honor roll student, a member of quiz bowl and has been a member of the student Lighthouse Team since 5th Grade. As a member of the Lighthouse Team, Brianna works with and helps her peers. She works with teachers to plan, organize, and run the academic assemblies. In addition, she demonstrates her leadership qualities through her friendly attitude, her positively, and her encouragement of her classmates and those around her. She also serves as a role model, is persistent in the classroom and works diligently to meet the goals she has set for herself. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, watching TV, reading, talking with her friends. When Brianna finishes high school, she plans to pursue a career in nursing.

Principal Kristi Estay introduced Custodian Harry Coleman as “Employee of the Month” at Centerville Junior High School. He is accompanied by his wife. Mr. Coleman is dependable, persistent and, goes above and beyond on a daily basis and has an enormous amount of pride in his family and his work. He takes care of jobs before being asked to do so. He takes an interest in the students and supports them in their extracurricular activities at school by coming to games and cheering students on. He has conversations with coaches helping them see the positives in their season when the season is a little rough. When he sees a student that needs some guidance, he offers his help. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his grandbabies, and he still plays in softball tournaments when he is able to attend. Mr. Coleman is truly appreciated by the faculty, staff, and students at Centerville High School.

## Hattie Watts Elementary School:

Principal Sheryl Gibbons introduced 4th grader Kallie Mayeux as “Student of the Month” at Hattie Watts Elementary School. She is accompanied by her mother, brother, sister, and grandparents. Kallie maintains straight “A’s” and has excellent character. She is recognized as one of the STAR leaders (Student Taking Academic Responsibility). Her teachers and principal Gibbons love how she takes initiative to fulfill her classroom leadership roles. She is a test folder organizer and a homework leader. She is dependable and completes all tasks with a positive attitude. Her teachers have noticed that Kallie is always willing to give a helping hand without being asked. She was her class’s Habit Hero in December 2020. Kallie is a master at Habit 4-Think Win-Win. She comes to school ready to learn, gives her best, and still is available to help others in class. Kallie’s goal this year is to become a Word Millionaire. She is a huge Harry Potter fan and is already reading the fourth book in the series. This week Kallie received a Leadership Certificate and positive visit to the office because she put first things first by completing all her Zearn lessons. When principal Gibbons asked her what she likes most about school. Kallie said, “I love to learn new things that will help me with my future and my career.” She explained that her mom is her role model, and she wants to be a teacher just like her. After school you can find Kallie playing school in her mom’s classroom.

Principal Sheryl Gibbons introduced Pre-Kindergarten Teacher Amy Isham as “Employee of the Month” at Hattie Watts Elementary School. She is accompanied by her husband, daughter, and two granddaughters. Mrs. Isham has been teaching for 16 years, and she has made Hattie Watts Elementary School her home for the last 8 years. She has served on the faculty Lighthouse Team, the School improvement Team committee and is available any time Hattie Watts is in need. Mrs. Isham is the teacher who helps her colleagues when they face challenges, even if it means adding to her own workload. She is so much more than a pre-school teacher at Hattie Watts. She is an optimistic leader, a nurturing school mom, an enthusiastic cheerleader, a kind mediator, and an energetic magician. Every morning she arrives at Hattie Watts ready to lead her Pre-K students to success. She teaches them the alphabet, sounds, numbers, counting, and everything in between, including how to be a good leader. She nurtures their talents and growing minds. Mrs. Isham genuinely enjoys teaching her pre-K babies; she teaches them good behavior and builds their character. She is loved and appreciated by her peers at Hattie Watts Elementary School.

## Morgan City High School:

Principal Tim Hymel introduced 12th Braylyn Pierce as “Student of the Month” at Morgan City High School. Braylyn sometimes presents the flag for the pledge, she is in ROTC, talented music, talented art, talented theater, choir, she is gifted academically, and she has taken 23 hours of dual enrollment core credits at school. Her future plans are to attend Nicholls State University to major in Business Administration. In ROTC she was selected above her peers for the adult level of responsibility, she was in charge of the HR safety plans, public affairs with over 100 cadets, and during COVID she covered over 20 schools in community events.

Principal Tim Hymel introduced Band Director Michael Swiber as “Employee of the Month” at Morgan City High School. He is a 1999 graduate of Morgan City High School, and also a 2004 graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. After graduating from college as a band major, he began working at Morgan City High School as a band director. Mr. Swiber was a very good trumpet player, and sometimes still plays with the students. He is always volunteering to do other people’s duties, and always supporting the soccer games and basketball games. Mr. Swiber is loved by the students and staff at Morgan City High School, which explains why he was chosen as “Employee of the Month.”

