

## GENERAL COMMITTEE REPORT TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016

The St. Bernard Parish School Board met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, October 18, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the St. Bernard Parish School Board Office. Following the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance, the Secretary called the roll. Members present were, Mrs. Diana B. Dysart, President, Mrs. Darleen P. Asevedo, Mr. Donald D. Campbell, Dr. Hugh C. Craft, Mrs. Katherine K. Lemoine, Mr. Clifford M. Englande, Mrs. Diana B. Dysart, Mr. Joseph V. Long, Sr., Mrs. Judy W. Nicosia and Mr. Sean K. Warner. Mr. William H. Egan and Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr. were absent.

On a point of privilege, Mrs. Dysart acknowledged the passing of Principal Susan Deffes with a moment of silence. Praises for Ms. Deffes were shared by the Board with condolences being extended to her school family at St. Bernard Middle and for her husband and sons.

Mr. Englande next wished a Happy Birthday to President Diana Dysart on behalf of the Board. Mrs. Dysart thanked everyone for their birthday wishes.

Mrs. Dysart next welcomed Ms. Alex Schneider to present the most recent installment of Super News. Alex first made an announcement regarding some upcoming activities including St. Bernard Middle's Moonlight and a Movie on October 21<sup>st</sup>, Chalmette High Homecoming on October 28<sup>th</sup>, Boo at the Barn on October 29<sup>th</sup> and the Chalmette High production of Robin Hood on November 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Schneider stated that this month's Super News will highlight three outstanding teachers, an Administrator and one support person. She also outlined dates that School Board Members will film introductions for Super News elements.

The Super News brought to the Board tonight highlighted Terrific Kids, Chalmette High College Night, National Merit Semi-Finalist Scholar Kenny Nguyen, Chalmette High Pep Rally, Chalmette High Ring Day, U.S. Attorney General Ken Polite and many local dignitaries visit to Chalmette High to discuss the dangers of addiction, Educator honors to Amber Moreland at Andrew Jackson Middle, Sarah Lurkins at Arabi Elementary and Beth Lauga at Chalmette Elementary, Denise Sanchez of Davies Elementary and Ms. Carole Mundt of Chalmette High. A special balloon release for Ms. Deffes was also highlighted.

Dr. Henderson Lewis arrived to join the meeting during this agenda item.

Mrs. Dysart thanked Ms. Schneider, Barry Lemoine and Jack Jackson for their time and energy in producing the Super News.

Mrs. Dysart next welcomed Mr. Albert Carey to present an update on the current construction of the Arlene Meraux Elementary School. He showed the front office and clock tower construction along with the drainage holding system being put in place to hold rainwater. He noted that the framing construction has progressed from front to back from the office to the pre-school play area to the gym which is just being framed. He mentioned that the school will offer over 300 parking spots. Mr. Carey closed by saying that because of terrific weather, the construction is staying on schedule.

After all questions were addressed by Mr. Carey, Mrs. Dysart thanked him for his presentation.

Mrs. Dysart next welcomed Mr. Charles Cassar to present information concerning the upcoming Red Ribbon Week. Mr. Cassar noted that the national and local effort to reduce drug activity will take place from October 24 – 28, 2016. The theme this year is “Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Drug Free.” Mr. Cassar noted that rally activities and speakers will be presented throughout the school system during this week. Much discussion took place regarding the visit from U. S. Attorney Ken Polite and the Epic Assemblies presentations that have taken place recently and the effect they have on the students.

Mrs. Dysart thanked Mr. Cassar for his efforts in this arena and for his presentation tonight.

Mr. Cassar next presented to the Education Committee an update on Cultural Arts activities that are taking place in the schools. Mr. Cassar noted the 100 students in band, 70 in chorus and 47 in tech. He mentioned also that Trist Middle and Arabi Elementary received funds from the Jazz and Heritage foundation to expand students’ knowledge by bringing in outside presenters and to expand current programs that exist in those schools. He also stated that starting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, many Christmas concerts will take place. Mr. Cassar announced that former student Caroline Boudreaux is the only sophomore placed in Loyola’s opera this season which is quite an honor. Ms. Cassar at Chalmette also had several of her students participate in the New Orleans Opera competition. Mr. Cassar also shared

how grateful he is for the facilities and opportunities that are shared with all the students through the support of the School Board. Special Recognition was extended to teacher Sara Felt of Davies Elementary who began to take her lessons from the classroom and posting them to You Tube. He noted that the Arts Council of New Orleans contacted him so that they could recognize this teacher for her outstanding use of technology in her Art project.

Mrs. Dysart again thanked Mr. Cassar for his presentation and additional thanks were offered to the teachers and students participating in these cultural arts activities.

Mr. Granberry presented the Personnel changes for October 2016. Mrs. Dysart acknowledged retirees Benny Nunez of Maintenance and Gwendolyn Harvey of Chalmette High School and thanked them for their years of service.

Under Superintendent's Recommendations, Ms. Voitier mentioned that the Audit Report for the 2015-2016 fiscal year will be presented at the October Regular Monthly Meeting. She also reminded everyone that Mr. John White will be at Davies Elementary on Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup> and asks Committee members to please let her know if they will be able to attend.

There being no further business to discuss, and on motion of Mrs. Asevedo, seconded by Mr. Campbell and passed by a unanimous voice vote of the members present, the meeting was adjourned.