

Amistad Academy
Joint High School Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Tuesday, September 8, 2020, 4:00 pm

I. Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm by Jane Levin. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

Carolyn Greenspan, Amistad Board - Yes
Jane Levin, Amistad Board - Yes
Albert Maldonado, Amistad Board - No

Dick Kalt, AFBA Board - Yes
Kimberly Bruce, AFBA Board - Yes
Michael Strambler - AFBA Board - No

Richard Ferguson, ECCP Board - Yes
Laura Saverin, ECCP Board - Yes
Julie Halberstam, ECCP Board - Yes

Simon Obas, Amistad HS Principal
Shannon Garfield, AF Network Support
Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support
Ken Paul, AF Network Support

Public: Julie Hajducky

II. Open Session for Public Comment

Julie Hajducky spoke in support of the change in name for Amistad Academy.

III. School Report

Mr. Simon Obas shared enrollment and attendance data which are likely to fluctuate over the next month. The target enrollment is 700 students. Twelve families left Amistad High School over the summer. Eight of those moved out of state and four decided to leave Amistad High School in favor of another high school.

Mr. Obas shared that he feels the new teachers who were hired for this school year are bringing good energy. There is a new program where every new staff member is paired with a returning staff member as a mentor. This person is separate from the new teachers' coaches. The hope is that the onboarding experience will be stronger.

Families were given a survey to indicate their preferences for the first two months of school: 83% have opted to continue remote and 16.8% want two days in person. Mr. Obas and the Director of School Operations (DSO) are currently working on designing the schedules for staff, rotating who is in the building and on which days.

All families have Chromebooks and MiFis so that scholars can work remotely. The school has gotten in touch with 100% of students to ensure they have access to technology.

Mr. Obas said that some of the lessons learned from last spring have been incorporated into the remote learning program for this fall. Some of those changes include:

- Mirroring the school day to what it would normally look like. Classes start at the beginning of the day and go to the end of the day. Attendance during the class, in real time, is mandatory.
- Advisory is a critical component of checking in on scholars and families and will play a more central role this year.
- There is an official attendance team this year with roles and responsibilities. Attendance calls are going out in the morning as opposed to the afternoon.
- Expanded small group supports in addition to whole class instruction.
- More opportunities for scholars to connect with staff members

Almost all courses are offered this year with the exception of two AP science classes but AP Art and AP Computer Science have been added to the curriculum.

The senior class is working with the college counselors on finalizing their lists and the scholars who are planning to apply early decision will begin that process soon. They have bi-weekly meetings with their college counselors.

The school is continuing to provide meals for scholars.

Mr. Obas is sending out weekly emails to scholars and weekly newsletters to families. College counselors are sending weekly emails to seniors.

Mr. Obas discussed how professional development is continuing with real time coaching, even with remote instruction. Special education students are receiving their services.

The Committee discussed the safety procedures especially around daily health screens and temperature checks. Ms. Shannon Garfield noted that training for staff will take place before scholars return to the building in October.

Following Mr. Obas' report, Ms. Laura Saverin gave an update on the budget amendment that is before the Committee. At this time, the state is funding at the same level as last year.

IV. Board Business

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Joint High School Committee hereby approves the meeting minutes from May 13, 2020.

Motion by Dick Ferguson

Seconded by Carolyn Greenspan

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy High School Committee hereby approves the amended financial budget for Amistad High School for the 2020-21 fiscal year as prepared by Achievement First.

Motion by Carolyn Greenspan

Seconded by Laura Saverin

All in favor

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm by Jane Levin.

Motion by Dick Kalt

Seconded by Julia Halberstam.

All in favor