# Approval of Amended Agenda

There were no amended agenda items to approve.

# Approval of Official School Board Minutes

Mr. Taylor offered the motion, Mrs. Rack offered the second to approve the official school board minutes from the regular meeting held on January 14, 2021. 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:

## Item 2: \*Permission to Advertise for Bids:

### A. \*Child Nutrition Department Items: Dry and canned foods, frozen foods, small and large equipment, paper, and cleaning supplies.

## Item 5: \*Approve resolution authorizing signatories on checks and other related financial documents.

## Item 6: \*Permission to advertise for Library Jobber contract.

Mrs. Griffin made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda as presented by Dr. Bagwell. Mr. Barbier made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

# Appearance:

## St. Mary Parish District Students of the Year:

            Ms. Tammy Drexler introduced the “Students of the Year” for the district as follows.  These students will compete in the regional competition.

### Elementary: Briar Gorman, 5th Grade, Wyandotte Elementary School

### Junior High: Mallory Menard, 8th Grade, Berwick Junior High School

### High School: Abby Williams, 12th Grade, Berwick High School

# Business Affairs:

## Item 1: Proclamations:

### A. National School Breakfast Week (March 8-12, 2021)

Mrs. Claire Guarisco reported that busy weekday mornings are a challenge for families to find time for a healthy breakfast. Fortunately, St. Mary Parish public schools offer nutritious school breakfast to ensure students are fueled for learning every school day. The National School Breakfast Week campaign theme this year is, “Score Big with School Breakfast” it reminds our entire school families that school breakfast provides a healthy and energized start to the day for students. Mrs. Guarisco asked the Board to make a motion to proclaim the week of March 8-12, 2021 as “National School Breakfast Week.”

Mrs. Rack made a motion to approve March 8-12, 2021 as National School Breakfast Week, as presented by Mrs. Guarisco. Mr. Foulcard made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

## Item 3: Discuss 2020 Reappointment Timelines.

Mr. Mike Hefner, Chief Demographer, of Geographic Planning and Demographic Services, LLC reported that the 2020 reapportionment timeline provided in the Board packets has a few changes. Normally, the census is reported to the president at the end of the year when the census was taken. Due to COVID the deadline has been extended to be released by late April. Mr. Hefner stated that he will do calculations after the release of the census data, then draft the required resolution stating the 2020 demographics for each district and whether redistricting will be necessary. The determination must be made within six months after the release of the census data as per State law. The School Board has approximately until June 2022 to have a plan approved to send to the Secretary of State and the State Legislative office for them to review and approve it and allow it to be implemented. If the Section 5 review is reinstated and Louisiana is a covered jurisdiction, then a plan must be adopted no later than January 2022. These dates are necessary to ensure the proper amount of time for required reviews and implementation prior to the qualifying period for the November 8, 2022 primary election. Qualifying for 2022 election cycle will be on July 20-22, 2022, and November 8, 2022 for the first election using the new reapportioned plan. Both the School Board and the Parish Council use precincts to build out their plans. Geographics Planning and Demographic Services, LLC recommends that both entities develop their respective plan concurrently. The coordination that comes from working together will allow for a minimal number of precinct splits and reduced election costs for both entities in the future. If the Board approves the Reappointment Proposal for Professional Services, public workshops would be held to allow public participation.

## Item 4: Approve GPDS, LLC Reapportionment Proposal for Professional Services.

Mr. Mike Hefner provided the Board with a proposal for 2020 Reapportionment Professional Services, which reflects a current client discount. If the School Board and the Parish Council agree to developing the plans of both entities concurrently, an additional $3,000 discount will be applied to each entity. The net cost of developing the School Board and the Parish Council plans concurrently would be reduced to $25,500.00 per entity.

Mr. Taylor made a motion; Ms. LaSalle made a second to approve the GPDS, LLC Reappointment Proposal for Professional Services.

Mr. Taylor commented that this is his fourth time working with Mr. Hefner and he was very pleased with Mr. Hefner’s outstanding performance in the past.

With no further discussion, all in favor and the motion carried.

## Item 7: Declare two portable metal buildings at Franklin Junior High School as surplus.

Mr. Wiese reported that two portable metal buildings at Franklin Junior High School have not been utilized in many years and needs maintenance expenditures. He asked the Board for permission to declare the two metal buildings as surplus.

Mrs. Rack made a motion to declare two portable metal buildings at Franklin Junior High School as surplus. Mr. Verret made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

## Item 8: Approve an Intergovernmental agreement to transfer ownership of two portable metal buildings from the St. Mary Parish School Board to the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office.

