

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 May 16, 2017.

Present: Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; 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, Eddie Schmeckenbecher and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest residents

Dr. Watson called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for June 20th. Dr. Watson stated the board needed to complete the Superintendent evaluations as soon as possible and asked if they wanted to schedule a special meeting for the first week in June or move up the regular meeting. Ms. Pack stated everyone was coming for graduation and asked if it could be done Thursday before ASD's graduation or Friday after ASB's graduation. Mr. Caton said he did not know if Faith was going to make it to the graduations. Ms. Pack asked Mr. Caton to check with Everett and Faith to see if they were going to be at graduation on Friday, May 19th at ASB. Dr. Watson stated it would be a special closed meeting. Dr. Watson asked if June 20th was okay. The June regular meeting will be June 20th.

17-J-007 Motion to Approve Minutes

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

Action Items

None

Discussion Items

1. Easter Seals Update: Mr. Caton said if you have been by there recently there is not much left. He said he had received a number of ideas from the Hillcrest neighbors. He asked if anyone from the neighborhood would like to say anything. He said it was his understanding that their main concern was the area remaining an open lot without being secured and protection for the newly planted seedlings. He said the list he had suggested creating a slope hill that would limit the use of the property.

Dr. Watson said it already had a steep slope. Mr. Caton said in the back it is but he thinks they are referring to the flatness of the present lot. Ms. Terry said she would strongly suggest not doing that. Mr. Caton said the neighbors also mentioned a bike path. David Newbern (neighbor) said Tom Jenks and he own property facing Lee Avenue. He said the neighborhood was very happy about the progress. He said he wanted to thank Mr. Hill, Mr. Caton and the board for listening to them and allowing them to participate in the discussion about the property. He said their concern was the future of the property and trying to keep it from becoming a camping place for people that didn't have anywhere else to go. He said the other thing was access to the street. He said several of them had gates that go out to the street and hoped they would be mindful of that. Mr. Caton thanked Judge Newbern. Ms. Coleman said she knew everyone was concerned about what is going to happen afterwards but knows it will be okay. She suggested that concrete barriers be put at the end of the street and if it gets bad maybe get fencing. Ms Bonifas said she thought they should take their time to think it over and see what is most beneficial for both schools (for the use of the property). She said she did not think sloping the property is something that should be done. Mr. Caton said he thought the main thing at this point was to be able to make our neighbor's concerns and ideas available to the board as they move forward in developing the property. Dr. Waston said, in the meantime, once they get it down can Del connect the water there for plants, grass & trees. Mr. Caton said he thought so but he would check to be sure. Ms. Bonifas asked if they wanted to plant trees. Ms. Coleman said if you were to do a garden you would need an irrigation system. Need to decide what you are going to do with the property.

2. Invitation to attend ASB/ASD Graduations: Dr. Watson said he would like to invite all that are interested to both schools' graduation. ASD's graduation will be in Parnell Hall on Thursday night at 6:00. ASB's graduation will be on Friday morning at 10:00 in Woolly Auditorium. Dr. Watson said they would need to have a special board meeting after in the Multi-Purpose room. He said they would need to check with Everett and Faith to make sure they could attend then set up time and place.

ASD Parent Representative – Harry Pompeo

Mr. Pompeo reported ASD recently hosted the Spring Carnival on April 27th. It was very successful and highly attended. Prom was May 4th and all of the high school students attended. It was at the Noah Event Center in West Little Rock. ASD recently attended the Congressional Art Competition reception with Representative French Hill at the Historic Arkansas Museum. Several ASD students were honored for their artwork. There have been ongoing planning meetings with architects who are working on a plan for ASD's campus. There was a community town hall meeting for staff, parents and community so they could share their ideas/input. The Governor will be at ASD for a tour May 31st and they are excited about that. CEASD Conference was recently held in Hartford, CT. ASD was given the CEASD Diversity Grant.

