



**AF Hartford Academy  
Board of Directors**

Monday, September 9, 2019  
305 Greenfield St, Hartford  
5:30 pm

**Call to Order**

**Public Comment**

**Approve Minutes**

**Reports and Discussion**

- ✓ **Principal Reports**
- ✓ **Joint High School Committee Report**
- ✓ **Chief Financial Officer Report**
- ✓ **Board Chair Report**
  - Approve Family Handbook
  - Elect Secretary

**Adjourn**



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New Haven, CT 06513  
203 773 3223

335 Adams Street, Suite 700  
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370 Hartford Avenue  
Providence, RI 02909  
401 347 1106 ext. 30610

## **AF Hartford Academy**

### **Board of Directors**

Monday, September 9, 2019

305 Greenfield St, Hartford

5:30 pm

#### **I. Call to Order & Attendance**

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

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Barry Jacobson - Yes         | Alberto Vasquez-Matos - No                   |
| Marshall Ruben - Yes (phone) | Endia DeCordova - Yes (phone)                |
| Ja Hannah - Yes              | Celina Whitmore - Yes                        |
| Patsy Mundy - Yes            |  |
| Alice Turner - Yes (phone)   |  |
| David Dee - Yes              | Raven Obas, AFBA School Leadership - Yes     |
| Deborah Prince - No          | Emily Wojtusik, AFHA School Leadership - Yes |
| Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine - Yes  | Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes      |

Public: John Motley

#### **II. Open Session for Public Comment**

There was no public comment

#### **III. Approve Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from July 31, 2019.

Motion by Lisa Tanen-La Fontaine

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

#### **IV. Reports and Discussions**

##### **A. Principal Reports**

Emily Wojtusik discussed the SBAC data with the board highlighting grade, subject and cohort level achievement and growth.

Ms. Wojtusik reviewed school culture metrics before discussing the goals and priorities for the year around student investment. AF has always made a huge push on academics but, Ms.

Wojtusik said, "we need to also make sure that kids feel like they want to be in the building."

Ms. Wojtusik feels that the leadership team is strong and they want to work on ensuring a strong adult culture with high retention and strong org health results.

Ms. Raven Obas reported on the start of the year for AF Hartford Elementary School starting with SBAC results from the prior year. The 4th grade results were likely impacted by the significant backfilling that took place last year. This year they are focused on stronger interventions to support those scholars because they've backfilled significantly again and are seeing new scholars in 4th grade reading several years behind grade level.

Parent engagement has been very strong. Attendance is improved over last year. Last year saw a significant dip in suspensions and this year is on track to continue to be strong if not stronger. Enrollment is good with second grade being the only grade with spots to fill.

The entire leadership team came back this year and teacher retention was 88 percent.

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

Barry Jacobson gave the High School report from the AF Hartford Joint High School Committee meeting which preceded the board meeting.

He reviewed academic performance from last year (SAT, AP results) and school culture.

#### **C. Chief Financial Officer Report**

Victor De La Paz joined the meeting by phone to give an overview of financials, which look good, and enrollment, which is over what was projected.

#### **D. Board Chair Report**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the Family Handbook as presented.

Motion by David Dee

Seconded by Lisa Tanen-La Fontaine

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Patsy Mundy to serve as Secretary of the Board.

Motion by Marshall Ruben

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

**V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm by Barry Jacobson.

Motion by Lisa Tanen-La Fontaine

Seconded by Marshall Ruben

All in favor



**AF Hartford Academy  
Board of Directors**

Monday, November 4, 2019  
305 Greenfield St, Hartford  
5:30 pm

**Call to Order**

**Public Comment**

**Approve Minutes**

**Reports and Discussion**

- ✓ **Principal Reports**
- ✓ **Regional Superintendent Reports**
- ✓ **Joint High School Committee Report**
- ✓ **Treasurer Report**
- ✓ **Board Chair Report**

