

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

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting July 26, 2022 at the Arkansas School for the Blind.

Present: Dr. Sam Atcherson, Chair; Robert Fagan, Secretary; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Dr. Priya Gupta, ASBVI Parent Representative; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; Will Gorum and Jonathan Smith, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

Absent: Susan Pack

Dr. Sam Atcherson called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for August 16, 2022 at the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

While waiting on a board member to arrive, Dr. Atcherson stated the meeting would start with the Superintendent reports.

ASD Superintendent Report

ASD busy planning – they had 3 retreats

ASD Admin Retreat at the State Library for two days. Completed document with action plan for the strategic plan and how to make it happen

ASD Educational Leadership Team Retreat on campus. Focused on literacy.

ASD Student Life Team Retreat for 2 days – decided to make this based on 5 pillars.

ADE Summit in Hot Springs. Dr. Gretchen Cobb served as a liaison to the ADE Planning Committee. Several staff attended. ASD received an award recognizing ASD as one of the top ten districts in the cycle reporting submission.

Work on Parnell Hall - Roy DePriest stated the new chiller has been installed. The pumps will be installed when they come in. Mechanical Room needs some work. It is about 85% complete.

Lower School façade is making progress.

School Dude – Roy said they are fully committed on both campuses to use the computerized maintenance management system, School Dude. He is working with his team and the staff on both campuses every day.

ASD Superintendent Report Continued

Statewide Services – School closed now but babies still need services. They recently had a lunch meeting with Kim Scott, Christie Birdsong, Millicent Callan, Becky Flynn, and Danielle Wright. They felt the meeting was successful.

Open enrollment has started

Had awesome summer camps

New washers & dryers in the dorms

Continuing work on facilities with ADE and Cromwell Architects on the new Health Center

ASB Superintendent Report

ASB getting ready for the fast-approaching school year

Staff returns August 8th and the first day of school is August 15th

F.I.E.S.T.A. is the theme for this year. Staff have been decorating the main hallway to go along with the theme.

Focus on

Important

Educational

Standards

That

All students can meet

Interviewing for Educational Specialist

Interviewing for RA Activities Supervisor – have a strong candidate

Will be interviewing for secretary for his office

Learned the School Counselor is resigning August 3rd

Contracted company for our OT, PT and Speech looking for PT

Psych examiner contracted for both schools has resigned

IRC team are holding registration July 25th – August 2nd by appointment

ASB will have Open House on August 14th

Literacy team met with Region 14 to finalize the Literacy Plan for the school year

Continuing to work with ADE on preparations for Biennial Legislative Sessions in January

85 students starting the school year (includes 7 new students)

Teachers on campus helping with learning loss and tutoring for students

Taking care of food insecurity needs with our Food Pantry on campus

He has received a lot of good feedback from the ADE Summit

Mr. Williams was an Ambassador at the Summit; several staff also attended

Health team attended the annual Schools for the Deaf Nurses Conference

ASB will have a new esports league this year-students will compete against other schools

Board of Trustees Meeting

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ASB Superintendent Report Continued

Will be starting repair work on roof in the Vocational Building that collapsed

Working on painting kitchen as well as dorms

The Alumni purchased 70" TVs for the dorms

Repair work in dorms

HVAC issues at Superintendent's house; Primary Building; IRC and Front Office

Mr. Fagan asked about the progress on the water line issue. Mr. Caton said ADE recently sent plans to look at. Mrs. Windle said the plans were on hold now as it has to go through the Plumbing Board, and it is with them now. If she doesn't hear something by end of the week, she will follow-up.

Mr. Fagan asked about the electrical. Mr. Caton said it is still under discussion with Entergy. He said they remain hopeful that it is going to happen for the schools.

Joint Agenda

22-J-009 Motion to Approve Joint June 16, 2022 Minutes

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. McAllister seconded. Motion carried.

Action Items - None

Discussion Items

Community Proposal – Dr. Atcherson said he mentioned in last month's meeting the board along with the superintendents had been in discussion whether they would want to have an on-line community portal for the board where all minutes, board activities, communication with each other and the community. They met with a representative with Diligent and the software is called BoardDocs. It will require training if the board decides to move forward. There is also a fee associated with it (\$2500 a year). It would be split between the two schools. Mr. Caton said he wished there could have been a trial period. He said he has learned since then that ADE has software they have been using for years for board meeting. There is a potential that the schools could be integrated into that program. It is something that is already being paid for. Dr. Atcherson said anything that the state is using should be explored. He thinks having on-line would be the right move. He said he is very interested in what they could learn from the state. He said they would table the discussion for now until more information was available.

There being no further business of Joint nature, the meeting moved to the ASD agenda.

ASD Agenda

22-D-007 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

Action Items

Dr. Dickinson said there were no substantial changes to either of these.

22-D-008 Motion to Approve Student and Employee Handbooks for 2022-2023

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. McAllister seconded. Motion carried.

22-D-009 Motion to Approve Personnel Policies & Salary Schedule

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

22-D-010 Motion to Approve School Level Improvement Plan

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion Items

Date Arkansas School for the Deaf was Established – Possible Change

Dr. Dickinson introduced J.R. Courtright (Director of the Arkansas Deaf Heritage Center. J.R. said he grew up learning that 1850 was when the School for the Deaf was founded. He said in 2017 Nathan Burleson went to Clarksville – Nathan looked around for markers for when the school was established. He went to the library and found information approving the Acts. He said the date was January 1, 1849. J.R. went on to discuss information on the School for the Deaf. Dr. Dickinson said there were several documents that were provided to the board. J.R. explained the documents. Dr. Atcherson asked if there were negative implications for changing the date (markings on buildings, anniversaries). Dr. Atcherson said he thought they needed a set of unbiased reviewers to look at it. There was more discussion. It was decided to do more research and report back to board at the September meeting.

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

ASB Agenda

22-B-008 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financials, Personnel Items)

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. McAllister seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion Items – None

Action Items

Mr. Caton said there was a sheet included that shows the changes made – mainly dates updated, names and the attendance policy (trying to have it read more clearly/friendly). Mr. Williams said our previous attendance policy did not allow for excused absences. They looked at surrounding districts so it would be in line with siblings attending other schools. Students do have to bring a doctor's excuse. Personal leave was changed so that teachers may not take personal days the first week of school or the last week of school.

22-B-009 Motion to Approve the 2022-2023 Student Handbook

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. McAllister seconded. Motion carried.

22-B-010 Motion to Approve the 2022-2023 Employee Handbook

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

22-B-011 Motion to Approve the Personnel Polices and Salary Schedule

Mr. Caton this is the form that is put on the website that ASB is following the personnel polices from OPM as well as the salary schedule.

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. McAllister seconded. Motion carried.

22-B-012 Motion to Approve School Level Improvement Plan (Elementary & Secondary)

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

22-B-013 Motion to Approve the Teacher & Administrator Recruitment/Retention Plan

Mr. Caton said this used to be the Minority Recruitment plan. It is now a 3-year plan but it has to be updated each year.

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

There being no further business for ASB, Dr. Atcherson asked for a motion to adjourn.

22-B-014 Motion to Adjourn

Dr. McAllister made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.



Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Chair



Rob Fagan, Secretary