

## **November, 2005, Board Briefing**

*Board Briefing is a summary of St. Tammany Parish School Board action taken at the November 10, 2005, School Board meeting and is not intended to be a complete accounting of Board action.*

### **Appreciation for Hurricane Recovery Efforts Given**

A resolution was passed expressing School Board gratitude to all, including School System personnel, parish government, local municipalities, law enforcement and emergency protection, governmental and private community service organizations, the military, local utilities, and PTA's, who provided support and assistance in helping the School System with recovery efforts and meeting the goal of reopening schools on October 3, 2005. Parish President Kevin Davis was recognized for his leadership in helping guide the recovery of St. Tammany Parish.

### **Pontchartrain Elementary School Recognized**

Pontchartrain Elementary School administration, staff, students, and parents were congratulated, by Board resolution, for being the first and only school in Louisiana not having academic entrance requirements to earn the Five-Star Performance Label. This label is the highest given by the State Department of Education to schools whose base line scores reach 140 or more points. The school also was recognized for its continuous improvement efforts and for attaining the Exemplary Growth Label for exceeding its 2004-2005 Growth Target.

### **Construction Contracts Terminated**

The action by Superintendent Sloan to terminate contracts with Peabody Construction Company, Inc., A & L Systems, Inc., and Ascension Environmental Services, Inc., effective August 29, 2005, was approved. The contracts had been approved for renovations to Salmen High School before Hurricane Katrina. Renovations to the school are being reviewed as a result of the significant damage to Salmen High School from the hurricane.

### **Application to Bond Commission for Approval to Issue \$40 Million in Revenue Notes Accepted**

Approval was given to apply to the State Bond Commission for approval to incur debt and issue Revenue Anticipation Notes in an amount not to exceed \$40 million, to establish a bank line of credit, if needed to meet address cash-flow concerns. The emergency measure is intended to provide a cash source for operations, repairing, renovating, constructing, and acquiring school facilities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

### **Application to Bond Commission for Approval to Issue \$74+ Million in Revenue Notes Accepted**

Approval was given to apply to the State Bond Commission for approval to issue

Revenue Anticipation Notes in an amount not to exceed \$74,082,843 through the federal Community Disaster Loan Act, to help the School System relieve the financial strain resulting from Hurricane Katrina.

**LEAP 21 Promotion Decision for 2006 Approved**

Approval was given to fourth grade and eighth grade student promotion criteria for the 2005-2006 school year only. Following a Board of Elementary and Secondary Education directive, changes to the promotion policy related to LEAP 21 performance were made to allow for the extraordinary academic circumstances created by Hurricane Katrina.

**Pupil Progression Plan Updates Approved**

Policy updates to the Pupil Progression Plan were approved for submission to the State Department of Education. The plan outlines System and State policy for promotion, retention, school attendance, etc.

**Early Retirement Incentive Proposal for Certificated Employees Approved**

In order to help alleviate School System fiscal concerns through voluntary staff reductions, an Early Retirement Incentive Plan for qualifying certificated employees was approved. The option will be offered only to certificated employees eligible for regular service retirement who agree to retire from the System no later than January 13, 2006. Criteria for participation include, but are not limited to, seniority, years of service credit in the retirement system, area(s) of certification, and needs of the School System. Final determination of those allowed to receive the incentive will be at the discretion of Superintendent Sloan. Incentives are \$6,000 for teachers and other certificated employees and \$7,500 for administrative employees.

**Agreement Regarding Avoidance of and Alternatives to Districtwide Employee Layoffs Approved**

The agreement between the St. Tammany Federation of Teachers and School Employees and the St. Tammany Parish School Board that outlines steps for avoiding any reduction in work force and states the manner in which reduction would be implemented if a reduction became necessary next semester was approved. The plan was developed as an emergency option for managing the serious financial picture the School Board faces in light of substantial property loss and damage, reduced student enrollment, and state and local tax revenue declines.