



Regular Meeting of the St. Mary Parish
School Board
03/13/2025 05:30 PM
Evans Medine Meeting Room
474 Hwy 317, Centerville, LA 70522

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Voting Members

Guienzy Brent, Board Member
Tammie Moore, Board Member - Vice President
Lindsey Anslem, Board Member
Debra Jones, Board Member
Ginger Griffin, Board Member
Lawrence Guillory, Interim School Board Member
Marilyn LaSalle, Board Member (arrived at
Chad Paradee, Board Member
Alaina Black, Board Member - President
Andrew Mancuso, Board Member
Rhonda Dennis, Board Member

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in regular session on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana for the following purposes and to take whatever actions necessary. The meeting may be viewed online at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZ1z15loF_FZnVcBe09cRQ

1. **Meeting Called to Order (Mrs. Black)**
The meeting was called to order by President Black.
2. **Roll Call (Dr. Fegenbush)**
The roll call was conducted by Dr. Fegenbush.
3. **Invocation (Mr. Holmes)**
Mr. Holmes gave the Invocation.
4. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America (Mrs. Black)**
President Black led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
5. **Introduction of Students and Employees of the Month (Mrs. Black)**
 - A. **Franklin Junior High School: Evelyn Hernandez, 8th Grade Student, and Summer LeDay, Teacher**
 - B. **Patterson High School: Kailey Benjamin, 12th Grade Student, and Tina Johnson, Teacher**
 - C. **Wyandotte Elementary School: Bentley Bigler, 5th Grade Student, and Maybelle Klein, Teacher**

II. Appearances

1. **Recognition of newly appointed positions (Ms. Estay)**
Ms. Estay recognized and congratulated the new appointees as follows:

- Jackee Jackson - St. Mary Parish Public Schools Purchasing Agent
- Mason Foret - St. Mary Parish Public Schools Chief Accountant

III. Approval of Amended Agenda (Mrs. Black)

No amended agenda.

IV. Approval of Official School Board Minutes (Mrs. Black)

1. Regular Meeting: February 13, 2025

A motion was made and duly seconded in globo to approve the official school board minutes from the regular school board meeting held on February 13, 2025, and the special meeting held on February 19, 2025.

Motion made by: Andrew Mancuso

Motion seconded by: Tammie Moore

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

2. Special Meeting: February 19, 2025

This agenda item was voted on together with Item 1 February 13, 2025, regular minutes as part of an in globo motion.

V. Approval of Consent Agenda (Mrs. Black)

President Black 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.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented by Dr. Fegenbush.

Motion made by: Lindsey Anslem

Motion seconded by: Debra Jones

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

1. *Field trips

- A. *Franklin Junior High -Disney World-Orlando, Florida May 22-26, 2025 (Dr. Sanders)
- B. *Morgan City High School - Mississippi State University Stem Camp-Starkville, MS June 23-27, 2025 (Dr. Sanders)
- C. *Morgan City High School - Naval Air Station, National Flight Camp - Pensacola, FL June 22-27, 2025 (Dr. Sanders)
- D. *Patterson High School - Disney Youth Leadership Program & National Beta Convention, June 18-27, 2025 (Dr. Sanders)

2. *Proclamations

- A. *National School Social Work Week (Ms. Mitchell)
- B. *Read Across America Day (Ms. Mitchell)
- C. *National School Breakfast Week (Ms. Mitchell)

VI. Personnel

1. Approval of Instructional Calendar for the 2025-2026 school year (Ms. Estay)

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the St. Mary Parish Public School 2025-2026 proposed Calendar (DRAFT B) as presented by Ms. Estay.

Motion made by: Lindsey Anslem

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

VII. Business Affairs

1. **Permission to advertise for Bid: Sixteen Section Land S16T 17SR12E Sweetbay Paradise (Mr. Wiese)**

Mr. Wiese requested board approval to advertise bids for a Sixteen Section Land S16T 17SR12E Sweetbay Paradise hunting lease after the current leaseholder decided to terminate the contract early that was originally set to expire in July 2026. This contract generates a yearly revenue of \$10,246.00.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the advertisement for the hunting lease as presented by Mr. Wiese.

