



Arkansas School for the Deaf

2400 W. Markham • Little Rock, Arkansas • 72205 • (501) 324-9506 • Fax (501) 324-9553

Jacob Oliva
Secretary

K. Nicole Walsh
Superintendent

Superintendent's Report- May 2025

State of the School

Enrollment numbers: 109

- High School: 35
- Middle School: 20
- Lower School including ECC: 54

Celebrations/Events:

- ASB and ASD Graduations will be held May 22nd. Please mark your calendars to attend. ASB- 10 am, ASD- 6 pm.
- Teacher Appreciation Week was last week! We have a whole host of exciting events to ensure teachers feel celebrated. One of those events was chair massages offered for all of our amazing ASD and ASB teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Dallas Cathey announced for the UALR Trojans Baseball game on Friday, May 9th. What an honor and opportunity for him to take part in something he loves so much!
- Deaf Leadership Council took place on Thursday, May 8th. It was recommended by a council member that we cease to meet together as the council has no Deaf member who has stepped up to assume ongoing leadership of this group since its initiation. The council desired to send out a survey to determine why businesses or groups are not participating.
- Leopard students Danielle Alhamwi, Kivy Harshaw, Anna-Marie Reginelli, Chevie Rothmeyer, and Travis Scruggs participated in the GPSD ASL Bowl competition at the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf in Faribault, MN.
 - Travis Scruggs won 3rd place in ASL poetry with "Fear to Dance".
 - Danielle Alhamwi won 3rd place in ASL storytelling with "Deaf Girl Can Skate".
 - Kivy Harshaw, Anna-Marie Reginelli, and Chevie Rothmeyer, who participated in ASL Bowl for three years, won: four silver medals, five bronze medals and one second-place team award for ASD
- This year's prom was a huge hit! Students had an amazing time celebrating together. The decorations were beautiful, and the dancing was a blast! There were also many wonderful traditions followed, advice given from Seniors to Juniors and just an overall good time. Thanks to all who worked so hard. Due to your dedication, this prom was truly unforgettable!
- Town Hall meetings were held to share current information with all staff, as well as give opportunity to get answers to their questions. Most of the time was spent on the new building and the merging of ASD and ASB.

- The Crystal Bridges Field Trip took place on April 29th and carried over to Wednesday, April 30th with a tour of the University of Arkansas! This has been nearly a whole year in the making. Students represented our schools with pride. Both Crystal Bridges, Camp War Eagle, and the U of A welcomed us back anytime. They were impressed with our students' manners and attentiveness.

Building Updates:

- Demo is nearly complete. Footings for the final building are being removed and clean up should be complete before the last day of school.
- Summer projects will target mass grading.

Human Capital Updates:

Termination/ Resignation:

- Sherri Waggoner – Registered Nurse
- Clarence Carter- RA Supervisor (ASB)

New Hire:

- Jackson Brannon – Computer Support Analyst

Transfers:

- None

Offers Provided:

- None

Positions Posted:

- Employment Report sent by email

Shout Outs:

- Primary Teacher:
 - Lynn Brooks has been teaching at ASD for more than 40 years, all of them with the littlest Leopards on campus in the Early Childhood Center. Lynn has wonderful rapport with parents, students, and colleagues, always striving to provide the best for their students and parents. Lynn has an excellent relationship with Briarwood Nursing Home, which has benefited ASD ECC for many years by providing shoes and coats for students and ensuring each ECC student has an awesome Christmas. She has also been instrumental in ensuring ASD is recognized statewide through various commitments. Lynn played a key role in the success of the Annual Silent Sunday Fundraiser for ASD and has run a successful Spring Carnival for ASD students and their families for many years. It is almost impossible to meet a deaf ASD alumni who does not know or has not been blessed to be in Lynn's class. Suffice to say, Lynn is a well-respected and loved ASD teacher.
- Secondary Teacher:
 - Jackie Pompeo, long term substitute as High School Science Teacher – Shout-out to Jackie! We appreciate her willingness to take on the role of high school science teacher. We have been very impressed with her teaching and thinking. She does an

outstanding job dedicating her time to helping students understand the science material and delivering her lessons beautifully in American Sign Language.

- Custodial/Maintenance Team:
 - Outstanding service was given to James Hayes, Eddie Tuzon, Sharon Smith, and Ronnie Strong.