ASD has passed out about 30 MacBook Airs – the students are thrilled about that. ASD is currently working to register for Google classroom. The track team is finished. They recently went to the Minnesota School f/t Deaf. They left here it was warm and when they arrived there it was cold. The boys and girls both did great. May 11th was the sports banquet. May 18th is graduation. May 19th will be semester tests. Next week Sophomores and Juniors will have semester tests. Summer Camp is scheduled for June 19-30. This concluded his report. Dr. Watson asked if they had any academic awards. Dr. Dickinson said they do have Honor Roll awards quarterly. Dr. Watson said he would like to hear more about the academic program. Mr. Bolen said they would have academic awards in the coming weeks.

ASB Parent Representative – Jeanne Tribett

Ms. Tribett reported ASBVI competed in the AAA track and field events. T. Lewis earned 2nd place in the triple jump, 5th place in the long jump and 7th place in the 100 meter dash. He received a special award for the most points scored at the meet. ASD Special Olympians also competed in the track and field and brought home many medals and ribbons. Prom was held at the Maumelle Country Club with the theme “The Black and Gold Masquerade”. Students and chaperones all had a great time. The senior class sponsors chaperoned the first “Senior Weekend” for graduating seniors. The group participated in activities all over the city. The students really enjoyed the weekend and want to continue this tradition for future graduates. A meeting was held on May 10th at the Ranch in West Little Rock to get more information on the implementation of the EAST programs. A majority of the equipment and support materials will begin being delivered and installed in June and July. The end of the school year brings many final events/celebrations. On the 17th the elementary sports program will be honored with a luncheon for students and parents. The secondary athletic banquet will be at 6:00 on the 18th. ASB graduation will be May 19th at 10:00 in Woolly Auditorium. The first annual Middle School Brunch will be held to honor all students who were part of this program in its inaugural year. The year will wrap up with our academic award ceremony on the 26th. The new Student Council officers will be instilled that day also.

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



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, 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 May 16, 2017.

Present: Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; 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, Eddie Schmeckenbecher and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

17-B-008 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. Pack made a motion to approve the consent items and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Watson asked Mr. Caton if there was anything he wanted to add about the new hire. Mr. Caton said Jena McDonnell was hired for the Instructional Resource Center where we send out Braille and Large Print books to the public schools in the state through the Textbook Program. She is doing a great job and we are pleased to have her. She is also helping out in other areas as well.

Action Items

Approve Community Eligibility Provision

Dr. Watson said approval is needed for Community Eligibility Provision. Mr. Caton said ASB has several action items the first is the Community Eligibility Provision. He said last year the board approved us to participate in that provision. Typically you would not renew it except for every four years but our percentage of elementary kids that qualified increased. Whenever you have an increase in the percentage you have to reapply and have it reapproved. That is what happened and we are pleased to see because overall it gives us a higher percentage rate that we are reimbursed. Dr. Watson asked if the board needed to take action. Mr. Caton said the minutes need to reflect that the board has approved participation in it and at a later date we will have an actual agreement that will need to be signed.

The second one is to approve the ADE Local School District Application Part B Funds. These are 6-B Pass Through funds that the school receives every year, approximately \$65,000 in Federal funds. He asked Mindy if there was anything else and she said there is a letter they get every year and basically the board has to approve each year and the board chair and superintendent to sign it.

Mr. Caton said the third item is ASB' Wellness Policy which has to be looked at and reviewed each year. It has to be reflect on the Child Nutrition Renewal Agreement when the board approved the Wellness Policy.

Mr. Caton said those were the three items ASB is seeking approval for today.

17-B-009 Motion to Approve the Community Eligibility Provision

Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the Community Eligibility Provision and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

17-B-010 Motion to Approve ADE Local School District Application Part B Funds

Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the ADE Local School District Application Part B Funds and Dr. Watson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

17-B-011 Motion to approve the Revised Wellness Policy

Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the Wellness Policy and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Discussion Items

None

Superintendent Report

Mr. Caton said he was very pleased to announce that ASB has received ANCRC grant for the Infirmary project. We received \$325,000 through that grant. He said they also met yesterday with the liaison from the Governor's Office to continue discussions for our agency needs and the upcoming visit by the Governor on the 31st. One thing brought to their attention was the new pay plan. It estimated to cost \$205,000 based on the existing staff to implement the state's new pay plan that raises the minimums for all entry level positions. Ms. Bonifas stated they were also losing the 1% COLA allocation that they have been getting, approximately \$43,281 that covers the two 1% COLA that happened about a year to 2 years ago. She said that was also hitting them also.

