



MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Voting Members

Guienzy Brent, Board Member
Tammie Moore, Board Member - Vice President
Lindsey Anslem, Board Member
Ginger Griffin, Board Member
Chad Paradee, Board Member
Alaina Black, Board Member - President
Andrew Mancuso, Board Member
Rhonda Dennis, Board Member
Lawrence Guillory, Board Member

Absent Members

Debra Jones, Board Member
Marilyn LaSalle, Board Member

I. Meeting Called to Order (Mrs. Black)

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Black.

1. Roll Call (Dr. Fegenbush)

The roll call was conducted by Dr. Fegenbush.

II. Opening of Regular Meeting

The St. Mary Parish School Board met in regular session on Thursday, September 11, 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. Invocation (Mr. Holmes)

Mr. Holmes gave the Invocation.

2. 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.

III. Approval of Amended Agenda (Mrs. Black)

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

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the minutes in globo for the budget workshop held on August 11, 2025 and the regular school board meeting held on August 14, 2025.

Motion made by: Ginger Griffin

Motion seconded by: Andrew Mancuso

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

1. **Budget Workshop: August 11, 2025**
2. **Regular Meeting: August 14, 2025**

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 following consent agenda as presented by Dr. Fegenbush.

Motion made by: Tammie Moore

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

1. *** Field Trips**
 - A. ***West St. Mary High School Wolfpack Band Travel to National Showband Association Showcase, November 8, 2025, to Beaumont, TX. (Dr. Sanders)**
2. ***Permission to submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR) to the State of Louisiana Department of Education for the year ending June 30, 2025 (Mrs. Voisin)**
3. ***Proclamations**
 - A. ***National Hispanic Heritage Month. (Ms. Mitchell)**
4. ***Request for Disposal and Weeding of Library Materials for the 2025-2026 school year. (Ms. Ransonet)**

VI. Business Affairs

1. **Receive update regarding 2026 commercial group health plan renewal and take appropriate action. (Mr. James Perez-DJW Insurance)**

Mr. Perez reported that the group health plan renewal proposal was received from Blue Cross, indicating a 5 percent premium increase effective January 1, 2026, totaling approximately \$662,000. This increase is primarily attributed to projected trends in prescription drug costs (12 percent) and medical expenses (just under 10 percent).

The August claims report showed a favorable month, resulting in a year-to-date loss ratio of 85.2 percent, and under 94 percent when adjusted for expenses.

An appeal was submitted to underwriting based on two key discrepancies:

The premium funding amount was underestimated by approximately \$250,000. No credit was given for the exclusion of HUMA, which will no longer be covered by fully insured plans with Blue Cross starting January 1, 2026, representing a \$140,000 reduction in projected spend.

A revised renewal rate of approximately 2.2 percent has been requested. A response from underwriting is expected prior to the October 9, 2025 board meeting, at which time a formal recommendation will be made.

It was noted that board decisions on renewals typically occur in October or November, with September decisions being rare and only occurring in cases of 0 percent increase.

Mr. Perez recommended deferring any decision until the October 9 meeting to allow time for underwriting's response.

Additionally, a self-funded proposal is available and may be presented at an Insurance Committee meeting for further review and comparison with the current fully insured plan.

2. Receive 2026 MAP plan renewal and take appropriate action. (Mr. James Perez-DJW Insurance)

Mr. James Perez reported that the current Medicare Advantage plan through Blue Cross remains a highly benefit-rich, custom plan with 754 enrolled Medicare retirees and spouses. The renewal premium increases from \$272 to \$316 per member per month, a \$44 increase. The plan continues to offer comprehensive coverage with minimal out-of-pocket costs and strong wellness visit participation.

The plan saves the district approximately \$5.2 million annually compared to covering retirees under the commercial plan.

Four renewal options offered by Blue Cross were presented:

- The board covers 100 percent of the increase – no change to member premiums.
- The board covers 75 percent – members pay \$11 more per month.
- The board covers 50 percent– members pay \$22 more per month.
- Switch to a reduced-benefit plan – no cost to board; members save \$39 per month, but with reduced coverage.

Proposals were not submitted by United Healthcare and Humana, as they could not offer competitive terms.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Medicare Advantage plan for renewal, which the Board would absorb 100 percent of the cost, as presented by Mr. Perez with DJW Insurance.

Motion made by: Ginger Griffin

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

3. Approve casualty insurance for year commencing October 1, 2025. (Mrs. Carmel Breaux-Norris Consulting)

Mrs. Carmel Breaux with Norris Consulting reported that the district's liability and cyber insurance packages are up for renewal effective October 1. Coverage remains unchanged across all areas, including general liability, automobile liability, board errors & omissions, and cyber liability.

