



# Louisiana Special School District

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## Louisiana Special School District Board of Directors

Regular Board Meeting  
February 7, 2024 at 11:00 AM  
Louisiana Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired  
2888 Brightside Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70820  
Student Activity Center, Room 196

### Agenda

I. Call to Order

The February 7, 2024 regular meeting of the Special School District Board of Directors was called to order at 10:41 AM by Ms. Kristy Flynn, Board President. Members present at the meeting included: Ms. Maria Annis; Dr. Edward Bell; Ms. Sherry Crosby; Mr. Kenny Davis; Ms. Bambi Polotzola; and, Ms. Vickie Smith. Members not in attendance: Mr. Anthony Celestine, and Mr. Ronnie Morris. [Mr. Morris joined the meeting shortly after it began.]

II. Approval of the August 22, 2023 & October 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Sherry Crosby requested correction to Item V, Part B of the August 22, 2023, meeting minutes to include clarification of the name of the board member to second the motion to adopt SSD's Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace policies. Mr. Kenny Davis asked to be indicated on the as the member seconding the motion. Ms. Crosby made a motion to accept the two previous meeting minutes and make the aforementioned correction. Dr. Bell second the motion and it was unanimously approved.

[Mr. Ronnie Morris arrived at meeting]

III. Reports

A. Superintendent's Report

i. School/Program Updates

LSD: Dr. Natalie Delgado presented MAP (Map of Academic Progress) and highlighted upcoming activities and events.

LSVI: Susan Covington gave an update on students' progress and announced a possible ten (10) new students joining LSVI. Dr. Bell asked what SSD could do to ensure that teachers have the funding to do the necessary training to earn certification. He noted that Louisiana Tech offers courses and a certification exam, but the university could not continue to fund the classes indefinitely. Dr. Martin stated that currently, SSD has a policy for tuition reimbursement, but said that he was exploring revising that policy and suggested that IDEA funding is a possibility.

SSP: Dr. Shirley Lewis presented updates and recent academic data for the special school programs.

[A 15 minute break for captionist: 11:31 AM – 11:47 AM]

District Wide Supports: Ms. Nancy Rawls provided an update on the CTE program



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and mentioned that Mr. Ronnie Morris recently toured the aquaponics lab and that the pool will soon have fish. She also informed the Board that the barn project is scheduled to break ground in early March and should be completed by the end of June. Dr. Bell asked for information about the summer program with the visually impaired youth. Ms. Rawls announced that the program will be held June 5 through 28, 2024, from 8:00 AM to 3:15 PM.

Non-Academic Supports: Ms. Kat Carr presented an overview of her office. Mr. Morris asked that SSD provide advanced notice to all parents and stake-holders via the current website and other social media platforms before rolling out the new website. Mr. Morris also asked if the SSD tracked Medicaid funds dedicated to the school district and whether or not the SSD would expend all funds available. Ms. Carr explained the reimbursement process and Mr. Morris requested that the Board get an updated financial statement of fund balances for Fiscal Year 2024, and Prior Year Actuals in order to be confident that SSD is utilizing all available funds.

## B. Personnel Report

Ms. Santa Patterson provided the Board with an update on agency filled positions, vacant positions, and new hires. Dr. Martin announced two (2) new leadership positions – Scott Whitford as the new general counsel, and Jeff Jacobs as the new Executive Director of Operations. Dr. Martin also introduced Crystal Bobb as the new internal auditor. The superintendent stated that hiring an internal auditor satisfied one finding by the Legislative Auditor. Dr. Martin said that he will continue to update the Board as he continues to implement corrective action in response to the Legislative Auditor’s findings.

## C. Financial Report

Mrs. Granier gave the Board a report of the agency’s expenditures through the end of January. She recommended the use of the state’s checkbook.la.gov to view the agency’s finances in real-time.

## IV. Old Business – No Old Business for discussion

### V. New Business

- A. SSA expense reimbursement - This was for the expenses related to the interviewing process for the candidates for superintendent. The invoice was dated March 16, 2023; however, it was not sent until October, which was outside of the fiscal year. The original contract did not allow for reimbursement of expenses. There is no mechanism to pay additional cost outside of a fiscal year. Mr. Ronnie Morris made a motion to explore, or investigate, options for how to make payments. The motion was seconded by Dr. Edward Bell and was unanimously approved.
  
- B. Superintendent’s evaluation discussion – The current contract for superintendent states that the evaluation must be complete by April 1, 2023. Dr. Martin suggested that short time frame is not feasible. – After much discussion, Dr. Edward Bell made a motion to extend the timeline for evaluations to May 30, and set discussion at the



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May 7 meeting. Mr. Ronnie Morris seconded the motion and was unanimously approved.

- C. Changes to Open Meetings Law – Andre Bourgeois spoke of changes to the open meetings law, per the ADA. Proposed resolution: SSD Board to formally request that the Superintendent be directed to fund and begin the process of implementing the requisite IT electronic accommodations necessary to ensure the Board is in compliance with Act 393; the Board request that the superintendent provide to the Board within 60 days, the cost estimates of implementing of these electronic accessibility measures; and, the Board authorize its legal advisors to draft the rules and regulations for state Louisiana Administrative Procedures Act. Dr. Edward Bell made the motion to adopt the resolution. Sherry Crosby second the motion and it was unanimously approved.
  - D. Discuss proposed statutory amendment to LA R.S. 17§1945 (Act 468 of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session) – Board attorney Andre Bourgeois wanted to get a conversation about the board to help address the current limited requirements to serve on the Board. Motion to review the membership qualifications, also the possibility of travel reimbursement. Motion made to begin reviewing SSD enabling legislation for changes by Ms. Polotzola and the motion was seconded by Dr. Bell, and it was unanimously approved.
  - E. Discuss possibility of electronic meetings – This item was discussed in Section V, Part C.
- VI. Adjournment – The Board received no public comment. With no further business, Board President Kristy Flynn moved to adjourn the regular board meeting and was seconded by Ms. Sherry Crosby. Ms. Kristy Flynn adjourned the meeting at 2:39 PM.
- 1. Public Comment Policy – Members of the public shall be allowed to speak on items presented for action consistent with the Board’s public comment policy and for a time period to be determined at the Board’s discretion.
  - 2. The Board reserves the right to enter into Executive Session, if needed, in accordance with La. R.S. 42:16 and 42:17, the Open Meetings Law. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance regarding the meeting, please contact Amy Jones at [ajones@lsdvi.org](mailto:ajones@lsdvi.org).