

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 April 18, 2017.

**Present:** Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Vice Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; Everett Elam, Board Member; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Jeanne Tribett, ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; Beth Smith and Eddie Schmeckenbecher, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest residents

Dr. Watson called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for May 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Watson asked for the graduation dates for both schools. Mr. Caton stated ASB's graduation would be May 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. Dr. Dickinson said ASD's would be May 18<sup>th</sup>.

**17-J-005 Motion to Approve Minutes**

Dr. Watson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March meeting. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the March minutes and Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**None**

**Discussion Items**

Update on Easter Seal Building: Mr. Caton said demolition would begin April 24<sup>th</sup>. He said they would most likely be there this week setting up their fencing. He said they met with the contractor yesterday and the contractor said they did not look for it to take the allowed 45 days. Project may be completed by the end of May. Dr. Watson asked Joann Coleman if she would alert the neighborhood about the demolition. She said yes.

Dr. Watson asked Ms. Pack to bring up the question about board members providing volunteer services. Ms. Pack said James had told the board that the legislature was voting on whether board members could volunteer. She said it says a board member could volunteer but the board must approve. In the past the law said you couldn't volunteer but they changed it. She said she wanted to ask permission to work with some children in Hot Springs.

## **17-J-006 Motion to Approve Susan Pack to Volunteer**

Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve Susan Pack to volunteer in Hot Springs. Mr. Elam seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Watson said he would like the board to think about continuing to schedule the meetings for 4:00 but to utilize on a monthly basis an opportunity for the board members to visit a program underway at the school the meeting is being held for that month the first hour of the meeting. Ms. Doan said it was a wonderful idea but most of the students are gone by 4:00. Ms. Pack asked if they would be there at 3:00. Ms. Doan said the youngest start leaving at 3:05 and elementary dismisses at 3:30. She said they could always use technology and video but that is not as good as the real thing. Dr. Watson said perhaps they could invite faculty and staff to come in and address the board and talk about what they are doing (special projects or things they are working on with the students or the school). He said he felt that they are isolated from the real life of the school. Mr. Elam said he would like to see some of the Student Council members come in and tell the board about what is going on at their respective schools. Dr. McAllister asked about starting at 2:00 to see the programs and come back and have the meeting. Ms. Pack said some members work. Mr. Pompeo said he could not do that because he works until 3:30. Ms. McLaughlin said all these were good ideas but maybe they could ponder them and talk about it since the end of school year was drawing near. She said they could talk and brainstorm some ideas about how the board could interact with the staff and the children and start in August with the new school year.

Dr. Watson said he wanted to encourage all board members to target a time that they could make it to visit and work with the superintendents. He said in previous years the board toured and visited the schools but have not done so recently.

Dr. Watson said ASBA has been developing a better system to evaluate the superintendent and he would like to talk about that for the future of both schools. ASBA has come forth with a massive program that would help structure the process. He has asked Jim Hill to work with him and the two superintendents the next few months to see if they think it would work for both schools. If so, within the next year to be able to set up a system that would be customized for our purposes, time and needs. ASBA believes it would help focus the effort of our leadership in the schools, setting goals not for just now but for the next five years, working toward future improvement in the way we deal with our people, students, teachers, family and staff. He said he wanted to share with the board that they are looking into this process. He asked if anyone had any questions at this time.

### **ASB Parent Representative – Jeannie Tribett**

Ms. Tribett reported that school has really started moving along as the end of year is fast approaching. Prior to Spring Break the Student Council Talent Show was held in Woolly Auditorium with a record number of acts and spectators on March 16<sup>th</sup>. On the same date the elementary and middle school students competed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Science Fair. Awards were given to the top three contestants. The projects were displayed in the lobby of the auditorium during the talent show.

The track team has participated in several away track meets. 10<sup>th</sup> grader Tywoun Lewis has qualified for a place in the State Track and Field Meet in the long jump. This is the same student who won this event with a record breaking distance at the NCASB Conference. The Special Olympics Track and Field meet is approaching and the athletes are practicing and getting ready for this event.

The elementary students participated in the annual beeper Easter Egg Hunt. This year the Easter Bunny hid all the eggs on the playground and visited the children during their hunts. The older elementary and middle school students celebrated playing bingo.

