

GENERAL COMMITTEE REPORT
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017

The St. Bernard Parish School Board met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 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, Mr. William H. Egan, Mr. Carl W. Gaines, Jr., Mr. Clifford M. Englande, Mrs. Katherine K. Lemoine, Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr., Mr. Joseph V. Long, Sr. and Mr. Sean K. Warner.

On a point of privilege, Mr. Englande recognized the birthdays of Board Members Katherine Lemoine, Diana Dysart and Mr. Carl Gaines. Mrs. Dysart also asked for a moment of silence to recognize the passing of Mrs. Bonnie Bonnette Boothe, daughter of former Board Member Mr. Herman Bonnette and for former School System Supervisor, Mr. Bob Arceneaux. After the moment of silence, condolences were offered to the families of both, Mr. Arceneaux and Mrs. Boothe.

Mrs. Dysart began the meeting by welcoming Mr. Jack Jackson who, in the absence of Mrs. Schneider, was present to introduce Super News. This Super News production highlighted, a score of 98.3 for the district in the school performance scores with CHS being named an “A” school for the third year in a row, the School District being awarded certificates of excellence in finance from the GFOA (Governmental Financial Officers Association) and ASBO, (Association of School Business Officials), making this over 25 years of achievement in this area, a reminder of the upcoming election on Saturday, November 18th where voters will decide whether or not to renew 3 propositions for continuation of millages to support the school system, National Merit Semi-finalist, Meghan St. Angelo, Red Ribbon Week, Boo at the Bayou, Literacy week and upcoming December shows at the Maumus Center. Teacher Features included Mr. Tom Dugger at Chalmette High School, Catherine Arnona of Meraux Elementary and Rocky Barrow a volunteer at St. Bernard Middle School. An additional shout out was given to the Chalmette High School girls Volleyball team who made the playoffs, the Chalmette High Football team who made the playoffs and the Chalmette High Band who scored Superior in all areas at the recent LMEA competition. Mrs. Dysart and the Committee thanked Mrs. Schneider for her presentation.

Mr. Cassar next presented to the Committee an update on Cultural Arts activities that are taking place in the schools. He stated that starting on December 1st will be a Christmas at the St. Bernard Parish Government Complex. Also, on December 2nd will be the Los Islenos Bonfire program and on December 9th will be the Docville Children's Christmas Festival, both of those events will highlight many students from different schools. The Chalmette High School will also have their annual Christmas Program on December 7th and 8th and is titled "Christmas Around the World." Mr. Cassar then talked about the Art activities that will take place at the Docville Christmas festival and invited Board Members to attend that festival on Saturday, December 9th between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to judge artwork done by students which will be sent to the upcoming Louisiana School Board Association Conference in February 2018. Mr. Cassar also reiterated the fantastic achievement of Mr. Jason Rusk, Chalmette High Band Director, in accomplishing the Superior rating for every facet of their LMEA performance in that local competition and also, Ms. Annelise Cassar who brought Opera students to participate in the New Orleans Opera Competition and had four students who placed in that competition.

Mr. Cassar also talked briefly about the efforts of Metropolitan Human Services district to provide assistance to parents and/or students in St. Bernard who are experiencing problems with substance abuse, mental health issues, depression, etc. A new center is now open in Arabi and funds are now available to ramp up those services locally.

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.

Dr. Lewis, as Education Committee Chair, presented the next agenda item regarding an update on Head Start. Dr. Raviotta appeared before the Education Committee to provide the Head Start update and Annual Report. Dr. Raviotta presented items that are mandated to be presented to the Head Start governing board, which is the School Board. In the series of handouts to be presented Dr. Raviotta began with the Head Start Program Annual Report. This first section of this report discloses information from the previous year. The second portion pertains to the breakdown of funding sources. The third section covers the number of families and children that were served. The fourth section covers the program compliance report. The fifth section covers the medical and dental report of the students. The sixth section talks about the various parental involvement that takes

place. The final section is on how they approach the readiness of students for kindergarten.

Other handouts offered were; Head Start Program Information Report that gives enrollment, staff qualifications, etc.; The Summary Narrative of Spring Data which refers to the assessment of improvements made by students during the school year; Health Report for each school Head Start classrooms; Head Start Governing Body Roles and Responsibilities; Head Start Program Goals and Head Start Program Performance Standards Final Rule: General Fact Sheet.

