

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 18, 2023, at the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Present: Susan Pack, Chair; Robert Fagan, Vice Chair; Dr. Samuel Atcherson, Board Member; Philip Garner, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Gretchen Cobb, ASD Interim Superintendent; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; Will Gorum and Sydney Morris, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

Absent: Dr. John McAllister, Secretary; Dr. Priya Gupta, ASBVI Parent Representative

Mrs. Pack called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. The August board meeting will take place on August 15, 2023, at the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

Joint Agenda

23-J-025 Motion to Approve Joint Meeting June 2023 Minutes

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. Atcherson seconded. Motion Carried.

Action Items

2023-24 Student Handbooks for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton discussed changes made to ASBVI handbook, which include dates, staff names, and new Arkansas State Laws.

Dr. Cobb discussed changes made to the ASD handbook, which include changes to staff, admission procedures, dress code, food services, and communication between students and teachers. There were no major policy changes.

Mr. Fagan inquired about a handbook edition for LEARNS Act community service requirement. Mrs. Pack stated that final approval for the Act has not been given, but once the green light is given an addendum for each handbook can be submitted.

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. Atcherson seconded. Motion Carried.

2023-24 Employee Handbooks for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton discussed changes made to ASBVI handbook, which include dates, staff names, and change to maternity leave based on Act 770.

Dr. Cobb discussed changes made to ASD handbook, which include maternity leave, personal leave, and structural and formatting changes.

Dr. Atcherson made a motion to approve along with formatting changes to ASBVI Handbook. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion Carried.

2023-24 School Level Improvement Plans for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton stated for ASBVI, the school has separate LEAs for Secondary and Elementary Education. Plan target areas for improvement include Literacy, and professional development. The district level improvement plan will be presented to the board in August.

Dr. Cobb stated for ASD no major change except to continue with bilingual grammar instruction for lower school, increase literacy and reading skills. ASD is looking into bilingual certification for teachers.

Mr. Garner made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion carried.

2023-24 Teacher & Administrator Recruitment Plans for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton discussed ASBVI plan changes made, which include updates to dates and surveys.

No changes for ASD.

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

2023-24 Board Chair Signature Page Personnel Policies & Salary Schedules for ASBVI & ASD

Signed and approved along with Handbooks per Mrs. Pack.

2023-24 Parent Teacher Engagement Plans for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton for ASBVI, mentioned all three plans (District, Elementary LEA, Secondary LEA) are available online.

Dr. Cobb for ASD clarified is only one LEA. Mrs. Varner is currently working on engagement plan.

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Mr. Garner seconded. Motion carried.

2023-24 Comprehensive School Counseling Plans for ASBVI & ASD

Mr. Caton mentioned it is a yearly plan not previously brought to the board for review and awareness.

Board approval not required.

Discussion Items

Annual School Nurse Survey for ASBVI & ASD, Vicki Crump, RN

RN Crump stated a separate survey is submitted for each school. In October of each year the acuity levels must be submitted for every student which includes healthcare concerns, medically complex, medically fragile, and nursing dependent. RN Crump provided board a breakdown of student count by level. The yearly survey was based on 190 students for both schools. Additionally, provided a chart with the number of students with ADD, Asthma, Cardiovascular disease, depression, allergies, seizure, substance abuse, TBI, and diabetes. As well as the number of students receiving long-term scheduled meds. Upcoming year, Narcan now must be on campus and must be with AEDs. The number of students missing 10% or more of the school year between both schools, 36% of students at each school. Infirmary educated staff on staff on student health or illnesses, provided covid testing and support, coordinated with three flu clinics, coordinated dental vans, and assisted with acute care clinics and mental health clinics. Provided CPR/First Aid/AED classes for staff and students, health physicals, and student medical records.

ASD Agenda

23-D-026 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Mr. Fagan made a motion to approve. Dr. Atcherson seconded. Motion Carried.

Action Items – None

Discussion Items

Update on Superintendent Search

Mrs. Pack stated on June 27, Superintendent is posted and there are currently two applicants that meet the criteria, but the position is listed as open until filled.