Motion made by: Marilyn LaSalle

Motion seconded by: Lawrence Guillory

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

2. **Approval of St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, Inc #20230011-ITE C&ITEP Application (Dr. Fegenbush)**

There was a public comment.

Mr. Brett Allain, former member of the Louisiana State Senate and President of St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, addressed the Board regarding a tax exemption application for St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, Inc. under the Louisiana Tax Exemption Program (ITEP). He provided background on the cooperative, emphasizing its status as one of the oldest sugar companies in Louisiana and the last remaining farmer-owned cooperative in the parish. He highlighted the economic impact of the cooperative, noting that it generated close to \$200,000,000 in revenue last year, with 62 percent paid out to farmers. He stressed the importance of the ITEP for the cooperative's ability to invest in necessary equipment, such as a \$24,000,000 cane boiler, without the burden of property taxes. Mr. Brett concluded by extending his gratitude to the Board for their time and consideration in approving the ITEP application for the St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, Inc.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Industrial Tax Exemption Application #20230011-ITE regarding the St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, Inc.

Andrew Mancuso said, despite his recusal, he expressed strong support for the approval of the Industrial Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) and ITEP's in general, emphasizing the need for a fair business climate in the parish to compete with neighboring parishes. He recommended that the board approve ITEP's as they arise.

After discussion, the motion passed with Andrew Mancuso and Chad Paradee recusing themselves due to a potential conflict of interest under Louisiana Revised Statute 42:1112, as their employer does business with the St. Mary Sugar Cooperative, Inc.

Motion made by: Lawrence Guillory

Motion seconded by: Tammie Moore

Voting:

Guienzy Brent - Yes

Tammie Moore - Yes

Lindsey Anslem - Yes

Debra Jones - Yes

Ginger Griffin - Yes

Marilyn LaSalle - Yes

Chad Paradee - Abstain
Alaina Black - Yes
Andrew Mancuso - Abstain
Rhonda Dennis - Yes
Lawrence Guillory - Yes

Motion passed.

3. Announce intent to call election as it relates to the renewal of the .45% sales tax renewal (Mrs. Voisin)

Mrs. Becky Voisin read aloud the announcement as follows:

St. Mary Parish School
Centerville, Louisiana

Announcement of Public Meeting

Notice is hereby given that at its meeting to be held on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex, 474 Hwy. 317, Centerville, Louisiana, the Parish School Board of the Parish of St. Mary, State of Louisiana, plans to consider adopting a resolution ordering and calling an election to be held in the Parish of St. Mary, State of Louisiana to authorize the renewal of a sales and use tax therein.

This item was presented for informational purposes only; no action was required or taken.

4. Receive Group Health Insurance Premium to Claims Summary Report (Mr. James Perez)

Mr. James Perez of DJW Insurance presented the health insurance premium to claim summary report, updated through February 2025. He noted that the report includes results for January and February, showing a favorable start to the year. The loss ratios were 89.2 percent for January and 86 percent for February, with \$2,250,000 in premiums paid and \$1,971,000 in claims paid out. Mr. Perez expressed concern about the high cost of prescription drug claims, particularly GLP-1 drugs, which could impact the budget for medical claims. He emphasized the importance of monitoring this trend and invited questions from the board. No questions were raised, and the report was concluded.

5. Approve recommendation regarding property insurance renewal for building & contents coverage for the year commencing April 1, 2025 (Mrs. Carmel Breaux)

Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants reported that the building and contents renewal offer from Paul's Agency showed no changes in coverage, terms, or conditions, with a premium of \$2,054,706, which is \$128,000 savings over the expiring premium. She recommended that the Board approve this renewal and to continue rejecting the terrorism coverage.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the recommendation of Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants regarding property insurance renewal for building and contents coverage for the year commencing April 1, 2025, for an amount of \$2,054,706 and to reject the terrorism coverage.

Motion made by: Chad Paradee

Motion seconded by: Andrew Mancuso

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

6. Approve recommendation regarding property insurance renewal for boiler & machinery coverage for the year commencing April 1, 2025 (Mrs. Carmel Breaux)

Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants reported that the equipment breakdown property insurance renewal for boiler and machinery coverage is offered by Frank's Agency with Liberty Mutual as the insurance carrier. There are no changes in coverage, terms, or conditions. The premium for the upcoming year is \$11,497, which is about a \$300 increase from the previous year. Mrs. Breaux recommended that the Board approve the property insurance equipment breakdown renewal for boiler and machinery coverage as presented.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the recommendation of Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants regarding property insurance renewal for boiler and machinery coverage for the year commencing April 1, 2025, for the amount of \$11,497.

