



Arizona School for the Arts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 26, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.
On Campus: Building A, Room 129

Attendance (Voting Members in **Bold**)

Allison Otu, President	P	Michelle Davidson, Vice President	P	Scott S. Stone, Treasurer	P
Annette Zinky, Secretary	P	Melvin (Mel) Brown	P	Michelle Buckley	P
Jennifer Delgado	P	Jaime Dempsey	P	Carrie Larson	P
Michael Medici, AIA	P	Marcelino Quiñonez	A	Elizabeth (Liz) Goodman	A
Joshua Pierce, Honorary Arts Faculty	P	Todd Webster, Honorary Academic Faculty	A	Lola Morales, Honorary Student	P
Promise Ndayiragije, Honorary Student	P	Elma Džanić Bass, Head of School	P	Leslie Religioso, Director of Advancement & CR	A
Carolyn Smith, Executive Office Manager	P	Forrest Valora II, Business Manager	P		

Agenda Items

| Call to the Public

	Allison Otu
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| Mission Moment

Celebrating Student Connectedness	Lola Morales & Promise Ndayiragije
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| Board Member Feature

	Allison Otu
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| Discussion Items, Part 1

Updated Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Community Handbook <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised Parent and Guardian Agreements• New Counseling and Social Work Policies	Elma Džanić Bass
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| Action Items

Approval of the September 28, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Approval of the Revised Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Community Handbook

| Discussion Items Part 2

Resource Development Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Dashboard • Discussion Topic: Sponsorship Possibilities 	Jaime Dempsey, Allison Otu & Leslie Religioso
Finance & Facilities Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2026 Reports • Discussion Topic: 	Scott Stone & Forrest Valora
Alumni Relations Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of New Engagement Tool 	Mel Brown & Elma Džanić Bass
 Consent Agenda	
President Updates	Allison Otu
Head of School Report	Elma Džanić Bass
 The Board of Directors may vote to hold an executive session for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the Board's attorney on any matter listed on the agenda pursuant to: ARS §38-431.03 (A)(3) Legal Advice	

Minutes

Board President Allison Otu called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

Call to the Public

Allison moved to the next agenda item as there were no members of the public present at the meeting.

Mission Moment

Student Honorary Board Member Lola Morales discussed the recent community meetings held by Transcend and the resonating theme of “connection, community and whole child focus”. Lola posited that student-led events and student voice can help achieve this goal in the present and cited the recent pep rally, Friday Night Lights and Homecoming dance as examples of community-building events with students involved in the planning process that help build enthusiasm and morale.

Board Member Feature

Newly-elected Board Secretary Annette Zinky was the featured board member this month; Allison shared information about Annette's career, board history, and interesting personal facts.

Discussion Items, Part 1

Updated Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Community Handbook

Head of School Elma Džanić Bass gave an overview of the change to the Parent and Guardian Agreements expanding the policy to the Family and Community Agreements with a more detailed and specific Code of Conduct due to some recent incidents. She then reviewed three new counseling and social work policies required by the Arizona Department of Education in relation to the Social Worker grant ASA has received. All of the policies have been included in a revised edition of the 2026-2027 Community Handbook that will need to be approved by the Board of Directors.

Action Items

Due to some members' need to attend the Lower School Choir concert being held the same evening the Action items were brought forward.

Approval of the September 28, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Michelle Davidson moved to approve the September 28, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mel Brown and passed unanimously without further discussion. [Otu, Davidson, Stone, Zinky, Brown, Buckley, Delgado, Dempsey, Larson, and Medici voting in favor.]

Approval of the Revised Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Community Handbook

Michelle Buckley moved to approve the revised Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Community Handbook. The motion was seconded by Carrie Larson and passed unanimously without further discussion. [Otu, Davidson, Stone, Zinky, Brown, Buckley, Delgado, Dempsey, Larson, and Medici voting in favor.]

Discussion Items, Part 2

Finance and Facilities Committee

- Scott Stone reviewed the October financial dashboard focusing on enrollment and the fact that all other categories including revenue, daily cash on hand, and debt service ratio are directly affected by student head count. Scott acknowledged Elma and her team were making great efforts to attract new, and retain current, students; Forrest Valora noted that many of the schools he is associated with have continued to add students after Fall Break.
- A question was posed about the status of discussions with ASA's bond holders. Elma said that discussions are ongoing and that the bond holders will be paying for the services of a financial consultant to work with Elma and Forrest to build a 5-year financial plan and the fiscal year 2028 budget.

Resource Development Council

- Allison opened the conversation with examples of everyday efforts she has made in the past month to introduce ASA as a possible school to coworkers and leveraging her connections to invite guests to her assigned Signature Series event. Michelle Davidson shared that she has made sponsorship asks of two families for her assigned events in addition to her own family's pledge. Annette has asked last year's sponsor of the Mainstage Play to sponsor the play this year in addition to her employer's sponsorship.
- Elma will be providing the Board with a list of ASA's to vendors as a possible source for sponsorship warm asks.
- Elma informed the Board that the fall campaign, Arts Without Limits, was launched on the prior Friday; she requested that board members follow her example and forward the social media posts to at least five people in their networks.

Alumni Relations Council

Mel Brown gave the Board an overview of an online platform he created for ASA alumni to connect and communicate with each other. It is a private platform that will allow alumni to create profiles and make posts like other social media platforms without the advertising and algorithms. The ARC is working together to finalize the layout and categories before it is launched in the next few weeks. A discussion ensued regarding the privacy and security of the site as well as how it can be expended in the future once it gains traction with ASA's alumni.

Consent Agenda

President Update

Allison took a moment to praise Elma and her administrative team for the work they have put in since July and noted how proud the Board is of all of the staff and faculty are able to accomplish in the face of difficult circumstances. Elma is getting out into the community and is making ASA be seen in quarters where we were not visible last year. She said that the Senior Leadership Team is

obviously a tight group that knows how to support each other evinced by their ability to work and play well together..

Head of School Report

Elma gave a summary of the current enrollment number as well as the pipeline of applicants for the 2027-2028 school year. She then went over the strategic priorities for the second quarter including the current performance season, the Arts Without Limits campaign, the school year 2027-2028 enrollment drive, student events, and progress on ASA 3.0. Elma discussed the recent site visit by Transcend Education and the workshops they facilitated to help stakeholders understand the case for change. She concluded with an overview of the focus and goals of the Arts Without Limits.

Adjournment

Carrie Larson moved to end the meeting. The motion was seconded by Michelle Buckley and passed unanimously without further discussion. [Davidson, Stone, Zinky, Brown, Buckley, Delgado, Dempsey, Larson, and Medici voting in favor. Otu left the meeting to attend the concert.]

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Minutes reviewed and accepted on: November 23, 2026

Signed by: _____, Board Member