



ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

2023-2024 Annual **REPORT**





MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Arkansas School for the Deaf is to empower Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing children to become highly effective communicators who are educated, motivated, and independent.

At ASD, students are transformed into confident young people, inspired to achieve their goals, with the skills to succeed in a competitive world.

VISION STATEMENT

Arkansas School for the Deaf is an inspired community committed to achievement, innovation, collaboration, and excellence.

MOTTO

Dream it! Believe it! Achieve it!



LETTER FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

NICOLE WALSH



Dear Members of the ASD Community,

As we reflect on the 2023-2024 school year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the remarkable achievements and progress that has been made and the welcome I have received as a new leader. Our dedicated staff, enthusiastic students, and supportive families have all contributed to creating a vibrant and nurturing learning environment. This year, we have seen growth in our academic programs, extracurricular activities, and community engagement initiatives, all of which have enriched the educational experience for our students.

One of the highlights of this past year has been the successful implementation of new digital learning platforms, which have enhanced our students' learning experiences and provided them with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Additionally, our commitment to fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect has been evident in the numerous events and programs to celebrate diversity and promote understanding within our school community.

This school year has been exceptional in that while we looked to the past as we celebrated our 175th anniversary of ASD, we also looked to the future in the form of preparation for our new school buildings. Teachers and staff dedicated countless hours to ensuring that students had a welcoming classroom on day one that encouraged learning. Every person, regardless of job title was essential to ensuring a smooth start to the school year and that effort cannot be overlooked.

As we look forward to the future, I am confident that we will continue to build on last year's successes and strive for even greater accomplishments. Together, we will ensure that every student at ASD has the opportunity to reach their full potential and achieve their dreams.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to our school.

K. Nicole Walsh
ASD Superintendent

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



ASD's Elementary School is a vibrant bilingual community where students love to learn and high expectations are fostered within a child-centered environment. Through innovative teaching methods, students are engaged as active participants in learning. As children grow, they begin to see themselves as writers, historians, problem-solvers, and scientists. Their vivid imagination and creativity are also explored in the dance studio, art room, and enrichment classes.

In Elementary School, we focus on the following:

1. Fluency in All Aspects of English Literacy
2. Skilled Mathematical Competence
3. Proficiency in Communication with access to both ASL and English
4. Confident and Creative Artistic Expression
5. Technologically Savvy, Age-Appropriate Skills
6. Positive Behaviors and Character Traits



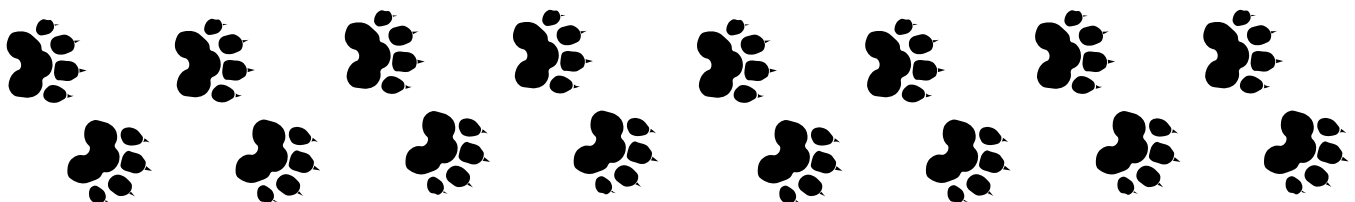
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DATA



In the Elementary School, overall achievement in Math has risen from the 2nd percentile to the 9th percentile. Specifically, Grade 3 is at the 1st percentile, Grade 4 at the 5th percentile, and Grade 5 at the 17th percentile. Among the 13 students who have been here since Fall 2023 and taken the MAP, growth is at the 44th percentile. Notably, 2 students in Grades 4 and 5 demonstrated growth above the 80th percentile.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



MIDDLE SCHOOL



In Middle School, our hallways are alive with the energy and enthusiasm that students bring with them each day. It is an exciting time as sixth, seventh, and eighth graders explore their curiosity for learning through lively collaborative activities and hands-on experiences.

The BEST THINGS about an ASD Middle School Experience are:

1. A curriculum is designed to prepare students to meet the rigors and challenges of high school and beyond, and language-rich classrooms allow students to fully engage in deeper learning and effective teamwork.
2. Teachers who strive to engage students in memorable learning opportunities and provide each student with just the right challenge to grow to their fullest potential.
3. Students who quickly develop the technological skills to succeed in the 21st century, as every middle school student is provided with a Chromebook laptop computer.
4. Students who have multiple extracurricular and enrichment opportunities. Students have the freedom to choose to join enrichment programs including American Sign Language (ASL) Bowl, the Robotics Team, Battle of the Books, Cooking Club, Chess Club, STEM Club, Jr. National Association of the Deaf, and our Mindfulness Group. We also have an outstanding athletic program including football, volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, track and field, and Special Olympics.
5. Students who enjoy positive relationships within the school and outside of school. Friendships are forged during these important years that last a lifetime.

In Middle School, overall achievement in English Language Arts, Math, and Science has improved from the 3rd percentile to the 8th percentile. Grade 6 is at the 2nd percentile, Grade 7 at the 8th percentile, and Grade 8 at the 19th percentile. For the 16 students who have been here since Fall 2023 and taken the MAP, growth is at the 76th percentile. All 4 students in Grade 8 demonstrated adequate growth, and 3 out of 5 students in Grade 6 showed adequate growth.



MIDDLE SCHOOL DATA



Middle School students improved their overall achievement from the 3rd percentile to the 8th percentile. Grade 6 students are at the 2nd percentile, Grade 7 at the 8th percentile, and Grade 8 at the 19th percentile. For the 16 students who have been at ASD since Fall 2023 and taken the MAP, growth is at the 76th percentile. All Grade 8 students (total of 4) demonstrated adequate growth, and 3 out of 5 Grade 6 students showed adequate growth



MIDDLE SCHOOL



HIGH SCHOOL



At the ASD, you will find a high school driven by creativity and rigor. Here, students make active choices about their learning and think proactively about their futures. Through various leadership opportunities, high school students acquire the skills they need to become effective leaders and collaborators. Specifically, ASD's competitive athletics program serves as a natural arena for fostering leadership and teamwork.