**Adjourn**



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**AF Hartford Academy**

**Board of Directors**

Monday, November 4, 2019

305 Greenfield St, Hartford

5:30 pm

**I. Call to Order and Attendance**

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

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Barry Jacobson - Yes       | Alberto Vasquez-Matos - No                    |
| Marshall Ruben - Yes       | Endia DeCordova - Yes                         |
| Ja Hannah - No             | Celina Whitmore - Yes                         |
| Patsy Mundy - Yes          | Christina Ellington, AF Network Support - Yes |
| Alice Turner - Yes         | Shannon Garfield, AF Network Support - Yes    |
| David Dee - No             | Raven Obas, AFBA School Leadership - Yes      |
| Deborah Prince - No        | Emily Wojtusik, AFHA School Leadership - Yes  |
| Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine - No | Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes       |
|                            | Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes            |

**II. Open Session for Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Approve Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from September 9, 2019.

Motion by Endia DeCordova

Seconded by Marshall Ruben

All in favor

**IV. Reports and Discussions**

**A. Principal Reports**

Raven Obas gave a report for AF Hartford Elementary School starting with the strong attendance rates and moving to discussions of other school culture metrics including suspensions and the appropriateness of consequences.

Emily Wojtusik gave a report about AF Hartford Summit Middle School beginning with attendance and enrollment. She also reviewed weekly quiz data highlighting consistent areas of strength where AF Hartford Summit Middle School students are performing well against the network, especially the AF New York schools. Suspensions are low.

Endia DeCordove inquired about enrichment and extracurriculars. Ms. Wojtusik spoke about four specials during school and extracurricular activities. Ms. DeCordova shared some opportunities through UConn and will follow up.

**B. Regional Superintendent Report**

Shannon Garfield, Regional superintendent of AF Hartford Summit Middle School and Christina Ellington, regional Superintendent of AF Hartford Elementary School joined the meeting to give principal performance reviews of the principals they manage.

**C. Joint High School Committee Report**

The board briefly discussed the High School Committee meeting including Ben Cruse's report and Amy D'Angelo, Regional Superintendent, principal performance review.

**D. Treasurer Report**

Barry Jacobson gave an update on financials, referencing enrollment, per pupil, and the schools' year to date financials.

**V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Motion by Patsy Mundy

Seconded by Marshall Ruben

All in favor



**AF Hartford Academy  
Board of Directors**

Tuesday, January 28, 2020  
580 Dixwell Ave, New Haven  
5:30 pm

**Call to Order**

**Public Comment**

**Approve Minutes**

**Discussion and Business**

- ✓ Elect chair
- ✓ Elect vice chair
- ✓ Elect new director
- ✓ Finance report
  - Approve financials
  - Accept audited financial statements

**Adjourn**



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## **AF Hartford Academy**

### **Board of Directors**

Tuesday, January 28, 2020, 5:30 pm

580 Dixwell Ave, New Haven

#### **I. Call to Order and Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 5:44 pm by Patsy Mundy. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Marshall Ruben - No         | Alberto Vasquez-Matos - No                 |
| Ja Hannah – Yes             | Endia DeCordova - Yes                      |
| Patsy Mundy - Yes           | Celina Whitmore - Yes                      |
| Alice Turner - Yes          |  |
| David Dee - Yes             | Victor De La Paz, AF Network Support - Yes |
| Deborah Prince - No         | Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes    |
| Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine - Yes | Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes         |

Public: Bildade Augustin

#### **II. Open Session for Public Comment**

There was no public comment

#### **III. Approve Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from November 4, 2019.

Motion by Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

#### **IV. Discussion and Board Business**

Sarah Blanton explained the process of identifying new board chair and vice chair candidates following Barry Jacobson's resignation in December.

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ms. Patsy Mundy to serve as Chair of the Board.

Motion by Ja Hannah

Seconded by Alice Turner

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ms. Endia DeCordova to serve as Vice Chair of the Board.

Motion by Ja Hannah

Seconded by Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ms. Bildade Augustin to serve as a Director with a three year term ending June 30, 2023.