The secondary students are ready for the prom. It is being held Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, at Maumelle Country Club. The theme is the “Masquerade Ball”. This year ASB is holding a Senior Weekend to celebrate graduation. Students and sponsors will be visiting Magic Springs. They will be staying on campus.

Next week the ACT Aspire will be given to grades 3 – 10. The test will be given online with supposed full access for all ASB students. District Test Coordinator, Sam Hall, has worked very closely with ADE in order to make sure our students receive the appropriate modifications for their respective tests.

The Home Life department is having a special weekend event, “Weekend Get Away on Campus”. They will be doing a variety of activities that includes Dave & Busters, a movie at Breckenridge Theater and a cook-out.

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

Mr. Pompeo reported that Deaf History Month was in March. They celebrated with a special assembly. ASD students had special activities going on and had ASL performances. Overall, it was a rewarding and educational Deaf History Month.

Art Competition-The awards were at the Governor's Mansion. ASD High School had three students chosen to have their artwork exhibited in the Annual Governor's Art Exhibit. The students were Mikka Coburn, Henry James III, and Shannon Mouser. The artwork will be displayed April 12<sup>th</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>. The winners were invited to go to a reception at the Governor's Mansion May 13<sup>th</sup>. ASD Art teacher Kimberli Alston won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Marie Jean Phillips Deaf Art Competition.

He said recently they had a parent meeting on campus to discuss things related to the parents and feedback from them. This month they talked about the building proposals. The parents are planning to design T-Shirts for themselves (VIP-Very Important Parent).

Athletics-Trophies were given out in recognition of the NDIAA. Sara Dobbs was chosen for the first team All American for basketball. Mikka Coburn was selected for the second team All American. The Deaf Digest Award went to Mikka Coburn for All American Basketball. USADB chose Sara Dobbs and Jewel Brandon to play in the USADB All Star game in Washington, DC April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Elementary, Middle School and High School Track & Field athletes have been busy preparing for the Track & Field events. They have participated in several events. They will have State competition at White Hall.

Special Olympics brought home the Gold Medal with a shot at the buzzer. They are now training for the swimming competition season.

Dr. Watson asked how many parents come to their meeting. Mr. Pompeo said an average of 20 to 25 parents attend the meeting.

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



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, Secretary

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ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

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**Present:** Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Vice Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; Everett Elam, Board Member; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; Jeanne Tribett, ASBVI Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Eddie Schmeckenbecher, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

**17-B-007 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Dr. Watson 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. Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Watson asked Mr. Caton if he wanted to comment on the personnel items. Mr. Caton said ASB had a new hire in the Child Nutrition Department and also added an LPN to the nursing staff. Ms. Bonifas said when the payroll person left she moved Kellie (current employee) into a downgraded position to be trained for that position. Now the position is back to its original title.

**Action Items**

None

**Discussion Items**

None

**Superintendent Report**

Mr. Caton said he added more detail in his report this month than he normally does and hoped the board found the additional information useful.

He said he and Janet are meeting once a month and the meetings have proven to be very valuable to both of them.

He said he would be attending the Arkansas Council for the Blind Conference this weekend giving an update on the school.

Mr. Caton stated a new Kindergarten student started recently making enrollment at 98.

He said ASB has auditors on campus and they will be here for a couple of weeks reviewing the Business Office and HR. He will provide the board with a report when the audit is completed.

He said they met with ADE Standards Assurance to review the initial Accreditation Report. There were no issues found so he is waiting on the final report showing that all is okay with ASB's accreditation.

The Annual School Report Card has been reviewed to make sure the data was correct and it was officially released to the public this week. They did restrict our values on the testing data.

Students are getting ready for the ACT Aspire testing which begins next week for grades 3 – 10. This is the first year the students will actually get to take the state assessment on the computer and are excited to see how the students do. Dr. Watson asked if the computer would be accessible to all students. Mr. Caton said that was what had to be worked on. It was getting the right things in place for the test to be accessible for our students to take on the computer. They will still have their backups if needed in terms of paper and other resources in case they run into other problems testing on the computer. Ms. Doan stated it came down to educating the ADE. ADE thought the student devices and the accessibility that the students require gave them an advantage over their cited peers. ASB's technology specialist, test coordinator and library media specialist took technology to ADE and showed them exactly what the devices were, how they worked and the parameters that were set.