Mr. Caton said the \$43,000 they were going to lose. He said the school will have to absorb approximately \$250,000 out of the budget which is a huge chunk for the school. That was one of the issues raised yesterday. He said he recently learned they were able to write a letter requesting help and \$150,000 was requested. Dr. Watson asked if that was doable. Mr. Caton said it hurts no doubt but we will find a way of doing it. He said they did get a response to their letter that they will get \$85,000. He said that will help some but still leave a significant amount for the school to absorb. He said they will continue to look at the budget to see how they can trim without impacting the students' programming. He said this is for next year. Dr. Watson asked about the base grant funding for next year. Ms. Bonifas said funding is based on ?? state level and we have lost the \$43,000. She said they got \$85,000. She said basically we have to absorb a lot. Transportation contract is projected to go up and the security contract went up and next year the therapy contract will come up for renewal. Mr. Caton said you understate state government trying to be more efficient but at the same time we still have to operate a school and programs. He said these were conversations they were having with the liaison and hopefully we will continue to get some responses and additional assistance down the road. Ms. Pack asked if there had been any discussion about state revenues being down and cutting more money. Mr. Caton said he hasn't heard anything yet. He said if there were to be a shortage then a huge amount will trickle down. He said it is very challenging when funding wise we are treated like a state agency when we are a school and have to operate as a school. Ms. Coleman asked about the Supreme Court Decision in Colorado and if it could be used when talking to the Governor. Mr. Caton said they had not mentioned that specifically but have made the point that we are a school. He said education is not supposed to be cut but because we are a state agency we get cut any time any other agency does. Ms. Coleman said this was for disabled kids. Ms. Pack said the problem lies in the fact that not all states are required to have a balanced budget. She said in the State of Arkansas you must have a balanced budget. She said that is the law. Ms. Coleman said disabled students are required to have a certain level by the Supreme Court Decision that was just handed down. She said the argument should be maybe cut somewhere else. Mr. Krenn said the concern he would have from his standpoint is looking at the number of kids and what they currently spend. Could they take every one of our students and put them in a school district that they are currently from. If you push them to much they may look at trying to merge. He said right now they are looking to merge as many agencies as possible. He said he sat in the budget office at DFA and they were looking at making ten categories and make each agency fall under one of those categories where you would start downsizing staff. He said ASD was allocated \$150,000 where the Blind School received \$85,000. He said with all the pay plan changes ASD would need about \$500,000 in salaries for next year. He said they are not the only agency calling the Governor and basically telling him they are going to let people go because they can't afford it and these are offices of the courts, state police and corrections. They look at us as a small dip in their budget.

Ms. Coleman said the problem is that the Supreme Court said the state must provide arrade minimis care which enables them to get an education in the state. She said what she was saying was they can't get the care and education in some schools that you do. They can't afford to do it because they would have to hire a teacher and that would cost them more than the increase would be here. That case that was just handed down is a good foundation for you to make that argument. She thinks the state is going to eventually get sued for cutting schools supporting the disabled. Ms. Bonifas said they did bring that up when meeting with them that a smaller district and the cost of them adding all the resources that a blind and visually impaired kid needs would cost that district a lot of money as opposed to sending them to ASBVI. Ms. Bonifas said they need to balance how hard they push and if they push hard they need to know they have enough support with the community, stake holders and legislators. Mr. Caton thanked Ms. Coleman. He said to sum up he feels they do have an open ear with the Governor's Office and liaison. He said they continue to develop the relationship and continue to have the conversations that they need to have. He said they would keep the board updated. Dr. Watson said he had a question for both superintendents. He asked if the governor was going to visit each school. Mr. Caton answered yes he would have about 30 minutes at each school. Dr. Watson asked if they wanted to involve the board. Ms. Pack said he is only going to be there about 30 minutes. Mr. Caton said that would be up to the board. He said they were going to walk around and look at the facilities to show some of the areas we need help. Dr. Watson asked what time and Mr. Caton said 9:30 for ASB and 10:00 for ASD.

