

The Morehouse Parish School Board met in regular monthly session on Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at Morehouse Student Services Center, with the following members present Karen Diel, Louis Melton, Robert Johnson – Vice President, Rick Hixon, Debbie Wilson, Veronica Loche-Tappin, and Adrin Williams - President. Also, present Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr., Superintendent, and Steve Katz, Attorney.

President Ms. Adrin Williams called the meeting to order.

The next item on the agenda was the invocation led by Mr. Rick Hixon.

The next item on the agenda was a moment of silence for:

- Shirley Peoples – Retired Nutrition Tech

Mr. Robert Johnson led the pledge of allegiance.

Next was a Roll call to Establish a Quorum: Present – Karen Diel, Louis Melton, Robert Johnson, Rick Hixon, Debbie Wilson, Veronica Loche-Tappin, and Adrin Williams.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the agenda. ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to amend the agenda with changes to item #15, seconded by Mr. Robert Johnson. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.***

On a motion of Mr. Robert Johnson to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Mrs. Veronica Tappin. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was recognitions:

- Hall of Fame- Gladys Hamlin Edwards. ***Ms. Gladys spoke in regards to being inducted into the 2026 Louisiana High School Sports Hall of Fame, and thanked Morehouse Parish.***
- Pafford EMS of Bastrop - Donated 250 backpacks to Morehouse Parish Schools. ***Morehouse Parish Schools recognized Pafford EMS of Bastrop with a plaque.***
- Employee of the month (Central Office). ***Willie Johnson was recognized as the employee of the month and was presented with a plaque, along with a gift card from EBI Insurance.***

The next item on the agenda was Superintendent's Announcements – (Presented by Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr.) ***Morehouse Parish Schools District received \$175,533.86 distribution from NativState. These funds will be used within the school district to purchase additional buses. English Learners grew 10% from last year.***

Homeland Security (Governor's Office) has entered into an agreement with Morehouse Parish School District for Emergency Preparedness. Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. recognized Mrs. Shelia Davenport as being selected to participate in the 2025-2026 NIET (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching program.)

Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. placed a newsletter from Counselor Anitra Shorts at board member's stations, with ideas to be implemented with our school district. Upon reviewing billing information with Waste Management services, Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. found a savings of \$3,000.00 a month.

Ms. Ruthie Evans with EBI Insurance sent an email regarding the 2025-2026 Back to School Rally, she was very impressed, and copies of the email was placed at board member's stations. There is a total of 3,002 students with Morehouse Parish School District.

Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. has partnered with Discovery Place, Union Parish Museum of History and Art. For the month of October, they will offer free field trips exhibitions for our students during the month of October.

September 18-22, 2025 Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. will attend the National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators Retreat in Washington, DC. Morehouse Parish School District has partnered with Life Skills and Catch My Breath. This program will teach the importance of not vaping and smoking. Catch My Breath will pay our teachers to teach the program, and provided all resources for free. Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. will follow up with principals.

Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. thanked the board again for allowing him to conduct research within the school district for his dissertation. Once the dissertation is published, copies will be provided to board members.

The next item on the agenda was Approval of Minutes – The Regular School Board Meeting held on August 5, 2025 at 5:30 pm. ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to approve minutes from the Regular School Board Meeting held on August 5, 2025 at 5:30 pm, seconded by Mrs. Debbie Wilson. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was the Approval of monthly Travel Requests - (Presented by Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr.) ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to approve monthly Travel Requests, seconded by Mr. Rick Hixon. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was to present the LARMA renewal and approve same and adopt the resolution for the 2025-2026 school year and authorize the superintendent to execute all documents necessary for renewal. (Presented by Mr. Rob Cowan) ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to approve same and adopt the resolution for the 2025-2026 school year and authorize the superintendent to execute all documents necessary for renewal, seconded by Ms. Karen Diel. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was “To discuss and consider an extension of the employment contract for the Superintendent of Schools.” (Presented by Mr. Louis Melton) ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to extend the employment contract for the Superintendent of Schools for two years through December 2028, seconded by Mrs. Debbie Wilson. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was to consider adopting A RESOLUTION GRANTING PRELIMINARY AUTHORITY RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE BY THE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD OF THE PARISH OF MOREHOUSE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, OF NOT EXCEEDING SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS (\$7,000,000) AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF REVENUE BONDS, IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, MAKING APPLICATION TO THE LOUISIANA STATE BOND COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL OF SAID BONDS AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION

THEREWITH. (Presented by Mrs. Samantha Mann) ***On a motion of Mrs. Veronica Tappin to table the item until further information is provided, seconded by Mr. Louis Melton.***