Engaging Students in Learning

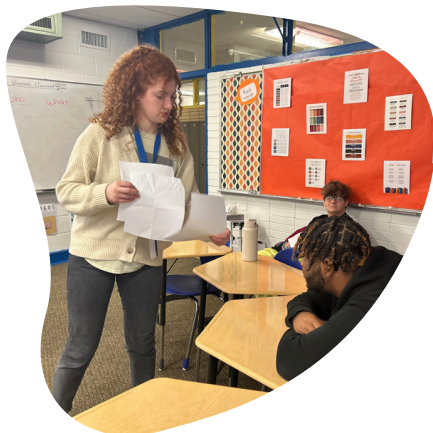
Learning in high school classrooms is interactive and dynamic; students become explorers, researchers, artists, and writers. The academic program is rigorous yet tailored to meet the diverse learning needs of deaf students.

High School Classes and Schedule

Each student's schedule is tailored to meet individual goals effectively. The small class sizes allow for rich interactions between teachers and students, and our block schedule provides more structured time for learning to occur. All high school students follow a personalized four-year plan that includes required academic and elective courses to fulfill state and graduation requirements.

Laptops for Students

Innovative and immersive technology is embedded throughout the high school experience and serves as an important tool to enhance learning. Each student is assigned their own laptop to build the skills needed to succeed in a 21st-century world.



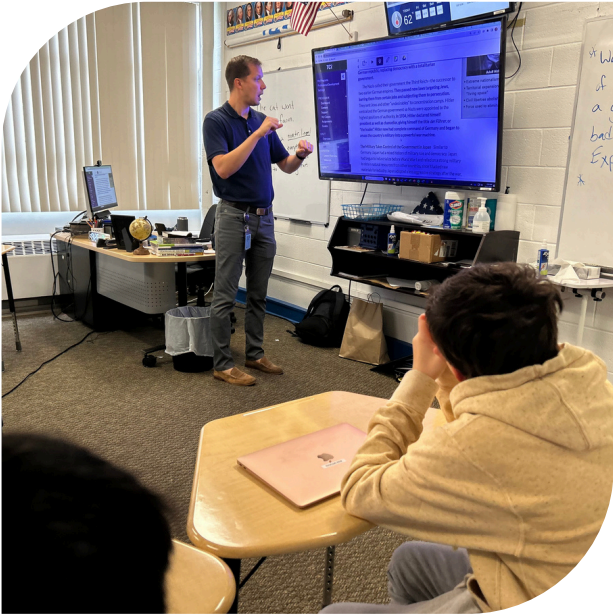
HIGH SCHOOL DATA



In High School, overall achievement in English Language Arts, Math, and Science has increased from the 6th percentile to the 9th percentile. Grade 9 is at the 11th percentile, Grade 10 at the 9th percentile, Grade 11 at the 8th percentile, and Grade 12 at the 8th percentile. Among the 33 students who have been here since Fall 2023 and taken the MAP, growth is at the 77th percentile. Grades 10, 11, and 12 demonstrated adequate growth



HIGH SCHOOL



CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION



ASD's cutting-edge, rigorous, and relevant career and technical education (CTE) courses prepare deaf students for a wide range of high-demand careers. On our campus, we offer the following programs:

- Culinary Arts
- Horticulture
- Photography
- Family and Consumer Science
- Business

ASD also partners with local career technology schools to expand opportunities for our students. Recently, ASD students have attended the Metro Career Technical Center for certification in welding, computer engineering, cosmetology, and automotive services.



STATEWIDE SERVICES



With a new Part C Service Coordinator and Developmental Therapist, the Statewide Services team continued their work across the state last year, providing developmental assessments and therapy to families of infants from birth to age three. After age three, the team offers transition support to preschool programs and, later, to kindergarten. Statewide Services also supports school-age students by attending IEP meetings, collaborating with school districts statewide, consulting with teachers on best practices for educating Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students, recommending individualized accommodations, preparing students for post-high school careers and college readiness, and advocating for both students and parents.

Annual Numbers

- Early Intervention (birth to 3 years old)-14
- Birth to Five-Years-Old Consults-20
- School Age Consults-14
- Referrals-25
- Medicaid earned for the 23-24 SY was \$6,362.00



DEAF CAREER CENTER



Arkansas Deaf Career Center and Elevate

ADCC was established to support Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults with job placement and career coaching. Our professional staff designs customized programs that help Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults not just find a job, but build a lifelong career. Some ADCC clients are also enrolled in college or professional certification courses while working, and we provide academic support to these dual-enrolled clients.

Our highly skilled staff use the latest technology and evidence-based curricula to explore personal and professional goals, ensuring clients are prepared for college, the workforce, and independent living. In doing so, we aim to fulfill our mission of significantly increasing the long-term employment rate of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Arkansans.

The center's K-12 Transition and Career Exploration Program supports Deaf students from kindergarten through 12th grade by embedding targeted career and transition learning goals into their educational curriculum and residential life.

These goals include exposing Deaf children to successful Deaf professionals in the workplace, learning about career clusters and job opportunities, developing independent living skills, and promoting recreation and healthy habits.

Transition services are critical for our students, helping them establish goals in three key areas after high school: post-secondary training, career and employment, and independent living. It's never too early for our students to begin planning for their successful futures!

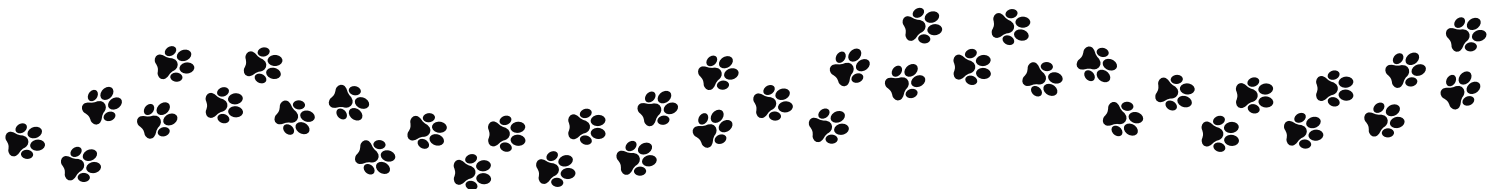
- K-5th grade students are EXPOSED to transition services.
- 6th-8th grade students EXPLORE transition services.
- 9th-12th grade students are ENGAGED in transition services

The Arkansas Deaf Career Center includes the following programs:

- Job Placement and Career Coaching
- Supportive Employment Services
- Career Readiness Workshop Series and Community Outings
- College Prep/Dual Enrollment
- Academic Remediation and Driver's Ed
- ADCC ELEVATE (residential program) (limited to individuals under 25 years old and requires admission)

Fall 2024 information:

- 10 Elevate clients are dually enrolled at UA-PTC, Shorter College, RIT and employed at PRIDE industries, Trader Joe's, Arkansas Department of Finance Administration, ASD/ASBVI
- 8 Elevate clients ready for graduation in May 2025
- 6 prospective students who can enroll as current students graduate





