

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

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired met for their monthly meeting on July 17, 2018.

**Present:** Faith McLaughlin, Chairperson; Susan Pack, Vice-Chairperson; Everett Elam, Secretary; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; (Vacant), ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest Residents

Ms. McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for August 21<sup>st</sup> at ASBVI. Ms. McLaughlin stated she would not be present for the August meeting.

**18-J-010 Motion to Approve Minutes**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June Board meeting. Mr. Elam made a motion to approve the June minutes and Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**None**

**Discussion Items**

Ms. McLaughlin said there were two priorities for the Board – 1) Financial welfare of the two schools; 2) Firing/Hiring of Superintendents. She said she wanted the members to always be careful when looking at the financials that are sent each month. She said she had asked Chris Vanlandingham from Wells Fargo to give an update on the School for Blind's investment account. The account was set up several years ago and he oversees the account. Ms. McLaughlin said she wanted Chris to come up and explain what the investment account is for and if there are any guidelines the board members need to be aware of. Mr. Vanlandingham said he prepared a brief overview. He said about 4 years ago ASB sent out proposals to look at other ways to fund some of their money that was on deposit with the state. He said the money market at the time was paying about .1% and the school was looking for a better ways to get a return on their investment so they could take some of the dividends/interest to spend for the school.

Mr. Vanlandingham said Wells Fargo was fortunate to win the business. The account started with approximately \$700,000. He said the total deposits into the account was about \$921,000 and this past year there was a withdrawal of almost \$112,000 going toward the purchase of new buses/vans. The total amount invested at this time is about \$809,000. The balance as of July 17<sup>th</sup> was \$986,771 with total earning of \$177,667. He said that this year has been a down year and the first one they have had. He said the current yield on the account is about \$40,000 a year and is put into another account ready to be spent or invested. Mr. Vanlandingham talked about the categories and definitions. He said when it was originally set up it was to get very conservative dividends and interest to better what they had been getting at the state. He asked if there were any questions. Ms. Pack asked if the money in the Sweep account had been used before. Mr. Caton said the first time any of the money had been used or withdrawn was for the buses. Mr. Caton said he thought that there was a cap in place where the board would have to approve. Ms. McLaughlin said she thought that anything over \$25,000 had to have full board approval and under that the board had to be notified so if there were needs for the school you would just bring them to the board and let us know but anything over \$25,000 like the buses we would vote on. Mr. Caton said it had worked well for ASB and that it is not an account that we have any intention to constantly be drawing from unless there is a real need. Ms. McLaughlin asked Chris if it would have been better to wait until the bill for the buses was presented. Mr. Vanlandingham said no because that money sits in cash and money market accounts are very low. Ms. Pack asked where the money originated. Mr. Caton said the \$700,000 original investment came from the state treasury investments. Ms. Pack asked if it was not a gift from someone. Ms. Coleman stated that some of it was gifted a long time ago and the state wanted it kept in a state account. She said it wasn't really state money – some of it is proceeds from oil wells and stock that was given that was transferred into a state account. Mr. Caton said the money could have come from donations and other sources. Ms. McLaughlin said anything that comes from the Foundation is totally different. Mr. Caton said it is separate from the school. Ms. McLaughlin asked if there were any other questions.

Mr. Krenn said he wanted to say the question had been asked about whether it would have been better to leave money in the account until billed for the buses. You have to be able to show that the money is readily available before the buses can even be ordered.

Ms. Pack asked if the auditor looks at this account like he does the other accounts at the school. Mr. Caton said it depends on what they are looking at when auditing the school. You never know what they are going to want to look at when they come.

Ms. McLaughlin thanked Mr. Vanlandingham for the update on the Wells Fargo account. She said it had clarified some things for her as well.