Mr. Caton said the initial EAST program implementation meeting will take place next month. He met with a STEM Program Manager from ADE and he is already making contacts with people across the state that are very interested in working with ASB on STEM programming and curriculum for ASB students. Dr. Watson asked if he mentioned they had been successful in California integrating blind students into the STEM curriculum. Mr. Caton said he did not mention that specifically. He is very interested in making STEM more available to populations that you don't normally associate with those areas – people with visual impairments as well as other disabilities, other minorities and women. Mr. Caton said that is the area they want to focus on - opening up STEM education to the populations that traditionally have not been that open to. ASB is going to get in on the front of this. Mr. Caton told Dr. Dickinson he would be glad to pass that contact along to her.

Mr. Caton said he wanted to give the board a breakdown of what the process was for students as they transition to high school and into their postsecondary activities. He said ASB has had a long-standing partnership with the Division of Services for the Blind to provide transition services for ASB students as they graduate out of high school. He said vocational counselors begin working with students at age 14 continuing through age 16. At graduation the students become part of their case load and they continue either pursuing their postsecondary education or some type of career choice. He said ASB has a number of partnerships where ASB students will go to programs upon graduation at World Services for the Blind or IFB Solutions (formerly Lighthouse for the Blind). He said he would continue to look at new programming and plan for the future. He said ASB still has students who attend Metropolitan Vocational School.

Mr. Caton said ASB received 10 new referrals for the Outreach program (Birth to 3). A new person was hired for the Instructional Resource Center to replace the person that left making that program fully staffed. The Wrightsville Prison program is continuing to rebuild, currently have 3 certified braille transcribers and two more working on their certification.

The Low Vision Clinic continues to provide services for students every Wednesday for the school as well as the public.

Good news for campus improvement projects – we received a call from the Governor’s Office today and the Governor will visit both campuses on May 31<sup>st</sup> to tour the facilities. On May 15<sup>th</sup> our liaison from the Governor’s Office as well as the educational liaison will come to meet with us regarding facilities’ needs.

The website is underway and being redesigned. He said the new server upgrades have been completed.

Mr. Caton reminded the board of a training opportunity on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

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



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, Secretary

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**17-D-006 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Dr. Watson 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 Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Dickinson said they had one new hire – HR Manager, Kristi Clark.

**Action Items**

**Proposed Lease of the Riverfront Property**

Mr. Krenn said they had brought up the proposal 2 months ago about the land by the river, potentially looking at selling that land. The next day after that meeting he received a phone call from Marshall Peters Real Estate Agency saying he had a client that might be interested in the property. Mr. Krenn said they have also been following the steps per the ABA process. Mr. Krenn introduced Marshall Peters to present his proposal. Mr. Krenn said at present they are still in a lease with the property until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Peters said he has a client that wants to purchase the property at the bottom of Cantrell Hill. The state has told Mr. Peters that they can't because it has to be offered to every other state agency before it can be offered to the public. He said they wanted to get in front of that by giving you the asking price for a 100 year lease. He said he knew there have been issues with previous leases. He said they would give any kind of guarantee on this property for its future value and everything will be up and above board without hazardous materials. Ms. Pack asked Mr. Krenn if had mentioned this to the state as far as a lease – would they accept that. Mr. Krenn said he had. He said they told Mr. Peters it was our choice. The proposal has been sent to state agency directors saying ASD is interested in selling the property. It gives them 10 business days to reply if they are interested and to date have received none.