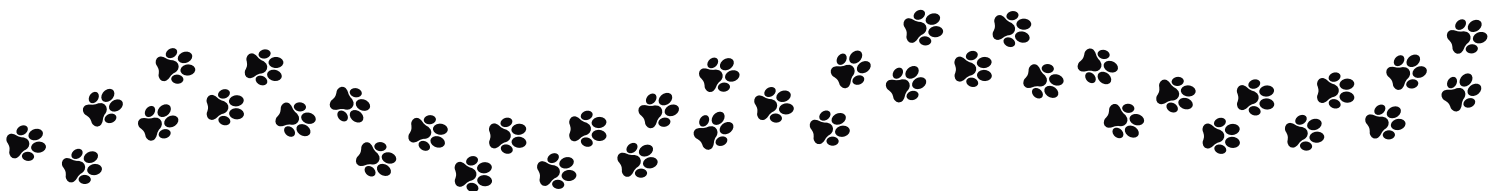
OUR HISTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS

Founded in 1849, Arkansas School for the Deaf is not only one of Arkansas' oldest schools but also the oldest school for the Deaf west of the Mississippi River. ASD has a strong legacy as the only school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Arkansas. In this role, we serve as the main resource for parents, school districts, and agencies regarding Deaf Education and the Deaf community in Arkansas.

Additionally, we provide individualized education to students throughout Arkansas, many of whom live on campus during the week in dormitories. Our comprehensive programs serve infants through the age of 21. As a Part C provider, we provide Early Intervention services for families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing infants and toddlers from birth to school age. Students who have graduated from high school can enter a comprehensive post-secondary program focusing on career and college readiness. ASD has a rich heritage of working together to create learning opportunities for academic excellence and personal independence. Our faculty and staff support this mission by providing students with dynamic learning opportunities and delivering more equitable access to the world around them, truly instilling independence, autonomy, and confidence in all our students. ASD is proud to be a leader in Deaf Education nationwide.

Currently, our student population at the Little Rock campus ranges in age from 2 years to 21 years and older members of Deaf Career Center. Student placement and individualized programs at ASD are based fully on each student's assessed needs and their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Programming is designed to meet Federal and State mandates for a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Arkansas.

Offering support across the state, our Statewide Services department currently serves children from birth to graduation. Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing infants and toddlers are served in their homes, daycare, or in another setting chosen by their family. We also provide instructional and technical support to school-age children. The primary focus of the Arkansas School for the Deaf is to provide an excellent education to every student enrolled in our programs.



Core Organizational Values

Communication

ASD believes good communication is multi-faceted and respectful that establishes clear communication channels, so information is disseminated in a timely manner. Leaders work collaboratively to ensure common messaging.

Collaboration

ASD works toward a common goal by utilizing the strengths, expertise, and talents of each staff member. We take a collaborative approach to problem-solving and leadership and believe understanding multiple perspectives leads to better decision-making.

Respect

ASD values different cultures, languages, and opinions and offers opportunities for our communities to learn from each other. We remain professional and kind, even when disagreements occur and value each person regardless of his or her job title.

Open-Mindedness

ASD is receptive to new and different ideas, including those that necessitate leaving our comfort zone. We believe that by embracing change, rather than avoiding it, we have an opportunity to significantly improve our future.

Professionalism

ASD maintains a positive image and attitude, acting in a professional and dignified manner. We use good judgment and do what is right for each other and our students. Our staff stays up to date with any significant changes within our fields and continually strives for excellence in all we do.

Support

ASD focuses on the good in our students and our colleagues. We are supportive and nurturing of each other. We promote upbeat and positive thoughts for the future and support each other by believing in each other.

Student Organization Values (R.O.A.R)

R – Responsibility
O – Organization
A – Achieving
R – Respect

ROAR



Our Bilingual Beliefs

We believe that students have a right to a language-rich learning environment, where they have full access to clear communication and language. Additionally, learning how to interact successfully in both Deaf culture and hearing mainstream helps students develop self-worth and self-confidence. To enhance our students' successful interactions, ASD promotes exposure to real-life experiences and provides Deaf role models. Exposure to real-life experiences increases students' understanding of cultural identity and the ability to successfully interact in the hearing community. Access to Deaf role models enhances their understanding of the language, culture, and gives them a view of what success looks like as a Deaf adult while increasing students' understanding and ability to successfully interact in the Deaf community.

ASD is an American Sign Language and English bilingual community in which people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and hearing learn and work together without language and communication barriers. At ASD, we realize the importance of providing a bilingual, culturally rich, and meaningful educational experience for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, recognizing their individual needs, and empowering them with both ASL and English skills. Both languages should be equally celebrated, and students should be equally proud of their achievements in both languages.

Students attending ASD have a variety of cultural and background experiences, and they access language in a variety of ways, which includes ASL as a first language, Spoken English as a first language, other cultural signed or spoken languages as a first language, or come students come to ASD with no language. While ASL and English are equal and separate languages, both languages allow Deaf children the ability to access academic information, interact effectively with others, and express themselves creatively.

Research shows that there are significant advantages to being bilingual. Deaf children have a right to be bilingual with access to meaningful instruction that utilizes curriculum and materials in both ASL and English (written and spoken). Students should have access to a quality curriculum and instruction in the linguistic structure of ASL designed to increase both incidental and academic ASL. Students should also have quality assessments to monitor their progress in acquiring a language. Providing comprehensive state-of-the-art classrooms, instructional strategies, and resources to maximize each student's learning of ASL and English is essential.

Gaining fluency in ASL positively impacts the language and conceptual development of all students. Students with the ability to communicate through spoken English should receive quality instruction to increase their skills in both incidental and academic spoken English, as well as quality assessments to monitor their progress. Lip reading can also serve as an additional tool to increase the child's communication opportunities. Recognizing and respecting that each student's individual needs and abilities are equal and important regardless of hearing levels, their preferred communication mode, and their cultural identity. To the greatest extent possible, students from other cultural families, such as Spanish speaking families, should receive support for learning their family's heritage language.

Optimizing student achievement means that Deaf children must have early exposure to a rich and comprehensive language. Therefore, it is our priority to meet these needs on our campus by providing programs, resources, and support to families of young Deaf children to foster their exposure to a full language. Our Early Intervention department meets these needs through a responsive and supported statewide program.

