

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 September 20, 2016.

Present: Mary Weeks, Chairperson; Dr. Doug Watson, Vice Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Secretary; Susan Pack, Board Member; Everett Elam, Board Member; Jeanne Tribett, 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

Ms. Weeks said she wanted to say she really enjoyed the tour and it was nice to see the colors and things looking alive in the buildings.

16-D-020 Motion to Approve Consent Items

Ms. Weeks 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.

Ms. Weeks asked what Dr. Dickinson did about the elementary principal. Dr. Dickinson said they have restructured the educational program. She said they felt a focus on curriculum and instruction making sure they have the best most competitive students so they changed to having one principal (K-12). She said they used the other position for the Curriculum and Instructional Director. She said that person's focus is to work with all of the teachers on instructional practices, to get a list of their lesson plans and see how they align with state requirements, she will go in and observe classrooms and support them as needed. She said they just recently started and it has been really positive so far. She said that person will also supervise the Literacy Specialist and the Math & Science Specialist. Ms. McLaughlin asked who the new K-12 principal was and Dr. Dickinson said it is Ray Bolen. She said the new Curriculum and Instructional Director is KayAnn Varner. She said Ms. Varner has been in Oklahoma most recently. She said her husband is ASD's middle school math teacher. Ms. McLaughlin said she like the idea of the new position.

Action Items

None

Discussion Items

None

She said they met with the community to brainstorm about what the future of their school looked like. She said a lot data and ideas were collected. She said there was a common theme. She said they would start with a K-12 Educational and Vocational building. She said in October based on the recommendation by the Governor's office and DBA they would be putting in options for Capital project requests, either \$20 million to fix the existing buildings or giving ASD the money for a new K-12 building. She said a rough estimate for that building would be about \$23 million. She said she wanted the board to be aware of what was happening.

She said October 15th is their Homecoming and they have a free flu shot clinic for the deaf community and anyone who wants a flu shot.

She said at the next board meeting on October 18th she wanted to invite the board, admin staff from Blind and Deaf Schools to her home for a reception.

Dr. Watson asked if the financial staff had looked at the dollar amount that the state gives to schools throughout Arkansas. He said he could not believe how many millions of dollars were being spent on public schools in the state, including football and basketball stadiums. Mr. Krenn said he could probably get some of those figures from the ADE. He said most school districts can raise their own funds so the state makes them do a match system and we do not have a way to match. Dr. Dickinson said it was important for ASD to show they are serving more than just students on campus. She said there were many opportunities for ASD to show they are providing equality for deaf students and could use that information for their own lobbying purposes. Dr. Watson said we are a state school and a state agency, two different programs. He said they often treat us like a state agency and not a school. He said they are throwing money to schools but not to state agencies. He said what is happening in Little Rock and around the state led him to wonder we can pursue state funding support and perhaps think about talking to Wal-Mart charter school funding so students throughout the state could be served. Ms. Pack said she had a friend who just went on line to look up charter schools and the school is listed as a charter school. She said she did not know how that happened. She said she didn't know if it was good or bad. She said her friend called and asked her and she told her that we were not a charter school. Ms. Coleman said she did not think they would want to be listed as a charter school. Ms. Pack said she didn't think so either. Ms. Coleman said in the current state you might be able to convince the Governor to issue a bond issue as a state school where as a charter school you couldn't do that. Dr. Dickinson said she appreciated any ideas. She said they will continue to explore every opportunity out there. She said ASD has a new grant writer who is also working on contacting people so there is no limit to what they are going to try to figure out to make it happen. She said she was confident they would make something happen.