

Centerville, Louisiana

March 26, 2024

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in special session on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 5:30 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:** Ms. Guienzy M. Brent, Ms. Tammie L. Moore, Mrs. Lindsey T. Anslem, Ms. Debra R. Jones, Mr. Chad M. Paradee, Mrs. Alaina L. Black, Mrs. Rhonda R. Dennis, Mrs. Ginger S. Griffin, Ms. Marilyn P. LaSalle.

**Absent:** Mr. Andrew V. Mancuso and Mr. Murphy J. Pontiff, Jr.

**Invocation.**

Dr. Fegenbush gave the Invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.**

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

**Staff:**

Approval of Resolution opposing State Legislation for Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) including House Bill 745 which creates the LA GATOR Scholarship Program.

President Black read aloud the resolution as follows:

A Resolution expressing opposition to state legislation establishing Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), including House Bill 745 which creates the LA GATOR Scholarship Program, that provide public dollars for private school tuition and educational expenses and to urge the St. Mary Parish legislative delegation to vote **NO** on any bill proposing an Education Savings Account, and otherwise to provide with respect thereto.

WHEREAS, there is a renewed and concerted effort at the legislature to pass bills that will give public funds directly to parents to be used for private school tuition and other educational expenses with little to no oversight; and

WHEREAS, for the past 20 years, the state has failed to adequately fund K-12 public education; and

WHEREAS, during that same period the state has continuously placed new accountability demands on both our students and our schools; and

WHEREAS, the St. Mary Parish School Board provides free public K-12 education to **any** student who resides in our school district within the guidelines set by both the state and federal government; and

WHEREAS, diverting public dollars to private schools and other programs through Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) without fully funding public schools disadvantages our students and schools; and

WHEREAS, providing public dollars to ESAs without requiring the same state accountability testing imposed on public school students is irresponsible public policy.

THEREFORE, the St. Mary Parish School Board does hereby express its **OPPOSITION** to legislation creating and/or funding Education Savings Accounts.

FURTHER, the St. Mary Parish School Board directs the superintendent of the St. Mary Parish School System to deliver a certified copy of this Resolution to each member of the legislative delegation of St. Mary Parish.

I, the undersigned President, and Superintendent of St. Mary Parish School Board, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted at its special session meeting on March 26, 2024.

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Mrs. Alaina L. Black, President

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Dr. Buffy S. Fegenbush, Superintendent

St. Mary Parish School Board

Ms. Moore made a motion and seconded by Ms. Brent to approve the Resolution opposing State Legislation for Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) including House Bill 745 which creates the LA GATOR Scholarship Program. All in favor and the motion carried.

**Adjournment:**

With there being no further business to address, Mrs. Dennis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:38 p.m. Mrs. Anslem made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.