Acadia Parish school enrollment drops

By JO CART
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CROWLEY — Enrollment figures for Acadia Parish schools showed about 150 students less on the day after Labor Day than in 1984, according to a staff report given to the parish School Board at its meeting Tuesday night.

Wilfred Broussard, supervisor of child welfare and attendance, told the board that the 1985 figure of total enrollment in the parish was 10,472, compared to 10,631 last year.

Crowley Middle School showed the biggest decrease, of 63, while the largest increase was of 69 at South Crowley Elementary School.

Broussard also said there are now 165 students enrolled in the alternative education program in Acadia.

The board approved a recommendation from its Executive Committee to accept the bid of Donley Air Conditioning and Heating Co. of Crowley for $42,010 to replace the boiler system at Crowley Junior High. The bid included two alternates — a water-pump replacement and installing an electronic energy-management system.

Dr. James Griffin, Acadia superintendent of schools, told the board that consulting engineers had assured him the boiler system was the most economical way to handle the school’s heating problems.

Grant Link, chairman of the Executive Committee, added that the current system is 40 years old and that the engineers said continued repairs would be impractical.

Griffin also briefed the board on the current ruling by the state Department of Education about services extended in the past by the public-school system to religiously affiliated schools.

He said the ruling specifically concerns instructors who were being paid with federal Chapter 1 funds and is the result of a U.S. Supreme Court decision.

Under the ruling, public-school teachers paid with Chapter 1 funds can no longer do any work at parochial schools, either during or after regular school hours. He added that special education Chapter 2 programs would not be affected by the changes.

Griffin also reviewed the sales-tax report for August, which showed a decrease of 2.5 percent from the same month last year. He said the collection for the year-to-date showed an increase of 7.61 percent.

He added that the board’s attorney, Kenneth Privat, had “more than paid for his salary” since being hired last year. Privat had written letters to companies with delinquent sales-tax accounts to acquire the funds without court action, Griffin said.

One firm with a delinquent account, Huffco Petroleum Corp., requested a waiver of the penalty charged on its account, but the board refused. The firm had paid $11,789 that was due in taxes, and the board assessed $8,746.69 in penalty charges. The board waived only $2,175.51, which would have been due on the amount the company paid incorrectly to another parish.

The board voted to accept a transfer of the Southwest Louisiana Vocational-Technical School annex, which now reverts to the board because the vocational system no longer uses the building.

Griffin said it will be used as an adult education and learning center, housing an alternative school, and adult-education and special-education programs.

In other action, the board:

• Approved a six-day contract extension for Rudick Construction Co. on two classrooms at Church Point Elementary.

• Approved a request for a hold-harmless agreement between the board and Fred Cart for about two feet of the new Iota High School track that infringes on Cart’s property.

• Approved resolutions seeking to restore tuition exemption for Louisiana teachers and opposing any further cuts in school-lunch funds from the state.