

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 5 (2024-25) PROGRESS

TEACHING AND LEARNING		
<i>Cultivate a culture of dynamic teaching and learning that empowers young people to identify their passions for research, inquiry, and creative expression, develop the self-discipline necessary for success, as well as grow in their identity as emerging practitioners and professionals.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Future Considerations
Strategy 1.1: Continue to build on ASMSA's faculty-supported model for student research, inquiry, and creative expression while seeking out expanded partnerships that engage talented young people with leading scholars, professionals, and organizations.	Expanded staffing models in Student Life allowed for the creation of a Weekday Transportation position. This move provides direct support for transportation of students from ASMSA to Little Rock two days per week. It creates space to build on existing partnerships with UAMS to serve additional students in other locations and partners.	ASMSA must expand partnerships beyond Hot Springs that create opportunities for students to engage in authentic research, inquiry, and internships. Continued evolution of the various arts Capstones (visual, music, film, and creative writing) should position students for national competitions in the Arts.
Strategy 1.2: Fully embrace ASMSA's arts mission by expanding an institutional culture of visual and performing arts through encouraging student talents, abilities, and creativity.	The key message of the admissions cycle that began in October 2024 emphasized the expansion of the Programs of Distinction model to include a music option beginning in Fall 2025. The first cohort for the Music P.O.D. was selected this spring. Sophomore entrants can take some art and music courses but full enrollment in the P.O.D.s will begin in junior year.	The ongoing maturation of the Art and Music P.O.D.s should help draw additional students and families who still think of ASMSA only as "the math and science school."
Strategy 1.3: Foster inclusive and diverse learning environments through ASMSA's hiring practices, instructional strategies, and student support systems that remove systemic barriers to equity within our community of learning.	ASMSA again achieved a record low for attrition at 7.8% for the Class of 2025. This reflects a significant change in institutional practices from 38% attrition in 2012 and an average attrition of 30% across the school's first two decades. Work continued on ACT prep support that will better position students on these national exams, particularly as many top universities return to pre-pandemic requirements for the SAT and ACT.	Additional attention and energy must be placed on closing "opportunity gaps" for students who come from rural, low-income, and first-generation college pathways to ASMSA. This involves developing "soft skills" along with aspirations that better position these young people for success at ASMSA, in college, and beyond.
Strategy 1.4: Focus on faculty growth and continuous improvement by offering expanded professional development, asserting leadership in instructional strategies, identifying contact points to interact with fellow educators, and sharing our best practices with national audiences.	Preliminary logistics began on ASMSA seeking Cognia's STEM accreditation. The goal is to submit for this review in Fall 2025. ASMSA has also been tapped by ChallengeSuccess for a special training program called ChAI that combines development character and ethical use of generative artificial intelligence. The yearlong training will begin this fall.	ASMSA must grapple with a quickly-changing landscape around school choice, the primary of the residential experience, and expanded opportunities for accelerated learning through the ACCESS Act of 2025. Much has changed in Arkansas since the school's founding, and ASMSA must adapt and respond alongside that change.
Strategy 1.5: Provide valuable and engaging learning opportunities to students, educators, and districts across the state through a diverse portfolio of outreach, enrichment, digital learning, and educator development programs that involve all members of the ASMSA community.	ASMSA's reach through STEM Pathways, the Talent Identification Program, and out-of-school enrichment opportunities now tops 6,000 students, parents, and educators per year. Work continues on offerings for Course Choice, though legislation passed in April 2025 delays implementation of the program until the 2026-27 school year.	While the residential experience will and must remain the core of ASMSA, the school's next chapter should emphasize how we can be of service and have a greater presence across the state of Arkansas. ASMSA's Online Academy, open to students throughout Arkansas, will begin offering courses in Fall 2025.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 5 (2024-25) PROGRESS

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT		
<i>Maximize the full potential of the on-campus experience by affirming the centrality of residential life in creating a living-learning community that connects students beyond the classroom, assists in developing them as whole people, and prepares these future leaders for successful and fulfilling lives through building sustainable skills and mindsets.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Future Considerations
Strategy 2.1: Implement a Student Development Curriculum that focuses on social-emotional learning, leadership development, digital citizenship, healthy relationships, and other topics that recognize students' needs as maturing young adults and engaged members of a community.	Residential Experience Coordinators continue to implement the Student Development Curriculum through monthly themes, individual discussions within their "wings" of the residence halls, and via campuswide programs.	Campus leadership should continue to explore how these elements are discussed through both the residential experience via the Student Life Staff and Student Success Framework offered by academic support members and faculty.
