

Centerville, Louisiana
January 11, 2024

The Regular School Board Meeting was called to order by Vice-President Moore.

Administer Oath of Office to School Board Member:

Judge Curtis Sigur and pastor Dr. Allen R. Randle, Sr. administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Guienzy M. Brent, District I School Board Member of the St. Mary Parish School Board. During the special ceremony, Ms. Brent was joined by her nephew Dallas McCarty Jr. and her cousin William Brent III.

Regular Session:

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in regular session on Thursday, January 11, 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:

Roll Call.

Present: Ms. Guienzy M. Brent, Ms. Tammie L. Moore, Mrs. Lindsey T. Anslem, Ms. Debra R. Jones, Mrs. Ginger S. Griffin, Mr. Chad M. Paradee, Mr. Andrew V. Mancuso, and Mrs. Rhonda R. Dennis.

Absent: Mr. Murphy J. Pontiff Jr., Mrs. Alaina L. Black, and Ms. Marilyn P. LaSalle

Invocation:

Mr. Holmes gave the Invocation.

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

Ms. Estay led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Introduction of Students and Employees of the Month:

B. Edward Boudreaux Middle School:

Principal Alexis Rack introduced 8th grade student Tyren Austin as Student of the Month at B. E. Boudreaux Middle School.

Principal Alexis Rack introduced Versana Polidore, JAG teacher as Employee of the Month at B. E. Boudreaux Middle School.

Hattie A. Watts Elementary School:

Assistant Principal Charles Foulcard introduced 4th grade student Sophia Paddle as Student of the Month at Hattie A. Watts Elementary School.

Assistant Principal Charles Foulcard introduced Dana Martin, 2nd grade teacher as Employee of the Month at Hattie A. Watts Elementary School.

Raintree Elementary School:

Principal Marie Cole introduced 5th grade student Sa'Niyah August as Student of the Month at Raintree Elementary School.

Principal Marie Cole introduced Shantay Womble, 5th grade teacher as Employee of the Month at Raintree Elementary School.

Approval of Amended Agenda.

No amended agenda.

Approval of Official School Board Minutes.

Mr. Mancuso offered the motion and Mrs. Dennis offered the second to approve the official school board minutes from the regular school board meeting held on December 14, 2023. All in favor and the motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda.

Vice-President Moore stated that Board Members can remove any of the items on the consent agenda for further discussion in the regular proceedings. Dr. Fegenbush read aloud the items on the consent agenda as follows:

New Business

Personnel:

Item 3. *Set day, time, and place for Regular Monthly School Board Meeting.

Item 4. *Proclamations:

- A. *Louisiana School Board Member Recognition Month (January 2024)
- B. *National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (January 9, 2024)
- C. *African American History Month (February 2024)
- D. *National School Counseling Week (February 5-9, 2024)

Item 5. *Permission to Advertise for Bids:

- A. *Child Nutrition Department Items: Produce, milk, eggs, juice, small equipment, Frozen foods, dry and canned foods, paper, and cleaning supplies.

Item 9. *Award bid for alligator tags.

Mr. Paradee made a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda, excluding Items 1 A-H and Item 2 A-B, as presented by Dr. Fegenbush. Ms. Jones made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Business Affairs:

Item 1. Review policies from Forethought Consulting as revised by Hammonds and Sill

- A. Administrative Records (CN)
- B. Grants (DFF)
- C. Gifts and Donations (DFK)
- D. Use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and Cardiac Emergency Plan (EBBH)
- E. Probation (GBG)
- F. Parent Conferences (IHAD)
- G. School Wellness (JGB)
- H. Student Health Services (JGC)

Mr. Mancuso recommended that the Board review policies and send comments to Superintendent Fegenbush before the February 8, 2024 regular school board meeting. No action was required from the Board for Item 1 A -H.

Item 2. Approval of policies from Forethought Consulting as revised by Hammonds and Sills.

- A. *Sick Leave (GBRIB)
- B. *Employee Sick Leave Bank (GBRIBB)

Mr. Mancuso made a motion to postpone approval of Item 2 A – B for a month, post policies on the school board’s website for employees to review and submit comments to be addressed at the February 8, 2024 regular school board meeting. Mr. Paradee made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.

Item 6. Discussion regarding timing and options for tax renewals and other funding requirements.

Mr. Jason Akers, Bond Council of Foley & Judell, L.L.P. explained the process of various taxes that are being levied by the school board and required to be renewed in the upcoming years as follows:

Ad Valorem Taxes (excluding bond millages)

- Consolidated School District No. 5 (Parishwide) – 11.82 mills last approved at election held on November 13, 2021 will expire tax year 2031.
- Consolidated School District No 2 – 12.73 mills last approved at election held on March 28, 2015 will expire tax year 2025.
- Consolidated School District No. 3 -12.42 mills last approved at election held on March 28, 2015 will expire tax year 2025.

Sales Taxes

- On July 1, 2021, the voters of the parish approved a point four five percent (0.45%) sales and use tax to be levied by the School Board. The net proceeds of the tax are to be used to supplement salaries and benefits paid by the School Board for teachers and other personnel. This tax will expire on June 30, 2026.