Dr. Watson asked what day he was on. Mr. Krenn said day seven. He does not expect to get any replies back from other agencies. He said the next step would be to go back to ABA and tell them no offers were received from other state agencies. They would draw up all the paperwork and potentially put it out for public to bid on the property. To lease we would have to speak with ABA and inform them what we want to do-that we no longer want to have a lease contract with the current company because we have a new proposal. It is based on what the board decides they want us to do with the property. Ms. McLaughlin said basically the property would be sold. Mr. Krenn said if we stay on the path that we are currently on, we can get bids in and bring to the board but the bids might not even be at face value. The board would still have the option to say not to sell. Ms. Pack said ASD would still own the land if the lease was the option taken. Mr. Krenn said that was correct. Ms. Pack said when you do a lease like that who would be liable from disaster, etc. Mr. Krenn said that would be a question for the legal department of ABA. Mr. Peters said they would do a land lease carrying all liability on the property and pay all the taxes. His client wants to build on it something that would bring people into that area. Ms. Pack asked if he could tell them what it would be used for. Mr. Peters said it would be a mixed use. He wants to have a dock and restaurant where boats would be able to come in. He said they would first have to get city approval. More discussion followed. Mr. Hill reminded the board of the situation they ran into with Easter Seals. AG's Office said since they owned the land they were responsible. Ms. Pack suggested the board should table until the next meeting to find out what ABA says and find out how quickly it could be sold. Dr. Watson said he thought they should terminate the existing lease when it was up so they would have more flexibility. Mr. Peters said the leases he uses states that they must leave the property in better condition than it was found or they are liable for any and all restoration. It was decided to table until more information could be available.

### **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dickinson said she had a wonderful experience this morning. Several of them went to Flavors, a restaurant in Maumelle. The restaurant has been training some of ASD's students for the past three months. Today was their graduation exercises and there were a lot of delicious things to taste.

Last Thursday we met with all the high school students and passed out laptops to them. They have new Mac Books and the students were so excited. Today, the first student got in trouble for trying to download a game. Team Ready teachers decided to have I-pads instead of Mac Books. She said their long-term goals are for all of students to have 1:1 devices. Lower School will have I-pads and Middle School will have Chrome Books. High School will have the Mac Books. Mr. Elam asked what she meant by 1:1. Dr. Dickinson said every student will have a laptop that will be assigned to them for the school year.

Dr. Dickinson said the architects attended a meeting with parents, students, admin team, staff and the community to gather ideas and input on the new Campus Plan. They still need to meet with the board. She said she wanted to make sure she had the opportunity to get the board's input. She said some excitement from ABA is that we are moving forward with this. When the Governor comes we want to make sure they have moved forward as much as possible for this. Dr. Dickinson said she wanted to get their input so she wanted to know if a special meeting or the next board meeting would be better. Ms. McLaughlin asked how long it would take as the board has to do evaluations at the next meeting. Dr. Dickinson said in the other meetings they planned for an hour but it wouldn't have to take that long. Dr. Watson asked when she expected the architects to have materials that they could share with the board so they could see where the input has led them. Dr. Dickinson said she thought by the middle to the third week of May. Dr. Watson said he would like to see them put it all together and bring before the board.

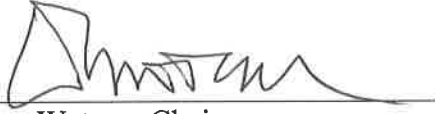
Dr. Dickinson said she went to CSD and met with the people there in the Vocabulary Lab and the Employability Center. She went to the ASCD Conference and came back to the New Mexico School for the Deaf and met with the superintendent. She came back with 19 pages full of typed ideas. She said ASD's Educational Leadership Team has done a great job planning the Arkansas Conference on Deaf Education and Career Readiness to be held September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Embassy Suites. She said the school was having a Retirees' Brunch in May so if anyone knew someone retired from ASD to get that information to Stacey.

Tomorrow Senator Tom Cotton is coming for a campus tour. Dr. Dickinson said she will be flying out tomorrow morning for the CEASD Conference in Hartford, CT. Stacey will show Senator Cotton the campus. The Governor will be having a photo op with the girls' basketball team.

The annual Carnival will be April 27<sup>th</sup>. She asked Stacey to talk about the Carnival. Stacey said the Carnival would be a great way for the board to get involved and they could serve hot dogs at the same time. The Carnival is held on the football field. If you have not been to one she encourages you to come. It is a relaxed family event. It is a community event, not a fundraiser. She said they have a program called Carnival Angels that they do every year. The cost to get into the event is \$5. If you want to sponsor a Carnival Angel she can take the money tonight. She said generally people give \$5 or \$10. She said starting this year Lynn is doing a Golden Angel because every year someone goes beyond the call of duty. Every angel means a child gets in that could not pay the \$5 and it also means their family can come. Stacey said she would be working the gate at the Carnival. She collected money for the angels from the attendees

**17-D-007 Motion to Adjourn**

Dr. Watson asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, Secretary