

## **Achievement First Bridgeport Academy**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

May 18, 2017, 6:00 pm

AFBA Middle School

529 Noble Ave, Bridgeport, CT

#### **I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm by Chris Kunhardt. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

Chris Kunhardt, AFBA Board - Yes	Ruben Felipe, AFBA Board - Yes (phone)
Dick Kalt, AFBA Board - Yes	Heather Watcher, AFBA Board - Yes
Marlene Macauda, AFBA Board - Yes	Challa Fleming, AFBA MS School Leadership - Yes
Debra Hertz, AFBA Board - Yes (phone)	Christina Pares, AFBA ES School Leadership - Yes
Max Perez, AFBA Board - No	Natasha Noel, AFBA MS School Leadership - No
Harold Kamins, AFBA Board - No	Florisca Carter, AFBA ES School Leadership - Yes
Michael Strambler, AFBA Board - Yes	
James Bennett, AFBA Board - Yes	Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes
Ebrima Jobe, AFBA Board - Yes	John Furniss, AF Network Support - Yes
Cornelius Medas, AFBA Board - No	Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

Public: Kimberly Bruce

#### **II. Open Session For Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **III. Elect Parent Representative**

##### **A. Election of New Board Member**

Ms. Bruce introduced herself to the Board. She has been an AF parent and AFBA Middle School volunteer for three years. Her son is in 7th grade.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Kimberly Bruce to the Board of Directors to serve as the parent representative with a two year term ending June 30, 2019.

Motion by Dick Kalt

Seconded by Debra Hertz

All in favor

#### **IV. Reports and Business**

##### **A. Principal Reports**

**AFBA Elementary School (Christina Pares).** AF Bridgeport Elementary School had their kindergarten orientation last week, including Ms. Pares' son. In the middle of SBAC testing. Students and teachers

have shared that they felt prepared and successful. Once SBAC is done, they are shifting focus towards their K-2 reading goals. This year's benchmark is much more advanced so it's taking longer to achieve. They are meeting goals for ISS, OSS and removals per week.

Ms. Pares, who has been principal of both AF Bridgeport Elementary and Amistad Elementary, is trying to balance readiness for next year at AFBA with ending year strong at Amistad Elementary. With flat funding for another year, the school has been struggling with the budget so Ms. Pares is trying to involve teachers more in the budgeting process. Ms. Pares explained that they have been able to avoid cutting staff for the most part, but they have made significant cuts in scholar incentives, such as off-site trips, teacher appreciation week, off site meals during summer PD, and family engagement activities.

Mr. Kunhardt inquired about certification. Ms. Pares highlighted the efforts of Ms. Carter and the assistance of Network Support. Ms. Carter stated that she has been impressed with the number of new staff coming in who can be certified quickly or who will be certified before they start teaching.

**AFBA Middle School (Challa Flemming).** Ms. Fleming invited the board to the 10th Anniversary Gala at 305 Milton Street this Saturday. Commencement will be Friday, June 16 at 1:30 at AFBA Middle School. Senior Signing Day is on May 25th at 1pm at Amistad High School which will include the 3rd class of graduating AFBA students. The event will be live-streamed so all 7th and 8th graders can watch and certain students will be able to attend.

AFBA Middle School had two teachers earn the Stage 4 distinguished Teacher honor this year.

SBAC testing recently finished, but not without some technical challenges. The app used to take test was not robust causing them to have numerous technical issues that made it difficult to take test. The scholars were generally able to overcome the adversity and ultimately felt prepared.

Have had some difficulties re: staffing, especially in leadership team. Finally have some additional support from Network Support with the addition of Peter Uwalaka who is a Dean of Students at another AF school. He has been helping several new teachers improve their classroom management skills.

Ms. Flemming echoed a lot of the same concerns as Ms. Pares regarding the budget. Scholar incentives and end of year trips are facing cuts.

On the topic of teacher certification, Ms Fleming noted that there has been an increase in attention and focus. Network Support is offering free study classes and they have had multiple people within the last few weeks taking tests.

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

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from 3/23/17.

Motion by Heather Wachter

Seconded by Ebrima Jobe  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby expresses appreciation for the service of Cornelius Medas, Parent Representative to the AF Bridgeport Board, as his term is complete, and accepts the resignations of the following Directors:

Harold Kamins, effective April 25, 2017

Max Perez, effective May 5, 2017

Motion by Jim Bennett

Seconded by Dick Kalt

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of the following Directors with a three year term ending June 30, 2020.