Strategy 2.2: Ensure that diversity, equity, inclusion, and mutual respect for all characterize our campus culture and climate.	Changes in federal orders as well as recent Supreme Court decisions resulted in a pause on formal programs under this domain. While these values remain consistent across the campus experience, ASMSA must be cautious about developing programs or activities that target specific audiences based on race, sex, ethnicity, or national origin. Instead, ASMSA resolves to create a culture that ensures all students are supported and excel.	Belonging is a concept explored deeply in the Challenge Success Survey, which ASMSA will continue to administer to students and learn from the data provided in responses. It remains critical that all students have direct and meaningful connections to both peers and adults across campus.
Strategy 2.3: Emphasize healthy habits as important components of physical well-being through campus programming and activities that support play, physical development, and balanced nutrition.	The Dean of Students convened a work group this year to explore the potential cost and programmatic elements of a campus Fitness Center as well as a "New Charter Field" greenspace at the back of campus. The \$4 million project is not immediately possible, but conceptual drawings are part of the 2033 Facilities Plan. ASMSA implemented a partnership with the YMCA for students to have guest passes to make use of their facilities.	While preliminary conversations about the role of AAA-based athletics at ASMSA have taken place, a genuine conversation about the opportunities, costs, and logistical challenges associated with a small slate of sports on campus should continue going forward.
Strategy 2.4: Create an atmosphere conducive to healthy conversations about mental and emotional well-being by providing student-centered services and programs that address the natural challenges of both adolescence and the rigors of the ASMSA experience.	More than half of students continue to access campus mental health programs and services. After investing in two positions through COVID relief funds, utilization trends suggest one professional is sufficient going forward with the decision of the LPC to retire this year.	Work must continue to ensure that students from backgrounds not traditionally open to mental health support feel as though they can access these services.
Strategy 2.5: Invest in staffing models and resources that reinforce the professionalism of and essential role played by Student Life Staff who employ best practices in fostering an inclusive and engaging residential community.	The revised salary structure implemented this fall has helped with stability and longevity of professionals in these roles. In fact, the structure has created opportunities for former staff members to return to campus to bring their experience. New roles in the RLO and transportation allowed for more direct student programs and engagement by RECs.	An ongoing goal should be to increase points of intersection between faculty and Student Life Staff. While the two spheres of campus offer specific programming and value to students, they are often viewed as independent of each other rather than as complementary or even unified in their work.
Strategy 2.6: Continue to involve students as full stakeholders in discussions on institutional policy and campus planning so that decision-making is student-centered.	SGA, along with special working groups, continue to be fruitful paths for discussions on student needs. The Fitness Center group is a key example of drawing students with a special interest together to share perspective and advocate for their needs.	Each SGA seems to want to "start fresh" rather than build on existing work. Staff should help the groups achieve greater continuity while still helping to ensure the groups have adequate opportunities to make their mark on the experience.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 5 (2024-25) PROGRESS

ENROLLMENT GROWTH		
<i>Expand enrollment to serve more students statewide through targeted growth models that reflect our commitment to stewardship of the public investment in ASMSA.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Future Considerations
Strategy 3.1: Work with members of the Arkansas General Assembly, University of Arkansas System, and other ASMSA stakeholders to develop and implement a sustainable funding formula that enables the school to increase enrollment.	While productive discussions took place with Sec. Oliva, ADE leadership, the Governor's Office, and UA System leadership, funding priorities during the session did not allow for proposed legislation to move forward creating a new enrollment and growth model for ASMSA. Draft legislation has been written that will serve as an ongoing framework for discussion in advance of the 2027 legislative session.	The goal remains for either ASMSA to receive direct per-pupil funding or at least funding that is equivalent to this amount. Ideally, the school's Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA) would be equivalent and ASMSA would submit a census count each year. The means of enrollment (residential, online, day) should be agnostic in the funding model so long as a student is full-time.
Strategy 3.2: Strengthen curricular options, methods of engagement, and unique experiences for students in the arts while developing recruitment and admissions procedures directed toward students with specific arts interests.	The Visual Arts and Design P.O.D. went through a series of curricular revisions this year for implementation in Fall 2025. The purpose was to clarify for the core requirements as best potential sequence. Work has begun on how to create a Film or Multimedia four-course cognate within the Art P.O.D. that allows students to specialize. The first cohort of the Music P.O.D. will enroll in Fall 2025.	Conversations will continue on how best to create opportunities for sophomores with interests in the Arts to begin formal study prior to their junior year at ASMSA. This may include future admissions pathways where sophomores may directly enroll in a P.O.D.
