

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

June 9, 2016, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

AF Bridgeport Academy Middle School  
529 Noble Avenue Bridgeport CT

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 6:06 pm by Chris Kunhardt.

Chris Kunhardt, AFBA Board - Yes

Ed Raice, AFBA Board - Yes

Max Perez, AFBA Board - No

Marlene Macaуда, AFBA Board - Yes

Cornelius Medas, AFBA Board - Yes

Debra Hertz, AFBA Board - Yes

Dick Kalt, AFBA Board - Yes

Harold Kamins, AFBA Board - No

James Bennett, AFBA Board - Yes

Wiley Mullins, AFBA Board - No

Michael Strambler, AFBA Board - Yes

Megan Tokarski, AF Network Support - Yes

Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

John Furniss, AF Network Support - Yes

Christina Pares, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

Heather Watcher, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

Florisca Carter, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

Challa Fleming, AF Bridgeport MS - Yes

Natasha Noel, AF Bridgeport MS - Yes

Public: Claudia Phillips, Mark Phillips, Mikia Fleming, Zumi Fleming, Susan Morales, Philip Duval, Andy Boas, Nicole Jackson, Linda Lambeck, Maria Pereira

Mr. Kunhardt opened the meeting by having several Board members read speeches from the recent AF Amistad High Senior Signing Day.

**II. Open Session For Public Comment**

An AF Bridgeport parent of three current (and four in the fall) AF Bridgeport Elementary School students shared her experience of when she took her kids out of AFBA for one year, but then returned her children to AFBA because she was so unhappy with the traditional public school. She has noticed a positive change in her children (including her two oldest daughters who each have a learning disability) since returning to AFBA. Her first grader is currently reading at an advanced level and she could not be more grateful to everything the school has provided.

Ms. Claudia Phillips, parent of three, read a prepared statement. Her children have thrived at AFBA in part due to the school culture. She thanked the board, school administration, teachers and operations department for the support she feels in the school. She then addressed the walkout at Amistad HS and the importance of the recruitment of minority teachers. She expressed pride in the

scholars and gratitude towards school leadership in their reaction and engagement with the students. Ms. Phillips then expressed resentment and displeasure at the original appointment of Bridgeport Board of Education Member Ms. Maria Pereira to the AF Bridgeport Academy Board. Finally, Ms. Phillips gave a resounding endorsement of Senior Signing Day.

### **III. Reports and Business**

#### **A. Principal Reports (Christina Pares, Challa Flemming)**

##### **AF Bridgeport Middle School (Challa Flemming)**

Ms. Flemming gave a report on the Middle School and specifically the activities which have focused on preparing students academically and mentally to do their best on their exams. Ms. Flemming showed a compilation video of the final day of “Crescendo” activities where members of the community and teachers formed a tunnel for students cheering them on as they entered the school. They hosted the “SBAC Olympics” as a way for students to blow off steam after multiple hours of testing and they started a #BeTheProof twitter hashtag as well. Following the test, students said they felt like the test was difficult, but that they felt prepared, worked hard and did well.

Ms. Flemming shared that the Middle School is looking to have 75 percent staff retention this year. Ms. Flemming expressed that it has been a major focus to build a school where you see the same people and faces year over year.

The Middle School is looking forward to welcoming the new class of 5th graders next year. They started “Stepping Up” days last year where 4th graders get to meet the leadership team, tour the building, take a writing class, listen to a panel of 8th grade students and join “Pride Circle.” Ms. Flemming congratulated Ms. Pares and Ms. Wachter on their preparation of the incoming 4th graders - all of whom will be promoted to the 5th grade.

##### **AF Bridgeport Elementary School (Christina Pares)**

Ms. Pares shared that while they’re in the final six days of school, you wouldn’t know it by the energy and focus by both teachers and scholars. The teachers are still pushing scholars to do their best and taking prep periods to help the youngest scholars achieve their reading goals.

SBAC testing seemed to go really well. Scholars shared that they felt very prepared for the tests and Ms. Pares reported that they also seemed confident in their performance. Many teachers expressed gratitude towards the AF Network for their support.