Motion made by: Lindsey Anslem

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

7. Approve recommendation regarding workers compensation insurance for the year commencing May 1, 2025 (Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consulting) (Glynn Guarisco-Franks Agency)

Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants reported that Midwest, the current carrier, for the workers' compensation insurance renewal offers a two-year policy at \$196,478, locking in the premium for two years, which is an annual premium of \$98,239 per year. Mrs. Breaux recommended that the Board approve the workers' compensation insurance renewal for the two years.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the recommendation of Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consulting regarding workers' compensation insurance for the year commencing May 1, 2025, for the amount of \$196,478 for the two-year renewal.

Motion made by: Marilyn LaSalle

Motion seconded by: Ginger Griffin

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

8. Approve recommendation to retain services of third-party administrator (TPA) and safety consultant to assist the board with the workers compensation program (Mrs. Carmel Breaux)

Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consultants reported that the board is recommended to retain the services of a third-party administrator (TPA) and a safety consultant to assist with the workers' compensation program. The TPA, Claims Administrative Services from Tyler, Texas, has been handling claims since 2010. Their fee increased from \$23,367 to \$29,367 due to a rise in the number of claims over the past few years. The safety consultant, Riskwise, provides loss prevention and safety training, and their fee remains at \$12,000. Mrs. Breaux recommended that the Board approve both contracts for renewal.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the recommendation of Mrs. Carmel Breaux of Norris Consulting regarding the services of a third-party administrator (TPA) and safety consultant to assist the board with the workers' compensation program for the amount of \$29,367 with Claims Administration of Tyler, Texas. The fee for safety loss prevention will remain the same with RiskWise for the amount of \$12,000.

Motion made by: Marilyn LaSalle
Motion seconded by: Tammie Moore
Voting:
Unanimously Approved

9. Approval of policy from Forethought Consulting as revised by Hammonds and Sills and reviewed by the St. Mary Parish School Board Policy Committee (Ms. Estay)

- A. Student Use of Electronic Telecommunication Devices (JCDAE)**
The Policy committee recommended one revision to the Student Use of Electronic Telecommunication Devices policy (JCDAE) as follows:

The original wording: "These provisions *shall* also apply to any school-sponsored event, including athletic competitions and field trips, which take place during an instructional day."

The revised wording: "These provisions *may* also apply to any school-sponsored event, including athletic competitions and field trips, which take place during an instructional day."

The change from *"shall" to "may"* gives school principals or administrators the discretion to decide whether the rules apply to school-sponsored events.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the revised Student Use of Electronic Telecommunication Devices policy (JCDAE) as presented.

Motion made by: Andrew Mancuso
Motion seconded by: Chad Paradee
Voting:
Unanimously Approved

10. Discuss and/take action concerning contract with Superintendent (Mrs. Black)
A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Superintendent's contract as negotiated by the Board President and Vice-President.

Motion made by: Chad Paradee
Motion seconded by: Rhonda Dennis

After discussion, a substitute motion was proposed to approve the contract with three changes: removing the request to pay for 10 annual days yearly, removing the provision for the board to pay the employer and employee portion of health insurance, and reinserting the liquidated damage clause.

Motion made by: Ginger Griffin
Motion seconded by: Marilyn LaSalle
Voting:

- Guienzy Brent - Yes
- Tammie Moore - No
- Lindsey Anslem - No
- Debra Jones - Yes
- Ginger Griffin - Yes
- Lawrence Guillory – No
- Marilyn LaSalle - Yes

- Chad Paradee - No
- Alaina Black - No
- Andrew Mancuso - No
- Rhonda Dennis - No

The substitute motion failed with 7 votes against and 4 votes in favor.

After the failure of the substitute motion, the board returned to the original motion to approve the negotiated contract as initially presented.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

- Guienzy Brent - Yes
- Tammie Moore - Yes
- Lindsey Anslem - Yes
- Debra Jones - Yes
- Ginger Griffin - No
- Lawrence Guillory – Yes
- Marilyn LaSalle - No
- Chad Paradee - Yes
- Alaina Black - Yes
- Andrew Mancuso - Yes
- Rhonda Dennis - Yes

The original motion passed with 9 votes in favor and 2 votes against.