Motion by Alice Turner

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

Victor De La Paz joined the conversation to discuss the financials and audit with the board. He noted that there is a deficit at AF Hartford High due to unfunded seats. At this point, we do not yet know whether those seats will be funded. If they are not, then the board will have to have a difficult conversation about the deficit.

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

Motion by David Dee

Seconded by Ja Hannah

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby accepts the report of the independent auditors CohnReznick prepared in relation to the fiscal year ending 6/30/19.

Motion by David Dee

Seconded by Ja Hannah

All in favor

#### **V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm by Patsy Mundy.

Motion by David Dee

Seconded by Alice Turner

All in favor



## **AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors Special Meeting**

Thursday, April 23, 2020  
4:00 pm

Call to Order

Public Comment

Board Business

- Approve Minutes
- Elect Secretary
- Approve AFHA Principal Contracts
- Authorize Acceptance of SBA Backed Payroll Protection Program Loan

Adjourn



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## **AF Hartford Academy**

### **Board of Directors**

Thursday, April 23, 2020, 4:00 pm

Zoom Video Conference

#### **I. Call to Order and Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Patsy Mundy. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Marshall Ruben - Yes        | Alberto Vasquez-Matos - No                 |
| Ja Hannah - Yes             | Endia DeCordova - Yes                      |
| Patsy Mundy - Yes           | Celina Whitmore - Yes                      |
| Alice Turner - No           | Bildade Augustin - Yes                     |
| David Dee - Yes             | Victor De La Paz, AF Network Support - Yes |
| Deborah Prince - No         | Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes    |
| Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine - Yes | Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes         |

#### **II. Open Session for Public Comment**

There was no public comment

#### **III. Board Business**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from January 28, 2020.

Motion by Bildade Augustin  
Seconded by Endia DeCordova  
All in favor

Patsy Mundy thanked Ja Hannah for his interest in serving as the secretary.

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ja Hannah to serve as Secretary of the Board.

Motion by David Dee  
Seconded by Marshall Ruben  
All in favor

Sarah Blanton shared that the board is asked, annually, to vote on contract renewals of the principals who intend to return for the following year. All three AFHA principals intend to return for the 2020-21 school year and have signed their offer letters from Achievement First.

RESOLVED, AF Hartford Board of Directors has discussed the performance of the AF Hartford Principals intending to return for the 2020-21 school year and the compensation packages as proposed by Achievement First, and hereby approves the renewal of the following principal, with a final compensation package to be incorporated in the FY21 Budget to be reviewed and approved in May 2020:

- Raven Obas, Principal, AF Hartford Academy Elementary School
- Emily Wojtusik, Principal, AF Hartford Summit Middle School
- Ben Cruse, Principal, AF Hartford High School

Motion by Marshall Ruben

Seconded by Ja Hannah

All in favor

Victor De La Paz, AF's CFO, gave an overview of the federal PPP loan for which AF Hartford Academy has been approved. In addition, Patsy Mundy will need to sign the bylaws so KeyBank has them on record.

The CARES stimulus package authorized support on a first come first served basis, and AF Hartford received an award in the amount of \$2.36MM (2.5 times the average monthly payroll). 75% of that loan must be for payroll costs and the first payment would be due in six months. The remaining 25% can be spent on such things as group health care benefits, rent, utilities, and interest payments on other debt obligations. AF is confident that the loan will be forgiven but it is not guaranteed. Mr De La Paz reminded the board that this is a loan that may potentially convert to revenue in six months.

Patsy added the following language to the following resolution, "whereas, the Paycheck Protection Program may require certified bylaws; be it resolved, the AF Hartford Board hereby certifies the bylaws dated November 13, 2017 have been duly adopted and authorizes the Board Chair and/or the Board Secretary to sign such certification."

We, the undersigned, being the directors of AF Hartford Academy, a Connecticut non-profit corporation with a principal office located in New Haven, Connecticut ("the Board"), in accordance with the amended bylaws and laws of the State of Connecticut hereby adopted the following:

WHEREAS: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board has been required to seek financial assistance through the SBA backed Payroll Protection Program. Said funds will be used to ensure the continued operation of schools under its supervision.

