

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 March 15, 2022 at the Arkansas School for the Blind.

Present: Dr. Sam Atcherson, Chair; Susan Pack, Secretary; Robert Fagan, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Holley Mott, ASD Parent Representative; Priya Gupta, ASB Parent Representative; Will Gorum & Jamie Bilancione, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

Dr. Sam Atcherson called the meeting to order at 5:06. The next meeting was scheduled for April 19, 2022 at the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

Joint Agenda

22-J-003 Motion to approve Joint February, 2022 Minutes

Rob moved to approve, Susan seconded. Motion carried.

Action Items- None

Discussion Items- New Building Funding

Dr. Dickinson said that she really appreciated the 30 million dollars the Governor had given ASD and ASB to share. She said it had not been discussed yet what the funds would be used for but that the three categories were Instruction, Residential and Safety. She said that 30 million would not meet all three areas so there would be discussions of what was most needed.

Mr. Caton stated that it might not meet everything but that it would go a long way in getting things done. He said that the money would be available July 1, 2022 and did not have an expire so that we had time to plan and assess. He said that the three areas mentioned were very broad. He said that there was one pot of money so they would be assessing what the highest priorities were between both schools.

Susan stated that in the past the State Building Services were the ones that put out bids and then asked that since this had come from ADE if State Building Services would be involved to help.

Mr. Caton stated that the typical process should still be in place, that we still have to get things approved through them.

Susan asked if there was any mention of Roy being involved

Dr. Dickinson said that Roy would be involved in all the meetings they went to.

ASD Agenda

22-D-003 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Susan moved to approve, Rob seconded. Motion carried.

Action Items-

22-D-004 Motion to Approve putting a hold on SCPI requirement until March 16, 2023

Dr. Dickinson said that due to school being out due to COVID and that she would like to put a hold on their SCPI requirement for a year. She said they were back offering classes now

Susan moved to approve, Rob seconded it. Motion carried.

22-D-005 Motion to approve 2022-2023 School Calendar

Dr. Dickinson stated that there had been a requirement that would not allow us to begin school until two weeks before Labor Day. But that in the past week that had changed.

Mr. Caton stated that there was a budget bill that had passed with an amendment putting a pause on schools not being able to start until two weeks before Labor Day until 2023. He said that this was causing some districts to look at revising their calendars, and that was what we decided to do. Changing our start date from August 22, 2022 to August 15, 2022 will allow us to get out before Memorial Day.

Priya asked about when LRSD would start and stated that our Christmas break was different then theirs and asked how that affected student transportation.

Mr. Caton stated that depending on the school district that it could affect student transportation.

Dr. Dickinson stated that for us, because of transporting students around the state, it wasn't appropriate for us to have students leave during the middle of a week so we needed to keep students on campus for full weeks.

Rob moved to approve, Susan seconded it. Motion carried.

Discussion Items-

Dr. Dickinson told the Board that they had received the information needed to grant a waiver for the background check on an employee so that the employee could remain employed at ASD.

Susan recommended that the employee be able to stay as an employee at ASD and Rob seconded it.

Superintendent Report

Facilities- Exciting news about the Governor giving both schools 30 million dollars to share. We have been working on and advocating for our new buildings for 7 years. We will be asking the Board for feedback soon.

Deaf Ed. Program- Lyon College is working with us to start a Deaf Ed. Program. They visited the school last week. They are very excited and moving forward fast. We are working with them to make a proposal. They have verbally "expressed their support" even though it has not gone through all the tiers it needs to yet.

ADE Legal Team Training- Great training. Some items discussed were credentials and licensure changes and how we can make sure we are following everything appropriately. Round two of this will be on Friday.

Word of the Year- This helps us unify as a campus. This year we took two words and combined them into a phrase. One word was Pei Pei, which is an ASL word that means best champ. This year our phrase is Persevere Pei Pei. You have to persevere before you get to the Pei Pei.

Statewide Services- The team is busy. This year they have doubled the number of students they are seeing. Melanie Brown has collected numbers from 32 school districts and has found 128 more students that we did not know about.

Lower School- This has been Dental Health Month. The students received new toothbrushes and floss from a local dentist, sponsored by Sherwood Rotary Club. We celebrated Read Across America and the President of AEA gave each of the students a new book, Green Eggs and Ham.

