

- Draft -

**Elm City College Preparatory
Board of Directors**

370 James St, New Haven

Wednesday, May 13, 2020, 5:30 pm

I. Call to Order and Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Dick Ferguson. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance:

Richard Ferguson

Laura Saverin

Stephanie Ma

Prish Pierce

Patric Gregory

Julia Halberstam

Andrew Poole, ECCP School Leadership

Katie McPollom, ECCP School Leadership

Katie Rosa Moher, AF Network Support

Ken Paul, AF Network Support

Public: n/a

II. Open session for public comment

There was no public comment.

III. Reports and Discussion

A. Principal Reports

Katie McPollom gave the principal's report for ECCP Middle School highlighting the strong attendance and student experience during remote learning. Generally, students and families are happy with remote learning. Work completion rates are very high and the teachers are looking closely to ensure that scholars are not just completing the work but are doing high quality work.

They are focusing on providing supports for students with special needs to make sure they don't fall behind. There are small group supports with differentiated, targeted instruction for every block of the day.

Students get a grade report every week. Ms. McPollom reviewed assessment data with the board and some sample screenshots from Zoom lessons. She also shared screenshots showing how teachers praise students, check in with parents and also give advice to kids on creating a good work space.

Dick Ferguson, on behalf of the entire board, thanked Ms. McPollom and Mr. Poole for their exceptional service.

Andrew Poole gave an update from Elm City Elementary School and how they transitioned from in-school to remote learning. He highlighted the Chromebook distribution, how they ensured all families had one point person at school to answer questions, got the staff trained on technology and online teaching tactics, and how they provided tools to support kids and families navigating Zoom and Google Classroom. Paper packets were also mailed when students had internet issues.

Students in grades K-4 are completing two hours of work: 60 minutes of math, 60 minutes of ELA. Each day every student has a one-on-one meeting with a teacher or a small group meeting. The meetings include both instruction and a check-in on how students are doing and feeling.

Attendance and work completion are strong. The data on work completion that was shared with the board reflects only those students who complete every assignment every day. In 6th grade, for example, average weekly attendance is 95% and average weekly work completion is 78% in science, 85% in ELA and 89% in math (data does not include students who complete some, but not all, of the assignments). On Fridays, all homerooms come together to build community.

Mr. Poole shared some videos of Zoom instruction with the board.

The board discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the ECCP families which, for some, has been particularly devastating. Ms. McPollom talked about the AF Team and Family Fund which is a fundraising effort to provide direct relief to families. Over thirteen families have received support. Ken Paul shared that over \$170K has been raised to date and over half has already been disbursed.

The board praised the principals for the way they've supported scholars, families and staff during a difficult time.

Mr. Poole and Ms. McPollom thanked the board for their support.

Shanice Adams, incoming principal for Elm City Elementary School, shared the progress she's made in ramping up to take over the role of principal starting July 1, 2020. Hiring is almost complete and teacher retention is 87%. She's working on gathering feedback from the staff as

they plan for next year. The leadership team is investing in getting to know one another and understanding everyone's working styles. Ms. Adams has a weekly meeting with Ms. Ashia Parks, the incoming principal of the middle school.

B. Treasurer Report

Laura Saverin provided the treasurer's report beginning with an overview of the proposed FY21 budget. Ms. Saverin commended AF and the operations team for the strong budget presentation especially given all the uncertainty. She highlighted that the budget presents the most conservative case with flat funding from the State, and the risks associated with that assumption. She reviewed several areas of uncertainty (philanthropy, state funding, debt forgiveness) and the well thought-out plan to mitigate against that uncertainty.

The budget presented is a full, in-person budget (most expensive) and if school is not fully in person, there will presumably be savings. Victor De La Paz joined the meeting and noted that with the uncertainty, it is highly likely that AF will come back to the board with a revised budget in the fall.

Ms. Saverin also noted that the current school model resulted in the lower expenses in the current forecasts.

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick to perform the financial audit of the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Motion by Prish Pierce

Seconded by Patric Gregory

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Motion by Prish Pierce

Seconded by Julia Halberstam

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Motion by Laura Saverin

Seconded by Prish Pierce

All in favor

C. Discussion and Possible Action: Consolidation and Construction Update

Dick Ferguson gave an update on how AF arrived at the contract before the board. The contract was competitively bid and AF performed due diligence on Babbidge Construction Company. AF has used

Babbidge before, (2016 ECCP Elementary) and has experienced them to be conscientious and good to work with.

WHEREAS, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors (the “Board”) approved the consolidation of the facilities of Elm City College Preparatory Elementary School (grades K-6) with Elm City College Preparatory Middle School (grades 7-8) (the “schools”) into one building at 403/407 James St to house both schools beginning in the 2020-21 school year, pending approval by CSDE, at its meeting on December 18, 2019;

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education approved the consolidation at its meeting on March 4, 2020;

WHEREAS, the design, scope, budget and other relevant facts and circumstances of the foregoing facilities consolidation project, including but not limited to the moving, maintenance and construction, has been presented to and considered by the Board;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board approves the facilities consolidation project and attendant budget, including but not limited to a contract with Babbidge Construction Company, Inc for \$727,422, as presented, for a cost not to exceed \$1.2 million.

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, Achievement First and its designees are, jointly and severally, authorized and directed, in the name of the Board, to submit and executive such documents needed in order to effectuate the foregoing resolution.

Motion by Prish Pierce

Seconded by Patric Gregory

All in favor

D. Joint High School Committee Report

Dick Ferguson gave an update on the Amistad High School Committee meeting. The report from Simon Obas was thorough and paralleled what the board heard from Mr. Poole and Ms. McPollom regarding the transition from in-school to remote learning.

Mr. Ferguson noted teacher retention and the fact that teachers who have not gotten certification are not continuing to work in our schools. Julia Halberstam added that only teachers who are already certified, or are on track to be, will be hired.

There will be a virtual Senior Signing Day with pre-recorded videos.

E. Board Chair Report

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 16, and April 24, 2020.

Motion by Prish Pierce

Seconded by Laura Saverin

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of Prish Pierce with a three year term ending June 30, 2023.

Motion by Julia Halberstam

Seconded by Patric Gregory

All in favor

Dick Ferguson noted that the vacancy on the Amistad High School has been filled by Julia Halberstam.

I. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm by Dick Ferguson.

Motion by Laura Saverin

Seconded by Patric Gregory

All in favor