- General Liability: \$2M limit / \$4M aggregate, \$25K deductible; renewal premium is \$38,177.
- Automobile Liability & Physical Damage: \$2M limit; fleet value increased from \$6.3M to \$8.7M due to new buses; renewal premium is \$310,736.
- Board Errors & Omissions: \$2M limit / aggregate, \$25K deductible; premium is \$38,700.
- Cyber Liability: \$1M limit, \$50K deductible; premium is \$35,116.

Total renewal cost is \$692,736, reflecting a \$96,000 increase, primarily due to the expanded auto fleet.

A recommendation was made to approve the renewal and authorize the superintendent to sign the Uninsured Motorist Rejection Form via separate motion.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the casualty insurance for the year commencing October 1, 2025, as presented by Mrs. Carmel Breaux with Norris Consulting.

Motion made by: Andrew Mancuso

Motion seconded by: Lindsey Anslem

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

A separate motion was made and duly seconded to reject the uninsured motorist and to authorize the superintendent to sign the uninsured motorist rejection form.

Motion made by: Tammie Moore

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

4. Approve resolution adopting operating budget of revenues and expenditures for fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 (Mrs. Voisin)

Mrs. Voisin stated that, as noted during the public hearing held today at 5:15 p.m. prior to this meeting, the district is required to adopt its annual budget by September 15, 2025. She recommended that the board approve the resolution included in the board packets to meet this requirement.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the resolution adopting the operating budget of revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, as presented by Mrs. Voisin.

Motion made by: Andrew Mancuso

Motion seconded by: Tammie Moore

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

5. Approve proposed employee meal price for school year 2025-2026. (Ms. Chaisson)

Ms. Chaisson proposed maintaining the current employee meal prices for the 2025-2026 school year as follows:

Breakfast: Full price – \$2.25; Carry-out – \$2.50

Lunch (staff only): Full price – \$3.75; Carry-out – \$4.00

She explained that although districts are not required by the state to offer discounted staff meals, this district has consistently done so as a courtesy.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the proposed employee meal prices as presented.

Motion made by: Rhonda Dennis

Motion seconded by: Lindsey Anslem

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

6. Approve proposed increase to visitor and extra meal price for school year 2025-2026. (Ms. Chiasson)

Ms. Chaisson explained that to remain in compliance with federal regulations governing participation in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program, visitor and extra meal prices must be set at or above the average meal cost from the prior school year. The 2024-2025 average costs were \$3.50 for breakfast and \$5.25 for lunch. Current prices fall below these minimums, requiring an adjustment. She proposed new visitor meal prices of \$3.75 for breakfast and \$5.60 for lunch for the 2025-2026 school year.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the visitor and extra meal price for school year 2025-2026, as presented by Ms. Chaisson.

Motion made by: Lawrence Guillory

Motion seconded by: Andrew Mancuso

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

7. Memorandum of Understanding between St. Mary Parish School Board and St. Mary/Vermillion CAA Head Start Program with provisions of Public Law 102 - 119 (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Public Law 97 - 35 (Federal Head Start Act). (Ms. Almetra Franklin-St. Mary CAA Head Start Administrator)

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between St. Mary Parish School Board and St. Mary/Vermillion CAA Head Start Program with provisions of Public Law 102 - 119 (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Public Law 97 - 35 (Federal Head Start Act) as presented by Ms. Daphne Jacquet of St. Mary Parish Community Action Agency Head Start Program.

Motion made by: Guienzy Brent

Motion seconded by: Rhonda Dennis

Voting:

Guienzy Brent - Yes

Tammie Moore - Abstain

Lindsey Anslem - Yes

Ginger Griffin - Yes

Chad Paradee - Yes

Alaina Black - Yes

Andrew Mancuso - Yes

Rhonda Dennis - Yes

Lawrence Guillory - Yes

8. Memorandum of Understanding between St. Mary/Vermillion CAA Head Start Program and St. Mary Parish School Board. (Mrs. Almetra Franklin, St. Mary CAA Head Start Administrator)

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between St. Mary/Vermillion CAA Head Start Program and St. Mary Parish School Board, as presented by Ms. Daphne Jacquet of St. Mary Parish Community Action Agency Head Start Program.

Motion made by: Rhonda Dennis

Motion seconded by: Guienzy Brent

Voting:

Guienzy Brent - Yes

Tammie Moore - Abstain

Lindsey Anslem - Yes

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

9. Update St. Mary Parish School Board on recently held auction and request permission to declare unsold items as surplus to be disposed. (Mr. Regard)

Mr. Regard provided an update on the furniture online auction. A total of five lots were sold, generating approximately \$110 in revenue. Bidders included individuals from as far as Mississippi, which was unexpected given the nature of the items— primarily older metal shelving and furniture. The broader reach of the auction was considered a success, and it was recommended that the same platform be used for future auctions.

As requested by Mr. Regard, a motion was made and duly seconded to declare the remaining unsold items as surplus for disposal.

