



# Arkansas School for the Deaf

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Jacob Oliva  
Secretary

K. Nicole Walsh  
Superintendent

## Superintendent's Report- February 2025

### State of the School

#### Enrollment numbers: 109

- High School- 35 (+2)
- Middle School- 20
- Lower School including ECC: 54 (+1)

### Celebrations/Events:

#### ASB:

- Honor Roll: 1st semester- Elementary; Honor Roll- All As  
Dallas Carter, Bowie Hauf, Zoey White  
Honor Roll- As and Bs  
Ava Chidester, Trinity Davis, Jensen Fultz, Dailigh Hutchison, Griffin Smith, Callie Taylor, Kaiden Taylor, Travis Taylor, Bryanna Tweedy, Dillon Warren
- 1st semester- Secondary  
All As Matthew Greenhill, Lucas Harris, Allison Howard, Aaron Lau, As and Bs- Brian Dukes, Sandy Mews, Evan Pratt, Bryson Selby
- Blind and Low Vision Competition Day was a HUGE Success! Winners for the Braille Challenge portion were the following: Varsity: Bryson Selby (1<sup>st</sup>), London Ledbetter (2<sup>nd</sup>); Junior Varsity: Addy Lemons (1<sup>st</sup>) Sandy Mews (2<sup>nd</sup>) Sophomore: Harper Swank (1<sup>st</sup>), Khloe Stracener (2<sup>nd</sup>); Freshman: Shaylah Richardson (1<sup>st</sup>) Griffin Smith (2<sup>nd</sup>) Apprentice: Jensen Fultz (1<sup>st</sup>); Foundational: Christina Eason (1<sup>st</sup>)
- Cane Quest Top Winners: Trail Blazers: Dallas Cathey, London Ledbetter (1<sup>st</sup> place); Sadie Huff, Lucas Harris (2<sup>nd</sup> place); Explorers: Sandy Mews (1<sup>st</sup> place), Ka'Riyah Griffin (2<sup>nd</sup>); Scouts: Gavin Webb, Jace Hutchison (1<sup>st</sup> place); Antarius Henry, Kaiden Taylor (2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Abacus Bee: grades 1-4: Dillon Warren; grades 5-6: Travis Taylor, grades 7-8: Brian Dukes; grades 9-10: Dallas Cathey Grades 11-12: Lucas Harris

#### ASD:

- Krystal Barnett – new educational paraprofessional started on January 21<sup>st</sup>, Behavior Intervention Plan training for LS Teachers and Paras – 1.24, Alyssa Ransome became a teacher for the 3 -5 Science, Elizabeth Spilman, ASB Art Teacher became art teacher for K-5 students, KV visited Boone Elementary School, Miaya Bilbury is the PBIS January Student of the Month

## Building Updates:

- Children First Daycare move out was extended to February 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Nabholz is planning a “walk and talk” presentation with our High School students from both campuses.
- Demolition is set for March 13<sup>th</sup>. A celebration of the buildings will be planned. Be on the lookout for an announcement.
- Schematic Design is set to be complete by the end of this month.

## Human Capital Updates:

### Termination/ Resignation:

- Kimberli Alston- Art- resigned
- Mary Carter- extra help- Double Pride Café is closed
- Brenda Tate- extra help- Substitute- resigned
- Casey Brown- Director of ADCC-resigned
- Michael Miller- Extra Help- project complete
- Ciera Arceneaux- Extra Help- project complete

### New Hire:

- Leon Allen- Maintenance
- Debbie Geist- Residential Advisor
- Josie Hall- Teacher
- Alyssa Ransome- Moved from Para to teacher

### Offers Provided:

- Nursing Supervisor Position
- Transportation Director

### Positions Posted:

- Special Education Teacher- ASB
- Science Teacher- ASD/ASB
- RN- ASD/ASB
- LPN- ASD/ASB

### Shout Outs:

- Teacher name: **Nancy Hicks**
  - Subject/grade: ECC Pre-K: Nancy ‘s classroom is always welcoming, clean and students are on task. Nancy’s work with Foundations for Literacy, one of ASD’s chosen curriculums, shows how important early learning is at that young age for literacy and language acquisition.
- Teacher name: **Kara Siemens**
  - Subject/grade: Middle School English Language Arts: Shoutout to Kara, an incredible middle school teacher and coach of our MS robotics team! Her dedication to her students is truly inspiring, as she consistently strives to bring out the best in each one of them. With her passion for teaching and unwavering support, she creates an engaging learning environment that fosters creativity and critical thinking. Thank you, Kara, for your hard work and commitment to shaping the future innovators of tomorrow!

- Teacher name: **Tammy Harrison**
  - Subject/grade: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade and STEAM club sponsor: Mrs. Tammy Harrison is doing amazing work in her classroom with students. I would love to highlight her work with the STEAM club after school. She is learning different ways to get the students engaged and building VEX robots and battlebots! She is a quick learner and her energy is contagious.

## Legislative Updates:

- SB198: AN ACT TO REAPPROPRIATE THE BALANCES OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
- SB75: AN ACT TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES AND OPERATING EXPENSES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2026; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## School Operations Updates

### Interpreting Services

ASD hired Clayton Higgins in October as an Interpreter Coordinator. He services as a staff interpreter and coordinates contract and agency services for our schools. Clayton has taken initiative to provide training to staff, support multiple types of situations, and has already taken on an intern to facilitate the “grow your own” model.

Clayton presented a report regarding the savings we are experiencing by having a staff interpreter on campus. It is important to note that the position was cross graded from another position, no new positions were requested. Please see below:

#### *Interpreter Expenses:*

2021- \$71, 443.59

2022- \$89,077.40

2023- \$120,672.04

2024- \$141,491.33

2025 Projected with Contract and Agency Only: \$166,105.56

2025 Projected with Staff Interpreter Addition: \$73,105.56

**Total Projected Savings for FY2025: \$93,000**