Strategy 3.3: Explore alternative enrollment models such as commuter options and online programs that recognize students' and families' individual needs, thereby increasing access to ASMSA's quality programs.	The Online Academy was approved in statute during the General Assembly (Act 648) as well as by the Board of Trustees in May 2025. The initial model for the program functions as an ADE-approved microschool with families being able to pay the \$5,000 annual tuition through the Educational Freedom Accounts. A preliminary cohort of 10 students is expected for Fall 2025 in the five-year pilot program.	The five-year pilot program for the Online Academy as well as specific mention of ASMSA in legislation refining the Course Choice provisions of the LEARNS Act (Act 730), highlight that ASMSA has a continued role to play in digital learning that builds on the school's more than 25 years of experience in this domain.
Strategy 3.4: Continue the sophomore early entrance pilot program to determine its overall effectiveness and potential for future expansion as a means of supporting students in need of academic acceleration and intellectual peers.	With the graduation of the first cohort of HELIX students, attention is focused on growing the number of sophomores on campus based on both interest and the strength of applicants. The sophomore work group believes that students in the three-year experience gain more from ASMSA overall and are able to pursue more in-depth opportunities across the experience.	The major discussion ahead will be should the sophomore cohort size grow or even become an equivalent point of entry to junior year in terms of size and the number of students admitted. Revisions to the entry requirements for sophomores is expected for the Class of 2029.
Strategy 3.5: Continue to ensure equity in access for geographically, economically, and racially diverse students who face opportunity gaps and do not share the same level of preparatory experiences and support as some of their peers.	ASMSA achieved record numbers of low-income students enrolled this year as well as significant success in seniors earning scholarships through programs like QuestBridge, Coca-Cola Scholars, Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, and other needs-based programs. Overall distribution of students continues to reflect statewide representation.	Not only is "access" important for these populations but also "success" of these students is critical. Low-income and rural students do still complete the experience with lower overall ACT scores compared to students from suburban, wealthier families.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 5 (2024-25) PROGRESS

ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS		
<i>Strengthen internal and external partnerships with local, state, and national stakeholders that create committed and vocal advocates for the essential leadership role that ASMSA plays within Arkansas education as well as economic and community development.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Future Considerations
Strategy 4.1: Develop a framework for alumni to share perspective and experience that supports students' personal and professional development in addition to institutional advancement.	ASMSA hosted a "farewell" event coinciding with Alumni Weekend in October 2024 to provide the campus community a final opportunity to tour the St. Joseph Hospital complex. The ceremony, tours, and alumni dinner was ASMSA's largest event of its kind to date. Work continues on drafting the framework for the National Advisory Council, with a goal of organizing meetings in Fall 2025.	A reset leading to the creation of the National Advisory Council provides an opportunity for an alumni group to closely follow updates from ASMSA, provide counsel, and become advocates. It is important this group is not only those in close proximity who can attend in person but representative of the many paths that alumni take.
Strategy 4.2: Reinforce to legislators and other leaders the value of the state's commitment to talented young people so that the decision-makers understand their return on investment in ASMSA.	Significant inroads were made with Sec. Oliva and ADE leadership this year about the unique role that ASMSA both does and can further play in supporting the goals of the state. The ACCESS legislation offered a unique opportunity to highlight accelerated learning at ASMSA, our early college experience, and how we can provide expanded support for online learning.	ASMSA must continue to center itself at the heart of landmark Arkansas legislation like LEARNS and ACCESS. LEARNS demonstrates ASMSA's longstanding example of school choice. ACCESS highlights ASMSA's work in early college, acceleration, and online learning.
Strategy 4.3: Utilize the ASMSA Parents Association and Parents Advisory Council to promote direct communication, gain insights on family needs, and represent ASMSA daily in communities across the state.	Monthly Zoom meetings with the Parents Advisory Council provided a productive space for ongoing discussions about family needs, campus updates, and open communication. Parents were particularly supportive for Giving Tuesday and spring Day of Giving campaigns for the ASMSA Foundation Fund.	The school should continue to seek opportunities to involve families in the ASMSA experience despite the geographic separation.
Strategy 4.4: Expand ASMSA's position in the Hot Springs community as a hub for educational discussions, cultural enhancement, intellectual debate, and economic development.	New collaborations with Arkansas Learning through the Arts, Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, and Fifty for the Future continue to position ASMSA as a downtown hub and space for community engagement.	ASMSA should continue to seek opportunities to bring community members and leaders to campus as well as to find community programs, events, and experiences that better connect students and employees to the Hot Springs community as the school strives to not only be "in" Hot Springs but also a meaningful "part of" the town.
