

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

November 17, 2016, 6:00 – 7:30 pm

AF Bridgeport Academy Middle School

529 Noble Avenue Bridgeport CT

I. Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chris Kunhardt.

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

Chris Kunhardt, AFBA Board - Yes

Dick Kalt, AFBA Board - No

Marlene Macauda, AFBA Board - Yes

Max Perez, AFBA Board - No

Michael Strambler, AFBA Board - Yes

Cornelius Medas, AFBA Board - Yes (phone)

Debra Hertz, AFBA Board - Yes (phone)

James Bennett, AFBA Board - No

Ebrima Jobe, AFBA Board - No

Harold Kamins, AFBA Board - Yes

Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes

Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

Christina Pares, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

Challa Fleming, AF Bridgeport MS - Yes

Florisca Carter, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

Natasha Noel, AF Bridgeport MS - No

Heather Wachter, AF Bridgeport ES - Yes

II. Open Session For Public Comment

No public comment.

III. Board Business

A. Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from 9/28/16.

Motion by Harold Kamins

Seconded by Marlene Macauda

All in favor

B. Accept resignation of Ed Raice

The board accepted and noted Ed Raice's resignation from the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors.

IV. Reports and Business

Principal Reports (Challa Flemming, Christina Pares)

Challa Flemming, AFBA Middle School Principal, began her report with the feedback from the Charter Renewal visit. She thanked the Elementary School for hosting. The middle school did a deep dive with the Laura Etkind, Director, Team Special Services, and looked at the first round of IA data. They saw that 5th, 7th and 8th grades in math and ELA they are seeing double digit gains for students with IEPs.

Unfortunately, suspension numbers are higher than they would like. The biggest challenge they are facing is consistency. Although they had high teacher retention rate, they still have a lot of people who are new and are still getting accustomed to the culture system at the school. Some classes are strong and focused and others are less so. Members of the leadership team are covering extra roles and responsibilities including teaching (a vacancy exists in 8th grade math).

Academically, the 5th and 6th grades are stronger than they've had in the past as those scholars are coming up through AF Bridgeport Elementary but the challenges of the staff culture concerns Challa.

Christina Pares, AFBA Elementary School Principal, shared that academically the 4th graders were at the top of the network on Interim Assessments. They are feeling good about some of the new teachers and Teachers in Residence who are getting great results. The kindergarten scholars have been taking math quizzes and Christina shared her daughter's excitement about her results. They switched assessments (from F&P to STEP) and they've seen progress but given that it's a new assessment there is some backslide. Suspensions are below 1% and removals are very low.

The toughest part of this year is that teachers are tired. They are implementing support plans for those who need additional help. Christina talked about the ways in which they have reflected on the early year departures (by teachers) and how she feels they have done a better job welcoming new teachers by engaging the grade level chairs to play a key role in that.

Every day they zero in on a more focused curriculum around social emotional learning. The kids seem happy when they walk into the building. Christina often sees students problem solve things that happen at recess, for example. They learn "self talk" and students are really implementing the strategies to persevere. Kids will often tell adults that they used self talk to get through frustration. The two social workers are spearheading the movement.

Christina spoke about her transition to Amistad Elementary and she said that she would not take over the role of principal of Amistad Elementary if she didn't have complete confidence in the leadership team at AFBA Elementary. She will attend the Wednesday morning meeting and on Fridays she will attend half days for leadership team development and she will have an opportunity to meet with each dean. They have engaged with teachers to see whether any of them wanted opportunities to take on additional leadership. They had an interview process to see who wanted to take on additional Dean of

Student responsibilities in light of Samantha Lucky's transition to go to Amistad Elementary. They are hiring a behavior interventionist to ensure that culture remains strong.

Joint High School Committee (Chris Kunhardt)

Chris gave a report from the Joint High School Committee meeting the prior day with Amistad High School Principal Morgan Barth. He highlighted the college application process, the dramatic drop in suspensions, and improvement in interim assessments year over year. There are 25-30 new teachers - 70% of whom are progressing in a satisfactory way but the others need additional support to get up to speed.

Of particular note, this time last year eight teachers had left and this year only one has left and it was a mutual decision. That position was replaced within the week with a former teacher who wanted to come back.

The student leaders who had organized the walk out last year have been in regular communication with Morgan's team and are pleased with the direction the school is going. Student attrition has been very low. Of concern was the issue of the percentage of students who are not passing all their courses.

Board Chair Report (Chris Kunhardt)

Chris shared some updates from the charter renewal site visit earlier in the week.

Treasurer's Report (Chris Kunhardt)

Chris reviewed the financials which reflect year to date through September. The balance sheet reflects the per pupil support received from the State for the student enrollment submitted on October 1.

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

Motion by Harold Kamins

Seconded by Mike Strambler

All in favor

V. Executive Session

The board entered executive session at 7:00pm to discuss personnel. Motion by Marlene Macauda, seconded by Harold Kamins. The board exited executive session at 7:11pm.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14pm by Chris Kunhardt

Motion by Harold Kamins

Seconded by Mike Strambler