

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 August 20, 2019.

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

Ms. Pack called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for September 17, 2019 at ASBVI. Ms. Pack stated the board meetings would begin at 5:00 pm going forward.

19-J-012 Motion to Approve Minutes

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

Action Items

19-J-013 Arkansas Department of Education Statement of Assurances (ASB/ASD)

Ms. Pack said this was something that is done every year. Mr. Caton said there were two different forms. One requires the board chair signature and reflected in the minutes of the board that the board has approved for the superintendents to sign the assurances and submit a budget to the ADE. This is the assurances that cover the Title funds.

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to accept and approve this document for the ADE's Statement of Assurances. Ms. McLaughlin made the motion to approve the Statement of Assurances and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Caton said the second item was also more assurances but were for pre-school funding. He said this was new for the schools as they have not received funding in the past. He said it had to be signed by the superintendents and the board chair.

Let the minutes reflect that the board chair signed the ADE Special Ed Local School District Application for Part B Funds for ASD and ASB on August 20, 2019.

Discussion Items
Shared Services Between ASD/ASB

Ms. Pack stated the superintendents were going to talk about where they are with the shared services between the two schools.

Dr. Dickinson said they have had several meetings with the new ADE which included several divisions: Arkansas School for the Deaf; Arkansas School for the Blind; Arkansas State Library; Division of Primary & Secondary Education; Department of Higher Education; DHSL AmeriCorps; MLK Commission; Pre-K: Ark Better Chance Program and Career Education. She said they have attended regular meetings led by Secretary Key and his key people. They have strong opinions that the schools share services. She has heard that ASB & ASD would share a business and HR services, but they will be under ADE. That is her understanding. She asked Mr. Caton if that is what he understands. Mr. Caton said for the business end of things it seems like it is leaning more toward the business/finance end being handled by the ADE. He said they will attend a meeting tomorrow and should have more information then. He said the HR part seems to be leaning toward there being one overall HR person for both schools. He said there had been a suggestion for one of the staff doing that for both schools. He said that is the latest update he could give at this time. Dr. Dickinson said that was her understanding as well. She said there be other areas, i.e., the MLK Commission has struggled to find a van for some of their activities so there may be a request for them to loan vehicles on occasion.

Ms. Pack said she met with Secretary Key a couple of weeks ago for about 1 ½ hours. She said she went down a long list of concerns that she has a lot of unknowns on both parts. She said the services of HR and business were a big issue and a big topic because she still feels that it should be on the school campus. She said she did ask him if there could be a board workshop and have his people come in and tell what they are doing and let the board ask questions and make suggestions about what they feel is best for the schools. She said he was very open to the idea. She said they talked about it being a little later in September after school started and everyone got acclimated to everything. She said she really urges the board members (since board members cannot communicate with each other) to meet with the superintendents. She said she has been meeting with James and Janet individually every month before the board meeting. She said she knows a lot of school districts do this. She said there is a lot going on that they need to know and stay on top of. She said it is key that they keep as up-to-date as possible and let them know the board's feelings and desires for the schools and kids.