Dr. Raviotta mentioned that the first phase of federal monitoring will be taking place within this school year. Head Start monitors will be looking at health and safety issues, class observations, review finance issues and perhaps interviews with School Board Members.

Dr. Raviotta thanked all of the Head Start administrators, teachers and staff for their hard work and professionalism on a daily basis. He addressed all questions from the Committee. Dr. Lewis thanked him for the presentation and his hard work within the Head Start Program.

On motion of Mr. Englande and seconded by Mrs. Lemoine, the Committee voted unanimously by a roll call vote of the members present to receive the official Head Start Annual Report and Update.

Next, Mrs. Dysart welcomed Mr. Granberry to present the personnel changes for the month of November. Mrs. Dysart thanked retiree Elizabeth Deshotel for her dedication and years of service. Mrs. Dysart thanked Mr. Granberry for the personnel review.

Mrs. Lemoine as Finance Committee Chair welcomed Mrs. Joni Blum to present the bid tabulation for Spices and Seasonings (Class 2), Cereal, Dried Beans and Crackers (Class 3), Frozen Foods (Class 5), Meat and Meat Products (Class 6), Poultry and Eggs (Class 7), Seafood Products (Class 8) and Canned Goods (Class 9) for the period of January 1, 2018 to June 30, 2018. Dr. Lewis moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the lowest bidder on each item on the aforementioned bid tabulation. Seconded by Mr. Warner, the motion passed with no objections by a roll call vote of the members present.

Mr. Englande next welcomed Mr. David Fernandez, Finance Manager, to present the revised 2017 – 2018 General Fund and Special Revenue Fund budgets. Mr.

Fernandez noted that the changes in the General fund reflect year end encumbrances and fund balances and current staffing. Mr. Fernandez pointed out that the changes to the Special Revenue Funds reflected the final amounts awarded for these programs.

Dr. Lewis moved to recommend to the Board to approve the revisions to the 2017 – 2018 General Fund and Special Revenue Fund Budgets. Seconded by Mr. Warner, the motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of the members present.

At this time Ms. Voitier addressed the next agenda item concerning the new state accountability plan under ESSA, (Every Student Succeeds Act.) She began her explanation by sharing that the ESSA plan was passed by Congress and mandated that all states develop a plan to address its tenants. Ms. Voitier stated that the states Accountability formula is the main portion that will affect our school system directly by awarding fewer points for the same level of student achievement which in turn will result in lower overall student and school performance scores. The three critical shifts in the design of the accountability system are shown below.

Accountability/ESSA Updates

Changes to Louisiana's Accountability Formula

The new formulae represent three critical shifts in the design of the accountability system.

1. **Adjusting the scoring system to ensure that achieving an "A" or "B" is more difficult.** This will be achieved by awarding fewer points for the same level of student achievement.
2. **Adjusting school rating calculations to value more the progress of every individual child, including (a) measuring whether students are on a path to master fundamental skills; and (b) measuring how effectively students are advancing relative to their peers.** This progress index will replace the current progress point system.
3. **Expanding the school performance score formula to emphasize interests and opportunities for students, in addition to traditional assessment and graduation outcomes, as five percent of school scores.**

Under Superintendent's Recommendations Ms. Voitier noted that at the Regular Monthly meeting a representative will be present to award the donation from Valero to the Special Olympics program and there will be a discussion regarding Sebastien Roy School. She also mentioned that the Superintendent's Evaluation

forms are being handed out tonight. Those forms should be completed and turned in to assist in the Special Meeting in December for the Superintendent's Evaluation.

Ms. Voitier took this moment to discuss the upcoming millage renewal election on the ballot in the November 18, 2017 election. She noted that in a recent edition of the St. Bernard Voice conflicting information was presented about the nature of the millages. One article explained the millage request as a renewal but in an opinion piece the millages were mischaracterized as new taxes. Ms. Voitier takes issue with any attempt to misrepresent the financial planning of the St. Bernard School Board who has time and again proven its ability to act in the public's best interest when it comes to the taxpayer's dollars. This mix-up was acknowledged by the St. Bernard Voice. The Voice columnist and the Voice Editor have personally apologized and a retraction is scheduled to appear on the front page of the next issue of the Voice. Ms. Voitier reiterated that the propositions on the ballot are renewals and will continue the current revenue streams and will not result in higher taxes.

On motion of Mrs. Asevedo, seconded by Mr. Campbell, and passed by a unanimous voice vote, the meeting was adjourned.