French Language Classes Requested

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Advertiser Staff Reporter

CODOFIL Chairman James Domengeaux this morning appealed to the Lafayette Parish School Board to institute French language classes in parish schools — not as an enrichment program but as a required subject.

Citing Act 408 of the 1968 legislature decreeing that French be taught in the first five elementary grades and three high school grades by the school year 1972-73, Domengeaux told the board that "Lafayette Parish has done very little to implement this act."

"Of 35 parish elementary schools 27 have no French classes at all and there are only nine high school teachers teaching French."

"Ignore People"

"The law also provides the option not to participate," the attorney continued, "but if you do not help us preserve our French language, we will have ignored the 1.5 million people in the state who speak and understand French and we will have ignored obvious economic and commercial benefits."

Domengeaux also told the local school board that the State Department of Education and Superintendent William Dodd have expressed support and encouragement for the program.

"This program must be of major importance to you," the chairman concluded.

Committee Named

On the recommendation of Board President George Dupuis, a committee was appointed to work with Domengeaux and school administrator Joe Glorioso to explore the possibility of using Federal Title I funds to finance the classes.

Committee recommendations and board action must be taken by April 20.

Following this plea for additional school services, budget committee chairman Charles Patterson reported that the final 1970-71 current school budget of $14,562,000 has a $350,000 deficit.

"And, since by law we cannot (Continued on Page 2, Col. 4)
Superintendent F.C. Delana told the board that an official name must be adopted for the new vocational-technical training school being readied to open in September.

Center Suggested
Lafayette Parish School Board Career Center was suggested by Delana and acting director Robert Arceneaux with several board members asking for time to consider the name.

Delana also recommended that the board continue to allow summer athletic and associated activity clinics the use of school facilities for a nominal fee, but that academic summer sessions using school facilities, supplies and equipment be discontinued.

Formal action on both matters will be taken at a later date.

submit a deficit budget to the State Department of Education, we have for the second year transferred funds from the Capital Improvement Fund, generated by sales tax, to the general fund to meet this obligation.

Observing that the board has unsuccessfully tried for the past two years to continue system programs and meet its budget with available funds, Patterson stated that “every effort will be made in the coming year to replace these transferred funds.

“If we continue as we have, we will be even deeper in debt. The major problem facing this school board is to fulfill our educational obligations and keep from going bankrupt.”

Approving a May 3 census of exceptional children in the parish who have not previously applied or participated in the school system, the board set the following guidelines for the survey:

If there are exceptional children between the ages of 6 and 16 in Lafayette Parish who have never had any contact with a public school or with services offered by the Lafayette Parish public schools, the parents are requested to report to the public school nearest them on Monday, May 3 to register the child.

Census Purposes
Dr. Harley Smith of the Special Education Department stressed that the May 3 registration is for census purposes only and not for admittance to the school system.

“We need the survey or census to know what facilities and services are needed,” Smith explained.