Ms. Pack said she would get back with the board members after she talks to Secretary Key again about a time that the workshop could be held. She said she had thought about seeing if it could be on a board meeting day so it could all be on one day. She said she thought it was necessary to have so they could find out what is going on. Dr. Atcherson asked if they would be able to get credit for the workshop. Ms. Pack said she doubted it but she would ask. She said she had some questions and she wanted to find out about a board retreat and how to do it. She said they needed to be communicating now. Ms. McLaughlin said she agreed. Ms. Pack said what she envisioned was they would have someone come talk to the board about HR, finance, Federal programs, special ed and those type of things. She said she would check on it. Dr. McAllister said basically what is happening is they are going to give HR to the schools and they are going to take over all the finances. Ms. Pack said she thinks there would be an HR person but they would answer to ADE. Mr. McAllister said on top of that the schools have to loan their vehicles to others under the umbrella. He asked who would be responsible for the maintenance of those vehicles. Ms. Pack said the schools would be responsible for it. She said she thinks there is going to be some give and take and she thinks there is going to be some good things come about from it. Mr. Caton said there are discussions being held by subcommittees from the Transformation Action Team that was created. He said that larger group has been broken into smaller groups like Beverly and Breonda are on the one for culture and Del and Lori on the one for assets. Mr. DePriest asked if the schools had a seat on the larger committee. Ms. Pack said no. Mr. Caton said the superintendents do but not the board members. Ms. Pack said that was one of the things she asked about is the role of the board now. Secretary Key's indication was to do exactly what has been being done. Ms. Pack said she would like it spelled out in a workshop. She said there were a lot of unanswered questions. Dr. McAllister said if they have a larger board, it seems like someone from this board should have a seat on it. Ms. Pack said that would be the State Board of Education. She said he did ask how many people were on the board, how it rotated, etc. Mr. Caton said when he and Janet meet with the other directors under the ADE that is where they have a voice under that larger umbrella. He said they could convey anything the board has concerns about. He said not to hesitate to let he or Janet know of anything so they can be sure it gets said. He said in spite of the challenges in making this work, they have been very open with them in listening and soliciting their opinions. Dr. Dickinson said she thought it was important that the board feels welcome to contact Secretary Key. She thinks he is very open to communicate with the board.

Ms. Pack said before they move on, she wanted to thank Ernie for setting up this room because the a/c was out in the room the meeting is normally in.

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


Susan Pack, Chair


Dr. John McAllister, Secretary

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

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired met for their monthly meeting on August 20, 2019.

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

19-B-012 Motion to Approve Consent Items - Minutes

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

19-B-013 Motion to Approve Consent Items – Financial Statement

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the financial statement. Dr. Atcherson made a motion to approve the financial statement and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

19-B-014 Motion to Approve Consent Items – Personnel Items

Ms. Pack asked Mr. Caton about the one personnel item, the promotion of Amanda Noles to Teacher Supervisor. Mr. Caton said Ms. Noles is now the LEA Designee/Special Education Supervisor. Mr. Caton said ASB did not have a position for the LEA/Special Ed Supervisor and it has always been under the Teacher Supervisor title.

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the personnel items. Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve the personnel items and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pack stated the board needed to go into an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. She asked Mr. Caton to stay. Executive Session started at 5:20 and ended at 5:45. Ms. Pack stated the personnel matter was discussed and there was no action taken at this time.

Superintendent Report

Mr. Caton said it was a great start to the new school year. He said ASB has initiated block scheduling this year and so far it is going smoothly. He said overall he thinks it is going to be good for the kids and benefit them in terms of the extended time they get for their course work. He said they have been focusing on the Science of Reading training required by ADE. He said they have a couple of years to complete the training but they are not going to wait that long. The teachers have watched a video released through Arkansas IDEAS that is the professional development for the Science of Reading so that at some future point they can prove to be proficient in teaching it to the students. Ms. Doan has also been undergoing training to become an assessor so ASB will have someone that will be able to assess them in terms of their level of proficiency. He said ASB has restructured their Parent/Teacher organization and it is now Friends of ASB. He said they did that to draw the outreach to include the community as well along with the parents and teachers. He said ASB is looking forward to developing family and community engagement. Mr. Caton said they are also in the process of developing and building this new relationship with Department of Education under the Governor's transformation and reorganization plan. He said ASB continues to carry out the core mission of educating blind and visually impaired students in the state.

Mr. Caton said as part of the community outreach, he and Janet had the privilege of meeting with Chief Humphrey of the Little Rock Police. He said they think it is going to be a good partnership. The Chief is going to work with them on different things.

Mr. Caton said regarding the transformation, they also met with Dr. Eric Flowers, Chief Opportunity Officer from the Office of Secretary of the Department of Education. He said it was a productive meeting and they gave him ideas that they would like to see developed focusing more on the outreach, early childhood and transition services for the older kids. Dr. Flowers is looking into what opportunities there is for the schools and additional resources that may be available.

Mr. Caton said they also had a meeting to discuss receiving Title funding which historically the school has not received funding in the past other than the little 6B that ASB received. He said they always signed the assurances for the title funds even though they were not receiving any funding. Since the move under ADE, that funding has opened up for the schools. He said ASB would be getting around \$39,000 and in addition to that ASB will be getting State Pre-School and Federal Pre-School funding which will serve kids ages 3-5.