School Operations Updates

Facilities Department

Key Highlights:

- April was a busy month with several utility-related issues and inclement weather causing flooding, tree damage, and a partial power outage.
- A total of 333 requests were made in Operation Hero during the month of April, compared to 260 in March, 297 in February, and 294 in January.
- Key incidents included:
 - The campuses experienced a partial outage due to severe weather on the weekend of April 4th, which lasted until Monday afternoon, April 7th.
 - A sixty-foot portion of the sanitary sewer waste line on the North end of Bradley had to be removed and replaced due to breaks. This revealed an unaccounted waste line on the "Utilities Package" drawings, allowing DCI engineers to update their drawings and avoid a costly oversight.
 - The severe storm in early April caused damage to several trees and flooding in the basements of two buildings.
 - Vandalism occurred at Reed High School's North façade glass door, with a rock thrown at the glass door sometime between the evening of April 28th and the early morning of April 29th.

Maintenance and Repairs:

- Routine maintenance involved disassembling and relocating three metal carports and removing two dead Oak trees.
- Emergency repairs included addressing a partial outage, storm damage to trees, a blocked drain causing sewage overflow, water intrusion in the Helen Keller Admin building, and repairs to gas and water lines cut by a demolition contractor.
- Preventive maintenance included work on air-cooled chillers and trash pickup.

Facilities Improvement Projects:

- Planned projects for summer include installing tankless water heater racks to improve energy efficiency and relocating the department to the ASB Maintenance Shop.

Safety and Compliance:

- All fire extinguishers were inspected in April as required by state mandate.
- Safety initiatives will follow the completion of OSHA 30 training.

Resource Management:

- Budget details were not provided.

Energy and Sustainability:

- No energy usage report.
- Sustainability initiatives are covered in the facilities improvement projects.

Staffing and Training:

- The department remains understaffed, with a maintenance tech position declined due to low pay and a skilled tradesman position unfilled.

Challenges & Opportunities:

- Aged buildings and extensive landscaping.
- An unused CAW water account was closed, saving \$77.36 per month.

Other Relevant Information:

- The buildout for the OperationsHERO EVENTHQ module will be completed this summer, with adjustments to the "FT" workflow for field trip requests.

Classroom Updates

Primary

Key Highlights:

- Due to severe weather and flooding statewide, there was no school on Monday, April 7th.
- Lower School students visited the ROAR Store to spend their earned PBIS tickets.
- ASD Lower School students participated in the ASBVI Art Show at the tornado shelter on April 11th, which was a huge success.
- Grades 3-5 attended a Deaf History presentation in Parnell Hall on April 11th.
- Lower School teachers were asked to complete an intent to return form for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Grades 3-5 attended a Deaf History presentation at the Arkansas State Capitol on April 17th.
- ASD Lower School joined ASBVI's annual Eggtravaganza on April 17th, featuring an Egg Hunt, face painting, and more.
- Professional Development Day on April 21st included training on teaching individuals with visual impairments, RTI, Fingerspelling Our Way to Reading, and Special Education. Some LS Paras attended CPI training.
- Vivica, a contestant in the 2025 Miss Arkansas Pageant and a member of Zeta Delta, read a story to students and donated books to the Lower School library.

School Demographics:

April 2025 Demographics					
Total Number of Students		Grade Level	Boys	Girls	Team Ready
Early Childhood Center		9	5	4	
Kindergarten		5	1	4	1
1st Grade		7	2	5	
2nd Grade		8	5	3	2
3rd Grade		9	6	3	
4th Grade		11	4	7	2
5th Grade		5	4	1	
Total Enrolled		54	27	27	5
March Absenteeism Percentage					
	Grade	Absences	Number of Days Per Grade		
	ECC	29	171	grade level %	16.96
	K	16	76	grade level %	21.05
	1	15	133	grade level %	11.28
	2	24	152	grade level %	15.79
	3	19	171	grade level %	11.11
	4	16	209	grade level %	7.66
	5	2	95	grade level %	2.11
		121	1007	overall percentage	12.02

Behavioral Data:

	Days	Events	Students Contributing
In-School Suspension	0	0	0
Out-of-School Suspension	5	2	2
Expulsion	0	0	0

- PBIS initiatives, such as the ROAR Store, are becoming more effective in motivating students.

