

**Elm City College Preparatory
Board of Directors**

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

370 James Street, New Haven

5:30 pm

I. Call to Order & Attendance

The joint session meeting of the Amistad Academy and Elm City College Preparatory boards was called to order at 5:37 pm by Carolyn Greenspan, Amistad Academy board chair. The following Elm City College Preparatory board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance:

Richard Ferguson - Yes

Laura Saverin - Yes

Genevive Walker - Yes

Patricia Pierce - No

Stephanie Ma - Yes

Magaly Cajigas - Yes

Patric Gregory - Yes

Melinda Hamilton - Yes

Julia Halberstam - Yes

Nicole Brambila - No

Joe Rodriguez - No

Dacia Toll, AF Network Support - Yes

Shannon Garfield, AF Network Support - Yes

Amy D'Angelo, AF Network Support - Yes

Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes

Katie Rosa Moher, AF Network Support - Yes

Sarah Claybaugh, AF Network Support - Yes

Public: n/a

II. Executive Session - personnel

The boards entered joint executive session at 5:37pm. Motion by Mike Griffin, Amistad Academy. Seconded by Carla Seeger, Amistad Academy. The boards exited joint executive session at 7:04 pm. Motion by Genevive Walker. Seconded by Laura Saverin.

III. Adjourn to individual meetings

The individual meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Dick Ferguson.

IV. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Reports, Discussion and Board Business

A. Principal Reports

Katie McPollom, principal of Elm City College Preparatory grades 7-8, reported that student

learning and teacher development is on the right track with all scholars showing signs of academic growth. Approximately 50% of the student population attend reading intervention and of those students, 90% improved their reading level by more than one grade level.

Teacher retention is projecting to be very strong. Only 11 percent of teachers across the AF network are Stage 4 teachers. At Elm City Middle School, one teacher recently achieved stage 4 and another teacher reached stage 5 (only 20 teacher network-wide are Stage 5, one two of whom are in CT).

Student experience has been a large focus for the school. The Dean of School Culture is beginning to innovate and will be reaching out to parents in April to discuss what is going well and what needs to be improved.

The board inquired as to the school's Parent Leadership Council (PLC) and discussed their activity with Ms. McPollom.

Ms. McPollom also reported that the school is trending toward lower student attrition rates which she attributes to strong student/teacher relationships.

Looking ahead, the school is focused on engaging families around facilitating the transition from grade to grade including the transition from 8th-grade to high school. Ms. McPollom noted "Stepping Up Day" in which students visit Amistad High School, classroom teachers discussing high school readiness, and a presentation from Amistad High Dean of College Services, Ms. Emery Sykes (currently serving as Amistad High School's Interim Principal).

Andrew Poole, principal of Elm City College Preparatory grades 3-6, reported that March is an exciting and busy time for the school. Known as "crescendo," March focuses on building strong skills and habits for not only high-stakes assessments, but high-stake situations that scholars will experience over the course of a lifetime.

Currently, the school is experiencing a tale of two schools and two subjects. On the most recent mock assessment, third and fourth grade math results are very strong. In English Language Arts (ELA), results remained steady year-over-year. The school's focus is on 5th- and 6th-grade math where students are struggling. Since shifting its focus to 5th grade achievement, the school has seen slight improvement, and cohorts of scholars are participating in an extra hour of math instruction after school. Additionally, the school is planning to implement Saturday or Spring Break academy. To avoid burnout, the school is trying to build hype and student investment by celebrating successes and wins day in and day out.

Looking ahead, the school is seeking input from families as to what needs to change for next year. Family turnout at related meetings is not where the school would like it to be, so surveys are being sent home in backpacks. In the addition, next year, the school will be implementing a hybrid model of Greenfield for grades K-4. This is because Elm City College Preparatory K-4 is “an island,” meaning it’s the only elementary school in the Achievement First network implementing the Greenfield model. As more Greenfield middle schools open across the network, Team Greenfield is able to provide less support to the elementary grades. The positive news is that the hybrid model will hold onto elements that the school believes are particularly effective and valuable like dream teams, goal teams, a form of expeditions, and self-directed learning. At the same time, the school will benefit from the broad support of the network’s elementary schools for the rest of the curriculum. Elm City College Preparatory grade 5-6 will continue implementing the full Greenfield model.

Kate Baker, principal of Elm City College Preparatory grades K-2, reported on student achievement growth which, overall, from the fall to winter was excellent.

Ms. Baker reported that school attendance has been a challenge. For the first time, attendance dipped below 96 percent. While attendance is always worse in the winter cold and flu season, it is a focus area. Ms. Baker personally participated in the most recent round of dream-team meetings in an effort to influence attendance.

In addition, Ms. Baker reported that the school’s teaching team is short-staffed. While there is high intent-to-return among staff, four out of 17 teachers are on maternity leave.

Looking ahead, the school is working on identifying the elementary of the Greenfield model that will continue under the hybrid model. Ms. Baker also discussed key issues for the upcoming charter renewal.

Ms. Baker closed her remarks with the announcement that after 12 years with Achievement First, she will be leaving. The board expressed their thanks for her leadership over the years.

B. Board Chair Report

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the updated authorized signers on the *ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs*.

Motion by Laura Saverin

Seconded by Melinda Hamilton

All in Favor

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves Simon Obas as the principal of Achievement First Amistad High School, effective July 1, 2019.

Motion by Laura Saverin

Seconded by Magaly Cajigas

All in favor

VI. Approve Minutes

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from November 14 and November 29, 2018

Motion by Patric Gregory

Seconded by Melinda Hamilton

All in Favor

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm by Dick Ferguson.

Motion by Laura Saverin

Seconded by Genevive Walker

All in favor