Mr. Caton said there is a meeting scheduled tomorrow with the ADE to further discuss the shared services model for the two schools. He said they will keep the board updated.

Mr. Caton said the Transformation Action Team has been meeting weekly. Recently it was broken up into subcommittees to work on different aspects of the transformation. ASB/ASD is represented on the cultural, assets, & communication subcommittees.

He mentioned last month about Madison School for the Blind reunion group coming for a tour of the school. They came August 9th and were excited to tour the school. He said the Madison School for the Blind was the school before integration. That is where African American students were educated. He said before Madison there was a Battery Street School. He said one of the members in the group attended the Battery Street School. He said in 1965 the Madison students were transferred to ASB.

Mr. Caton said the teachers were welcomed back August 5th with a sailor/sea theme “Sailing into 2019-2020”. The week was filled with professional development as mentioned in his report. On Thursday a welcome back lunch was served. Gina Windell, Chief of Staff, attended the lunch and gave staff a chance to ask any question they had about the transformation.

Registration was held on August 11th. 101 students were welcomed back on August 13th, the first day of school, with an all-school assembly. Students spent the first week adjusting to the daily routines and the new block scheduling.

Jackie Roberts, Literacy Specialist, from Arch Ford presented a professional development session on the Science of Reading for teachers and staff.

Mr. Caton said ASB will send staff from the Wellness Committee to represent the school at the Coordinated School Health quarterly meetings to be held at Heifer Village.

The Infirmary is putting together a manual for standard safety protocols related to different student health issues to include procedures for student injuries. In addition, training related to blood borne pathogens, chemicals, cleaning supplies as well as the emergency use of epi-pens has been available to the staff. More topics will be added as this resource is developed.

The counseling department will integrate the GUIDE for Life initiative that the Department of Education has rolled out (mainly on the high school level). This resource helps students develop the soft skills that are so essential to them being prepared for life beyond school.

Growth – Manage yourself
Understanding – Know yourself
Interaction – Build Relationships
Decisions – Make responsible choices
Empathy – Be aware of others

A daily high school classroom mantra is recited after the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence.

I am smart, and today I prove it
Today is a new day with no mistakes in it
I get today to help someone
Today, I am grateful for (Share)

Elementary mantras:

I am loved
I am valuable
I am needed
I am accepted
I belong here
I am safe here
I am secure

Mr. Caton said along with the Guide for Life initiative these add some new elements and dynamics for the students in helping them with their self –esteem and confidence.

Mr. Caton said to bring you up-to-date with the Website/Technology, they have been working with the Office of Civil Rights to get the website corrected with accessibility issues with our website. This is part of a nation-wide proactive initiative the OCR is taking in working with schools and their websites making sure they have all the accessibility features that are required.

The Infirmary renovations are progressing at a good pace. He said it is looking like a brand new place.

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



Susan Pack, Chair


Dr. John McAllister, 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 August 20, 2019.

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

19-D-014 Motion to Approve Consent Items - Minutes

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the July minutes. Dr. Atcherson made a motion to approve the July minutes and Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

19-D-015 Motion to Approve Consent Items – Financial Statement

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the financial statement. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the financial statement and Dr. Atcherson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

19-D-016 Motion to Approve Consent Items – Personnel Items

Ms. Pack asked for a motion to approve the personnel items. Mr. DePriest made a motion to approve the personnel items and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pack asked Dr. Dickinson if she had any comments on the personnel items. Dr. Dickinson said Andy Conrad was a new hire in the kitchen. She said it was always a pleasure to hire someone who is so excited to be here and he is so positive. He is learning to sign. Alice Strong retired and she is very much missed. Rick Porter transferred to ADE. She said Rick came back the first day of school to welcome the kids back. ADE recommended that their staff go out to schools to volunteer the first day of school so Rick contacted her and asked to come to ASD. Rick was their LEA plus many other duties. He definitely has very big shoes to fill. Becky Bell has taken on the supervisory of the student services department as Director. A Special Ed Coordinator has been hired and that is LeeAnn Brazeal. Stacie took on several duties as well.