Chris Kunhardt, Director

Debra Hertz, Director

Motion by Marlene Macauda

Seconded by Dick Kalt

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors does, pursuant to the Bylaws of AF Bridgeport Academy, set the number of members of the Board of Directors at ten (10) effective May 18, 2017.

Motion by Marlene Macauda

Seconded by Michael Strambler

All in favor

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

Chris Kunhardt, Chair

Dick Kalt, Vice-Chair

Dick Kalt, Treasurer

Marlene Macauda, Secretary

Motion by Jim Bennett

Seconded by Michael Strambler

All in favor

In a discussion of the Family Handbook, Ms. Wachter requested clarification on the section about grade promotion and the role that absences play in promotion. The following resolution is made subject to clarification regarding the role of attendance in promotion decisions.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby accepts the Family Handbook as drafted.

Motion by Michael Strambler

Seconded by Heather Wachter  
All in favor

Ms. Blanton explained that the Dependent Care benefit is a benefit being offered throughout the network whereby teachers and staff can set aside pretax dollars to help pay for childcare costs.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the Dependent Care Assistance Program to go into effect at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

Motion by Michael Strambler  
Seconded by Jim Bennett  
All in favor

### **C. Teacher Certification**

Ms. Bussmann gave a report to the Board regarding teacher certification status and efforts at AFBA Elementary and Middle Schools.

### **D. Joint High School Committee Report (Chris Kunhardt)**

On behalf of the Joint High School Committee, Chris Kunhardt reported that, for the eighth consecutive year, 100% of AF Amistad High's graduating seniors have been accepted to a four-year college. For the first time, AF Amistad High has more than 100 seniors in its graduating class, including 15 students who started with AF in kindergarten.

In the 2016-17 school year, approximately 50% of AF Amistad High's staff was new to the school. For 2017-18, the school is projecting 80-85% staff retention, and 30-40% of new hires are people of color. AF Amistad High is still in need of some hard-to-staff teachers, including STEM and special education.

AF Amistad High is intentionally reducing the size of the incoming 9th-grade class for 2017-18 from approximately 200 students to 185 students. The school's building was intended to accommodate a student body of 550, but student enrollment currently exceeds 600. AF Amistad High will undergo minor building renovations this summer to convert some non-instructional spaces into additional classrooms, but the school will need a longer term facility solution for 2018-19 and beyond.

Every senior at AF Amistad High is required to take at least one AP course (currently AP Language or AP Statistics or Calculus, with AP Writing to be added), and students completed AP exams last week.

AF Amistad High's priorities for 2017-18 include greater attentiveness to data with regard to analyzing and responding to data more immediately, as well as excellent school culture systems and the development of students' college-ready habits and skills.

The Joint High School Committee voted to let AF Amistad High's New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation lapse due to the significant time and financial burden of maintaining the accreditation with little benefit to the school.

#### **E. Treasurer Report (Dick Kalt)**

Mr. Kalt gave the financial report and reviewed the proposed budgets for next year. He highlighted some changes to the financial policies, namely increased board involvement, directed at increasing the amount of oversight of financial policies. There are a number of budget issues for next year, including a decrease in available philanthropy, flat funding at the state level, and being at capacity (in terms of growth). There are serious challenges in funding some of the non-academic work, as the principals discussed earlier. Mr. Kalt expressed interest in Board-driven philanthropy and seeing if there are ways to make up some of the funding gap.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented pending corrections of the variance calculation on Bridgeport Elementary School's budget sheet.

Motion by Jim Bennett  
Seconded by Michael Strambler  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budgets as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Motion by Michael Strambler  
Seconded by Marlene Macauda  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the appointment of CohnReznik to perform the financial audit of the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Motion by Heather Wachter  
Seconded by Marlene Macauda  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Fiscal Policies Manual dated in May 2017 is approved. Be it further resolved, proposed revisions or changes will be brought to the full board on at least an annual basis, more frequently as required, for approval.

Motion by Ebrima Jobe  
Seconded by Michael Strambler  
All in favor

Motion to enter Executive Session at 7:43 pm by Marlene Macauda. Seconded by Michael Strambler  
Motion to exit Executive Session at 8:22pm by Marlene Macauda. Seconded by Michael Strambler

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 pm by Chris Kunhardt.  
Motion by Jim Bennett. Seconded by Marlene Macauda