Academic Performance:

- ATLAS Testing for Grades 3-5 in Lower School took place from April 14-30.

Challenges and Struggles:

- Academic challenges include the need for more curriculum alignment and specific pacing guides.
- Behavioral challenges stem from a variety of reasons, but all have the common factor of extremely delayed language development. These behaviors are also influenced by external factors such as family dynamics.
- Resource challenges include facility issues like restroom repairs and odors.
- We are continuing to search for more effective, fun recess activities for K-5 students.

Action Plan for Improvement:

- A survey will be sent out soon asking teachers, paras, and therapists for ideas and suggestions.
- Academic goal: Gauge utilization of HQIM materials.
- Behavioral goal: Encourage the use of de-escalating techniques and support VB-MAPP.

- School culture goal: Promote respect among students.
- Strategies include collaboration between the SEL team and Lower School teachers, and analyzing classroom data to understand behavior incidents.

Secondary

Key Highlights:

- We celebrated Deaf History Month to raise awareness and appreciation for the Deaf community's contributions.
- Students participated in ATLAS testing.
- We visited Crystal Bridges and the University of Arkansas.
- Prom was held on May 1.
- SkillsUSA won several awards and is advancing to the national level in June.
- Both students and staff are experiencing fatigue.

School Demographics:

Total Number of Students: 55

- High School: 35
- Middle School: 20
- Withdrawals: 0
- New Students: 0

Breakdown by Grade Level:

- 6th Grade: 7
- 7th Grade: 8
- 8th Grade: 5
- 9th Grade: 6
- 10th Grade: 5
- 11th Grade: 8
- 12th Grade: 16

Student Attendance Rates:

- Middle School: 90%
- High School: 88%

Academic Performance:

Achievements & Events:

- April was Deaf History Month.
- April 4th - WIN Presentation: Artistic Process Inside DeafBlind Choreography – Redefining Dance through Touch and Spatial Awareness, aiming for an inclusive and accessible movement language.
- April 10th - Draft Day which connects students with real jobs and real opportunities to help them build tomorrow's workforce.
- ATLAS Testing in April:
 - Reading (Grades 3-10): April 14

- Writing (Grades 3-10): April 14-15
- Math (Grades 3-8): April 22-24
- Science (Grades 3-8): April 28-30
- High School Testing:
 - Math (Algebra 1 & Geometry assessments): April 22-24
 - Science (Biology assessment): April 28-30
- 2025 Arkansas SkillsUSA Championship Competition
 - Our ASD SkillsUSA students won GOLD medals in two categories at the 2025 Arkansas SkillsUSA Championship Competition in Hot Springs! Jakhii won the gold medal in the High School Photography category, and the Opening/Closing Ceremony team won gold in the High School OCC category. The team members were Chevy, Bethany, Trey, Ava, Kivy, Sha, and Eli.
 - Our gold medalists are now qualified to attend the National SkillsUSA Championship this June in Atlanta, GA.
 - ASD SkillsUSA advisors are Judy Brint-Murphy (Ju Ju), Janie Kimble, Katie Brown & Joey Fussell.
- The trip to Crystal Bridge and University of Arkansas was on April 29th & 30th. We enjoyed the trip despite the heavy rain and thunderstorms on the way back home. The students truly appreciated the experience and gained valuable insights into art and the workings of a museum, as well as the opportunities that the University of Arkansas could offer them.
- Congratulations to Derrick Jones for being named the Valedictorian of the Class of 2025.
- Congratulations to Jax Cooper for being named the Salutatorian of the Class of 2025.

Extracurricular achievements:

- May 1st- Prom Night, the theme was Masquerade. Jax Cooper is the king, and Sha'Mya Simmons is the prom queen.
- Lollipop Fundraiser – To support ASD SkillsUSA
- May 15th- ASD Athletic Banquet
- 2025 Yearbook: Mr. and Miss ASD- are Jax Cooper and Bethany Wortman
- NDIAA Basketball Awards
 - Trey Lewis- 2nd Team All-American
 - Derrick Jones- Honorable Mention

Congratulations to Derrick Jones and Trey Lewis. They have been selected to represent ASD at the USADB All-Star Game on April 19th in Washington, D.C.

