



# St. John the Baptist Parish School Board

118 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street • P.O. Drawer AL • Reserve, Louisiana 70084  
[www.stjohn.k12.la.us](http://www.stjohn.k12.la.us) • PHONE: 985-536-1106 • 1-800-296-1106 • FAX: 985-536-1109

Patrick H. Sanders  
Board President

Heidi Trosclair  
Interim Superintendent

Sherry DeFrancesch  
Board Vice-President

December 6, 2019

HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD  
Parish of St. John the Baptist

Dear Board Member:

Upon call of the President, the St. John the Baptist Parish School Board will meet in **special session** at Godchaux Grammar Cafeteria, 1600 Highway 44, Reserve, Louisiana, on Monday, December 9, 2019, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The agenda is attached for the meeting.

Sincerely,

Patrick H. Sanders  
Board President

PHS:sww

Copy: News Media  
Legal Counsel  
SJAE  
Agenda Participants

#### MEMBERS OF THE ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

Charo Holden, District 1	Gerald J. Keller, Ph.D., District 3	Sherry DeFrancesch, District 5	Phillip Johnson, District 7	Shawn Wallace, District 9	Clarence Triche, District 11
Albert Burl, District 2	Patrick H. Sanders, District 4	Keith Jones, District 6	Debbie Schum, District 8	Nia Mitchell, District 10	

**AGENDA**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF ST. JOHN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Monday, December 9, 2019 ~ 6:30 p.m.**  
**Godchaux Grammar Cafeteria ~ Reserve, Louisiana**

1. Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance
  
2. Roll Call of Members
  
3. Public Comment. Ms. Debra Schum - To consider approval of Site for Proposed Type 1 Charter for Louisiana Premiere Charter (LAPC) at Life House Campus/Facility, Reserve, Louisiana (Requires action)
  
4. Board Items of Interest
  
5. Adjournment

Information forwarded to BESE members on  
President Sanders' behalf.



# St. John the Baptist Parish School Board

118 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street • P.O. Drawer AL • Reserve, Louisiana 70084  
[www.stjohn.k12.la.us](http://www.stjohn.k12.la.us) • PHONE: 985-536-1106 • 1-800-296-1106 • FAX: 985-536-1109

Patrick H. Sanders  
Board President

Heidi Trosclair  
Interim Superintendent

Sherry DeFrancesch  
Board Vice-President

December 5, 2019

BESE Member,

As you know, BESE's review of the Type 2 request by Louisiana Premiere Charter (LAPC) is on the School Innovation and Turnaround Committee agenda for December 10, 2019. As we stated in the attached letter, the SJBPSB has been receptive, timely, and responsive to LAPC's requests for information regarding a possible site for a Type 1 charter. We provide the following as an update to facts presented in the attached October 11, 2019 letter to you.

On October 25, 2019, our legal counsel (Wayne T. Stewart of Hammonds, Sills, Adkins & Guice) received a letter from LAPC's counsel requesting multiple pieces of information regarding the STEM site, a site the SJBPSB offered to LAPC in July 2019. The STEM site was part of four district-owned sites for the proposed LAPC Type 1 charter school. Within two weeks, the SJBPSB provided LAPC counsel information in response to each issue, as well as a proposed lease. Also, the SJBPSB arranged for a walk-through of the STEM site on November 8, 2019. On that date, Mr. Andre Washington of LAPC, Mr. Joe Neary with 4th Sector, and SJBPSB's Peter Montz toured the STEM School facilities, and Mr. Montz answered questions from Mr. Washington and Mr. Neary. In response to subsequent requests (November 11 and 19, 2019) from LAPC counsel, SJBPSB quickly provided follow-up information.

On November 14, 2019, I agreed to an informal meeting to discuss with Mr. Washington of LAPC to discuss progress toward its choice of charter site. I was accompanied by fellow board member Mrs. Schum, as well as SJBPSB staff, including Superintendent Trosclair. LAPC had several staff as well as its counsel, Ms. McMurray and Ms. Grand. The district staff and I addressed LAPC's multiple questions.

On December 2, 2019 at 5:00 p.m., SJBPSB's counsel received an email from LAPC counsel (Melissa Grand) indicating LAPC had rejected the STEM site. Instead, Ms. Grand stated that LAPC had chosen an apparently unused private facility on the LifeHouse campus. The LifeHouse site (the former Reserve Christian School) was among several considered by LAPC over a year ago and reviewed by TenSquare ("School Facility Assessment", K. Padian, December 17, 2018). The December 2018 TenSquare report cited "significant drawbacks" of the LifeHouse site, including partially completed/renovated building areas. LAPC had abandoned the LifeHouse option during contract negotiations, in favor of Riverside, due to the repairs needed at LifeHouse. We believe that LAPC's proposed charter school site has been vacant since 2012 – at least not in use as a school. As of the date of this letter, we have received no report or other information from LAPC that the condition of the LifeHouse site has improved in the past year.

SJBPSB counsel requested on December 2, 2019 of LAPC counsel that they provide the LAPC board agenda and minutes reflecting the rejection and choice communicated that day to SJBPSB counsel, as well as any updated facilities review/report (e.g., TenSquare). On December 4, 2019, our counsel received the attached

#### MEMBERS OF THE ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

Charo Holden, District 1    Gerald J. Keller, Ph.D., District 3    Sherry DeFrancesch, District 5    Phillip Johnson, District 7    Shawn Wallace, District 9    Clarence Triche, District 11  
Albert Burl, District 2    Patrick H. Sanders, District 4    Keith Jones, District 6    Debbie Schum, District 8    Nia Mitchell, District 10

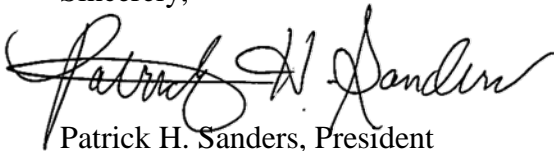
agenda from LAPC counsel. Despite LAPC having decided on November 20, 2019 to reject SJBPSB's STEM proposal, apparently in favor of a LifeHouse site, LAPC counsel waited over 11 days to communicate its decisions to SJBPSB counsel.

As we stated here and in our letter to you of October 11, 2019, LAPC has had several months to review sites the SJBPSB proposed for the charter. Also, SJBPSB staff have been very responsive and accommodating to LAPC's information requests. Now, within five working days of a BESE meeting to consider LAPC's Type 2 charter request, LAPC asks for SJBPSB's position on whether the LifeHouse site is acceptable for a Type 1 charter and whether proposed amendments to the draft charter contract are OK.

As expressed in our prior letter, we stand by our commitment to best serving the needs of our children. We remain firm in our belief that the proposed STEM site is a reasonable and appropriate choice for a Type 1 charter school. However, in our continuing diligent efforts to work cooperatively and in good faith in this process, the SJBPSB would obviously and simply need additional time and information to review LAPC's 11<sup>th</sup> hour rejection and alternate proposal. While it has been our honest and open desire to have a Type 1 charter, as opposed to a Type 2, we request that BESE remove Type 2 review from the table and allow us to continue to work toward a Type 1. Then, we will have certainty as to how to plan for all the children who will be under our jurisdiction for the 2020-2021 school year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call School Board member Debbie Schum at 985-212-9501.

Sincerely,



Patrick H. Sanders, President  
St. John the Baptist Parish School Board

Attachments (via email)

cc: Ms. Shan Davis, Exec. Dir. of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education