RESOLVED, that effective immediately, the Board has begun the process of completing the required documentation necessary to apply for the above referenced financial assistance,

Motion by Marshall Ruben

Seconded by Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

All in favor

**IV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 pm by Patsy Mundy.

Motion by David Dee

Seconded by Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

All in favor



**AF Hartford Academy  
Board of Directors**

Monday, May 11, 2020, 5:30 pm  
Zoom Video Conference

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approve Minutes

Reports and Discussion

- ✓ Principal Reports
- ✓ Joint High School Committee Report
- ✓ Chief Financial Officer Report
- ✓ Board Chair Report
  - Retreat Discussion
  - Board Recruitment and Pipeline

Board Business

1. Re-appoint auditors
2. Approve financial report
3. Approve FY21 budget
4. Re-elect director

Adjourn



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## **AF Hartford Academy**

### **Board of Directors**

Monday, May 11, 2020, 5:30 pm

Zoom Video Conference

#### **I. Call to Order and Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm by Patsy Mundy. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Patsy Mundy - Yes          | Alberto Vasquez-Matos - No              |
| Endia DeCordova - Yes      | Celina Whitmore - Yes                   |
| Marshall Ruben - No        |   |
| Ja Hannah - Yes            | Christina Ellington, AF Network Support |
| Alice Turner - Yes         | Raven Obas, AFBA School Leadership      |
| David Dee - Yes            | Emily Wojtusik, AFHA School Leadership  |
| Deborah Prince - Yes       | Victor De La Paz, AF Network Support    |
| Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine - No | Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support       |
| Bildade Augustin - Yes     | Ken Paul, AF Network Support            |

Public: Caroline Mclean

#### **II. Open Session for Public Comment**

Caroline Mclean introduced herself. Her son is a senior at AF Hartford High School.

#### **III. Approve Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 23, 2020.

Motion by Bildade Augustin

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

#### **IV. Reports and Discussions**

##### **A. Principal Reports**

Raven Obas gave a report for AF Hartford Elementary School noting that her return from maternity leave aligned almost exactly with the closure of school, but she was able to be in the building for a day before everyone went to remote learning.

Remote learning is going as well as it possibly could and almost all students have received

Chromebooks and mifis.

Attendance has been strong (92% last week) and all scholars are receiving multiple conferences each week. Spirit week was last week, so each day was a themed day with great participation to keep joy and positivity.

The leadership team is in conversation around the summer work plan especially since the scholars have Chromebooks and have online programs that they didn't have in prior years.

Teachers are working hard, and it can be challenging to have back to back conferences while also consistently follow up with all families to ensure work is completed. They are saying that they are loving the connection with the scholars. Often, conferences go into the evening to accommodate schedules of scholars and families.

Each teacher-dean check in begins with a personal check in to see how they're doing.

Teacher retention is 90%. The 10% was made up of teachers we knew weren't returning. A family engagement survey went out a couple weeks ago and the leadership team is going to unpack the data later this week.

Weekly principal cohort meetings allow for collaboration with other AF principals. Ms. Obas feels the network has been amazing at providing technology. The school continues to collect data from families along with wellness checks.

Ms. Obas noted they are doing sensitivity training for teachers around the ways that entering families' homes via Zoom can be complex. She shared that the school is not doing any end-of-year testing at the elementary school. They plan to do diagnostic testing once back to in-person school to assess where scholars are.

Ms. Emily Wojtusik shared that she's incredibly proud of the staff, scholars and families. Immediately after school shut down, the school got Chromebooks out to families. They've been focused on delivering high quality remote learning and knowing how families are doing.

She shared a daily schedule – two classes, two fitness breaks and two tutoring blocks, with an hour lunch break.

Attendance is high for attending one class, somewhat high for two classes, but attendance drops off at three or four classes. They are working on identifying and understanding the issues.

Kids are completing work, which is great, but are not always coming to the Zoom meetings. Ms. Wojtusik affirmed the importance of understanding what's going on with families, above and beyond academics.