VIII. Committee Reports

1. Set time and date for the Annual Discipline Committee Meeting (Ms. Jones)

The Discipline Committee Meeting was scheduled for March 25 ,2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.

2. Set time and date for the District Climate Committee Meeting (Mrs. Anslem)

President Black stated that the District Climate Committee is a new committee that has been formed based on feedback from various stakeholders. The committee aims to conduct a climate survey to assess the feelings, perceptions, and views of the district and schools. It includes diverse members such as board members, staff, parents, community members, administrators, custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and paraprofessionals. The goal is to promote positivity and potentially make changes to improve the district.

The District Climate Committee Meeting was scheduled for April 2, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.

3. Special Education Advisory Council Meeting met on March 10, 2025 (Ms. McClarity)

Ms. McClarity reported that the Special Education Advisory Council met on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 4:00 p.m., in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex. Mr. Ricardo Rosado, a school psychologist, gave a presentation on social-emotional learning. The Special Olympics Track Meet will be held on April 4, 2025, at West St. Mary High School. The St. Mary Parish Arts Jam for Elementary Schools will be held on April 7, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. and High Schools will be held on April 8, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Franklin Teche Theatre located at 501 Main Street, Franklin, Louisiana. The importance of parent attendance and support for the advisory council was emphasized. The upcoming Special Education Advisory Council meeting dates were set for Monday,

September 15, 2025, Monday, November 17, 2025, and Monday, January 26, 2026, at 4:30 p.m., in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex.

IX. Staff Reports

1. Chief Financial Officer's Report (Mrs. Voisin)

A. Sales Tax Update

Mrs. Voisin reported that the sales tax collections for February 2025, which are eight months into the fiscal year, were \$1,879,000, with \$179,000 or 88.7 percent unfavorable compared to the budget of \$2,058,000. However, year-to-date collections are \$2,800,000 or 17 percent favorable due to a one-time tax audit collection received in October 2024, where the parish collected \$5,700,000, and the district's share was 47.3 percent or \$2,700,000.

B. Financial Statements (Major Funds Only)

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

C. Other Significant Items

There were no other significant items to report.

X. Superintendent's Report (Dr. Fegenbush)

Dr. Fegenbush reported that the 2025 Red Ribbon slogan for the St. Mary Parish Public School System has been selected: "Life is a Canvas, paint it with Dreams-Be Drug Free." Congratulations to Stanley Aucoin IV, a ninth grader at Berwick High School, for submitting the winning slogan. The Red Ribbon art contest based on the slogan is open for submissions until March 26th, and both will be presented at a later School Board meeting.

On March 17th, the St. Mary Parish Schools Industrial Advisory Panel will meet to discuss upcoming events and collaboration to support students and the community. This panel has organized a joint graduating senior and community job fair on May 5th.

Educators Rising, a grassroots effort to empower future educators and school leaders, will hold a conference on March 21st at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL). High school students will hear guest speakers, network, and compete in various competitions.

Dr. Fegenbush expressed gratitude to the Board for the privilege of continuing to serve in her capacity. Over the past year and ten months, St. Mary Parish School district has achieved significant academic progress across various areas, thanks to the collective efforts of staff members, families, board members, and the community. She thanked the community for their support and dedication.

Best wishes were extended to the Franklin Senior High School Hornets, who will compete in the finals at the Legacy Center in Lake Charles as defending Division 4 non-select boys basketball champions.

Mr. Mancuso clarified the recusal process for the Industrial Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) item, noting that the correct revised statute for the recusal reason is 42:1112, and the recusal process is 42:1120. He acknowledged that he may have previously misstated the statute numbers and wanted to ensure the correction was noted.

XI. Resolution of Respect (Ms. Estay)

Ms. Estay read the Resolutions of Respect for the late Dianne McAllister (retired school secretary).

XII. Closing - Adjournment

A motion was made and duly seconded to adjourn the meeting.

With there being no further business to address, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Motion made by: Lindsey Anslem

Motion seconded by: Debra Jones

Voting:

Unanimously Approved