Behavioral Data:

Suspensions:

- Total: 1

Challenges and Struggles:

Behavioral:

- Impact of external factors such as community issues and mental health.

Resource Challenges:

- Staffing shortages - Science Teacher for High School.
- Staff absences.
- Facility and infrastructure issues.

Special Services Department

Food Services

April Meals Served: Breakfast –1299

- Lunch – 1401
- Days Served – 19
- Eligibility Numbers as of 4/30: Free 55, Reduced 15, and Paid 39.

Nursing and Health Services

- All ASBVI health screenings have been completed and entered into eSchool.
- We continue to work on ASD health screenings.
- We have no positive Flu, Strep, or COVID screenings.
- IEP meetings were completed on multiple ASD students.
- Emergency medications and information binder, which includes step-by-step instructions for what to do if symptoms of seizure occur was placed at front desk of lower school.
- Seizure refresher course completed for staff that are directly involved with students diagnosed with epilepsy.
- Nurse accompanied ASD/ASBVI on Crystal Bridges field trip.
- Met with Jena McDonald and Carol Lopez to revise registration paperwork for the upcoming year. Our goal was to shorten the health services portion of the registration and to use the same paperwork for both campuses. We were able to combine some pages, erase repetitive information/questions within the old paperwork.
- Hired 7am-3pm Registered Nurse – Start Date unknown at this time
- Hired 3pm-11pm Licensed Practical Nurse – Start Date unknown at this time.
- Senior CPR completed for ASB, Senior CPR scheduled for May 6, 2025, for ASD.
- First aid bags packed and sent with all scheduled field trips for both campuses.
- Medication Clinic completed with ASD staff – No medication changes required at this time.
- LifeVac (Choking Hazard Device) ordered and received. These devices will be placed in AED/NARCAN emergency boxes in cafeterias, gyms, infirmary, and possibly dorms.
- OPM training completed at ADE.

Special Education and Admissions

- 1 (LS) ASD Tours held for potential students.
- 0 New ASD Admissions this month.
- 3 Prospective Fall 26 Admissions (K-12)
- 0 Prospective ECC Referrals (age 3-5)

Individualized Education Program Updates:

April Activity	ASBVI	ASD
IEP Meetings	8	23
Existing Data Reviews (EDRs)	0 - ??	2
Evaluation Programming Conference w/ IEP development	7	3
Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs)	0	0

Student Support:**ASD Transition Team Activities**

- Roadmap Development: The ASD Transition Team is actively working on a roadmap for high school transition by grade level. Reviews have been made on the compiled information and will be shared with the group to determine if any updates or changes are needed before the ASD Transition RoadMap is finalized and ready for approval.
- Monthly Meetings: The ASD Transition Team has established a monthly recurring meeting with Jeremy Hogue, a Transition Consultant, to ensure continuous progress and alignment on the transition roadmap.

UofK Partnership

- Support for GSC App and SDLMI Research: The University of Kentucky is partnering with ASD to support the GSC App and SDLMI Research, specifically for Cohort 2. This partnership aims to enhance the research and application development efforts.

Professional Development/Training:

- LEA Job Alike Meeting @ ARESC: Bi-monthly in 2024-2025.
- Early Childhood Forum for EC Coordinators: Virtual, monthly.
- LEA Call by DESE: Monthly.

Challenges:

- Continuing to work on compliant paperwork (ongoing).

Successes:

- Signed SpedTrack contract.
- Held the first SpedTrack admin meeting (timeline).
- Signed MOU for UofK Partnership to support GSC App and SDLMI Research.
- SOP Meetings are in full swing for Graduating Seniors.
- Julie Amstutz has reviewed paperwork twice this month before submission to DESE and prior to some meetings.
- Notified Kristin and Yvonne about files ready for review before the 5/13 visit. If no response from DESE-OSE, plan to upload them to the Monitoring portal for review and ASD documentation.
- Debbie is writing an SOP for processing SSI paperwork.

Family and Student Support Services

Dorms

Vacant Positions:

- Currently seeking candidates to fill vacant positions for ASBVI B and C shifts.

Interviews and Selections:

- Interviewed 6 candidates.
- Selected 2 candidates who are now in the process of onboarding.
- Another candidate has been selected but is waiting for their school schedule to end before starting work in the dorms.

ASD Dorms:

- Running smoothly.

