

Achievement First Bridgeport Academy
Board of Directors Meeting

September 28, 2016, 5:30 – 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 5:19pm by Chris Kunhardt.

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

Chris Kunhardt - Yes

Dick Kalt - Yes

Ed Raice - Yes

Max Perez - No

Marlene Macauda - Yes (phone)

Cornelius Medas - Yes

Debra Hertz - Yes

James Bennett - Yes (phone)

Michael Strambler - Yes

Harold Kamins - 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 - Yes

Public: Ebrima Jobe, AFBA Parent Representative-elect, Heather Wachter, AFBA Elementary Dean

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 6/9/16 and 7/12/16.

Motion by Debra Hertz

Seconded by Harold Kamins

All in favor

B. Approval of Amended and Restated Bylaws

Bill Bouton gave a brief presentation about the importance of periodic review of Bylaws and, because of changes in the law and policy and practices, the bylaws were out of date and needed to be updated.

Board members asked questions and had a discussion about the changes to the bylaws and the meaning of certain sections.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the updated Bylaws as presented.

Motion by Harold Kamins
Seconded by Debra Hertz
All in favor

C. Election of new board member

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ebrima Jobe, Parent Representative, to the Board of Directors with a two year term ending June 30, 2018.

Motion by Debra Hertz
Seconded by Dick Kalt
All in favor

IV. Reports and Business

Principal Reports (Christina Pares, Challa Flemming)

AFBA Elementary School. Christina Pares shared the excitement of the strong academic results from the SBAC test. Resetting the school culture last year was critical and everyone is pleased with the results.

Currently they have some Teach For America (TFA) teachers who are excellent and a Teacher in Residence (TIR) who is currently doing a fabulous job. Academically, they are assessing data much earlier in the year with 3rd and 4th graders are doing weekly assessments. The results have been at the top of the CT schools and have been between 2nd and 4th in the entire network.

On teacher retention: they hired someone who never showed up and one special education teacher resigned which was not a total surprise but the school hoped that things would work out.

AFBA Middle School. Challa Flemming shared the SBAC results which give them confidence they are moving in the right direction despite still seeing numbers that are lower than they want. The AF Network goal was to improve by 3-5% in ELA and 8-10% in math and they reached that. She also reviewed the year-over-year results and AFBA Middle School's comparison with the State.

They are especially proud of the 8th grade which showed the most progress year-over-year. She also noted the strength of the 5th grade team. 7th grade math teacher position went unfilled this year (reflected in the August budget). Salaries are budgeted at the level of the teachers in the prior year and with many new teachers their salaries are lower than budgeted for.

AFBA Middle had 72 percent staff retention which is up from last year. 100 percent of the leadership team, Ops team and Support staff stayed which has been tremendously helpful, but that high percentage is then offset by a teacher retention rate of 57. One teacher left during August PD, before scholars came back to school.

The board engaged in a conversation with Challa Flemming about the TFA teachers (AFBA MS has four, first-year TFA teachers) along with the three additional first year teachers and the challenges they face.

Joint High School Committee (Dick Kalt)

Dick Kalt shared a report of the HS. Despite a low teacher retention rate, Morgan Barth feels that the school year has started strong with teachers focusing on building strong relationships with scholars and families. Certification levels remain below the goal and that with the charter renewal this year, it is a top priority.

Morgan Barth feels that there has been a substantive shift in the school culture and that some of the families who were most critical last year are feeling better this year. Extracurricular activities are underway with sports and after school clubs and organizations.

At a school of 600 students, 260 of the high school students are coming up from Bridgeport.

The demerit system has been fundamentally changed to a system called “wolf points”. Cornelius shared that his daughter and nephew are there and said that Morgan Barth has made some substantive progress.

Board Chair Report (Chris Kunhardt)

- Charter Renewal
- Visitor Days at AF Bridgeport
 1. October 20 – AFBA Elementary
 2. March 23 – AFBA Middle
 3. May 11 – AFBA Elementary
- Legislative Breakfast – October 12, AFBA Middle
- Accept Board Resignation – Wiley Mullins

Treasurer’s Report (Ed Raice)

Ed Raice led a discussion about the financials specifically addressing 1) the variance at the Middle School which was related to salaries discussed with the principals and 2) the balance sheets which reflect where a loan, in effect, was given from AF, Inc to AF Bridgeport to account for a timing issue of when AFBA was reimbursed from the State.

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

Motion by Cornelius Medas

Seconded by Debra Hertz

All in favor

Additional Discussion

Cornelius Medas brought to the attention of the board the dangerous traffic situation at drop off and pick up at AF Bridgeport Elementary School and the efforts he and the school are making to try to remedy the situation. The city is not going to provide police support because it is too expensive. Heather Wachter shared that the major issue with the police who had been helpful was that they were very inconsistent - they would come some days but not other days.

Ken Paul reminded the board that since the busing policy changed so that children living within 1.5 miles of the school more parents are dropping off their children

V. Executive Session

The board entered executive session at 7:19pm to discuss personnel. Motion by Debra Hertz, seconded by Dick Kalt. The board exited executive session at 7:27pm.

VI. Additional Business

A. Set the number of AF Bridgeport Academy Directors

RESOLVED, pursuant to the bylaws of AF Bridgeport Academy, the Board of Directors does hereby set the number of members of the Board of Directors at eleven (11).

Motion by Debra Hertz

Seconded by Cornelius Medas

All in favor

B. Approve Conflict of Interest Policy

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the Conflict of Interest Policy as presented.

Motion by Debra Hertz

Seconded by Cornelius Medas

All in favor

C. Approve Amendment to the Charter Management Agreement

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the amendment to the Charter Management Agreement.

Moved by Harold Kamins
Seconded by Michael Strambler
All in favor

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm by Chris Kunhardt.

Motion by Dick Kalt

Seconded by Cornelius Medas