Ms. Pares shared that the school maintained a 97 percent attendance average over the entire year even through bouts of severe sickness. 80 percent of teachers are staying on next year with three teachers leaving to take leadership positions at other AF schools.

The final goals Ms. Pares reported on are the 90/40 goals - seeing 90 percent of kids proficient and 40 percent advanced at their reading level by the end of the year. The 2nd grade has already achieved this goal and the 1st grade is two scholars away from the goal. The kindergarten is moving strongly in the correct direction. In addition to objectively reaching the goal, it was critically important to create a culture where learning can and truly does happen and Ms. Pares feels that they accomplished that.

Ms. Pares is feeling great about school prep for next year which has been built off the strong

systems that have been put in place this year and so there's not much reworking to do over the summer.

The aim is to tighten up everything next year and better support teachers. They are looking to stay in touch with teachers via Facebook and other methods over the summer.

**B. Board Chair Report (Chris Kunhardt)**

Mr. Kunhardt gave a brief report. The Board helped fund some of the activities during Teacher Appreciation Week and Mr Kunhardt expressed gratitude to the members who participated. The Board Retreat is 7/12 in New Haven. The Middle School graduation is 6/17 from 3-5pm at AFBA Middle.

**C. Election of Board Members (Chris Kunhardt)**

**1. Re-elect Board Members**

Each prospective Board Member left the room during the vote.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of the following Directors:

Dick Kalt, Director, with a three year term ending June 30, 2019

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz

Seconded by Jim Bennett

All in favor

Jim Bennett, Director, with a three year term ending June 30, 2019

Motion to approve: Marlene Macaуда

Seconded by Cornelius Medas

All in favor

Cornelius Medas, Parent Representative, with a one year term ending June 30, 2017

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz

Seconded by Dick Kalt

All in favor

**2. Elect Officers**

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

Chris Kunhardt, Chair

Dick Kalt, Vice-Chair

Ed Raice, Treasurer

Marlene Macaуда, Secretary

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz  
Seconded by Cornelius Medas  
All in favor

**D. Financial Report (Ed Raice)**

**1. Approve Financial Report**

Mr. Raice gave a summary of the Financial Report. The Elementary School is on track to end the year on budget, while the Middle School has a small surplus.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz  
Seconded by Jim Bennett  
All in favor

**2. Approve the 2016-17 AF Bridgeport Budget**

Mr. Kunhardt said that he and Mr. Raice spent a good deal of time working through the budget with AF's CFO and Finance Team and feel confident about it. They then discussed changes in staff costs and state funding.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport 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.

Motion to approve: Marlene Macaudo  
Seconded by Dick Kalt  
All in favor

**3. Appoint PKF O'Connor Davies as Independent Auditors**

There will be a new auditor this year (as required by the State) will be O'Connor Davies. The firm has experience with other charter schools in Connecticut. AFBA intends to go back to CohnReznik next year.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby ratifies the appointment of PKF O'Connor Davies to perform the financial audit of the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz  
Seconded by Ed Raice  
All in favor

**IV. Executive Session**

Motion to Executive Session to discuss Personnel at 7:09pm by Chris Kunhardt  
Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:39 pm by Chris Kunhardt

**V. Additional Business**

**A. Elect Amistad High School Principal**

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby elects Mr. Morgan Barth as the Principal of Achievement First Amistad High School effective July 1, 2016.

Motion to approve: Jim Bennett

Seconded by Ed Raice

All in favor

**B. Approve CEP Policy**

RESOLVED, the Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby approves the amendment of the Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099) between the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and AF Bridgeport Academy by the Community Eligibility Provision.

Motion to approve: Debra Hertz

Seconded by Ed Raice

All in favor

**C. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 24, April 11 and May 10, 2016.

Motion to approve: Cornelius Medas

Seconded by Dick Kalt

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 pm by Chris Kunhardt.

Motion by Debra Hertz

Seconded by Jim Bennett