## **State Agency Restructuring**

Dr. Dickinson said you may remember when the Governor announced that he wanted to reduce the number of state agencies. She said they have been watching to see how that would affect the schools. Recently both schools have had separate meetings with the Amy Fletcher, Chief Transitional Officer. At the time they felt there might be three options for the schools. The first option would be they could leave the schools as they are; the second option would be a merge; and the third option would be a merge under ADE. Mr. Caton said it is challenging to discuss right now but they felt the board should be aware that these discussions are going on and something will be proposed but we don't have that detail yet. Amy met with both superintendents separately and the experiences seemed to be similar. It wasn't to tell them what was going to be proposed but to get their feedback and ideas of what they thought would be good for the schools moving forward under some type of transformation plan and allow us to continue to do what the schools do. He said neither of them felt it was a change in what they are doing as far as the schools' basic functions and missions. Even if there were some type of merger (as in the past), the schools would still be separate schools in terms of the activities and functioning. The logical thing seemed they might put us under the Department of Education. He said in one sense they are already under the ADE in terms of being a school, but the funding is not under ADE. It could be possible they would want to run the funding through the Department of Education. He said anything they say may not be proposed at all. Whatever is proposed will still have to go through the legislative process. Dr. Dickinson said she feels good about their mission. She said they see that the schools are thriving and growing. She said they want to be team players and work through this. She thinks she and James have a good plan. She said basically they just have to wait probably until October when the Governor announces his plans. She said they probably wouldn't know anything for sure until next spring. Ms. Pack said the schools have been under ADE for certain things. She thinks the main thing to do is to look at it as a win-win situation. She said she thought they were handling it well. Mr. Caton said they had no concerns about the schools surviving and continuing to go forward. He said they want to know what can be done to help the schools do better and grow. Ms. McLaughlin said she had great confidence in the leadership at both schools. Ms. Pack said that farther into the situation if the board needed to be involved they would be.

### **ASD Parent Representative – Harry Pompeo**

Mr. Pompeo said there was not a lot of news to report since students are gone for the summer. He said they had a total of 66 campers for the two week Summer Camp. There were 37 ASD students and 39 non-ASD students that attended the Summer Camp program. There were 57 students staying in the dorms.

Sha'que Robinson played in the All-Star game at UCA. There were about 50 fans that attended in support of Sha'que. When he was called on the field everyone stood up and waved – deaf culture does not clap, instead the wave their hands in the air.

Mr. Pompeo said there would be a sports camp the third week of August. They are looking forward to their athletes coming for volleyball and other sports.

### **ASB Parent Report – Vacant**

Ms. McLaughlin asked if there was any news on a parent rep for ASB. Mr. Caton stated he is still waiting to hear about the appointment. She asked if anyone had applied and Mr. Caton said he knew of one possibly two. She asked about a timeframe and Mr. Caton said with it being an election and the pending restructuring it is hard to tell. Ms. McLaughlin said maybe by the beginning of school.

Ms. Doan reported that summer is a very busy time ASBVI. She said there are typically more people on campus during the summer programs than after. ASB is involved in three different programs in the summer; Summer Camp program for 6 – 15 year olds; Jump Start program for 16-21; and an O&M Prep Program for Dr. McAllister. There were 46 attending Summer Camp; 27 students in Jump Start; and 18 in the O&M program. Summer Camp is very high action and hands-on. Jump Start is a transition based program where the students work all over the central Arkansas area. She said ASB has also been participating in the STYLE program at World Services for the Blind. This program is very similar to Jump Start. The students have access to teachers that give mobility instruction, daily living skills, and real world jobs that expose them to jobs and careers they can complete. There are approximately 21 ASB students that are attending the program.

Ms. McLaughlin stated there were a lot of good things going on at both schools.