Strategy 4.5: Prioritize fundraising efforts to reflect the ASMSA Foundation's commitment to direct student support, faculty innovation, programmatic development, and facilities needs.	ASMSA continues to evaluate the role that private philanthropy places in meeting institutional needs. Ongoing conversations seek to determine the appropriate balance of generating revenue through sponsored programs versus seeking individual gifts and grants.	Parent engagement and support as part of the core Annual Giving plan must become the hub of those efforts. Work should continue to assess the specific types of funds and initiatives that alumni are most likely to support.
Strategy 4.6: Explore methods to reach varied audiences by using traditional and evolving media to provide a snapshot of daily life and learning on campus, celebrate achievement, and articulate a full narrative of the unique opportunities and experiences available exclusively at ASMSA.	Inclusion of video as part of the digital portfolio remains a priority. This emphasis includes streaming of concerts and campus events to both Facebook and YouTube as well as short-form videos as posts/stories. ASMSA now maintains a presence on both Threads and Bluesky, which are competitors to X (Twitter), as well as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.	ASMSA social and online presence continues to be one of the best ways to share our institutional story as well as that of our students and colleagues. While social media has a wide reach, it has shifted toward a paid model. One of the most effective ways to grow ASMSA's social media awareness is for employees, families, students, and alumni to share ASMSA's content on their own profiles.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 5 (2024-25) PROGRESS

FACILITIES EXPANSION		
<i>Grow facilities and implement long-range strategies to meet the needs of expanded enrollment, academic experiences, student life, recreation, and community engagement.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Future Considerations
Strategy 5.1: Review and update the Campus Master Plan to redevelop a facilities growth pathway in accordance with institutional needs.	Ongoing discussions around the 2033 Facilities Plan, including stakeholder surveys, conceptual work, and campus discussions have been productive. The plan is expected to be released in September 2025. While immediate needs will focus on the Arts Zone and Wellness Zone of campus, the Plan sets a broad vision for how the campus can continue to evolve in the future.	Public sharing of the 2033 Plan will begin in the fall along with initial potential concepts for the Arts Zone that will replace the footprint of the hospital. Questions remain about the redevelopment of the Majestic Hotel site and how the space will enhance or complement the ASMSA campus.
Strategy 5.2: Initiate efforts to expand ASMSA's dedicated arts facilities in collaboration with community partners that lead to the full realization of the school's legislated arts mission.	The Arts Zone remains the next step in the redevelopment of campus. Cost estimates have been completed along with a planning timeline that suggest construction can begin on some element of these needs along the timeline of demolition of the hospital complex. A likely scenario is construction beginning in winter 2028.	The major question to resolve will be the scale of the Arts facilities. While the school aspires to large-scale buildings, the realities of funding available may mean some compromise. A secondary question to answer will be the pursuit of a combined building or individual visual and performing arts spaces.
Strategy 5.3: Formalize steps that will lead to vacating the former hospital complex by creating a plan to transfer teacher offices, maintenance, and other programs to permanent locations using new or existing facilities.	Significant effort over summer and fall 2024 led to a general exit of the hospital complex in January 2025. Delays by the City of Hot Springs in exiting some of the maintenance buildings did hinder a complete handover until spring 2025. Official notice was given to the City that the hospital would be returned on June 1, 2025. The City has begun a Phase II environment assessment and has set aside full funding for the demolition.	Close communication with the City of Hot Springs on the logistics and impacts of the demolition process is critical. The work that will happen in the heart of campus in the coming years will have a significant impact on the ASMSA experience.
Strategy 5.4: Expand and create student residences as well as shared and recreational spaces to fully support the emotional, social, physical, and academic needs of students.	Particular emphasis was placed on concept work for the Fitness Center and New Charter Field. The potential of new capital funding created the possibility of moving forward with the project in Fall 2025; however, the project remains in limbo as discussions continue on the equal need for facilities to support ASMSA's legislated Arts mission.	Longterm solutions for student wellness, play, and athletics must be an ongoing conversation for the school with the UA System, state leadership, and potential donors.
Strategy 5.5: Advocate for the creation of a Public Residential Schools Facilities Fund by the Arkansas General Assembly that brings ASMSA into parity with other public high schools.	Initial conversations with ADE suggested the possibility of a new annual appropriation and allocation of significant funding to support the campus redevelopment. Despite ASMSA efforts, this funding did not materialize late in the legislative session as initially pledged. It will remain an ongoing point of priority for the 2027 session.	Intentional funding to support the ongoing redevelopment of campus along with ensuring the longevity of newer campus facilities will be critical in light of rising construction costs. New funding to supplement the existing template that has led to \$37.5 million in projects in the first phase is essential.