

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting on January 21, 2020.

**Present:** Roy DePriest, Chairperson; Dr. John McAllister, Vice-Chairperson; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Secretary; Faith McLaughlin, Board Member; Susan Pack; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Dr. Priya Gupta, ASB Parent Representative; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; Will Gorum and Belle McGhee, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest Residents

Ms. Pack (at the request of incoming chairperson, Roy DePriest) called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for February 18, 2019

**20-J-001 Approve December Minutes**

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Mr. DePriest made a motion to approve the December minutes and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**20-J-002 Approve 2020 Board Stipend Amount, Up to \$85**

Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the 2020 Board Stipend Amount up to \$85 and Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**20-J-003 Approve 2020 Superintendent Residency Expenditures for ASB & ASD**

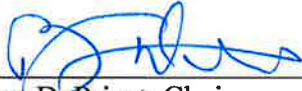
Mr. DePriest made a motion to approve the 2020 Superintendent Residency Expenditures and Dr. Atcherson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion Items**

None

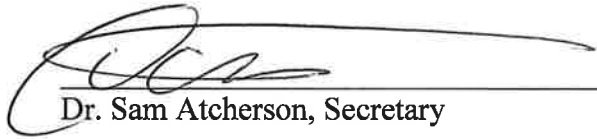
Ms. Pack asked if there was someone there that wanted to make a public comment. No one answered.

There being no further business of Joint nature, the meeting moved to the agenda for the Arkansas School for the Deaf.



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Roy DePriest, Chair



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Dr. Sam Atcherson, Secretary

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting on January 21, 2020.

**Present:** Roy DePriest, Chairperson; Dr. John McAllister, Vice-Chair; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Secretary; Faith McLaughlin, Board Member; Susan Pack; Dr. Priya Gupta, ASB Parent Representative; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Will Gorum and Belle McGhee, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest Residents

**20-D-001 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the consent items to include the minutes, financial statement and personnel items. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the consent items and Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

None

**Discussion Items**

**Final Report from DFA Audit**

Ms. Pack stated Dr. Dickinson had provided a copy of the audit. Dr. Dickinson said she had email the Board of Trustees to explain and she wanted to explain again for the audience. She said in the past there was concern about reporting to DFA for an Internal Audit. Anytime there is a concern about a report with any state agency, they are required by law to investigate those concerns. She said they had a period of time that they had many reports that had to be filed. She said they spent many, many hours on that part. She thanked Michelle for providing documentation that was needed for this. She said auditors would ask for anything they needed and they did personal interviews and as ASD went through the process, it became very clear that most of their concerns were made up. There was nothing related at all to the truth but the documentation had to be provided to the auditors. The auditors went through everything in depth with the school (SCPI, class sizes, certification of licensures). Dr. Dickinson said there were four things that came up. There was nothing wrong but recommendations were made where improvements could be made.

Dr. Dickinson said the first recommendation was sometime in the past when they recruited people from out of state, they would come in (sometimes last minute) and would have no place to stay. She said they would allow them to stay on campus up to three weeks max. She said sometimes they would have a staff person that had lost their home for some reason and they would give them the opportunity to stay in the apartment for 2 or 3 weeks. She said they found out that as a state agency they were not supposed to do that. She said they immediately changed the policy moving forward.

The second recommendation was regarding SCPI's. She said the auditors reviewed the SCPI policy and the process that was being followed. They didn't have any problem with that but in the past ASD has given their staff an option for the test to be scored by UALR or by people that are certified trainers that may be on the ASD staff. There was faster response time by on-campus raters. DFA said you could only have an outside agency rate the tests. She said they immediately changed the policy.

The third recommendation was that all mandated reporters, i.e., if anyone sees something with a student that they feel is not appropriate, it is required by law to call the hotline. When a staff person makes a report to the hotline, they also have to report to their supervisor. She said it can get sticky because a report can be made anonymously then the staff person does not have to make the internal report.

The last recommendation was for travel reimbursements. She said they now have a much better process for that. Auditors recommended that if mileage is requested the Google map has to printed that shows the shortest distance. She said they immediately implemented that change as well.

Ms. Pack asked if anyone had questions and Mr. DePriest asked what prompted DFA's audit. Dr. Dickinson said there is a DFA hotline where if you feel there is fraud or something illegal going on in any state agency you can call this hotline. She said not many people are aware of this hotline. She someone had made a call to the hotline. Ms. McLaughlin said they went through all those things or insinuated. Dr. Dickinson said they are not supposed to know the nature of the complaint or how many people called or how many times the same person called. She thinks in a relatively short time they had received a number of calls about many different things.

### **Campus-Wide Plan**

Dr. Dickinson said since she asked to have this added to the agenda, there have been additional discussions with ADE. She said she wanted to give the board a hard copy of the plan. The plan came with input from the community, staff, students, and various stakeholders. She said it was developed and completed in 2017.

Dr. Dickinson said in today's meeting, ADE clarified that they want to see a plan for both schools. ADE asked them to stop printing but that she would send a link to the board members so they can view it as soon as they have a good plan in place for both the Deaf School and the Blind School.

### **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dickinson said they have had a cold and busy January. They had homecoming last week with some very exciting games.

She said she is excited to announce they have four new partnerships. The first one is with Pulaski Heights Elementary School. She asked Kay Ann to share. Kay Ann said they have this partnership for several reasons. She said they have 2 students in a pilot program where the students will attend 60 – 90 minutes every day to receive instruction. She said the 2 students need that exposure to spoken English. The students started January 13, 2020. The first grader goes to Reading and recess and the fifth grader goes to recess and Math. The students seem to like it. She said they would be meeting with Pulaski Heights to see what is working and not working. Dr. Dickinson said they are also interested in the potential of this partnership because there are many mainstream students who may want to try the school. She said they are looking forward to seeing the results of the pilot program.

