

ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026
5:00 P.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

DR. JOHN McALLISTER, Chair
MR. JERRY BELEW, Vice Chair
MS. CARY SMITH, Secretary
MR. PHILLIP MILLER
MR. ROBERT FAGAN

NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS:

MS. NICOLE WALSH, Superintendent

LOCATION:

ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND
- Woolly Auditorium
2600 West Markham Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

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P R O C E E D I N G S

II. REMINDER OF NEXT MEETING -SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

CHAIR McALLISTER: Next, I have a reminder that our next meeting will be October the 20th, 2026. Does that work for everyone? October the 20th, 2026.

MS. SMITH: Yes.

MR. MILLER: October 20th?

CHAIR McALLISTER: Correct.

MS. SMITH: Am I getting feedback? Okay, just making sure.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

B. PERSONNEL ITEMS

CHAIR McALLISTER: Next on the agenda is the consent items. I need an approval of the minutes, financial statements and personnel items.

MR. FAGAN: Mr. Chair, I move to approve the minutes, financial statement and personnel items as submitted to the board.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chair, if I may, a point of order. It's listed in here that I was in attendance on August meeting. I was absent for that meeting. Would you just make that amendment?

CHAIR McALLISTER: Okay. Can we please make that amendment that Mr. Philip Miller was absent on

1 August the --

2 MR. FAGAN: So moved.

3 MS. SMITH: I second.

4 CHAIR McALLISTER: All right. So it has been
5 moved and second all in favor.

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIR McALLISTER: All against? Anyone
8 abstaining? If not, the financial approval of the
9 minutes, financial statements and personnel items
10 have been passed with the addendum of Mr. Philip
11 Miller's attendance.

12 SUPT. WALSH: Don't forget attendance.

13 CHAIR McALLISTER: At this time, I would like to
14 call the roll.

15 Mr. Philip Miller?

16 MR. MILLER: I'm present.

17 CHAIR McALLISTER: Mr. Jerry Belew?

18 MR. BELEW: Present.

19 CHAIR McALLISTER: Robert Fagan?

20 MR. FAGAN: Present.

21 CHAIR McALLISTER: Cary Smith?

22 MS. SMITH: Here.

23 CHAIR McALLISTER: Nicole Walsh?

24 SUPT. WALSH: Here.

25 CHAIR McALLISTER: Philip Powell?

1 SUPT. WALSH: Powell.

2 CHAIR McALLISTER: Philip Powell.

3 SUPT. WALSH: Is absent.

4 CHAIR McALLISTER: Myself, John McAllister, I'm
5 present.

6 Next we have action items. It is we need to
7 approve the annual equity compliance and compliance
8 report.

9 SUPT. WALSH: We need to do personnel items
10 first or the personnel items.

11 CHAIR McALLISTER: I'm sorry. Excuse me.
12 Approval of the personnel items first.

13 SUPT. WALSH: Board, if I may take them on
14 before we approve the personnel items, I'd like to
15 ask for our new teachers to rise so I can introduce
16 them. The young lady in the blue sweater is Miss
17 Kallen Boyett. She is our special education teacher
18 in the deaf department, team ready elementary. And
19 then we have I'm so sorry. Sabrina, your name is not
20 on here. Is that right, Sabrina; right? That's
21 right; right? I'm so sorry.

22 MS. HORTON: Horton.

23 SUPT. WALSH: Horton, thank you. I apologize.
24 We'll make sure that your name gets on there for next
25 month. I'm not sure why you missed this month. So

1 Sabrina Horton also teaches in our deaf department
2 elementary as well. And then Mr. Heath Simpson is
3 not with us this evening, but he is our new PE
4 teacher in the deaf department. We're very honored
5 to have you guys here. Thank you for coming.

6 CHAIR McALLISTER: Thank you all for your
7 service.

8 So now I need an approval of the personnel
9 items.

10 MS. SMITH: I make a motion to approve the
11 personnel items.

12 MR. FAGAN: Second.

13 CHAIR McALLISTER: All right. Moved and
14 seconded. All in favor?

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIR McALLISTER: Anyone against it? Is there
17 anyone abstaining?

