Amistad Academy Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM EDT
Virtual over Zoom: https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/82067664718

Attendees:

Board members: Lorraine Gibbons, Jen Alexander, Jim Baron, Jason Prime
AF Staff: Amy D'Angelo, Michael Rabin, Olivia Levey, Samantha Lucky, Sulafa Bashir

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Lorraine Gibbons.

II. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

III. Regionalization Update

Michael Rabin gave an overview of the phases of work that have been undertaken from codifying the future operating model of split-control to starting the multi-year implementation plan. He went on to discuss the rationale for the regional ED model, highlighting the need for accountability, decision-making authority and focus on community relationships, and to describe the ED's roles and responsibilities. He concluded by stressing the balance of keeping AF's core components the same across the regions while allowing for regional variation.

Mr. Rabin introduced Ms. Amy D'Angelo who officially started as the Regional Executive Director on July 1 as part of the regionalization effort.

IV. Dialogue with Regional Executive Director

Ms. Amy D'Angelo stated that the regional model has been well-received by Connecticut stakeholders, who have expressed support for a leadership focused specifically on local needs and challenges, and she shared that these changes have marked a 'new chapter' in relationships with various groups, including the state and the police department, an

Ms. D'Angelo introduced Sam Lucky and Liv Levey who briefly described their roles and backgrounds.

Ms. D'Angelo stated that the region is engaged in an academic turnaround targeting year-over-year gains over the next 3 to 5 years. Efforts to enhance academic performance include highlighting exemplary teacher achievements such double-digit gains in student proficiency attained by several teachers, underscoring the impact of dedicated teaching and the ambitious three-year plan aimed at district competitiveness.

Investments in professional development aim to enhance performance, leveraging high performers and partnerships with organizations like Lavinia Group. Strategies include targeted mentoring, evidence-based practices, and innovative platforms like Mojo to improve school outcomes.

V. Academic Review

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To address the decline in proficiency rates in reading and math, the focus shifts to identifying skill gaps and enhancing evaluation methods to comply with varying state standards, increasing feedback frequency and direct leadership involvement to foster improvement.

Additionally, a comprehensive summer school initiative is set to boost student outcomes, supported by national institutes, and is expected to be inclusive for all students, regardless of performance level, providing a low-risk, high-reward opportunity.

Ms. D'Anglo gave an overview of the ERC funds that the charter will be receiving, and indicated that there would be strategic criteria set for spending, focusing on impactful upgrades. Plans to involve principal inputs in future decisions ensure equitable resource distribution and team-wide recognition for goals achievement through bonuses.

Ms. D'Angelo gave an update on charter renewal progress at the schools, and encouraged board members to attend the public hearings which have been effective in the past in fostering engagement and support for the school through impactful testimonials.

VI. Adjourn

Ms. Lorraine Gibbons thanked Ms. D'Angelo for her energy and authenticity. She then highlighted the addition of two new board members, Alex Guzhnay and Jason Prime, at the previous meeting. Jason, who was present, introduced himself and his background. Ms. Gibbons welcomed him and, highlighting his finance experience, stated that he would be joining the finance committee.

Prior to adjourning, Ms. Gibbons reminded the board members that they are required to submit a conflict of interest form annually and stated there would be an email from an AF staff member to provide instructions for completion.

There being no other business, Ms. Gibbons called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Baron motioned, seconded by Jen Alexander. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned by Lorraine Gibbons at 8:55 am.