Middle School/High School- A group of students participated in the National Deaf High School Theatre Festival at Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind.

ASD Museum- 15 UALR students along with Professor Hollingsworth came to tour the ASD Museum.

Jr. NAD will have a virtual conference on March 16, 2022

We are thrilled that Food Services has opened our salad bar.

Rob asked Dr. Dickinson how the Stoplight system in regards to mask wearing was going. Dr. Dickinson said they loved it and that they all had been in green.

ASB Agenda

22-B-002 Motion to Approve Consent Items (Minutes, Financial Statement, Personnel Items)

Rob moved to approve, Susan seconded. Motion carried.

Action Items-

22-B-003 Motion to Approve taking away Mask Mandate

Mr. Caton said that he had gotten feedback form staff, parents and students. The results were that we would like to keep the mask mandate in place for the week after Spring Break then after that move to an optional policy. He would still like to see the Infirmary have a mask mandate. He stated that he would be looking at using the Stoplight system as well as information from the CDC that highlighted areas of the state that were high since we have students from different parts of the state on campus.

Susan made a motion to keep the mask mandate in effect until April 4, 2022. Rob seconded it. Motion carried.

22-B-004 Motion to Approve 2022-2023 Calendar

Mr. Caton stated that our calendar was basically the same as the one ASD had provided. He said one difference was when our ten-month employees returned.

Rob asked about that difference. Mr. Caton stated that ASD's came back on August 1 due to their Sports Camp being that first week. He said that all of our 10-month staff work the same number of days it's just broken down differently.

Rob moved to approve the 2022-2023 calendar. Susan seconded it. Motion carried.

Discussion Items- None

Superintendent Report

Facilities- Very excited about funding.

Cottage Grant- Our application was submitted for more grant funds for our cottage renovation project. The grant request is for \$557,400.00 which reflects inflation and the rise of costs. The funding meeting will be scheduled for some time in May. We are pretty confident. When our first request was made we made it for the total amount and we were asked about doing it in phases. We have just completed Phase 1.

State Audit- We had a state audit conducted through email and a brief site visit. Everything appeared to be in order. They usually come and stay for a few weeks- being in and out so this one was brief. You will be notified of any reports.

High School Student Highlight- 11th Grader, Diya Chakraborty was chosen for the Governors School Choral Music Program. This was very competitive as only 400 students are chosen statewide.

Food Pantry- Robin Dean has been working with her church and together they have provided 15 backpacks of food for needy students. This will be an ongoing partnership. We are also working on establishing a permanent food pantry made up of donated non-perishable food that we can give to our students for weekends and during school breaks.

Black History Program- We were able to put one together at the last minute. +one of our teacher's dad was a 1958 graduate of Central High so he came and spoke, giving his perspective. Many thanks to Ms. Cole and Ms. Runder.

School Happenings- We are making plans for prom and graduation. This Thursday, March 17th is our annual Talent Show at 6:00 p.m. in Woolly Auditorium.

Staff Highlights- 2 of our staff have been working to get the Special Ed Resource and Co-Teacher endorsement on their licenses. They are in their last semester. This is paid for by ADE. We do have some more working on it.

EAST- our students left today for the EAST conference in Hot Springs. The projects that will be highlighted at the conference are Wake Up ASB/Newsletter, O&M Scavenger Hunt, High School Hangout, Playground Project, Audio Yearbook, and Hot Springs Library.

Data- We've had 950 Facebook followers. Our posts have reached 3376 people and we have 25 new followers. In Class Dojo we have 46 teachers and 108 parents.

Annual Quota Funds- This is the money APH distributes to Blind Schools and we get a per capita amount. All of our students are placed on census. This money goes a long way in helping us get Large Print and Braille books and other materials from APH.

Child Nutrition- They had a routine inspection from the Health Department. The only finding was some wooden shelves in a storage room that need to be painted incase something spills on it. We also had our Annual Commodity Distribution Review. We had a few products in inventory that were coded wrong. Roy has installed some automatic wireless devices that will automatically monitor the temperatures of h=the refrigerators and freezers. We have also ordered some new tables to help spruce things up. This will also make it easier to move them which will make it easier to keep the floors sanitized and make cleaning and sanitizing the tables themselves easier.

Susan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rob seconded. Motion carried.

Dr. Sam Atcherson, Chair

Susan Pack, Secretary