

## **February , 2002**

**Board Briefing is a summary of St. Tammany Parish School Board action taken at the January 17, 2002, Special Board Meeting and the February 14, 2002, School Board meeting and is not intended to be a complete accounting of Board action.**

### **January 17, 2002 Special Board Meeting**

#### **Screening and Evaluation Committee Appointed**

Four members of the Screening and Evaluation Committee were appointed to evaluate and recommend architectural and other related professional services applicants for School Board capital improvement projects. Architect Henry Fry and engineer Kenneth Dutruch along with School Board Supervisors of Construction Cameron Tipton and Jules Lagarde were appointed.

#### **Abita Springs Elementary School Authorized to Contract with Agriculture and Forestry Department**

A resolution was approved giving Abita Springs Elementary School authorization to enter into an agreement with the State Department of Agriculture and Forestry for a school grant.

### **February 14, 2002, School Board Meeting**

#### **BESE Representative Presents Award to School System**

District 1 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) Representative Donna Contois made a special presentation noting the outstanding performance of St. Tammany Parish Public Schools in addressing state-designated school performance scores.

#### **School Board Bond Ratings Increase Announced**

School Board bond rating upgrades by two national bond rating agencies were announced. Moody's Investors Services increased its rating from A2 to A1; Standard and Poor's revised its rating from A to A+. According to agency reports, the upgrades are based on the School Board's commitment to "preserving ample levels of financial reserves," "sound financial operations," and "low debt burden" as well as "the District's steady property value." The upgraded School Board bond ratings will mean lower interest rates for the Board on bond sales. These credit ratings are among the highest in Louisiana.

#### **Special Election Called to Authorize Renewal of Propositions 1, 2, and 3**

A resolution was approved to call a special election for May 4, 2002, to renew existing millages known as Propositions 1, 2, and 3.

#### **Changes to School Board Policy Manual Approved**

Updates to the personnel policies section of the Board Policy Manual regarding the testing of drivers of commercial vehicles, the smoke-free workplace, and retirement were

approved. Revisions to instructional policies regarding the elementary physical education program, field trips and school-sponsored travel, and the Pupil Progression Plan were approved. References to "functions of the Education Center" were deleted from the policy manual.

### **Local Revisions to Pupil Progression Plan Approved**

Local changes regarding Algebra I credit and grading at the eighth grade level and foreign language credit and proficiency at the eighth grade level were made in the School System Pupil Progression Plan.

### **Bonne Ecole Elementary School Employee Recognized**

Bonne Ecole Elementary School custodian Wilbert Page received special thanks from the School System administration and a commendation from Fire District 1 for his prompt action in extinguishing a recent kitchen fire at the school. As a result of his immediate response, students faced no danger from the fire and the kitchen had only minor damage.

### **Schools Lauded for Exceeding Performance Growth Targets**

Twenty-six schools were recognized for earning state designation as either a School of Exemplary Academic Growth or a School of Recognized Academic Growth. The Exemplary Academic Growth designation required that schools exceed their school performance growth targets by five points or more. Recognized Academic Growth was awarded for exceeding growth targets by up to five points. Schools will receive monetary awards and recognition flags from the State. The total monetary award for the 26 schools is approximately \$342,190. Schools presented were:

#### *Exemplary Academic Growth*

Abita Springs Middle  
Alton Elementary  
Brock Elementary  
Chahta-Ima Elementary  
Folsom Elementary  
Folsom Junior High  
Madisonville Junior High  
Mandeville Junior High  
Pearl River Junior High  
Pitcher Junior High  
St. Tammany Junior High  
Sixth Ward Junior High  
Riverside Elementary  
Fontainebleau Junior High

#### *Recognized Academic Growth*

Abney Elementary  
Bayou Lacombe Middle  
Boyett Junior High  
Clearwood Junior High

Covington Elementary  
Cypress Cove Elementary  
Fifth Ward Junior High  
Florida Avenue Elementary  
Lee Road Junior High  
Little Oak Middle  
Pine View Middle  
Honey Island Elementary

### **School Board Redistricting Plan Approved**

A plan for School Board redistricting was approved and will be sent to the U. S. Department of Justice for final approval. Under the plan, western St. Tammany Parish gained a new district and eastern St. Tammany lost a district. Redistricting is required every ten years by law to reflect changes in population as recorded by the U. S. Census.

### **School Uniform Policy Amended**

Changes to the School Uniform Policy initially adopted by the School Board in 1998 were approved as amended. Primary changes involve parent notification about uniforms, uniform survey distribution and collection, cycle for parent vote on uniforms, and compliance measures. Changes to the policy originated from the recommendations of a district uniform committee comprised of school administrators, educators, parents, and students.

### **New Junior High School Name Approved**

Creekside Junior High School was the name approved for a new school opening in the fall in the Pearl River/Sixth Ward areas. A committee of school administrators, educators, parents, and students recommended the name.

### **Projects at Bonne Ecole Elementary and Florida Avenue Elementary Schools Approved**

The new parking lot paving and bus loop repaving at Bonne Ecole Elementary School and the new parking lot paving at Florida Avenue Elementary School were approved as substantially complete subject to recommendations of the architect, completion of the punch list, and approval of Superintendent Monteleone.

### **Low Bid for Pearl River High School Track Accepted**

The low bid meeting plans and specifications submitted by Southwest Recreational Industries, Inc., for a track at Pearl River High School was accepted. The bid amount was \$172,068.