Action Items

None

Discussion Items

Update on Transportation

Dr. Dickinson asked Steve to share information on transportation. Steve said after a lot of hard work, a contract has been made with Arrow Coach. He said there were no problems when Arrow Coach provided transportation before. Steve said by rearranging some things, the local schools will now come back and pick up their kids on Fridays. He said this will save some money. Dr. Dickinson said Steve worked countless hours to pull all of this together.

Dr. Dickinson said there was a review of the security contract today. She thinks there will be formal approval by tomorrow.

School Nurse Survey

Dr. Dickinson said Vicki is the president of the Association of School Nurses for the Deaf which is a national organization. Vicki went to the California School for the Deaf in Fremont, California where she was re-elected president. There were 18 deaf schools represented and 38 nurses in attendance.

Vicki said the conference was all deaf related and she got some really great topics and nursing insight. One of the speakers was a professor at the University of San Francisco. He was an infection disease control doctor and he talked on the importance of getting immunizations and how much it cuts down on the use of antibiotics. She said it was her job to educate parents on importance of immunizations. The new guidelines from the ADE as of December 1st, all of the immunization results will have to be posted on the school website. She said her survey was different from ASB. She said at the beginning is Student Acuity for 2018-2019 and she thinks it is very important for them to know because it is very easy to see what percentage of students need nursing services. She said she has to report the immunization to the ADE and it goes in eSchool. Vicki said they give a lot of medicine every day. ASD has one of the medicine carts like the hospitals use and still run out of room. She went over her survey explaining each section.

Vicki said her nursing license does not allow her to give anything that is not approved by the FDA and the essential oils, etc. which would include the CBD oils are not approved so she cannot give those. Ms. Pack said that was good to know because she knows from going to school board meetings that it is going to be a big issue. Vicki said that was a hot topic at the conference in Fremont.

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Vicki said they see a lot of kids. She said they document everything because they want to know what they do and she can show what is being done. She said they very rarely sit down. Vicki said evidence shows that if there is a school nurse working and they see the kids versus an unlicensed person that the kids are returned to school more often. Students can't be educated unless they are sitting in a classroom getting what they need. She said they take care of a lot of the staff also. She said they have done a lot of training. She said she is very proud of the number of staff or anyone in direct contact with students that Dr. Dickinson has taken the initiative to make sure they get trained (CPR, ADD, First Aid). She said everyone needs it and it makes the kids safer. She said the other thing is Stop the Bleed – everyone was trained in that. She asked if anyone had questions. There were none.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Dickinson said James did a great job describing the many meetings they have attended focusing on transformation and sharing services. One of her favorite meetings is called First Friday where Secretary Key, his Leadership Team and all ADE staff attend. It is also live-streamed. In that meeting, Secretary Key explained the whole concept of the transformation to his staff. She said it was interesting to see how they also value celebrating positive work, and it was great to see their spirit of collaboration.

Dr. Dickinson said their Welcome Back went very smooth. She said they had an afternoon visit from Secretary Key and Gina Windle to meet with the staff. He talked about transformation and gave the staff an opportunity to ask questions. She said they ended the week with a Be Happy Hour and had ice cream for everyone.

Dr. Dickinson said the visit from Chief Humphrey was really exciting for her. She said his cadets would come to the ASD campus to learn how they should respond to deaf people.

She said ASD was also working on the Science of Reading. The teachers completed several of the training modules over the summer. She said the Lower School has a Fabulous Friday assembly each week. Last week, the Lower School teachers dressed up as their favorite character and acted out scenes. It was a lot of fun.

Dr. Dickinson said the Parnell renovations are coming along extremely well. The students and staff are fascinated with each step of the construction process. The elevator should be there next week. They are putting in the windows and hopefully it will be finished soon and the next phase can be started. She said they would have a ribbon cutting ceremony with the board to celebrate the completed renovation.

Ms. Pack asked Staci if she brought any of the Foundation cards. Staci said she had one. Ms. Pack said they just got a bunch of new materials and it tells about the Foundation and the different levels of giving. She said there was good information in it.

Ms. Pack said if there was no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 6:30.


Susan Pack, Chair


Dr. John McAllister, Secretary