



Arkansas School for the Deaf

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Jacob Oliva
Secretary

K. Nicole Walsh
Superintendent

Superintendent's Report- January 2025

Celebrations/Events:

- On December 20th, we held our first Merry "Dip-Mas" Party. Staff from both schools brought dips and dippers to share. We mingled, crowned our 2024 Ugly Sweater Contest Winner, and raffled off lots of donation items from local businesses. A special thank you to Tiffany Pritchard for her hard work with obtaining local donations and to the businesses who donated. Thank you cards with pictures of the winners and a voucher for a free ASL class attendance were provided to encourage community partnership.
- Inclement Weather Event- The Critical Alert Team did an excellent job responding to the inclement weather that occurred January 9-13, 2025. Schools missed three days due to the inclement weather but due to the diligence of Gary Wade and the Critical Alert Team all students made it home safely on Wednesday and returned safely on Monday and Tuesday. We implemented a communication document for internal use that allowed staff to receive updates and information on a departmental basis when needed. Overall, the feedback was positive. We are making a few changes as we proceed with this document to ensure that all staff and families have equitable access.
- Corrective Action Plan Documents have all been submitted to the Department of Education to clear our monitoring that began in 2024. A special thank you to Stacy Kratky and Teresa Doan who have spent numerous hours on this project.

Building Updates:

- Warfield/ CTE Building on ASD Campus: Asbestos Abatement is complete.
- Asbestos abatement began in Lower School/ Parks Building on Monday, 1/13/25 with Nabholtz Construction leading the charge. They anticipate 20 days per building on each Rasnick, Parks, and Pack Hall.
- Additional Stakeholder meetings were held the second week of January to focus on specialty areas: dining, therapy, security, and the media center.
- The ChildrenFirst Daycare is set to be moved out on January 24th.
- Geotechnical Borings occurred during the Winter Break. We are still waiting for the results of the tests that were sent off, but discussions during their time on campus were that overall, things are as expected for this area and nothing was out of the ordinary.

Human Capital Updates:

Retirement:

- Wayne Morrow-IT
- Vicki Crump- Nursing Supervisor

Termination/ Resignation:

- Shawn Galmore- Maintenance

Interviews:

- Transportation Coordinator- position offered, but not yet started.
- RNs and LPNs- Ms. Doan, Dr. Barnes, and Mrs. Walsh have interviewed several candidates and position offerings will be forthcoming. We are hoping to be fully staffed by this time next month.
- Nursing Supervisor- Will be interviewed for soon.
- Teacher Positions: Art, Science- reposted and interviews will occur soon.

Legislative Updates:

- No new bills have been filed related to our schools as of 1/15/25.
- Governor Sanders State of the State speech mentioned several topics related to schools including but not limited to:
 - Education Freedom Accounts- Universal access to education vouchers for students and their families in Arkansas.
 - Cell Phones in School Ban- This is to tackle the constantly increasing statistics on teen suicide and self-harm rates.
 - Funding for college credits while in High School- Students will be eligible to access college credits without the cost that is currently associated with concurrent credits.
 - Universal Free School Breakfast- All students will have access to free breakfast across the state.