18 If not, the personnel items have been approved.

19 **IV. ACTION AGENDA**

20 **1. APPROVE ANNUAL EQUITY COMPLIANCE REPORT (SIGNATURES)**

21 CHAIR McALLISTER: Now we have the action items.
22 We need approval of the annual equity compliance
23 report.

24 SUPT. WALSH: I'm so sorry, I was trying to have
25 the feedback addressed.

1 Okay. So the annual compliance is basically
2 just an assurance that is signed by the board that
3 states that we do have Title IX, we are following
4 IDEA and Section 504 in the event that would be
5 appropriate for our students. All of our students do
6 not have any students who have 504s. But Title IX
7 applies, Title V, Title I, all of the titles, and we
8 just follow the state regulations. So it's just to
9 circle those and say, yes, we do that, and to sign
10 off on it.

11 Any questions?

12 MS. SMITH: Do we have any plans in place for if
13 we are understaffed or anything like that for
14 services, Sped or otherwise?

15 SUPT. WALSH: Sure. So one of the things that
16 is very beneficial for us, if we are understaffed,
17 for the most part we attempt to staff it via
18 scheduling components to make sure that it is
19 covered. We have a shortage. We do not have a
20 special education teacher for the team ready in the
21 deaf department specifically, high school. And so
22 what we have done in that manner is we have moved
23 into a co-teaching model. One of the best parts
24 about being a small school is that we're allowed to
25 be a little bit creative. We have people who are

1 willing to be a little bit creative. And so we've
2 moved them into a co-taught model where they're
3 receiving services from the content teacher as well
4 as a special education teacher. And so they're
5 receiving those services rather -- instead of in a
6 self-contained style, they're doing it more in a
7 co-taught model, which is new for these students, but
8 I think it's been very successful so far. So that's
9 kind of how we approach those needs. If we are
10 lacking an art teacher, we try to fill that position
11 as quickly as possible. If we cannot, we --
12 thankfully, if you're K through 6, you can teach art
13 if you're elementary certified. So we find someone
14 to cover that. Hopefully that will not be -- we've
15 got some positions that are a little bit available,
16 but hopefully we won't have them open for too
17 terribly long. And we just attempt to reconfigure as
18 best we can. We are very blessed now as being one
19 school. Even before we were one school, we had
20 teachers who were willing to work on both sides of
21 the -- in both departments. And as such, we've seen,
22 one, some serious growth in our teachers, some great
23 skills developed in our students and a sense of
24 camaraderie, which is really important.

25 MS. SMITH: So is that co-taught model approved

1 for -- like, by this compliance?

2 SUPT. WALSH: So really all this just says is
3 that we will follow the requirements of IDEA. So it
4 makes sure that we meet service minutes. So it's
5 really --

6 MS. SMITH: But does a co-taught model meet
7 those minutes?

8 SUPT. WALSH: Yes.

9 MS. SMITH: Okay.

10 SUPT. WALSH: As long as there's a special
11 education teacher in there, it meets the minutes.

12 MS. SMITH: Okay. And then what about any
13 special services?

14 SUPT. WALSH: So, like, related services?

15 MS. SMITH: Uh-huh.

16 SUPT. WALSH: So making sure that we meet those
17 minutes with certified staff is the most important
18 thing. As it sits right now, other than an
19 occupational therapist, we do not have a gap in
20 services and that person is starting very, very soon.
21 So that will be picked up, and we'll make up the
22 compliance with those minutes. We'll have to catch
23 those up. But for the most part, we haven't missed
24 much, thankfully. If there is a gap, we always
25 contract in if necessary.

1 MS. SMTIH; Okay, thank you.

2 SUPT. WALSH: Yes, of course.

3 Anybody else?

4 (NO RESPONSE)

5 SUPT. WALSH: Awesome, thank you so much.

6 CHAIR McALLISTER: Can we get an approval --

7 MR. FAGAN: Mr. Chair, I move to approve the
8 annual compliance report for ARDP.

9 CHAIR McALLISTER: Do I have a second?

10 MR. BELEW: Jerry Belew, I second.

11 CHAIR McALLISTER: All right. It's been moved
12 and seconded. All in favor?

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIR McALLISTER: All right. Is there anyone
15 abstaining?