Mr. Caton presented the board with a copy of the 2017 yearbook. He said Josten's has been doing the yearbook for 45 years. ASB is one of their longest standing customers in the state of Arkansas. Dr. asked if they had one in braille. Mr. Caton said what they initiated this year to make the yearbook more accessible to the braille students they did an Earbook which is an audio where everyone around the school has contributed. There is a CD in the back of the book.

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



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, 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 May 16, 2017.

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

17-D-008 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. Pack made a motion to approve the consent items and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Watson asked Dr. Dickinson about the new hires. Dr. Dickinson said they all work in the cafeteria. She said they were excited to have a deaf cook and she is doing a great job.

Action Items

None

Discussion Items

Review of ASD Building - What a New Campus Should Look Like

Dr. Dickinson welcomed Wes Walls from Polk Stanley Wilcox Architect Firm. They have done a great job meeting with our different groups and stake holders. She said they have had a lot of meetings. She turned the meeting over to Mr. Walls.

Mr. Walls thanked the board for having him. He stated his name was Wesley Walls with Polk Wilcox Architect. He said he was the sole person presenting a larger team working on the master plan. He talked about the firm. They have offices in Little Rock and Fayetteville with 48 staff. He told of some of their other projects they have completed. He has been with the firm for 25 years. Saturday they will celebrate 40 years of practice. He said he would talk about two types of campus concepts. He said they received a lot of feedback from the district that went into the campus concepts. He said from a planning standpoint this is a quick summary –one of the most valuable things for a board is that it helps establish vision and build consensus. It helps generate planning guidelines.

He said ultimately a campus master plan will help determine what the physical direction will be of any future development and also what are the implementation strategies. What is the phasing of the project? They divided the process into four stages. One is the Discover Stage where we are spending a lot of time collecting information about the campus and have been working with Dr. Dickinson and Michael Krenn so they have a good background of what is happening on campus. He said now they are at the Dream phase where they begin to develop vision and put pen to paper on campus planning concepts. He said what would come from that is they will settle on a scheme but then go into it in more detail. He said he would present planning concepts tonight about locations and adjacency but they have a lot more work to do determine exact size, square footage, etc.

Mr. Walls talked about the Town Hall meetings and the information that came from them. He said they had meetings with the Administration on May 8th and with staff and community on May 12th to review concepts. He went over everything they have done to date and summarized the project. He said the main things that stood out were accessibility and security. He said they developed two campus concepts and passed copy out to the board. He explained the two different concepts.

Dr. Dickinson said she would like to thank Mr. Walls for his work with the community. Ms. Pack said she was happy to see the plans. Dr. Watson asked if there were any cost estimates projected to tear down and then build. Mr. Krenn said they had to come with a plan first to know what buildings needed to come down, and then they could start projecting what the cost would be. Ms. Pack asked as a priority where would they start. Dr. Dickinson said they would work with Wes and his team and discuss with the community. She said the number one priority is a new educational facility (K-12) and get them close together. More discussion

Mr. Caton said it was exciting to see this process and the only feedback he had would be to consider where the ASB Superintendent's home is (since they were proposing to have a building near there).

Dr. Dickinson said the point tonight was for the board to have an opportunity to share any ideas or concerns. She said they would be meeting with the board liaison on Friday morning and our goal is to share not specific visions but where we are in the process. Mr. Walls thanked the board for letting him present tonight.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Dickinson said they were very excited that ASD received a grant (ANCRC). They received \$300,000 for the renovation of Parnell Hall. We got this for two purposes, one is to complete the waterproofing on the outside of the building and the other is to replace windows with storm windows. The third that we did not receive money for is for a new elevator. They told us to come back next year for that. Dr. Dickinson said she gave up her time for the previous presentation by Mr. Walls.

Dr. Watson, in preparation for the special meeting to complete superintendent evaluations, passed out forms. He also handed out information for online training workshops by ASBA that could help with the evaluations.

Dr. Dickinson stated ASD had strawberries for the board.

There being no further business for Arkansas School for the Deaf, Dr. Watson asked for a motion to adjourn.

17-D-009 Motion to Adjourn

Ms. Pack made a motion to adjourn and Dr. McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



Dr. Doug Watson, Chair



Susan Pack, Secretary