

Achievement First Bridgeport Academy

Board of Directors Meeting

September 17, 2020, 5:30 pm

Zoom Video Conference

I. Call to Order and Attendance

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

Dick Kalt - Yes	Samantha Lucky, AFBA School Leadership
Marlene Macauda - Yes	Petrina Hospedales, AFBA School Leadership
Debra Hertz - Yes	Annedrea Coleman, AFBA School Leadership
Kimberly Bruce - Yes	Domonique Marshall, AFBA School Leadership
Michael Strambler - Yes	Christina Ellington, AF Network Support
Ruben Felipe – Yes	Michael Hendricks, AF Network Support
Ebrima Jobe - Yes	Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support
Rajeev Lakra - Yes	Ken Paul, AF Network Support
Dewey Loselle - Yes	

II. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Approve Minutes

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from August 12, 2020.

Motion by Debra Hertz

Seconded by Marlene Macauda

All in favor

IV. Discussion and Business

A. Principal Reports

Ms. Samantha Lucky, AF Bridgeport Elementary School Principal, shared how the start of school has been going as the school is fully remote at this time. Attendance has been strong – last week averaged at 93% and today was 95%. Ms. Lucky has weekly town halls every Friday with families. Feedback from families was very positive about their experiences.

Ms. Lucky is giving a survey next week to get feedback from staff. Feedback from scholars about their experiences and their teachers has been positive.

32% of families are planning to come back for in-person instruction in October. There is a four day model, Monday – Thursday. The scholars who will be coming to school in-person will stay with the same teacher throughout the day.

Staff were invited to state their preferences for returning. Currently, 22 teachers will come back to teach in person. Ms. Lucky will review with each of the 22 teachers the safety protocol and hear their concerns.

Parents and teachers will express their preferences (in-person or remote) for each “chapter,” each of which is approximately six weeks long.

Petrina Hospedales, Director of School Operations, gave an overview of safety measures in the building including signs about social distancing, where it is safe to be, and where to walk. Ms. Hospedales reviewed teacher retention, which is strong. All teachers who are not certified have submitted their applications. They are looking to build a buffer in enrollment anticipating that some families may leave or move out of the area. The school is actively working on bringing in new families and has made offers to 24 new families.

Ms. Annedrea Coleman, AF Bridgeport Middle School principal, shared that the start of the school year is going well. The school is doing a lot of family outreach and hosted a virtual back to school night. They are planning a Latin Dancing and Trivia night. In addition to academics, they are offering enrichment and social-emotional learning (SEL) programs for scholars.

Ms. Coleman shared snapshots of different Zoom classes and the use of technology like Jamboard and Nearpod. She also shared quotes from comments and feedback from new teachers. New teachers have been paired with returning teachers as mentors.

Ms. Coleman shared the way in which she’s ensuring that AF’s Lead for Racial Equity core value is an active part of the work and development the staff is doing.

Pulse surveys for staff are given every 4-6 weeks. Ms. Coleman shared the initial results of the first pulse survey (up from last spring).

63% of families plan to remain remote and 24% wish to come in-person (four days) with no more than 15 scholars per advisory. All entrances to the school building will be used to support a different grade level. Breakfast and lunch will be delivered to classrooms. There are designated staff areas for work and breaks with extra classrooms used as teacher workspaces.

The school is still determining the number of staff who will return in person. All leadership team members and operations staff will be in the building.

Ms. Coleman reviewed teacher retention and certification. There is a plan in place for every teacher who is currently not certified to meet the deadline for certification. Attendance is 96% which exceeds the goal for September which Ms. Coleman credits to the operations team's hard work. Ms. Coleman reviewed enrollment and Domonique Marshall, Director of School Operations, noted that some families are opting for Bridgeport Public School which are already providing in-person instruction.

B. Finance Committee Report

Victor De La Paz reviewed the budget amendment presented to the board noting line items that have been eliminated due to changes as a result of COVID, as well as some line items which may be cut or reduced in the future.

Mr. De La Paz also reviewed the balance sheet which shows a strong cash position and the updates to the PPP loan.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the amended budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Motion by Rajeev Lakra

Seconded by Dewey Loselle

All in favor

Ken Paul gave a brief philanthropy update noting the PCLB match challenge.

C. Joint High School Committee Report

Dick Kalt gave the Amistad Joint High School Committee Report. The target enrollment of Amistad High School is 700 students.

New teachers are paired with returning staff, in a mentoring relationship.

84% of families will continue with remote instruction for the six weeks following the reopening (10/5). All scholars have Chromebooks and MiFis. Mr. Obas, Amistad High School principal, shared lessons learned from last year's remote instruction and the ways they have made improvements both around instruction and operations.

The college counselors are meeting with seniors as they work towards college application deadlines. Professional development for teachers and special education services are continuing without disruption.

The board discussed the two AP science classes that are not offered this year, the approach to special education and the overall class sizes of the remote classes.

D. Board Chair Report

Dick Kalt reviewed the following resolutions.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby renews the updated Cooperative Arrangement Agreement by and between Achievement First Bridgeport Academy, Amistad Academy and Elm City College Preparatory for a term to commence July 1, 2020 and end on June 30, 2025.

Motion by Dick Kalt

Seconded by Marlene Macaуда

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the facial covering (mask) policy as presented by Achievement First.

Motion by Dick Kalt

Seconded by Michael Strambler

All in favor

The board had a discussion about the Lead for Racial Equity commitment that the board is considering adopting. The board supported a redrafting of a resolution that addresses the nuance and complexity of bigotry and discrimination beyond anti-racism. Michael Strambler shared a letter with the board of his thoughts (Exhibit A) and reservations about the recommended resolution. He noted the lack of specificity of the definition of a) the terminology in the resolution, specifically anti-racism, and b) the goals and outcomes associated with the proposal.

Debra Hertz made a motion not to support the Lead for Racial Equity resolution as presented. Marlene Macaуда seconds the motion to reject the recommended resolution. The board unanimously supported the rejection.

The board requested that the resolution be rewritten incorporating the board's feedback. Ruben Felipe thanked Mike Strambler for his leadership in guiding the discussion with his

original letter and thoughtful comments during the meeting.

Dick Kalt reminded the board to submit their conflict of interest disclosure statements.

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm by Dick Kalt.

Motion by Rajeev Lakra

Seconded by Marlene Macaуда

All in favor