16 If not, the annual equity compliance report has
17 been approved.

18 **2. APPROVE ARDB TRANSPORTATION SUPPLEMENTAL COMPENSATION**
19 **POLICY**

20 CHAIR McALLISTER: Next on our action items is
21 the ARDB transportation supplemental compensation
22 policy.

23 SUPT. WALSH: Okay. So as many of you know, we
24 offer compensatory time to our 12-month non-exempt
25 staff who ride buses, or in this situation, now that

1 we've started driving our buses, drive buses. And
2 that will continue. However, we did not have a
3 policy or a procedure in place for our exempt staff,
4 so our teachers, to be able to receive those
5 stipended funds for travel because they cannot
6 receive compensatory time. So we wanted to make sure
7 that was put into place, that it was standardized.
8 And it's one of those situations where every route's
9 a little bit different, so we wanted to set
10 expectation for this is how much you'll get paid for
11 each ride. And then for driving as well, we have
12 some folks who are interested in going to get their
13 passenger CDL to be able to drive for us as well. We
14 are hoping -- we have plans already in the works to
15 purchase two vans. We've already talked about that.
16 But at the urging of the Secretary, we are trying our
17 best to find two more and be able to bring it all
18 in-house, which I think is a wonderful plan. If
19 we're able to get the innovative transportation
20 grant, which he seems confident that we will, we may
21 be able to purchase and bring in-house all four
22 routes, in which case we would need a couple more
23 CDLs based drivers. Technically, you don't have to
24 have a CDL to drive a van with 12 kids or less -- 15
25 kids or less in it, but we want to make sure that our

1 staff are adequately prepared. So that kind of falls
2 into all of this if they're not required to have a
3 CDL, if they're not driving the bigger buses, but
4 it's nice to have. So if they're riding on the
5 routes as chaperones, route one receives \$125 a ride.
6 Route 2 is \$125. This is really based on length and
7 time. Route 3 is our shortest one. It's about 3 1/2
8 hours there and back. It's not that bad. And so
9 it's \$100. And then route 4 is \$110. And then for
10 drivers, it's more because you're taking on
11 responsibility of actually driving the vehicle. So
12 that's kind of laid out for that. And just to kind
13 of set all the supplements in there, what the
14 overtime would look like, how that's funded and then
15 kind of how we're going to make sure that it gets
16 assigned properly.

17 MR. BELEW: And so would this be paid, you know,
18 would this pay on a daily basis, a weekly basis,
19 monthly basis? How would this be done?

20 SUPT. WALSH: Great. So you get -- you get --
21 you will be paid monthly, but you are paid per ride.
22 So if you drive on Friday and drive on Sunday, you
23 would get the total of those two rides. So if you're
24 a chaperone riding on route 3, you would get \$100 on
25 Friday and \$100 on Sunday. It would not be paid till

1 the end of the month.

2 MR. BELEW: And so it would be -- so it could be
3 like, they would be paying twice? It would be like,
4 for as much as many as a total of eight, if they
5 were, so you're looking at something like \$1,000 a
6 month for that?

7 SUPT. WALSH: I mean, if someone were to ride
8 every single weekend and they were to ride Friday and
9 Sunday, which not everybody can because our teachers
10 have to be here Friday afternoons for, you know, PD
11 or what have you. But if there's a week -- a day
12 that it doesn't require PD and they do want to ride,
13 that's great. But you could potentially earn you
14 know, almost \$1,000, or right at \$1,000, depending on
15 what route you ride. Yes, sir. But, in the grand
16 course of things --

17 MS. SMITH: People who are wanting to rotate and
18 take on that responsibility?

19 SUPT. WALSH: Absolutely. And we wanted to make
20 it available to our teachers, because to this point,
21 really only our 12-month non-exempt, or yeah,
22 non-exempt staff have been able to do that, and we've
23 got some teachers who are interested in doing that as
24 well. We want to make sure they have the ability to
25 do that.

1 MR. FAGAN: Is there any other staff such as
2 maintenance or anyone like that interested as well?

3 SUPT. WALSH: Yes, sir, but maintenance falls
4 into that 12-month non-exempt as well, so they would
5 earn comp time.

6 MR. FAGAN: Okay.

7 MS. SMITH: Is there a situation where someone
8 would have to have a shortened day in preparation for
9 this? I know that, like, when you drive you have to
10 take a 30-minute lunch break every so many hours or
11 whatever for rest. Does that apply to our teachers?

12 SUPT. WALSH: So because the way it works is we
13 would have to make sure that they could step away a
14 little early. But this doesn't fall under because
15 our -- it's a great question because our -- it
16 doesn't fall outside of the -- within the same realm
17 of the same job. So there's not a requirement for an
18 extra lunch break and things. It's a totally
19 different responsibility.

