

Approved: 1/23/12

Achievement First Hartford Academy

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2012

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

AF Hartford Academy

Board members in attendance: Jean LaVecchia, James Morton, Tina Rendon, Colleen Palmer, Nancy Zwiener, Gretchen Unfried, Laura Estes, John Motley.

Others in Attendance: Kelonda Maull, Lauren Miller, Claire Shin, Emily Banks, Liz Ferguson, Jeff House, Carl Hendrick, Ja Hannah, Liz Adams, Aja Davis

Ms. LaVecchia called the meeting to order at 5:03pm and asked everyone to introduce themselves to the board.

Ja Hanna and Carl Hardick gave a brief presentation to the board regarding their work in the community and their ideas to connect the school to other community organizations in the area. The board engaged in conversation about this and members of the board will meet with Mr. Hannah, Mr. Hardick and members of the External Relations Team at Achievement First to continue this conversation.

Ms. LaVecchia asked Mr. House to present his principal report. Mr. House, principal of Achievement First Hartford Academy Middle School spoke to the board regarding some successes and challenges that the school has faced to date this year. Some successes include an increase in student attendance and scholar recognition in November. They are really looking forward to a 6th grade breakthrough this year with reading results increasing on their IA's. This year staff members are prioritizing and focusing on 6th grade reading, attendance, staff norms and staff culture. Overall, the school is doing well. Mr. House also spoke about the areas for growth that the school is focused on this year. He then answered questions from the board.

Ms. LaVecchia asked Mr. House to elaborate on the Achievement First Hartford Academy Report Card during his principal report. Mr. House discussed this with the board and gave background concerning the results and scores. The board will continue talking about the report card results at the January board meeting.

Ms. LaVecchia introduced Emily Banks who will be the new Achievement First Hartford Academy High school principal after Claire Shin's transition. The board introduced themselves to Ms. Banks. Ms. Banks gave the board background on her experiences as a TFA Corps member and a teacher at Achievement First and her work for Achievement First Network Support. Ms. Banks answered questions from the board.

Ms. LaVecchia asked Claire Shin to give a Principal Report for Achievement First Hartford High School.

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Ms. Shin, principal of Achievement First Hartford Academy Elementary School spoke to the board regarding Achievement First Hartford High school and gave background about her transition to Brooklyn next year to open another great Achievement First high school. Ms. Shin is excited about academic rigor and feels Emily Banks reflects such rigor and will make a great principal for the high school scholars. Ms. Shin and Ms. Banks are working closely together to ensure a smooth transition. Ms. Shin talked about some key successes for the school including wonderful attendance at 97%. The school culture has been strong and IA exam results have also been strong. Ms. Shin also, addressed some areas where the school is trying to grow. They are working to ensure low levels of retention. Ms. Shin then, expressed the need for donated books and equipment and asked the board if they knew anyone who would donate. Ms. Shin wants to build on their athletic program and feels this would be a strong program. The board asked her to come up with a wish list for the athletics program. Ms. Shin will brainstorm with her team to figure out what they need for the scholars. Ms. Shin answered questions from the board.

Ms. LaVeccia asked Liz Ferguson to give a Principal Report for Achievement First Hartford Elementary School.

Ms. Ferguson spoke to the board regarding the Elementary school successes, priorities and challenges. She explained classroom culture is becoming stronger and student culture is still a focus. Ms. Ferguson wants her scholars to be invested in learning and she is trying to develop consistency across the school to implement student incentives (Morning Motivation and students are able to wear any sneakers they like) for a stronger school culture. Ms. Ferguson is happy with attendance increasing from 97% to 98%. One challenge this year is bus behavior and the school is recruiting parents to support a proposal for bus monitors. Ms. Ferguson opened for questions or comments.

Ms. LaVeccia asked for a motion to enter into Executive session at 5:51pm. The board invited Liz Ferguson, Aja Davis and Liz Adams to join them.

The board motioned to complete the executive session and asked the rest of the people present at the meeting to re-join the meeting.

Moved: James Morton

Seconded: Nancy Zwiener
(All in favor)

Ms. LaVeccia asked Pat Sweet to give an Advocacy update to the board.

Ms. Sweet gave a quick update regarding advocacy from the State Legislation regarding funding for the next year. She asked the board to reach out to new legislators for them to visit our schools for Visitor Days.

Ms. LaVeccia asked the board if they had a chance to look through the minutes from the last board meeting. She asked if anyone had any changes to make to the minutes. Hearing no suggestions, she asked the board for a motion to approve the minutes.

RESOLVED: To approve the meeting minutes from the September 24, 2012 board meeting as presented to the board.

Moved: James Morton

Second: Nancy Zwiener
(All in Favor)

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Ms. LaVeccia gave the board background information regarding the AF School Report Card and the Bonus Policy. This policy will also measure graduation rates and attrition. Mr. Paul gave information on the grant funding of the bonuses that is distributed per school. Ms. LaVeccia introduced Tony Siddall to explain the resolution.

Mr. Siddall spoke to the board regarding the Bonus Policy and gave background for approval. He answered questions from the board.

RESOLVED:

RESOLVED, The Achievement First Hartford Academy Board hereby approves the bonus policy attached herein, covering performance from the 2011-12 school year. The Board further approves the AF School Report Card as the method for determining the amount of bonuses, and delegates to Achievement First co-CEO and Superintendent Doug McCurry the exclusive authority to award mitigating points in exceptional circumstances.

Board Chair

Date

Moved: John Motley

Second: James Morton

Abstained: Gretchen Unfried

(All in Favor)

Ms. Miller spoke to the board regarding the joint high school committee with members of the Jumoke board. The Board nominated Jean LaVeccia, John Motley and Marshall Ruben to serve on the committee on behalf of Achievement First Hartford Academy.

RESOLVED: To appoint Jean LaVeccia, John Motley and Marshall Ruben to serve on the joint high school committee

Moved: Laura Estes

Second: Nancy Zwiener

Abstained: Jean LaVeccia

(All in Favor)

Mr. Motley spoke to the board regarding the school's financials Mr. Motley said that the financials look good. He asked if anyone had questions and hearing none, asked for a motion to approve the financials.

RESOLVED: To approve the financial forecast

Moved: James Morton

Second: Nancy Zwiener

(All in Favor)

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Ms. LaVeccia gave an update to the board on the Nutmeg Big Brother Big Sister program and asked the board to send any ideas for community mentoring opportunities to her. Ms. Sweet gave an update on the program. Ms. Sweet opened for questions.

Ms. LaVeccia asked Mr. Paul to give a Development Update to the board. Mr. Paul gave a brief update to the board about fundraising and answered questions from the board.

Ms. LaVeccia asked if there was any new business to be addressed at the meeting. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

RESOLVED: To adjourn the meeting

Moved: Laura Estes

Second: Nancy Zwiener

(All in Favor)

Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm

Respectfully Submitted: _____