The item was for informational purposes only and no action was required from the Board.

Item 7. Approve acceptance of audit report for year ended June 30, 2023, as presented by the firm of Darnall, Sikes, Gardes, and Frederick.

Mr. Chris Miller, CPA with the firm of Darnall, Sikes, Gardes, and Frederick reported that in the audit for financial statements, there was an unmodified clean opinion and the highest opinion that can be given by an independent auditor.

Regarding the performance of the audit procedures, there were no audit adjustments proposed to the financial statements. Information received from the St. Mary Parish School Board accounting staff was accurate and unchanged.

There were no reportable deficiencies or material weaknesses that were noted in the internal control structure and no instances of non-compliance regarding state laws.

The report for internal controls and compliance regarding two federal programs, were reviewed and tested in detail for specific requirements. There were no findings on internal controls and compliance with the federal programs. It was an unmodified clean opinion issued for the year.

It was noted that there were some differences this year in the data reporting to the Louisiana Department of Education. The information is being reviewed by the school board's staff and will be resubmitted to the Louisiana Department of Education.

The Legislative Auditors have resumed a requirement that local governments are now again subjected to additional compliance testing in several operational areas. Regarding the statewide agreed upon procedures, there were no items noted that were no significant findings or any reportable exceptions in that area.

In summary, the results of the audit in many testing procedures were positive.

Mr. Mancuso made a motion and seconded by Ms. Brent to approve the audit report for the year ended June 30, 2023, as presented by Mr. Chris Miller.

In conjunction with the audit, Chief Financial Officer, Alton Perry asked the Board to designate \$3,000,000 for future technology and \$3,000,000 for potential future self-funded group health plan.

Item will be added to the February 8, 2024 regular school board meeting agenda.

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

Item 8. Award bid for lockers at Franklin Senior High School.

Ms. Jones made a motion and seconded by Mrs. Anslem to award the bid to Louisiana Equipment Company of Baton Rouge, Louisiana in the amount of \$53,950 for lockers at Franklin Senior High School, as presented by Mr. Wiese. All in favor and the motion carried.

Item 10. Approve Memorandum of Understanding between the St. Mary Parish School Board and 100 Black Men of St. Mary, Inc.

Mr. Mancuso made a motion and seconded by Ms. Jones to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the St. Mary Parish School Board and 100 Black Men of St. Mary, Inc., as presented by Dr. Sanders.

Attorney Edward B. Jones with 100 Black Men of St. Mary, Inc. provided a concise overview of the program's operations and the support it offers to students in St. Mary Parish.

All in favor and the motion carried.

Item 11. Approve vendor for E-Rate Category 2 equipment.

Mrs. Griffin made a motion and seconded by Mrs. Anslem to approve the 2024-2025 E-Rate Category 2 RFP to IConvergence, as presented by Mr. Vead. All in favor and the motion carried.

Reports

Staff Report:

Chief Financial Officer's Report:

Sale Tax Update:

Mr. Perry reported that the sales tax collections for six months into the fiscal year collected \$1,900,000 about \$40,000 under budget.

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. Fegenbush reported that the new semester officially began January 8th for students.

In December, Carson Paradee of Berwick Elementary School, Tyren Austin of B. Edward Boudreaux Middle School, and Cherish Lewis of Berwick High School were recognized as St. Mary Parish's Students of the Year. After a recent round of interviews, all three have been selected to complete on the regional level. Dr. Fegenbush wished each of them the best of luck as they progressed in the competition.

Dr. Fegenbush extends sincere gratitude to the St. Mary Parish law enforcement agencies for their daily contributions to safeguard St. Mary schools. As we honor National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day on January 9th, their dedicated service is deeply appreciated.

The public is cordially invited to attend the St. Mary parish junior and senior high schools' honor band performance at Franklin High School on Saturday, January 20th at noon.

The St. Mary Parish School District declare appreciation to board members of the St. Mary Parish School Board and proclaim January 2024 as "School Board Recognition Month" in St. Mary Parish. Dr. Fegenbush commended board members for their outstanding efforts in the community and their positive impact on the students of St. Mary Parish.

Dr. Fegenbush concluded her report with a heartfelt dedication in memory of District I school board member Mr. Joseph C. Foulcard, Jr.

Closing:

Resolutions of Respect:

No Resolutions of Respect.

Executive Session:

Strategy session and/or action concerning pending litigation.

As authorized by La.R.S. 42:17(A)(2), there may be an executive session to discuss strategy in litigation entitled "Boudreaux, et al vs. School Board of St. Mary Parish," bearing Civil Action No. 6:65-11351 on the docket of the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana.

Board Entered Executive Session:

With a motion from Mrs. Griffin and a second from Ms. Brent the Board entered the Executive Session. All in favor and the motion carried.

Adjournment:

With there being no further business to address, Mrs. Griffin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m. Mr. Mancuso made a second, all in favor and the motion carried.