Motion made by: Chad Paradee

Motion seconded by: Andrew Mancuso

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

10. Discuss and/or take action regarding estimates for canopy at Foster Elementary School. (Mr. Regard)

Mr. Regard stated as requested at the previous meeting, administration obtained three quotes for a canopy for the Foster Elementary School play area. Although the project cost is below the \$150,000 threshold, multiple bids were sought in accordance with board preferences. The quotes varied significantly, ranging from \$74,350 to nearly \$100,000. The low bidder for this project was NAVCO Construction LLC, with a total bid of \$74,350.00 for the Base Bid, which is below the estimated construction budget of \$75,000.00.

Mr. Regard asked the Board to accept the lowest bid of \$74,350.00 from NAVCO Construction LLC.

Motion made by: Guienzy Brent

Motion seconded by: Tammie Moore

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

VII. Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee Meeting met on August 27, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room to review and make recommendations regarding policies. (Mr. Mancuso)

Mr. Mancuso reported that the Policy Committee Meeting met on August 27, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room to review and make recommendations regarding policies listed as items 1 A through H in response to address statutory changes resulting from the 2024 and 2025 legislative sessions and to incorporate revisions to BESE Bulletin 741. The revisions pertained to the district's active policy manual. Any future transition to Simbli policies will be considered at a later date. All proposed revisions were presented by Forethought and reviewed by legal counsel prior to discussion, with the exception of Policy JGCF (Behavioral Health Support for Students) and Policy IDFC (Cameras in Special Education Classrooms). These two policies were referred to administration for further review, as additional clarification from legal counsel

and/or BESE was deemed necessary. Items A through F were recommended for approval as presented in the board packets. Items G and H were recommended to be tabled pending further clarification from BESE and/or legal counsel.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve policies listed in Item 1 A-F, as recommended by the Policy Committee.

Motion made by: Andrew Mancuso

Motion seconded by: Lindsey Anslem

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

Policies listed in Item 1 G-H were tabled by the Policy Committee for further research.

- A. Instructional Materials (IFA)**
- B. Student Computer Access and Use (IFBGA)**
- C. Student Absences and Excuses (JBD)**
- D. Bullying and Hazing (JCDAF)**
- E. Expulsion (JDE)**
- F. Child Abuse (JGCE)**
- G. Behavioral Health Support for Students (JGCF)**
- H. Cameras in Special Education Classrooms (IDDFC)**

VIII. Staff Reports

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

Mrs. Voisin reported that for two months into the fiscal year, year-to-date sales tax collections (July–August) are 6 percent below projections. August collections totaled \$1.947 million, which is \$392,000 under the monthly budget and \$33,000 below the year-to-date budget. Collections will be closely monitored in the coming months. Despite the current shortfall, the local sales tax office anticipates that FY 2025–2026 collections will exceed those of FY 2024–2025.

- A. Sales Tax Update**
- B. Financial Statements (Major Funds Only)**

The financial statement actuals for August 2025 are included in the board packets for members to review at their convenience.

C. Other Significant Items

Mrs. Voisin reminded the board of the upcoming 0.45 percent sales tax renewal election scheduled for Saturday, October 11, 2025. Early voting will take place from Saturday, September 27, 2025, through Saturday, October 4, 2025, excluding Sunday, September 28, 2025. Proceeds from this tax are dedicated to supplementing salaries and benefits for teachers and other personnel. This funding enabled permanent pay raises in FY 2021–2022 of \$3,000 for certified staff and \$1,500 for support staff but is only secured through June 2026. She indicated that the Fifth Ward School District No. 1 bonds were recently upgraded by Standard and Poor's from an A to an A+ rating. This exceptional rating reflects the agency's view of the district's consistently positive budgetary performance and growth in reserves, which enhances financial flexibility to meet future challenges.

IX. Superintendent's Report (Dr. Fegenbush)

Dr. Fegenbush reminded the community that on October 11, 2025, voters parishwide will decide whether to renew the 0.45 percent sales and use tax dedicated to teacher and staff pay starting in 2021. This funding directly impacts approximately 1,200 school board employees, supporting competitive compensation and classroom stability. Early voting begins September 27, 2025.

The district will host Parent and Family Engagement Nights on September 29, 2025, at Franklin High School and September 30, 2025, at Morgan City High School, offering sessions on internet safety, navigating the district website, community affairs, and academic resources.

September is Attendance Awareness Month. The district emphasizes the importance of daily school attendance, aligning with Louisiana's motto: "***The Power of Presence.***" A district-wide attendance support team is actively assisting schools in this effort.

The board paused to honor the memory of lives lost on September 11, 2001, recognizing the bravery of first responders and the unity that followed. The superintendent encouraged continued efforts toward peace, understanding, and community solidarity.

X. Resolution of Respect (Ms. Estay)

Ms. Estay read the Resolutions of Respect for the late Elnora Jack (retired language arts teacher).

XI. Closing - Adjournment (Mrs. Black)

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Motion made by: Tammie Moore

Motion seconded by: Andrew Mancuso

Voting:

Unanimously Approved