Another important belief we hold is the value of technological devices such as hearing aids and Cochlear implants. These tools to help students achieve more success in gaining listening and spoken English skills. We believe it is important to provide our students with up-to-date information and support in accessing and maximizing the success of these tools. We respect students' and families' decisions to choose either to use or not to use technological devices. Deaf students need strong English skills to function independently in a hearing world and to maximize their future success. Mastery of written English includes both being able to read and comprehend complex texts and being able to express oneself through written English.

Finally, we believe that our faculty and staff continually develop and foster a sense of double pride; we value both the signed and spoken language preferences of our students. We realize it is essential that we have fluent skills in both our native and non-native languages to provide a high-quality bilingual instructional environment. In promoting double pride, we believe that we can successfully meet the needs of future generations of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.



Unique Community Characteristics that Impact the School

ASD currently serves students on campus from Early Childhood to 12th Grade. We serve students from every corner of the state. This geographical range spans the Ozark Mountains to the Little Rock inner-city population to the southern and Delta farming communities. Students stay in the dormitories from Sunday evening through Friday early afternoon.



Leadership In Collaborative Partnerships

Arkansas School for the Deaf believes that by working together with national and local partners, we can significantly enhance the education, experiences, and lives of Deaf children. Today, ASD's leadership promotes strategic and valuable partnerships with many local agencies and corporations to meet the needs of our student body. Our collaborative initiatives happen at the national, state, and local levels.

National Level

- Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD). As a member of CEASD, the school joins this organization to bring together a rich composite of resources and reaches out to enhance education programs and influence educational policy.
- National Association for the Deaf (NAD). We maintain open communication with the NAD, which is the nation's premier civil rights organization of, by, and for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in the United States of America.
- American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC). ASD is a member of ASDC, a parent-helping parent network that provides tremendous support to families through conferences, support systems, and research-based information sharing. Our parents receive free membership to ASDC, and the school actively promotes their involvement in this organization.
- Hands and Voices. A parent-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- 17th National ASL Roundtable Conference at Wisconsin School for the Deaf, October 2023



State Level

- Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative (ARESC). Cooperative operates within a network of 15 sister service agencies created to help schools meet accreditation standards, equalize educational opportunities, use resources effectively, and promote coordination of Arkansas Department of Education initiatives. ARES is governed by a board of directors composed of the Superintendents from each member school. ASD's Superintendent is a member of their Board. ASD's staff fully takes advantage of the quality services and training offered by ARES.
- Public Schools and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). Public Schools in Arkansas and the ADE frequently reach out to access information on deaf education and the deaf community at large.
- Arkansas Department of Health and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI). Our Statewide Services department delivers developmental therapy to Deaf and Hard of Hearing infants under the guidelines provided by First Connections, the lead agency for Early Intervention.

Local Level

- ASD Foundation. The Foundation serves as a supporting organization for the school by providing post-secondary scholarships for ASD programs and offering ASL classes for the community on our campus and workshops for businesses, police departments, fire stations, and other community groups.
- Little Rock Police Department (LRPD). Our school maintains a strong relationship with local police departments. Our facilities are used by LRPD and SWAT for practice outside of school hours, and they work closely with ASD in training the staff and students in safety issues.
- Many more relationships: We have many organizations, schools, corporations, foundations, and professionals who are becoming more engaged with our school. We actively seek out opportunities to engage new friends and promote these relationships.

Parents—Relationships and Involvement

At ASD, we value parents and their dual role aspect of the community and as part of our team. We work to support and engage parents in school. Some of our most important initiatives include:

American Sign Language Classes

Free ASL classes are offered to all families of students enrolled at ASD and families in the Early Intervention program. The classes can be accessed in person or online. Registration is available on our website.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

These are held two times a year—fall and spring. Teachers and parents meet to discuss the progress of their students. Also, our school holds an Open House/School Enrollment Day, which provides parents with an opportunity to see the campus and meet our faculty and staff.

Holiday Meals

Parents were invited to have lunch at a minimal cost with their children for a November Thanksgiving Meal and a meal following our Annual Winter Holiday Program in December.

Statewide Services Department

The department provides family support services for our youngest Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and their families. Because the therapists in the department serve these families from infancy, we develop a close relationship and become a resource to them as their children grow.





Campus and Community Connections

Student Need

ASD serves students with various hearing profiles along with a continuum of cognitive, academic, communication, social, and behavioral skills and abilities. The students' needs impact the instruction, educational program, curriculum development and implementation, and socialization within the ASD environment.

School District Involvement

The student's local school districts have a certain amount of decision-making power in whether their students enroll in our program. Students must be referred to ASD from their home school district. Upon enrolling at ASD, the school districts are invited to IEP meetings and encouraged to be a valued part of the team.

Parent Expectations

Parents have expectations and desires for their children, which impact the programs offered at ASD. Parents are formally and informally asked to provide input into the direction and plans of ASD.

Deaf Community

Many deaf adults throughout the state are alumni of ASD. They grew up in the dormitories, and therefore, feel that ASD is home. ASD collaborates closely with many Deaf community organizations such as Arkansas Association of the Deaf, Little Rock Association of the Deaf, Arkansas Registry of Interpreters, along with members of the DeafBlind community, and Deaf churches throughout the state.

Board of Trustees

The ASD Board of Trustees meets monthly. Board members are appointed by the Arkansas State Governor, Sara Huckabee Sanders. We are fortunate to have a team of dynamic, professional, and engaged Trustees. Their high expectations and guidance help to move ASD toward more significant growth, effective practices, and prosperity.

Policies and Guidelines as a State Agency

Although ASD is a State Agency, the school follows the same state mandates as public schools. On July 1, 2019, the school became a division under the Arkansas Department of Education hierarchy. As a State Agency, we have policies and guidelines that set us apart from other schools. One example is funding, which is a fixed allocation of funding per year. The funding is not contingent on the number of enrolled students.

School-Wide Decision-Making Staff Opportunities

At ASD, shared decision-making is a collaborative process aimed at improving the learning environment and enhancing student achievement. Collaboration and teamwork are highly valued at ASD, as we believe that multiple perspectives lead to better decision-making and more effective practices.

Administrative Team

This team includes the supervisors of all departments. This team meets with the Superintendent to report departmental news, collaborate on new initiatives, and discuss best practices in leadership.

Educational Leadership Team

This team of administrators and teachers leads plans for professional development, educational initiatives, and the ordering of learning resources. They also lead the curriculum development process. This team also discusses the detailed implementation plans of school improvement plans and looks closely at teaching and learning at ASD.

Mental Health Team

Our mental health team is composed of members who focus on positive behavior interventions and support for our students, as well as monitor the interventions of students with mental health needs. This team reviews any red flags students and discusses current initiatives.