Mrs. Young, HR, stated position is posted on state website, Alumni boards on Universities with a deaf education program, and will be posted on Indeed. Additionally, will be posted on the Association of Deaf school administrators. Awaiting login information. One additional applicant came through today.

Mrs. Pack informed members that applicant names will not be shared until the search has ended, a recommendation from region 14. Training on August 1 with Lynann of Region 14 is tentatively scheduled for August 1, 2023. A list of the supt. search committee members and alternates is provided and read aloud. Mrs. Pack as for board approval of the committee members.

Dr. Atcherson asked to have a member of the interpreter community join the committee. Dr. Atcherson recommended Will Gorum of C+ Interpreting.

ASD Community recommended a deaf/blind member serve on the committee. Another member expresses concern about the conflict of interest for the student member whose mother is a parent representative on the board.

Each committee member must sign a confidentiality statement and are not allowed to vote only to make recommendation.

Report on Student issue with Rogers School District

Dr. Cobb discussed a report from the parent of a Rogers student. At the time of the incidents, ASD was between LEAs and did not have good direction on the paperwork and lack of training. Unfortunately, ASD has not had adequate training for special education paperwork since prior to covid. Dr. Cobb feels ASD staff can prevent similar issues going forward. ASD is currently working to hire a new LEA and Ms. Kratky is serving that role. Ms. Kratky has been working to meet deadlines and states all students' items are all up to date.

Superintendent Report

Camp was a huge success – 40 kids enrolled.

Attended ADE Summit along with several teachers. The two first time presenters did a great job.

ASD Alumni presented at ADE Summit

Presented on new Deaf education standards with Lion College

Three ASD staff will teach deaf courses at Lion college – tentatively fall 2024.

New Atlas tests, test based on the standards. Excited to be part of the rollout.

Mrs. Pack asks for approval for ASD Information Technology Security plan.

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

ASBVI Agenda

23-B-027 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Mr. Garner made a motion to approve. Mr. Fagan seconded. Motion Carried.

Action Items – None

Discussion Items

Annual Bullying Report for 2022-23 School Year

Mr. Caton pleased to report no bullying reports filed to present to the board.

Budget / Financials

Mr. Caton pulled out the special maintenance carryover fund from the monthly report for the board to see a more detailed breakdown of expenses. Funds are used for school projects, renovations, and facilities.

Monthly Student Achievement Report

A new report for the upcoming school year must be provided to the board on student achievement each month. A list of the items focused on student achievement was provided to the board. ACT aspire scores came out this week, hopefully we'll see some growth and improvement.

Superintendent Report

Agency cap is 91 and currently 82 filled. 9 vacancies, 5 requested to fill.
Math teacher and virtual Arkansas to assist with science until position filled.
Employee list included, separated by department.

Dr. Atcherson inquired about the purpose of the employee list requested by Secretary Oliva. Mrs. Pack stated it's to look at and understand the various positions.

Projected enrollment – 72. 66 returning and 6 new students.
Attended school safety conference.
Two students had wonderful time and experience at FBLA Conference
Two students attending Governor School
Attended ADE Summit with Staff. Multiple staff presented.
State public service intern served our ADE booth.
Several Paraprofessionals through REACH are now part of Teacher Academy.
Three teachers accepted into ADE master teacher academy for certification.
RN Crump attended the National School Nurses Conference.
Nurses attended training at ACH and Arch Ford.
The cottage renovation extended to September.
The water line is finishing up. Getting ready to tie into central AR water system.
Two utility vehicles stolen.
Vehicles re-keyed and shop locks changed.

Mr. DePriest met with Mr. Smith to establish a scope to put together a budget or starting point for the campus fencing project.

Three power outages this month.
AR Unit of American herb society is donating two lion sculptures.
Hoping to have contractor in place for Health Service Building by end of August.

23-J-028 Motion to Adjourn

Mrs. Pack made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Susan Pack, Chair

Dr. John McAllister, Secretary