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

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**Present:** Faith McLaughlin, Chairperson; Susan Pack, Vice Chairperson; Everett Elam, Secretary; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Board Member; Vacant, ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest Residents

**18-D-008 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

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

**Action Items**

**18-D-009 Motion to Approve 2018/2019 Student Handbook/Employee Handbook/Teacher Handbook Addendum**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve the 2018/2019 Student Handbook/Employee Handbook and Teacher Handbook Addendum. Dr. Atcherson made a motion to approve all three handbooks and Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**18-D-010 Motion to Approve ASD School Improvement Plan**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve the ASD School Improvement Plan. Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the ASD School Improvement Plan and Mr. Elam seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pack asked about the promotion of KayAnn. Dr. Dickinson said this year we will have two principals. Ray will be the high school principal; they will share middle school; and KayAnn will focus on lower school and ECE (Early Childhood Education).

**Discussion Items**

**None**

## **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dickinson said they had a meeting with DFA and OPM. She thanked Michael and Kristi for their work for the meeting. She said the meeting went very smoothly, very positive and it was an exciting meeting. It seems the school has a flat budget.

She said they have had a lot of interesting students coming in for the summer. Rick Porter has been working double/triple time recruiting students from the school districts. She said there are about 15 students that are very interested in attending ASD but are not fully committed yet.

She said the very sad news is that Sally (their bus) was totaled. She said there was a little fender bender and unfortunately Sally was not worth much. She asked Michael Krenn to follow-up on Sally. Mr. Krenn said Sally was the charter bus that we used for a lot of the sports event traveling. He said because it was old the value was low and it is hard to find parts for it. The company that used to make it is no longer in business. Insurance has come back and said it is totaled and this is how much you will get for it. The bus will go to M&R. They will do all their processing and take their fee out it and by the time it is done the school may get \$12,000. He said they now have to try to find a bus to replace it with because they do a fair amount of traveling out of state. He said they have been looking and a rough estimate is over \$50,000 for a good used charter bus. That type of bus is over the one ton weight limit so general revenue funds cannot be used to purchase one. He said there were no federal funds that would pay for it so basically what we have is what is left in the cash fund. He said they have a little bit of money invested in the treasury. ASD is down to their vans and the one new vehicle they bought. He said they need permission from the board to be able to look for one but we do not know the dollar amount because they do not know what they will find. He said his transportation director would love a new one but they are about \$300,000 to \$400,000. Mr. Krenn said they are not going that route. Dr. Dickinson said they found out to late to add to the agenda but they will need board support next month so cash can be transferred. Ms. McLaughlin asked about fundraisers. He said he was open to anything. He said they could use the contract for the charter company but a rough estimate to do the football activity would be about \$34,000. He said they do have a yellow bus but with the temperatures he wouldn't want to use it. Ms. Pack asked if they were looking for something besides a school bus. Mr. Krenn said they are looking at a charter bus because they need a bathroom.

Dr. Dickinson said there is a lot of detail in her report to read. She said they were going to have an Admin Retreat.

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

  
Susan Pack, Vice Chair

  
Everett Elam, Secretary

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**18-B-008 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

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

**Action Items**

**18-B-009 Motion to Approve the 2018/2019 Student Handbook**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve the 2018/2019 Student Handbook. Mr. Elam made a motion to approve the 2018/2019 Student Handbook and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**18-B-010 Motion to Approve the School Improvement Plans**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve ASBVI's School Improvement Plans. Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the School Improvement Plans and Dr. Atcherson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Caton stated in connection with the School Improvement Plans, the Department of Education is trying to change the language and perception of those plans – used to use the language of the ACSIP. The ESSA Act (Every Student Succeeds Act) allows school districts to develop their own plans that fit the individual schools within the district. The plans will be looked at constantly throughout the year-changes/adjustments will be made as needed. The plans are intended to change as the school year progresses and needs arise.



