

**Achievement First Hartford Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**

Monday, May 23, 2016, 5:00 – 7:00 pm  
305 Greenfield Street, Hartford

The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

**I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by John Motley.

John Motley, AFHA Board - Yes

Barry Jacobson, AFHA Board - Yes

Jeffrey Digel, AFHA Board - Yes (phone)

Marshall Ruben, AFHA Board - No

Angela Scott, AFHA Board - Yes (phone)

William Schedl, AFHA Board - Yes

Jose Rendon, AFHA Board - Yes

Ja Hanna, AFHA Board - Yes

David Dee, AFHA Board - Yes

Emily Banks, School Leadership - Yes

Ernest Peterson, School Leadership - Yes

Sorby Grant, School Leadership - Yes

Ben Cruse, School Leadership - Yes (Phone)

Morgan Barth, AF Network Support, No

Shannon Garfield, AF Network Support - No

Ken Paul, AF Network Support - No

John Furniss, AF Network Support - Yes

Laurie Bussman, AF Network Support - No

Lorie McGee, AF Network Support - Yes

Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes

**II. Open Session For Public Comment**

No public comment.

**III. Reports and Discussion**

**A. Principal Reports**

**1. AF Hartford Academy Elementary (Ernest Peterson)**

AF Hartford Elementary School is in the middle of SBAC testing, having finished up ELA last week and working on Math this week. Their focus has been on working on really engaging students and staff. Part of these efforts involved special visits from State Reps, Yard Goats, University of Hartford baseball team, policemen, and local firemen.

Suspensions are holding at three percent, attendance is still around the 96 percent. Staff culture is largely positive, as everyone is trying to finish up the school year strong. Staff very excited for senior signing day tomorrow.

**2. AF Hartford Academy Middle (Sorby Grant)**

Ms. Grant spoke about all the hard work the scholars and teachers are putting into preparing for the

SBAC. All around the school, scholars have been engaged and the energy has been quite positive. They are also very excited for end of year trips.

In spite of the bus strike, attendance was highest it has been all year but it remains just shy of the Network goal of 97 percent. The average for the year has been 96 percent. The school leadership team is working on supporting the scholars who are chronically absent to get back to school.

### **3. AF Summit Middle (Ben Cruse)**

Mr. Cruse shared that at AF Summit, they are feeling confident about SBAC testing. Weekly quizzes in both ELA and Math have been strong - near top of CT in both. Attendance continues to be an issue (around 95 percent) but they are trying to push to the end of year. The low attendance rate is heavily impacted by a number of chronically absent students. That said, AF Summit had 98 percent attendance on both testing days.

Three teachers will not be returning for the following school year but hiring is going well. The entire leadership team is returning and most new spaces (for new grades) have been filled.

The Honor Roll Banquet will be held on June 14th at the YMCA.

Mr. Motley asked about the parent engagement, and Mr. Cruse explained it's not uniform across the board but they do have some very engaged parents.

### **4. Joint High School Committee (Emily Banks)**

Emily Banks shared that everyone at the school is excited for Senior Signing Day which is tomorrow, May 24th.

AP testing is done - seven in total. Overall, it went well. Ms. Banks is optimistic about the history classes in particular. The first round of SAT scores, of the four AF high schools, AF Hartford High was the strongest in the network.

Attendance is still a bit of a struggle – ranging from 94 to 96 percent which is a function of some truancy. Ms. Banks discussed her eagerness for tackling attendance at the beginning of the new school year. Hartford Promise requires a record of 93 percent attendance in order to qualify for the scholarship.

It's been a hard year for teacher recruitment. Applications are down across the board. As of now, there are still positions that need to be filled.

## **B. Board Chair Report (John Motley)**

### **1. AF Hartford Renewal**

Mr. Motley led a discussion on the AF Hartford Charter Renewal.

## **2. Professional Growth Plan Updates (PGP)**

Ultimately not finished yet, but Mr. Motley has been very involved. Very impressed with the level of detail and thought that go into these plans. Mr. Motley congratulated the Principals on the progress that we're making.

## **3. 2016 Board Giving**

The Board is expected to make a gift to AF and reach the goal of 100 percent giving. The amount is not important.

## **4. Summer Retreat - July 12, 2016**

The Annual Board Retreat will be in New Haven, but location is TBD. Mr. Motley explained that they tend to be very informative and inspirational. Ms. Blanton gave an overview of last year's retreat, and explained that there will be input from the Board Chairs.

## **5. AF Hartford Board Leadership Positions**

### **C. Financial Report (John Motley)**

Mr. Motley presented the Financial Report and gave a review of the budget for the 16-17 school year. There will be budget reductions across the board but they will continue to focus funds on where they are needed most.

Mr. Digel inquired as to how student recruitment efforts will affect funds. Ms. McGee explained that the lottery was run today, and they had at least two times as many applications as they did last year (as of April). Lots of on the ground outreach has been done. Professional canvassing team has hit North End while a volunteer team has hit south end. AF has also engaged in various mass-marketing strategies (billboards, bus signs) along with lots of personal outreach/phone calls. In addition, AF has enlisted current families to assist in student recruitment of new families. Mr. Dee inquired as to whether any of these prospective families or canvassers have been invited to Senior Signing Day.

## **IV. Executive Session**

Motion for Executive Session by Barry Jacobson at 6:08pm.

Seconded by David Dee

Motion to exit executive session at 6:16pm by William Schedl

## **V. Board Business**

RESOLVED, the Achievement First Hartford Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 28, 2016.

Moved by: Barry Jacobson

Seconded by: Ja Hannah

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Achievement First Hartford Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Moved by: Jose Rendon  
Seconded by: Will Schedl  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Moved by: Jose Rendon  
Seconded by: Barry Jacobson  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznik to perform the financial audit of the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Moved by: Barry Jacobson  
Seconded by: David Dee  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of the following Director with a three year term ending June 30, 2019.

John Motley, Director

Moved by: Jose Rendon  
Seconded by: Ja Hanna  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects the following leadership slate:

John Motley, Chair

Barry Jacobson, Vice-Chair

Jeff Digel, Treasurer

Angela Scott, Secretary

Moved by: David Dee  
Seconded by: William Schedl  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby renews the Cooperative Arrangement Agreement by and between Achievement First Hartford Academy, Inc. and Jumoke Academy, Inc. for one (1) year.

Moved by: David Dee  
Seconded by: William Schedl  
All in favor

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 pm by John Motley

Moved by: William Schedl