Wellness Committee

A school wellness committee is an active advisory group that prioritizes the health and well-being of students, staff, and families within a school community. The committee is responsible for upholding the district's wellness policy and leading other health-related efforts.

Safety Committee

The ASD Safety Committee is comprised of staff members who help to maintain all aspects of health and safety on campus. Their focus on safety has had a positive impact on our school. Through their leadership, we now have many safety measures in place, including a visual alert system, fewer entrances, internal cameras, and external cameras.

Public Relations (PR)

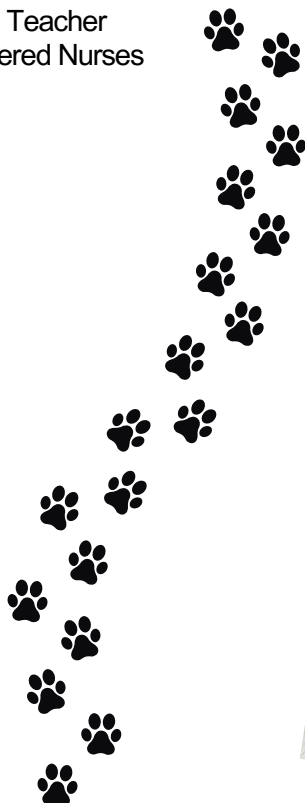
With a focus on the public relations and media needs of the school, functions include the website design, flyers for upcoming events, distribution of flyers, program brochures, and the semi-annual newsletter.

Technology Team

The team focused on providing new laptops, updating technology, and supporting staff and students with information regarding the ticketing system. Additionally, the team prepares vendors to visit campus and facilitates conferences and meetings both on-campus and off-site.

All programs share the following Educational Support Staff

- 1 Audiologist
- 1 Librarian
- 4 Speech Language Pathologists
- 2 LPNs
- 1 ASL Teachers
- 1 ASL Specialist
- 1 Occupational Therapist
- 1 Counselor
- 1 Physical Therapist
- 1 Guidance Counselor
- 1 Art Teacher
- 1 Dean of Students
- 1 Physical Education Teacher
- 1 Job Coach
- 1 Dance Teacher
- 2 Registered Nurses



Staff Hired from August 1, 2023 to November 1, 2024

<p>Breanna Rhodes--Certified Bachelors Teacher Cameron Upton--Physical Education Teacher Chad Murach--Residential Advisor Charles Mosshart--Educational Paraprofessional Christian Ashcroft--Education Paraprofessional Clayton Higgins--Interpreter David Burton--Public Safety Commander David Merriman--Cook Deanda Holloway--Education Paraprofessional Donna Lee-Shields--Food Preparation Coordinator</p>	<p>Doug Geist--Overnight Dormitory Supervisor Elizabeth Moody--Certified Bachelors Teacher Erica Rothmeyer--Residential Advisor Haylee Garner--Administrative Assistant Jayden Sprout--Education Paraprofessional Kate Berry--Part C Service Coordinator Nicole Walsh--Superintendent Pam Conley--Education Paraprofessional Ramiro Moncada--Residential Advisor Shaq'ke Robinson--ASL Teacher Stacy Kratky--Special Education Supervisor Tiffany Lambert--Education Paraprofessional</p>
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Grants

<i>Name of Grant</i>	<i>Amount Awarded</i>
1003 Curriculum support	\$ 4,669.87
Perkins 1% - CTE programs	\$29,405.80
AR Foodbank - ASD food pantry	\$25,000.00
High-Impact Tutoring grant	\$ 1,350.00
Dollar General Literacy Foundation	\$3,000.00
Title Funding	\$93,868.85



Parent Square

Parent Square is the integrated communication program focused on internal communication, emergency communication, and accessible routes of communication using multiple modes (i.e. phones, computers, and apps).

Social Media

ASD's social media outlets have increased engagement with more than 300% on Instagram and more than 200% on Facebook. The ASD Facebook page (@Arkansas School for the Deaf Leopards) now has 3.8K followers, and the Instagram page (@asd_leopards) has over 1K followers.



Audiology

- 57 students use amplification devices on campus.
 - 4 students use a BAHA (Bone Anchored Hearing Aid).
 - 24 students have cochlear implants.
 - 23 students use hearing aids.
 - 6 students use both a cochlear implant and a hearing aid (bimodal).

The 57 students with amplification devices receive annual hearing evaluations at the onsite audiology clinic. Students with cochlear implants are provided with loaner rechargeable batteries when their personal batteries run out. Those with hearing aids and BAHA devices are supplied with zinc-air batteries and earmolds as needed. All students are given retention equipment to keep their devices secure. Each school is equipped with an electronic Dry Lux kit for drying devices that get wet or sweaty. The hearing equipment is checked every morning and throughout the day if issues arise.

Classrooms, where teachers use spoken English, are equipped with sound field systems to assist students who learn best through listening. If a student has a personal microphone (e.g., partner mic, mini mic), it is used to reduce background noise in the classroom.

A file containing records of past hearing evaluations and equipment needs is kept in the audiology clinic for each student.

Speech Pathology

There are four speech-language pathologists (SLPs) on the ASD campus, serving 70% of the students at ASD. Three of the four have a Listening and Spoken Language Endorsement Certificate from Utah State University. All have over five years of experience working with Deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Most therapy sessions are conducted using the push-in therapy model, a collaborative approach that takes place in the student's classroom. This model reduces time away from instruction and ensures that the therapist and teacher work together toward shared goals.

The SLPs conduct intensive testing every three years for each student on campus and are valuable members of the IEP team. In some cases, the SLP has worked with a student for more years than the classroom teacher, providing important historical insights. The SLPs take care to foster open relationships with the parents during the years they serve the students.

Each year, the SLPs host interns from graduate schools across the state, helping to train future professionals in working with this unique population. Additionally, they meet quarterly with staff from Arkansas Children's Hospital to discuss ways to improve care for students who also receive therapy at ACH.

Student and Family Support Services

ASD has a school counselor and a school educational counselor. Both are fluent in ASL. They worked wonderfully with the students. They were able to set up classes with the students and work one-on-one with them. The department created a sensory room for students to calm down. This room has been used and the students like all the textures and items that were purchased for the room.

The educational counselor worked with the high school students to make sure all their paperwork was for them to graduate and was able to take many of them on college trips and work-finding prospects. The counselor also helped the principal with the schedules of the classes for the high school students, too.

Occupational and physical therapists work with students at all levels of the campus. However, most of their work is focused on Lower School.



Food Services

There are 178 school serving days, 11,712 breakfasts and 14,602 lunches claimed. We give our children access to fresh fruit and vegetables daily and provide snacks to our school buildings and dorms. We host many events and always get rave reviews from other Deaf schools about our food. Our student's families love our catered events such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the Sports Banquet, where we serve around 300 meals.