20 MS. SMITH: Like, a total drive time?

21 SUPT. WALSH: Yes.

22 MS. SMITH: Like, eight hours would require 30
23 minutes --

24 SUPT. WALSH: It does.

25 MS. SMITH: -- but not a total workday of eight

1 hours?

2 SUPT. WALSH: Correct.

3 MS. SMITH: Correct? Okay.

4 SUPT. WALSH: Yes. So if there -- and they
5 will, you'll see our Route 1 folks, they will take a
6 lunch break. When they drop all the kids off, they
7 stop for 30 minutes; they take a smoke break; they do
8 what they need to do; they get back in the car and
9 drive again. And that's required as part of the
10 driving component.

11 MS. SMITH: Okay.

12 SUPT. WALSH: But if it's not the big, long
13 route, typically we don't have that trouble.

14 MS. SMITH: And so because a CDL is not
15 technically required for these, what transportation
16 education are you providing?

17 SUPT. WALSH: Sure. So they must have a valid
18 Arkansas driver's license. And then Lamar does a
19 test ride with every single person to make sure they
20 understand how to use the vehicle, that they're safe
21 using the vehicle. We take a test drive and then we
22 do some basic behavioral and student chaperoning
23 training as well.

24 MS. SMITH: Okay. And then what if they obtain
25 -- not within the van that they're driving -- but

1 outside of that, what if they get a speeding ticket
2 or a traffic violation of some sort?

3 SUPT. WALSH: So those are -- those records --
4 every person that would drive any of our vehicles on
5 this campus, they're registered with the Department
6 of Transportation. It's required by law.

7 MS. SMITH: Okay.

8 SUPT. WALSH: So any of those kinds of things.
9 Speeding tickets typically don't show up unless they
10 are egregious or in school zones. If they're more
11 than 20 miles an hour and you have to show up in
12 court, it's probably going to show up. If you get
13 into an accident, that will definitely show up.
14 There's things like that are monitored by our
15 transportation department, and they do absolutely
16 call us when things like that happen.

17 MS. SMITH: Okay.

18 SUPT. WALSH: Also, as part of that, all of our
19 drivers that are registered are subject to a random
20 drug test. And I think two of our folks got called
21 last month, surprisingly. So that's just part of it,
22 and that's part of the expectation as well.

23 MS. SMITH: And do all chaperones have to be
24 able to sign as well as work with the blind
25 population or no?

1 SUPT. WALSH: We try to make sure that there is
2 at least one person on that bus who knows how to
3 communicate in an American Sign Language and one
4 person that knows how to communicate in spoken
5 English so that both populations of students are
6 covered.

7 MS. SMITH: Okay.

8 SUPT. WALSH: If we happen to have someone who
9 can do both, that's wonderful. But we try to make
10 sure we have at least, if our driver is deaf, then
11 our chaperone is hearing or vice versa.

12 MS. SMITH: That's great. I like the plane.

13 SUPT. WALSH: And that's been the situation for
14 a very long time. And it works out nicely.

15 Any other questions?

16 MR. FAGAN: Mr. Chair, I move to approve the
17 ARDB transportation policy.

18 CHAIR McALLISTER: Do I have a second?

19 MS. SMITH: A second.

20 CHAIR McALLISTER: So it has been moved and
21 seconded. Anyone -- all in favor?

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIR McALLISTER: Anyone against? Is there
24 anyone abstaining?

25 If not, the ARDB transportation supplemental

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compensation policy has been passed.

(The action agenda concluded at 5:18 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)

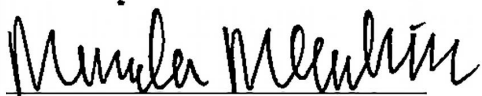
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COUNTY OF PULASKI)

I, Miranda McEntire, Certified Court Reporter #852, do hereby certify that the facts stated by me in the caption on the foregoing proceedings are true; and that the foregoing proceedings were reported verbatim through the use of the voice-writing method and thereafter transcribed by me or under my direct supervision to the best of my ability, taken at the time and place set out on the caption hereto.

I FURTHER CERTIFY, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or employed by the parties hereto, nor financially interested or otherwise, in the outcome of this action, and that I have no contract with the parties, attorneys, or persons with an interest in the action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original deposition transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial attorney, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties in the action.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 17th day of September, 2026.



MIRANDA MCENTIRE, CCR

Certified Court Reporter #852

