

**SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
EMERGENCY MEETING
OF
THE TERREBONNE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

MARCH 20, 2020 – 9:00 A.M.

The Terrebonne Parish School Board met today at 9:00 A.M. in a special emergency session at its regular meeting place, the Terrebonne Parish School Board Office, 201 Stadium Drive, Houma, Louisiana, with Mrs. Debi Benoit, president, presiding, and the following members present: Mrs. Stacy V. Solet, vice president; Mr. Michael T. LaGarde, Mr. Matthew J. Ford, Mr. Clyde F. Hamner, Mr. Roger Dale DeHart, Dr. MayBelle N. Trahan, and Mr. Dane Voisin.

ABSENT: Mr. Gregory Harding

Dr. Trahan led the Board and audience in the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

President Benoit announced that the purpose of this special emergency meeting is to consider the adoption of the resolution "Declaring a State of Emergency," as it relates to Covid-19 (coronavirus).

Superintendent Philip Martin then proceeded to read the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

DECLARATION OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY

COVID-19

WHEREAS on December 31, 2019, officials in China alerted the World Health Organization ("WHO") to several cases of an unknown respiratory illness primarily concentrated in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province; and

WHEREAS after further investigating the illness and ruling out the recurrence of other previously-known viruses, officials, on January 7, 2020, announced the discovery of a new virus belonging to the coronavirus family of viruses ("COVID-19"); and

WHEREAS over the following weeks, the Chinese government began to report additional cases of the virus, evidencing a propensity of the virus to spread throughout China and beyond; and

WHEREAS by January 30, 2020, approximately eighteen countries, outside of China, were reporting cases of the virus, causing the WHO to declare the virus a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern;" and

WHEREAS over the following weeks, the virus continued to spread to nations around the globe, infecting thousands of individuals; and

WHEREAS on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared the coronavirus outbreak a "Global Pandemic;" and

WHEREAS on March 11, 2020, the Governor of the State of Louisiana declared a "Public Health Emergency" over the coronavirus outbreak; and

WHEREAS on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States of America declared a national emergency due to the coronavirus outbreak; and

WHEREAS in an attempt to combat the spread of the virus, the Governor, on March 13, 2020, ordered the closure of all public elementary and secondary schools in Louisiana, beginning on March 16, 2020, and ending on April 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS many children depend on the services of the Terrebonne Parish School Board for essential services such as the provision of healthy meals; and

WHEREAS while the cancellation of school will hopefully serve to combat the spread of the virus, such cancellation may put children at risk of not receiving enough healthy meals during the prolonged closure; and

WHEREAS the spread of the virus and its impact on the everyday lives of the School Board's students, faculty, staff, and their family members requires the School Board to take unprecedented steps to combat the spread of the virus and to serve the children of Terrebonne Parish; and

WHEREAS the sudden closure of all schools until April 13, 2020, or later has also caused confusion and concern to employees of the school district about their ability to continue to be able to support their families through receipt of compensation from the School Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, the above recitals considered, the School Board desires to utilize its assets in the fight against the coronavirus, as more fully set forth below.

AND NOW, CONSIDERING THE FOREGOING, THE SCHOOL BOARD HEREBY DECLARES AS FOLLOWS:

BE IT DECLARED that the Terrebonne Parish School Board hereby declares a public emergency due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that, notwithstanding any policy or rule to the contrary, the School Board hereby confers emergency powers upon its Superintendent of Schools for purposes of leading the School Board's response to the outbreak. Such emergency powers include, at the sole discretion of the Superintendent:

- (1) The authority to enter into any agreement or contract, without any further Board approval, for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, or services for sanitation, cleaning, technology, and other COVID-19 related services and supplies on behalf of School Board.
- (2) The authority to supply and arrange for the delivery of meals to all children of the parish, eighteen (18) years of age or younger, at no costs to the child or his/her family.
- (3) The authority to continue to pay school employees their regular compensation during the period schools are closed.
- (4) The authority to adjust curriculum, work schedule, compensation, and staff assignments without any further Board approval.
- (5) The authority to adjust the school calendar.

- (6) The authority to apply to BESE, LDOE, and/or USDOE, or any other government body for waivers of regulations or requirements, the compliance of which is impacted by COVID-19.
- (7) The authority to apply for waivers, grants, reimbursements, aid, and other COVID-19 related matters on behalf of the School Board.
- (8) The authority to provide non-mandatory, supplemental educational resources to students.
- (9) The authority to take any other action reasonably necessary to implement the above directives.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that the Superintendent is required to report, in writing, and at reasonable intervals, to the School Board as to the amount of expenditures made pursuant to this Declaration, as well as, the actions taken by the Superintendent pursuant to this Declaration.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that, in accordance with the Governor's declaration, any bidding requirements of the Louisiana Public Bid Law (La. R.S. 38:2212 et seq.) applicable to any purchases related to the School Board's response to the coronavirus outbreak are hereby suspended.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that this Declaration shall remain in effect until withdrawn by the School Board.

BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that notice of the provisions contained herein shall be published in the official journal of the Terrebonne Parish School Board within ten (10) days hereof.

THIS DECLARATION is adopted by the Terrebonne Parish School Board, at a Special Emergency Meeting held on the **20th day of March, 2020**, in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana.

Mr. Gregory Harding entered the meeting at this time.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Hamner moved, seconded by Dr. Trahan, that the Board approve the adoption of the foregoing resolution, as it relates to Declaration of Public Emergency (COVID-19).

A roll call vote having been called for on the adoption of the foregoing resolution, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Mr. LaGarde, Mr. Harding, Mr. Ford, Mrs. Benoit, Mrs. Solet, Mr. Hamner, Dr. Trahan, and Mr. Voisin

NAYS: Mr. DeHart

ABSENT: None

President Benoit declared the approval and adoption of the foregoing resolution carried.

Motion of Mrs. Solet, seconded by Mr. Hamner, with the exception of Mr. Ford who objected, the Board authorized and allowed the Board President, during this period of emergency, to amend or modify policies necessary to address issues specific to the COVID-19 crisis, expiring with the end of the current emergency declaration and revert back to normal Board policy at that time.

Motion of Mr. DeHart, seconded by Mrs. Solet, unanimously carried, the Board voted to adjourn its meeting **(9:25 A.M.)**.

/s/ Philip Martin, Secretary

/s/ Debi Benoit, President

RLB