Facilities

Over the past year, the Facilities Department has focused on reactive and corrective maintenance tasks, along with grounds upkeep. The department officially transitioned its CMMS (Computerized Maintenance Management System) platform from "School Dude" to "OperationsHERO" on July 1st, 2023. The transition has been relatively smooth, with only a slight learning curve.

OperationsHERO manages work requests submitted by faculty and staff. These requests are categorized across a spectrum of building components and systems, including carpentry, locks and keys, safety, structural, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC, to name a few. The majority of the department's work involves HVAC, plumbing, lighting, reactive requests, and grounds upkeep. Unfortunately, scheduled preventive maintenance (PM) has been neglected, compounding deferred maintenance needs and costs. A total of 708 requests have been made and completed since July 1st, 2023.

In recent months, the Facilities Department has been working to update the school's antiquated physical key system to a new key/lock system. This improvement involves replacing door hardware to allow for a new keyway. The update will be coupled with a formal key management system, which will significantly enhance the security of our students.

Last year, trees, brush, and vegetation were cleared to help mitigate power outages. Clearing the power lines has proven successful, as the frequency of outages has reduced.

Most recently, the bleachers at the Earl Football Field have been repaired or replaced, and rotted boards at the deck near the concessions building have been removed and replaced. Lighting at the football field will be upgraded from incandescent to LED during the week of September 22nd.

The Facilities Department will continue its efforts to make spaces more comfortable, secure, safer, and healthier for our students.

Student Life Program

The Student Life Program at the ASD is responsible for providing our students with a safe and educational *home away from home* environment after school hours. We have cozy dorms, filled with friends, that are well-staffed by dedicated, nurturing Residential Advisors. We provide supervision in the dorms during the week and on some weekends for sports and special events. Health care is provided by a fully licensed nursing staff.

Student Life is designed to foster student growth, development, and educational achievement. Residential students arrive at ASD on Sunday evening and return home on Friday afternoon. During the week, we provide extensive after-school programming. The goals of the program include allowing students to grow into mature, independent young adults with the ability to manage decision-making situations and assume leadership roles. Our Student Life activities develop their collaborative abilities and strengthen their social skills, based on each individual's needs and interests. Students have access to a broad range of after-school programs and activities.

Field trips, organization meetings, clubs, community projects, athletics, intramural games, and tournaments are some of the activities provided to address the following areas:

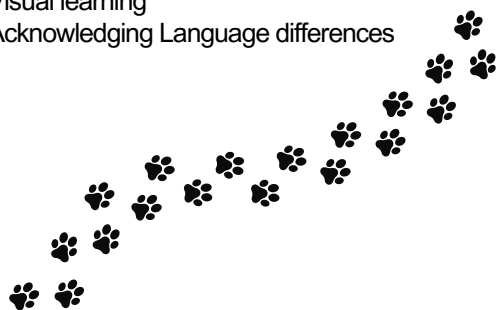
- Tutoring
- Literacy and math
- Leadership
- Emotional and social skills
- Self-awareness and self-esteem
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Appreciation for different perspectives
- Respect for diversity



What Makes Us Unique

Facts to Know

- We are a residential school
- 97% of our students have an IEP
- Many students enroll at ASD with little or no language
- Students receive education in their native language
- Understanding that Deaf students learn through:
 - Eye contact
 - Visual learning
 - Acknowledging Language differences



The Curriculum, Instruction, and Innovation (CII) department oversees curriculum, professional development, instructional coaching, and text resources.

Professional Development

The CII Department provided professional development opportunities to teachers during the week before school started. Topics included special education paperwork, special healthcare needs, bullying awareness and prevention, and human trafficking prevention. We also plan sessions throughout the school year to support staff development. Planned topics include IEP policies and procedures, Schoology refresher, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI), Google 101, and Classroom Walkthrough objectives.

Continuing Implementation of Educational Programs and Text Resources

- Schoology is a Learning Management System (LMS) that allows teachers to assign educational work to students. It provides many time-saving features, including quick and easy methods for giving instructions in ASL or assigning ASL video discussion threads.
- Discovery Techbook is a K-12 science text resource. Teachers have provided positive feedback about this engaging resource, which supports teaching grade-level content, enrichment, additional visual resources for understanding, and differentiated assignments to individualize instruction.
- Foundations for Literacy is a K-2 targeted literacy support resource specifically designed for Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners. While this curriculum requires extensive preparation and organization, we are seeing effective outcomes.
- Bilingual Grammar Curriculum is another resource tailored for Deaf and Hard of Hearing learners. Teachers are excited to have more resources specifically designed to meet our students' needs.
- Read 180 is a leveled reading remediation program. Our staff has worked hard to adapt the program to meet the needs of our students, and some teachers are reporting positive results.

Our Curricula

To meet Arkansas State Standards, ASD currently implements State and board-approved instructional materials.

Mathematics

- Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics

English Language Arts

- Bilingual Grammar Curriculum K-12
- Foundations for Literacy K-2
- Read 180 for 3-5
- Read 180 novels and trade books used in the Arkansas State Standards 9-12 Reading A-Z curriculum and materials for K-5, supplemental materials for 6-12

Social Studies

- Teachers' Curriculum Institute K-12

Science

- Discovery Education Techbook K-12

Progress Monitoring

At ASD, we monitor the progress of our students. We also give students opportunities to track their progress.

District Assessments

- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) grades 3-8
- Reading A-Z grades 3-8
- Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing 3-8th grades
- I Excel Learning (IXL) grades 3-12
-

State Assessments

- Arkansas Teaching and Learning Assessment System (ATLAS) along with Universal Protocol for Accommodations in Reading (uPAR) required for grades 3-8
- American College Testing (ACT) grades 10-12



Clubs, Sports, and Activities

Middle School Space Field Trip

Three middle school students had the opportunity to fly to Huntsville, Alabama to learn about space. These students participated in many exciting activities, including a mission simulation where they worked together to launch and land a rocket. They also learned about the preparations astronauts must undergo before a launch. These experiences helped our students enhance their communication skills, which will contribute to their future success.



Gallaudet Midwest Regional Academic Bowl

On February 29 through March 2, 2024, ASD hosted the Gallaudet Midwest Regional Academic Bowl for the first time in its 28-year history. Many visitors commented on our "Arkansas hospitality" and how great our food tasted. Fifteen teams with 58 players participated in the competition from California, Texas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arizona, and Wisconsin.