Mr. Wiese stated that the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office has expressed an interest in the two portable metal buildings, and they would take full responsibility of transporting both buildings from the current location at 525 Morris Street, Franklin, Louisiana, to the Sheriff’s Office anticipated place of usage. Mr. Wiese asked the Board to approve an Intergovernmental agreement to transfer ownership of two portable metal buildings to the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office.

Mrs. Rack made a motion to approve an Intergovernmental agreement to transfer ownership of two portable metal building from the St. Mary Parish School Board to the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office. Mr. Foulcard made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Item 9: Approve vendor for 2021-2022 E-Rate Category 2 project.

Mr. Derise reported that the St. Mary Parish School Board is eligible to receive E-Rate funds for network infrastructure improvements. A request for proposals (RFP) was issued in November 2020. Mr. Derise provided the Board with documentation on the three vendors (Detel, iConvergence, and Transformyx) that responded to the (RFP) and the scoring matrix. Mr. Derise asked the Board to approve Detel as the vendor for 2021-2022 E-Rate Category 2 project.

Mr. Verret made a motion; Mrs. Rack made a second to approve the 2021-2022 E-Rate Category 2 project to vendor Detel.

Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Derise if he had to detail a list of items that the funds would pay for and if it would be upgrades. Mr. Derise responded that in the RFP he listed the various types of equipment needed. Basically, like a catalog bid, compared to the last time he did a project bid. This would upgrade all the schools to faster internet and more access points.

Mrs. Rack asked if the list of items available for the Board members to review. Mr. Derise responded that it was in the RFP and he could provide her a copy.

With no further discussion, all in favor and the motion carried.

Committee Report:

Mr. Wiese asked the Board to schedule a Maintenance District III Committee meeting Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. prior to the regular school board meeting, to review the bids of the Morgan City High School 1st Floor HVAC Replacement Project.

Mrs. LaSalle asked the Board to schedule a School Uniform Committee meeting on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Staff Reports

## Chief Financial Officer’s Report:

### Sales Tax Update

On behalf of Mr. Perry in his absence, Dr. Bagwell reported that January 2021 sales tax collections for the seventh month of the fiscal year were $1.8 million collected and includes both Christmas sales and a one-time audit.

### Financial Statements (Major Funds Only)

Financial statements were not available.

### Other Significant Items:

None

## Superintendent’s Report:

Dr. Bagwell reported that the month of February is proclaimed as African-American History Month and this year focuses on the theme, the “Black Family:  Representation, Identity, and Diversity.”  Schools throughout St. Mary have created virtual instructional ceremonies, classroom activities, and schoolwide displays in celebration of pivotal leaders and prominent figures, honoring the vast contributions they have made in the progress of our nation.

The Louisiana Department of Education recently released a comprehensive document entitled, “Believe to Achieve” that highlights the state’s critical goals and overall educational priorities. Included within the release, LDOE also featured various data points that substantiate these goals and priorities. According to data on the state’s teaching force, the statistics revealed that:

* In 2019-2020, 24% of Louisiana’s teachers were uncertified or out-of-field.
* In 2018-2019, the state’s average teacher salary was $50,288. (St. Mary’s average was $47,933)
* Between 2016-2019, 44% of teachers exited by the end of their 5th year in teaching.
* In 2019-2020, at least 20% of all math, science, and social studies classes were taught by out-of-field or uncertified teachers.

St. Mary parallels the state’s priorities with a need to acquire and retain a diverse, highly effective educator workforce in an effort to staff every classroom with a certified and exceptionally competent teacher. Such efforts are impeded by the declining number of education majors in the state’s colleges as corroborated within “Believe to Achieve” data. The onset of a pandemic has only acted to magnify the problem as school systems struggle to hire teachers. A sales tax proposition of .45 percent seeks to attract and retain educators for our children. If approved, the measure will still see St. Mary as one of the lowest sales tax parishes in the area at 4.45 percent/4.75 percent in Morgan City versus 5 percent or higher in surrounding parishes. St. Mary’s school system has built a reputation as one of the state’s higher performing districts and are committed to fulfilling the pledge to offer students an exceptional education, which begins in the classroom.

In closing, Dr. Bagwell wished everyone a safe and enjoyable Mardi Gras break and remind students and parents that schools will reopen on Thursday, February 18th.

## Other Business as Allowed by Act 131.

None

# Closing:

## Resolution of Respect

Mr. Stadalis read the Resolutions of Respect for the late Maxie Galler (retired kindergarten teacher), Rowlyn Landry (retired science teacher), and Percy Parro (retired assistant principal).

With there being no further discussion, Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Rack made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.