Dr. Dickinson said another partnership is with Union Pacific Railroad and she asked Ray to talk about it. He said he would like to thank Leah Marshall, High School Counselor, for helping to make this partnership work out. They came here January 6<sup>th</sup> and sat down with ASD. The team was excited to have a brainstorming session to see how ASD could partner with the railroad. He said they are looking for people with disabilities and wanted to partner with ASD to start building the relationship.

Dr. Dickinson said one other partnership they have is with Blue Sprig, Inc. They are a company that is really focused on Autism. They have people coming in working one on one with ASD students anywhere from 10-40 hours per week. She said the best part is ASD does not have to pay them – they are paid through Medicaid billing.

The final partnership is with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. ASD has been approved as a vendor Arkansas Rehab. ASD can support deaf people in their jobs, getting people connected and can bill up to \$8,000 for each person. She said right now they can serve deaf and hard of hearing adults through this program and get paid for doing it. She said many deaf people do not have a lot of support systems. She said they had been limited to age up to 21 as to what they could do but now that barrier has been removed.

Dr. Dickinson said recently she and three students had gone to Capitol View Stiff Station Neighborhood Association meeting. She said they spoke to the community. She said she interviewed the students on stage. The community asked a lot of questions.

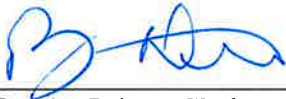
She said she met with the Arkansas Arts Center to discuss what they could do together and they are willing to come provide a program for ASD to provide training and also to help with Summer School. They want to use Parnell Hall on occasion after the renovations are completed.

Dr. Dickinson said Seth has become certified Child Nutrition Manager in the State of Arkansas.

Dr. Dickinson said they are in the middle of naming the Tornado Shelter. The staff nominated, voted and narrowed it down to six names. She passed out sheets and asked the board to vote on their favorite: the ASD Center; the Leopard Center; the Leopard Shelter; the Leopard Spot; WCM Center; and the Leopard Den.

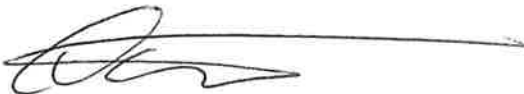
Dr. Dickinson wished the board Happy Board Appreciation month.

There being no further business for the Arkansas School for the Deaf, the agenda moved to the Arkansas School for the Blind.



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Roy DePriest, Chair



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Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Secretary

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**20-B-001 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the consent items to include the minutes, financial statement and personnel items. Dr. Atcherson made a motion to approve the consent items and Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**20-B-002 Approve Water Container Policy**

Mr. Caton said the board should have a copy of the policy. He said it is a policy for the students carrying water bottles with them during the day to be able to fill them up. ASB received a grant that provided the school with a water bottle filling station. It was installed in the hallway of the main building. As part of the grant, next month the school will kick off a water campaign along with some dental health activities and education. He said since the students would be carrying water bottles that ASB needed a policy governing the carrying of water bottles. He said some schools require clear bottles but with ASB being as small as it is they should be able to monitor and if issues pop up then the policy would be revised accordingly. Mr. DePriest asked who the policy was applicable to and Mr. Caton said all grades. Ms. Pack asked if they would be doing the cups like Yeti and Mr. Caton said they could, especially in high school. Ms. Pack said she saw that the rubber ring needed to be taken out and clean it.

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the Water Container policy. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the Water Container Policy and Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion Items**

**None**

## **Superintendent Report**

Mr. Caton said as an annual requirement he was going to give the training hours for the board members. Susan has 18.5; Faith has 6; Roy has 5.5; John has 9.5; Holly has 10; Dr. Gupta has 14.5; Dr. Atcherson has 6. He said if there were any discrepancies let Betty know. Dr. McAllister asked what counted toward the hours. Mr. Caton said anything from the Arkansas School Board Association and AER.

Mr. Caton said he included handouts he wanted to share with the board. Doah Strojek, Social Studies teacher, received an Amazing Educator Award from Little Rock Family Magazine. Recently Hillcrest Life Magazine did an article on the school. They interviewed Rebecca Lewis, English teacher. On the back of the article ASB's fall parade was also featured. He said he also included a list of upcoming activities for ASB. The biggest thing being the NCASB Conference with 10 schools coming in that will be competing in cheerleading and wrestling. He thanked ASD for the use of their gym and some of their dormitories. He said it is a huge event for ASB that is only done about every 10 years. ASB's Chili Cook-Off will be Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Homecoming King and Queen crowning will also be Thursday. On Friday at 8:00 pm is when the cheerleading competition takes place. Saturday morning at 10:00 the wrestling tournament begins. Dr. McAllister asked about entering the Chili Cook-Off and where to pay. Mr. Caton said get the entry form and money to the Main Office.

Mr. Caton said ASB received another large painting donated to the school. He said these are artwork to put up at the school.

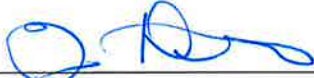
Mr. Caton said he met with Tim Cain, Director of the Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation, in reference to the campus master plans. His team will be getting with both schools to at a later date to help move forward. There is not any particular timeline like public schools in submitting the master plan.

Mr. Caton said the biggest event was the water line shut off valve and what should have been a simple 2-hour repair turned into almost 2 days of not having water on most of the campus. He said they are still working on plans for renovations for the gymnasium boys and girls bathrooms.

Mr. Caton said he appreciated the board's service over the past year and look forward to the coming year. He there was a reception in appreciation of the board.

Ms. Pack said if there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned(at 5:51).





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Roy DePriest, Chair



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Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Secretary