Results

- 1st place: Indiana School for the Deaf
- 2nd place: Texas School for the Deaf
- 3rd place: California School for the Deaf, Riverside
- 4th place: Rocky Mountain Deaf School
- Team Sportsmanship: Metro Deaf School
- Team Sportsmanship: Phoenix Day School for the Deaf

Gallaudet staff praised ASD, saying, "Fifteen teams visited the Land of Opportunity at Arkansas School for the Deaf for the 28th annual Academic Bowl Midwest Regional competition! Many thanks to Arkansas and their host coordinator, Tommy Varner, for being excellent hosts for this year's Midwest Regional!"

Gallaudet donated approximately \$2,000 worth of equipment to our after-school eSports program.

CTE Festival

ASD held our first CTE Festival on May 3, 2023. Everyone enjoyed the dance and ASL storytelling with our students. Many thanks to our excellent CTE teachers for preparing the festival. CTE Teachers include Judy Brint-Murphy, CTE Lead; Kimberli Alston, Art; Joey Fussell, Computer; Janie Kimble, Business; Anna Ledbetter, Business; Katie Brown, Culinary Arts; Brandy Mimms, Dance; Shaq'ke Robinson, ASL, Cameron Upton, PE, and Dana Darr, Agriculture.

Vex IQ World Championships

On the first day, after the Leopard Llamas set up their pit area, their robot passed inspection. They met students from all around the world and enjoyed a fantastic opening ceremony. Then, they completed a practice match and their first qualifying match. On the second day of completion, the Leopard Llamas collaborated with seven teams worldwide in seven qualifying matches. They met, strategized, and practiced with each team before each game. They also had to problem-solve through a few robot malfunctions and create solutions. They worked their way up in the ranks from 83rd out of 84 teams in their division to 77th.

High School Robotics

The HS Robotics team participated in the High School Robotics V5 competition, focusing on designing and building a robot based on their idea. It took about 3-4 months to complete the build and practice strategies on the field. They also worked on coding for both the robot and the game field. There are two types of competitions: the battle game field, where alliances compete against each other, and the automation and driver skills competitions. During the competition week, the team traveled to the Kansas School for the Deaf. The event began with quality rankings, with about 22 Deaf schools and 40 teams participating. The HS Robotics team was ranked 21 out of 40. At the end of the quality rankings, the top 16 teams were selected to form alliances for the tournament. ASD was chosen and accepted by one of these top 16 teams. Unfortunately, we and their alliance were eliminated in the game before the semi-finals. Despite this, they performed well overall. They have expressed interest in participating again in the 2024-2025 season.



eSports

Coached by Joey Fussell, the High School started its first year in eSports. Several students showed interest in participating in eSports games hosted by RIT. They began practicing for the competitions and participated in two events, ultimately qualifying for a tournament at RIT in New York. Fussell coached two Rocket League teams and Fortnite, the individual competition. One of his students placed 3rd in Fortnite, while the Rocket League teams also performed well.

Pulaski Technical College Tour

On April 3, 2024, junior and senior students from the Arkansas School for the Deaf embarked on a campus tour of the University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College.

SouthWest College for the Deaf Presentation

On April 17, 2024, John Green delivered an insightful presentation to juniors and seniors, focusing on the educational and community opportunities at SouthWest College for the Deaf. His presentation highlighted the specialized environment and programs that make the college a great option for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students from across the country. By emphasizing the college's commitment to accessibility, Green showcased how SouthWest College for the Deaf provides the tools and support students need to succeed both academically and personally.

Build My Future

On April 18, 2024, high school students from ASD attended the Build My Future event in Conway, AR. Students had the opportunity to engage with professionals in the construction field, ask questions, and gain valuable insights into potential career paths. The event featured interactive exhibits designed to spark interest in the construction industry, showcasing the innovation and technology that are integral to modern construction projects. Students participated in hands-on activities and simulations, allowing them to explore their strengths and interests, laying the foundation for future career exploration. Build My Future aims to inspire the next generation of construction professionals by fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students can learn, grow, and succeed.

ASD SkillsUSA

In April 2024, our SkillsUSA students, advised by Judy Brint-Murphy, Katie Brown, Janie Kimble, and Joey Fussell, attended the Arkansas SkillsUSA Championship in Hot Springs. The Opening and Closing Ceremony team, consisting of Kivy, Alannah, Sha'mya, Bethany, Chevie, Ava C., and Eli, earned a gold medal and the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton (UACCM) scholarships. Their win in this category secured their spot at the 2024 SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC) in Atlanta, GA, on June 24-28, 2024.

Our photography student, Anna, won a silver medal out of 10 Arkansas high school students in the high school photography category. As a prize, she received an online photography scholarship and photography equipment.

Snapshots of the College Campus Tour at Pulaski Technical College

On April 3, 2024, junior and senior students from the ASD toured the campus of the University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College. This renowned institution offers a wide range of educational opportunities, including technical and occupational education, developmental studies, and continuing community education. Programs at the college span across transfer degrees, technical sciences, business and information technology, allied health, culinary arts, education, cosmetology, general studies, and law enforcement.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

As an FFA program in an urban setting with many residential students, ASD faced the challenge of developing hands-on projects for the students. ASD chose a mentorship approach, recognizing that students who often experience language barriers have missed out on learning through trial and error. In the past, others would step in to complete tasks for them.

Three years ago, ASD adopted an approach that allows students to make mistakes and learn from them. This approach has proven effective, especially in teaching *city kids* how to work with tools and involving FFA students in mentoring younger ASD students about animals. Stations were set up where FFA students led the Lower School students. When problems arose, the FFA students were taught to let the elementary students help with problem-solving. The agriculture teacher, Dana Darr, stressed that the FFA students should let the lower school students learn from their mistakes and allow the high school students to teach in their way.

Whether they were learning how to connect a garden hose to a spigot, pull a wagon around a corner or through a door, measure wood for cutting, or learn about farm animals and plants, the students led the lessons in their own unique ways. The class had a tool station, a garden station, a greenhouse station, an animal station, and a flower pot station for Mother's Day gifts.



Middle School Robotics

In partnership with NTID Regional STEM Center (NRSC), Middle School teachers, Kara Siemens and Christy Pettis, participated in NRSC's VEX IQ program last season. The team won the Alliance Award, earning them a spot at the VEX Worlds. The team and coaches traveled to Dallas, TX, for an exciting experience. Rooted in leadership and teamwork, students use the engineering design process to create robots that meet the season's challenge. This year, they face a new challenge: competing outside their cultural comfort zone. They will compete with hearing students from local schools and potentially in Northwest Arkansas.

