

**Amistad Academy  
Board of Directors**

Tuesday, September 12, 2017, 6:00pm  
495 Blake St, New Haven

**I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Carolyn Greenspan. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

Carolyn Greenspan - Yes	Pat Sweet - Yes
Caroline Williams - No	Khadijah Muhammad - Yes
Mike Griffin - Yes	Paul McCraven - No
Lorraine Gibbons - Yes	Edward Joyner - No
Tim Pavlis - No	Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes
Jane Levin - Yes	Megan Tokarski, AF Network Support - Yes
Carla Seeger - Yes	Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

**II. Open Session For Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Business**

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from 8/01/17.

Motion by Lorraine Gibbons  
Seconded by Khadijah Muhammad  
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Carla Seeger, Teacher Representative, to serve a three year term ending June 30, 2020.

Motion by Pat Sweet  
Seconded by Mike Griffin  
All in favor

**IV. Reports and Discussion**

**A. Principal Reports**

Sarah Lewis updated the board on Amistad Elementary School. Suspensions are down by half from last year. Teacher retention was between 80 and 85 percent. Teachers are coming back

with a renewed sense of focus and determination.

Teacher certification is an issue but they are on track to meeting the goal by December 1.

She shared that in terms of overall performance, the Kindergarten team was in the top five in math across the network. They've seen a 30-40 point jump in 4th grade, year over year, but even with that gain, they are still falling between tenth and twelfth in the network. The trajectory is going in the right direction.

Sarah shared that they have students reading below grade level when measuring their skills at close reading. These are students that have come up through Amistad Elementary School, not students who are new to AF. She shared that the way this happens is that when scholars are reaching proficiency but not advanced, and then have summer slide and lose ground.

Khadijah Muhammad asked whether there are opportunities for high school students to do community service hours. Sarah Blanton will connect them via email after the meeting to explore this possibility.

Katie Poynter, Amistad Middle School Principal, updated the board beginning with the focus on their 2017-18 priority: The Year of Investment. Looking at removal data, Katie shared that if students are regularly removed from class, they can start to believe the narrative that they are not wanted in the classroom. Rather than call them "removals" they are calling it "support" so that the focus is on helping students get whatever they need to be able to feel better and get back to learning. Removals are down from over 50 to under 20 thus far in the year. Suspensions, both in and out of school, are way down.

Lorraine Gibbons asked about family engagement. Katie shared that they've already had one potluck and are planning another in November.

Katie shared the teacher certification update that they are currently at 65.79% certified. She is confident they are on track to meet their 90% goal.

Katie spoke about her leadership team including deans and her DSO and shared that she tries to focus on spending 75 percent of her time investing in, coaching and training the deans.

The board discussed the difference between NY and CT middle schools and Katie highlighted the fact that Carla Seeger's 6th grade math students prove that CT scholars can outperform NY, as her class regularly does on weekly quizzes.

Amistad Middle School had a strong year of retention. They added six new positions so they are investing heavily in training and supporting these new people.

There are more students at the school. Most classes have 32 scholars with one teacher.

#### **B. Joint High School Committee Report**

Carolyn reported from the Joint High School Committee meeting. Morgan Barth reported a strong start of the year and highlighted key data points from the meeting. In particular, suspensions are down, teacher retention was close to 75%, and college persistence is 55%.

#### **C. Board Chair Report**

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby accepts the resignation of Reginald Simmons, and, pursuant to the bylaws of Amistad Academy, the Board of Directors does hereby set the number of members of the Board of Directors at eleven (11).

Motion by Lorraine Gibbons

Seconded by Jane Levin

All in favor

Carolyn Greenspan reported to the board an update on her conversations with the regional superintendents about teacher certification and suspensions - both of which are in a much better place than in years past.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the Corrective Action Plan in response to Finding 2016-001 which has been approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Motion by Khadijah Muhammad

Seconded by Pat Sweet

All in favor

Carolyn is going to complete the evaluation of Achievement First on behalf of the board.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements were completed and submitted by board members in attendance.

#### **D. Treasurer Report**

Mike Griffin gave the Treasurer's report including the end of the last fiscal year (FY17) and the year to date financials for FY18.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Motion by Lorraine Gibbons

Seconded by Jane Levin

All in favor

**V. Executive Session**

The board did not go into executive session.

**VI. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm by Carolyn Greenspan

Motion by Khadijah Muhammad

Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons

All in favor