

*St. Mary Parish School Board*

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For Immediate Release: Wednesday, September 30, 2020

RE: Leadership Changes at Morgan City Jr. High School and District Level Adjustments

Morgan City Jr. High School will install two new administrators this week just as all students are returning to on-campus learning. Ms. Michelle South will assume the reins as the school's principal to replace Ms. Carmen Lagarde who was recently appointed as Elementary Coordinator for Special Services. Ms. South is a familiar face to the students of MCJHS as she currently serves as the school's assistant principal. A longtime social studies teacher at Morgan City High School, Ms. South has worked within the community for several years and will easily transition into the principal role.

The appointment opened the door for a new assistant principal at the school, which will be filled by Ms. Alexis Rack who currently serves as a chemistry teacher and basketball coach at Franklin High School. Ms. Rack also has experience working with middle school students having previously served as a science teacher at B. Edward Boudreaux Middle School. Her dual experience in the classroom and on the basketball court will be an asset to the school as they strive to promote the academic growth and extracurricular involvement of all students.

Additional appointments were announced by school officials today and include a requested transfer of personnel to formerly held positions. Ms. Gidget Everitt will once again serve as At-Risk Interventionist and Ms. Chrissy Harrison will return to her role as Instructional Specialist for English Language Learners. Given this pivotal time in education, consistency of student support services is critical and the continuation of leadership in these vital areas was necessary. The adjustments will offer schools stability of program implementation, which is needed as St. Mary adapts to the impacts of a previously interrupted school year. Moreover, the school system is implementing newly designed social-emotional learning supports and reading interventions that will be coordinated by Ms. Everitt and Ms. Harrison as they resume their roles.

Further, the onset of enhanced health and wellness guidelines resulting from Covid-19 led the school board to adopt changes in the job description of its Nurse Facilitator. The significant revision in job responsibilities was necessary given the imperative emphasis on school health protocols and ongoing collaboration with public health officials. As a result, Ms. Lydia Duval assumes this expanded position as St. Mary's Facilitator of School Health and Nursing Services. Her role in managing school nurses and maintaining adherence to school health protocols is especially critical and necessitates one with her expertise and experience. The school system intends to transition all newly appointed leaders within the coming week.