Middle School Drones

In the summer of 2021, Christy Pettis attended a professional development session for VEX IQ Coaches. During the session, she met Matt Howell and learned about drones. Following further professional development and a personal visit from Matt Howell, the teams began.

Coached by Christy Pettis, our drone team built underwater ROVs and learned how to operate them effectively. Then, in the spring of 2023, they participated in the first NRSC Aerial Drone Competition and the fourth SeaPerch Competition for secondary Deaf schools, including the American School for the Deaf. It was a wonderful experience for our students to witness a significant part of their history as Deaf students. The coaches explained the importance of the American School for the Deaf in Deaf history to their teams.

Launching the program without a pool to practice with the underwater ROVs has been challenging. However, the team persevered and continued into the next season. Christy negotiated access to the pool located in the gym of the Blind School, allowing the team to prepare their ROVs for competition.

Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf (RIT/NTID) Middle School Math Competition

In January 2024, Christy Pettis and four middle school students attended the Southwest Regional RIT/NTID Math Competition in Brandon, Florida. Before attending, students were required to practice on their own time. Khan Academy and IXL were used to improve their middle school math skills. The students competed against many other Deaf and Hard of Hearing students from southwestern states. The team placed fourth among several teams. While this is not the first time ASD has sent students to the competition, it was a first for this team and for Pettis. She plans to continue the Math Club and hopes to see the team from ASD qualify for the National Championship at the RIT.

Double Pride Cafe

Double Pride Cafe is a student-led cafe on the campus of the Arkansas School for the Deaf. Students in grades 10-12 who are enrolled in Food Safety and Nutrition or Culinary Arts I/II participate in this program. Every week, they create a menu that includes an entrée, side, and dessert to sell to paying staff members. The students follow recipes to complete the cooking process for each item, present it nicely in a to-go container, and deliver it to staff members who have purchased a meal. We have structured this process to resemble a restaurant. When they deliver the lunches, the students collect money from staff members who have not prepaid. Once they finish delivering, the students clean the kitchen according to the sanitary regulations required for a functioning restaurant.

SERVSafe Food Handler Certification

The ServSafe Food Handler certification is a nationally recognized credential in the food industry. Students can qualify to take the test for this credential by completing Food Safety and Nutrition and Culinary Arts I course, and be currently enrolled in Culinary Arts II. They will understand how to keep food safe during the purchasing, storing, cooking, and cleaning processes. The test also includes questions on health department procedures for restaurants such as holding dates and labeling food correctly. Students who pass this certification test will have the opportunity to add this achievement to their resumes, potentially leading to a pay increase in food industry-related fields. Family and Consumer Sciences teacher, Katie Brown is pleased to report that all her students for the 2023-2024 school year passed this certification test in the spring of 2024.

ASD Athletics

Participating in athletics at school can strengthen school spirit and create a stronger sense of community, leading to greater student loyalty. In addition to promoting physical health and wellness by reducing the risk of obesity and cardiovascular diseases, athletics serve as a platform for imparting essential life lessons such as teamwork, discipline, dedication, and perseverance. Furthermore, involvement in athletics helps students develop social skills, make friends, resolve conflicts, and celebrate shared accomplishments, fostering camaraderie and teamwork. Attending high school sporting events can be an uplifting and enriching experience for the entire community and contribute to the development of self-esteem. Our students can participate in several sports that we offer.

Cross Country
Girls Volleyball
Girls Basketball
Boys Basketball
Cheerleading
Track and Field Meet

Results for 2023-2024

Girls Volleyball

- Won Southern Spikeout in Alabama
- Won Leopard Spikeout here in Arkansas
- Won Bison Spikeout in Oklahoma
- 3rd place at GPSD Volleyball tournament in Minnesota.

National Deaf Interscholastic Athletic Association (NDIAA) Honors

- 2nd Team All -American - Ava Vitucci
- Honorable Mention - Roselani Sticher

Girls Basketball

- Won Magnolia Classic in Mississippi
- Runner-up Leopard Classic
- 3rd place at Fuller/Miller-Donatucci Classic in Kansas
- GPSD Champs in Wisconsin

The Lady Leopard Basketball team was voted NDIAA National Champs

NDIAA Honors

- Girls Player of the Year, 1st Team All-American - Ava Vitucci
- Girls Honorable Mention - Mia Pompeo

Boys Basketball

- Consolation Champs at Fuller/Miller-Donatucci Classic in Kansas
- 3rd at GPSD in Wisconsin

NDIAA Honors

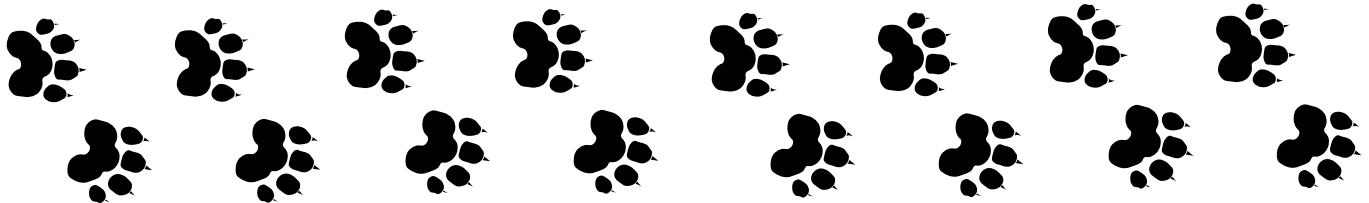
- Honorable Mention - Derrick Jones
- Honorable Mention - Trey Lewis

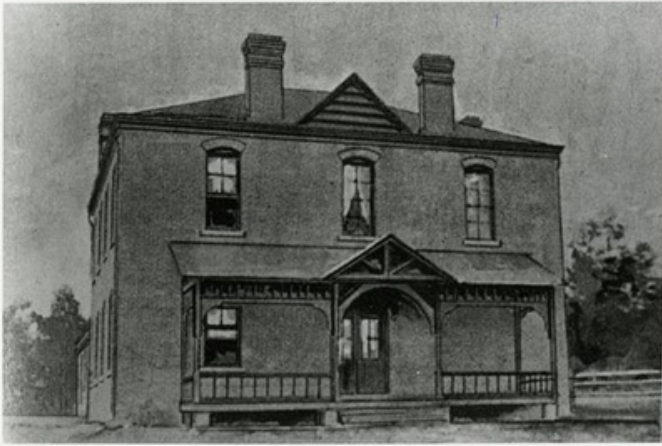
Cheerleading

- NDIAA First Team All-American - Juanita Cooper

NDIAA All Around - Division II Female Athlete of the Year - Ava Vitucci









CONNNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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