Staff Assignments:

- Jr Courtright is working the C-shift.
- Doug Geist is floating between ASD and ASBVI.

Mental Health and Counseling:

- Our counselor, Anna Snare, is effectively maintaining her schedule across all the schools.
- She is collaborating with the Speech department to address hygiene and manner issues for lower and middle school students.
- Anna continues to provide one-on-one and group sessions for students.
- She stays late to meet with students in the dorms, ensuring they receive the support they need.

Dean of Students:

- The dean is making sure students are safe. Adam also carries out the discipline for the schools.

Statewide Services:

- **Developmental Therapy Sessions (0-3 years old):** 35 sessions.
- **Consultations (3-5 years old):** 8 consultations.
- **IFSP Conferences (0-3 years old):** 4 conferences.
- **New Referrals (0-3 years old):** 8 referrals.
- **Family Engagements (0-3 years old):** 6 engagements.
- **Early Intervention (EI) Evaluations (0-3 years old):** 4 evaluations.
- **Non-Responsive Referrals:** 5 referrals from last month did not respond or refused services.
- **Program Dropouts:** 1 child dropped from the program due to nonresponse from the parent.
- **EIDT Facility:** 1 child transitioned to an Early Intervention Day Treatment (EIDT) facility.
- **Funding:** First Connections is providing additional funding of \$1108.00.
- **Total Enrollment:** 27 birth to three-year-olds on an IFSP, 22 consults, and 8 in the queue.

Professional Development:

- Staff attended training on the Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) model through the ECHO Series with the University of Denver.

Community Engagement:

- Dr. Cobb presented at the Little Rock Police Department Recruiting center with Ernest Northup on working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in the community.

Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC):

- Kate Berry attended the semi-annual ICC meeting, which advises and assists in monitoring and evaluating the system to ensure high-quality, efficient, and timely services that support families and maximize each child's potential.

FCS Data Collection System:

- The team continued working in partnership with ADE in a pilot program to resolve issues in the FCS data collection system.

Ongoing collaborations with:

- First Connections Provider Input Call.
- Early Childhood Vision and Hearing Collaborative.
- ACH Speech Department.

Related Services (e.g. Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Audiology)

As we approach the final weeks of the 2024-2025 school year, the Related Services Department remains highly active and deeply involved in supporting our students' success. This period is filled with annual IEP meetings, Evaluation Programming Conferences, and continued interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure appropriate services and placement decisions for the upcoming school year. Our team is committed to attending, contributing to, and facilitating these essential meetings for our students and their families.

In addition to our core responsibilities, our department has enjoyed participating in numerous end-of-year events and student field trips. These opportunities allow our staff to support students in generalizing communication, motor, and social-emotional skills in real-world settings.

We are proud to highlight several special milestones and outreach efforts within our team:

- **Millie's Retirement:** Millie, our beloved Physical Therapist, will retire at the end of the school year. She began her career at ASD in March 1998 and has been a tireless advocate and service provider for deaf and hard-of-hearing children across the state for the past 27 years. Her professionalism, compassion, and deep understanding of DHH access needs have made her an invaluable team member. We are grateful for her dedication to ASD's mission and wish her all the best in this next chapter of her life.
- **Lenae's Maternity Leave:** Lenae, one of our Lower School speech-language pathologists, is preparing for the arrival of her first child, Manning Garrett Sullivan, expected in July. Lenae will be taking the full 12 weeks of maternity leave offered by the state. We are working closely with Nicole to ensure our students continue to receive consistent, high-quality speech-language services during Lenae's leave. We celebrate Lenae as she prioritizes her growing family and appreciate her thoughtful planning for continuity of care.

- **Derenda's Guest Speaking Engagement:** Derenda, our middle school SLP, recently served as a guest speaker for an undergraduate Communication Sciences and Disorders class at UALR. Her presentation sparked meaningful discussion about the rewards of working with deaf and hard-of-hearing populations to support their language access and development. One inspired student chose to shadow Derenda on-site at ASD on May 1 to learn more about the field firsthand.
- **Beth Helms' Guest Lecture:** Beth Helms, our new Related Services Coordinator, gave a guest lecture at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) for graduate students in the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences. Her presentation focused on social communication as one of the missing links for D/HH individuals and emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary and culturally responsive service delivery for this population.