Ms. Wojtusik shared a video of a teacher who has one of the highest rates of attendance in her Zoom classes. The video showed a teacher pretending to outrun a dinosaur who was in pursuit in a video behind her as a way to introduce a lesson on why dinosaurs are extinct. The teachers are being creative in engaging the scholars.

The staff did a car parade through Hartford visiting scholars. Staff retention is good. Hiring feels stagnant but Ms. Wojtusik is being patient that all hires are right for the school.

Families are receiving weekly emails from the school leaders and biweekly calls to check in. Ms. Wojtusik referenced the Team and Family Fund at AF which is providing emergency funds to families who most need it.

First day for new staff is July 20<sup>th</sup> which is two weeks later than planned. AF PD will be remote. The first day of school is pushed back a little in hopes of being able to be in person.

Ken Paul shared that a national think tank has researched remote learning plans across the country and has identified AF as among the top in the country. Mr. Hannah applauded the way that the school has created structure and high benchmarks.

The school is going to work on how to best engage students who have struggled with online learning as they plan for next year. It will require an review of test results, attendance results, work submissions and individualized input.

The board discussed work completion rates as compared to attendance rates. Generally, students are completing work at a higher rate than they are attending classes but there is variation between courses. There is still a small percentage of families (2%) who are struggling with connectivity. They are having check-ins with 100% of families and the operations team is doing everything they can to ensure that all families have internet and a devices.

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

Ms. Patsy Mundy shared the work going on at AF Hartford High School – remote learning, attendance, teacher retention and the budget. They are planning for senior signing day and graduation. Teachers are making yard signs for seniors and the class of 2020 has very strong college acceptance results.

The school has gotten a head start on college applications and recommendations for the class of 2021. And in the class of 2020, there is one scholar for whom college is not the right fit and that scholar is attending a life skills program next year.

The board discussed the impact of financial aid on the college admissions process.

### **C. Chief Financial Officer Report**

Victor De La Paz joined the meeting to give an overview of the PPP loan, the financials, and the proposed FY21 budget along with the assumptions underlying the FY21 budget.

Achievement First is anticipating flat funding for next year and although the philanthropy need for next year is lower than this year, there is still a significant amount of fundraising. On the revenue side, we have a seat cap which does not fund all our seats. We need 1235 seats at scale and we only have 1163 in the charter cap. Seats above the cap are not funded.

On the expense side, we set targets according to what is equitable and affordable. AF Hartford Summit MS is continuing to shrink because of the past consolidation. It was the biggest middle school in the network, following the consolidation of AF Hartford Middle and AF Summit Middle and is now returning to a size similar to most AF middle schools.

Endia DeCordova inquired about the fundraising strategy for the Hartford schools. Ken Paul responded appreciatively and wants to follow up with a dialogue about raising Hartford specific funds.

Mr. De La Paz reviewed the forecasts, balance sheet and the request to continue to work with CohnReznick for the FY20 audit.

**RESOLVED**, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick to perform the financial audit of the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Motion by Debbie Prince

Seconded by Endia DeCordova

All in favor

**RESOLVED**, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Motion by Debbie Prince

Seconded by Endia DeCordova

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget as prepared by Achievement First for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Motion by Debbie Prince

Seconded by Endia DeCordova

All in favor

#### **D. Board Chair Report**

Ms. Mundy shared the desire to have a board retreat and asked the board members to think about topics. There is an urgent need to identify a treasurer for the board and to assess the skill sets needed for the board. In addition, the board should have a strong succession plan for leadership.

RESOLVED, the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of Alice Turner with a three year term ending June 30, 2023 and, pursuant to the bylaws of AF Hartford Academy, the Board of Directors does, effective July 1, 2020, set the number of members of the Board of Directors at nine (9).

Motion by Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

Seconded by David Dee

All in favor

#### **V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 pm by Patsy Mundy.

Motion by Bildade Augustin

Seconded by Ja Hannah

All in favor