## **18-B-011 Motion to Approve Personnel Policies/District Salary Schedule**

Ms. McLaughlin asked for a motion to approve the Personnel Policies/District Salary Schedule. Ms. Pack made a motion to approve and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Discussion Items Student Support Services Plan**

The Student Support Services Plan does not require approval of the board but he wanted the board to be aware of the plan. It will be posted to the website by August 1<sup>st</sup>. This is some broad areas of support services that are offered to the students at the school. There are some other areas that he is going to add to the plan and as he does he will present to the board.

Mr. Caton said under the Promotions those are two people who have moved within the Business Office. He said the three teacher positions have been filled. He said two teachers are from the non-traditional program through ADE. He likes to get teachers from that program because they often turn out to be the best teachers as you have the opportunity to take them while they are brand new and develop them. He said they were the new math and FACS teachers. He said the new English teacher has a lot of experience and her Masters. He said she is going to bring some really good changes.

### **Superintendent Report**

Mr. Caton said a lot of his report was mentioned in the parent report. He said everyone enjoyed the Jump Start graduation at the Governor's Mansion. The First Lady made some very appropriate remarks and was very supportive of the school. She talked about the history of the school. A number of the students in Jump Start went to World Services in the STYLE program to receive extra training.

Mr. Caton said the network servers have been completely upgraded this summer which should improve our functioning of the network on campus. He said a lot of new adaptive technology has been received and the braille embossers have been upgraded. He said some new individual devices have been purchased for braille students - some devices can cost \$5,000-\$6000.

Campus Projects: He said a certified letter had been sent to the roofing company today asking for a response by Friday on what they intend to do to finish the project as well as the repairs that need to be completed inside the building from the water damage that was sustained. Ms. Packed asked if they have not been coming to work.

Mr. Caton said they have not been on campus in several weeks. He said the company has not responded to any phone calls so the next step was to send the certified letter asking for their intention. He is hoping they come through and finish like it should be done but if not the next step is contacting the bonding company. He said that is a long process but that is what is available. Ms. Pack asked if it was the same company that has done the other buildings. Mr. Caton said no that this was a new company and the low bid. He said the company that worked on the other buildings did an outstanding job finishing several roofs. He said he has been struggling trying to get this one project completed. Ms. Pack asked what the bobcat and torn up ground was? Mr. Caton said that is for a fire line to Shults House sprinkler system. It is expected to be completed in July. He said the first phase of the Infirmary is being finished up and second phase plan is being drawn up.

Ms. McLaughlin asked about the pool. Mr. Caton said they had asked the Foundation to look at it for the school to see if they might help with that project. He said he asked the school's on-call architect to look at the specs that the one company has sent in. He said it would have to go out for bids because of the amount (\$80,000). Ms. McLaughlin asked if he had gone to the Foundation and he said no. Ms. McLaughlin said she thought the entire board would have to vote on it. Mr. Caton said he was sure they would. Ms. McLaughlin said at least you have resources available if you need them. The money was left, whether it's the Foundation or the investments, for the children. Mr. Caton said he agreed but wanted to be careful with it. Dr. Atcherson asked if the pool is used a lot. Mr. Caton said yes it is used all year long. It is a facility that the kids have always enjoyed.

Ms. McLaughlin asked about the delivery date for the buses. Mr. Caton said they are expected by the middle of August.

Ms. McLaughlin said Ms. Pack has information for the board. Ms. Pack said she attended the board training workshop and it was probably the best one she has been to. She said one of the sessions was on Executive Sessions – what you can do and what you can't do. Another session was on Expectations of Board Members getting the hours members are required to have each year and attendance of board members. She said she asked if boards could have retreats and the answer was yes but it should be training. The ASBA said it could be done there and if their people were needed they would be there to help. She said she would go into this more next month and she will have handouts for the members. She said she learned so much. She stated personnel problems are about all that can be talked about in an Executive Session. She said members need to be very aware that two or more members together means that it is a board meeting and it is not allowed. She said there would be a regional meeting coming up and she would have that information.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. McLaughlin adjourned the meeting.



Susan Pack, Vice Chair



Everett Elam, Secretary