Roll Call Vote:

Karen Diel-No

Louis Melton-Yes

Robert Johnson-No

Rick Hixon-No

Debbie Wilson-No

Veronica Tappin-Yes

Adrin Williams-No

THE MOTION FAILED

On a motion of Mr. Robert Johnson to adopt the preliminary resolution GRANTING PRELIMINARY AUTHORITY RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE BY THE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD OF THE PARISH OF MOREHOUSE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, OF NOT EXCEEDING SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS (\$7,000,000) AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF REVENUE BONDS, IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, MAKING APPLICATION TO THE LOUISIANA STATE BOND COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL OF SAID BONDS AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, seconded by Mr. Rick Hixon.

Roll Call Vote:

Karen Diel-Yes

Louis Melton-No

Robert Johnson-Yes

Rick Hixon-Yes

Debbie Wilson-Yes

Veronica Tappin-No

Adrin Williams-No

THE MOTION PASSED

The next item on the agenda was to request permission from the board to hire Volkert, Inc. to provide project management services, and also to hire TBA Studios to provide professional design services for the roof project at Morehouse Elementary School. (Requested by Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr. and Presented by Volkert - Mr. Lyn Kenley) ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to grant permission to hire Volkert, Inc. to provide project management services, and also to hire TBA Studios to provide professional design services for the roof project at Morehouse Elementary School, seconded by Mrs. Debbie Wilson. None opposed and the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was to approve the engagement letter with Woodard and Associates for the school activity fund audit of any outstanding 2023-2024 audits and for 2024-2025 audits. (Presented by Ms. Ersula Downs) ***On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to approve the engagement letter with Woodard and Associates for the school activity fund audit of any outstanding 2023-2024 audits and for 2024-2025 audits, seconded by Mr. Rick Hixon. None opposed and the motion passed unanimously.***

The next item on the agenda was to receive the report from the Finance and Advisory Committee meeting held on August 26, 2025.

The Finance and Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 5:30 pm. **Robert Johnson - Chairperson** called the meeting to order. In attendance were the following: Louis Melton, Debbie Wilson, Veronica Tappin and Adrin Williams. Also present was Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr., Superintendent and Stephen Katz, Attorney.

The following agenda items were presented to the Finance and Advisory Committee:

1. To receive the Sales Tax Funds for July 2025. (Presented by Ms. Ersula Downs) **On a motion of Mrs. Debbie Wilson to approve the Sales Tax Fund for July 2025, seconded by Ms. Adrin Williams. None opposed the motion passed unanimously. Madam President, I so move, seconded by Mr. Louis Melton. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.**
2. To receive the General Fund report for July 2025. (Presented by Ms. Ersula Downs) **On a motion of Mr. Louis Melton to approve the General Fund report for July 2025, seconded by Ms. Adrin Williams. None opposed the motion passed unanimously. Madam President, I so move, seconded by Mr. Louis Melton. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.**
3. To receive the School Lunch Fund report for July 2025. (Presented by Ms. Ersula Downs) **On a motion of Ms. Adrin Williams to approve the School Lunch Fund report for July 2025, seconded by Mrs. Debbie Wilson. None opposed the motion passed unanimously. Madam President, I so move, seconded by Mr. Louis Melton. None opposed the motion passed unanimously.**
4. Meeting adjourned.

The next item on the agenda was “To discuss and consider having a cleanest campus contest.” (Presented by Mr. Rick Hixon) **This was discussion only.**

The next item on the agenda was to adopt the following Forethought amended policies as a: **“First Reading:”** IFA- Instructional Materials, IFBGA- Computer Access And Use, JBD- Student Absences And Excuses, JCDAF-Bullying And Hazing, JDE- Expulsion, JGCE-Child Abuse and JGCF-Behavioral Health Support For Students. Copies are provided in your packet. (Presented by Mr. Steve Katz) **On a motion of Mr. Robert Johnson to adopt the following Forethought amended policies as a: “First Reading:” IFA- Instructional Materials, IFBGA- Computer Access And Use, JBD- Student Absences And Excuses, JCDAF-Bullying And Hazing, JDE- Expulsion, JGCE-Child Abuse and JGCF-Behavioral Health Support For Students, seconded by Mrs. Veronica Tappin. None opposed and the motion passed unanimously.**

The next item on the agenda was Public Comment: **None for this meeting.**

The next item on the agenda was the Personnel Report.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Jesse Winston, Jr., Superintendent
Adrin Williams, Board President