

- DRAFT -

**Amistad Academy
Board of Directors**

Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, March 10, 2021
5:30 pm

I. Call to Order and Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm by Carolyn Greenspan. The following board members and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

Carolyn Greenspan - Yes
Lorraine Gibbons - Yes
Jane Levin - Yes
Pat Sweet - Yes
Jennifer Alexander - Yes
Albert Maldonado - No
Ethan Tyminski - Yes
Tyra Smallwood - Yes
Shannelle Whyte - Yes
Priyanka Junankar – Yes
Yashira Agosto - Yes

Brooke Williams, Amistad School Leader
Roseann Basile, Amistad School Leader
Lashell Rountree, Amistad School Leader
Christina Ellington, AF Network Support
Jesse Balis-Harris, AF Network Support
Cassidy McKee, AF Network Support
Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support
Eduardo del Valle, AF Network Support
Faisal Jawaaid, AF Network Support
Elise Major, AF Network Support

Public: Brian Zahn, Gerald Francese

II. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Board Business

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from January 19 and January 20, 2021.

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Tyra Smallwood

All in favor

RESOLVED, pursuant to Article IV, Section 4(a) of the Amistad Academy Bylaws, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby does, effective March 10, 2021, remove Albert Maldonado, Director.

Motion by Ethan Tyminski

Seconded by Jen Alexander
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby elects Ms. Yashira Agosto to serve as a director for a three year term ending June 30, 2021.

Motion by Pat Sweet
Seconded by Jane Levin
All in favor

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

Motion by Carolyn Greenspan
Seconded by Jen Alexander
All in favor

IV. Discussion and Additional Business

A. Principal Reports

Brooke Williams, principal of Amistad Elementary School, shared that the school is in a hybrid model as of March 2. It has been great to have kids back in the building. They have been very good about wearing masks and following the protocol.

Ms. Williams is hosting an upcoming town hall to engage with families.

She shared some academic data and how they are targeting student needs. Ms. Williams is working with the fourth grade in particular. They are projecting very strong teacher retention (91%) and all leaders are returning next year.

Ms. Rosie Basile, principal of Amistad Middle School, shared that reopening went smoothly with approximately 40% of students back in person which is higher than in the fall. She shared how proud she is of the adult enthusiasm to support scholars coming back to school.

Some parents are ambivalent about sending kids in to school for reasons related to positive experiences with remote learning. Ms. Basile started a weekly progress report to parents that goes out via email.

Org health gains have continued to be significant but she continues to strive for absolute success, not just relative success.

Staff retention is projected to be above 80%.

Ms. Basile spoke about student mental health and the outstanding work of the school social worker. The team is working collaboratively to share student wellbeing. Students seem to really enjoy being at school especially being at recess.

They are thinking about how to structure the school day next year to provide remediation and the social emotional issues that arise in conjunction with academic difficulties.

B. Joint High School Committee Report

Jane Levin shared that the high school reopened successfully but that only 50 students are in the building attending school in person. Those who do come in person are logging into their Zoom classes for synchronous learning.

Ms. Levin noted the mental health challenges the high school is facing and how the school is actively addressing it.

Attendance has been high and college results are good. She noted a program coming to Amistad High School next fall that provides college level coursework that will automatically provide college credit.

They have started planning for the 2021-22 school year with 100% leadership team retention and 89% projected teacher retention.

C. Approve Healthy Food Certification

Carolyn Greenspan introduced the following resolution.

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons

All in favor

The board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the

sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held.

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons

All in favor

D. Amistad Name Discussion

John Motley, AF Network Support Board member and former board chair of the AF Hartford Board, gave an update about the work of the Amistad Renaming Focus Group. There are three recommendations before the board: AF Leadership Academy, AF Strive Academy and AF New Haven.

Given that there wasn’t broad community support for any particular name, the board requested a survey be sent to the Amistad community with those names as well as an option to keep Amistad Academy.

E. Debt Refinancing Discussion

Ms. Cassidy McKee gave an overview of the debt refinancing option presented to the board below.

130 Edgewood Ave NMTC Refi Loan. Approval of a loan from Low Income Investment Fund (“LIIF” or “Lender”) in the original face amount of approximately \$1,128,705. plus costs and fees, to refinance the existing NMTC loan which is secured by real property located at 130 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT (the “130 Edgewood Refi”), upon the terms and conditions described in the Lender’s term sheet. By this resolution, the board of Amistad Academy grants authority to designated officers of Amistad Academy and Achievement First (“Authorized Officers”), for and on behalf of and in the name of Amistad Academy as borrower or guarantor, to negotiate, execute, deliver and perform for and on behalf of Amistad Academy, (i) the 130 Edgewood Refi, upon substantially the terms set forth on the attached Term Sheet, with such changes as the Authorized Officer executing the same may approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval, and any other finance documents to which Amistad Academy is a party with respect to the 130 Edgewood Refi, and (ii) all other instruments, certificates, papers, agreements and other documents (the “Other Documents”) which the Lender may require in connection with the 130 Edgewood Refi in such form and of such content as any such Authorized Officer shall approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval;

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Tyra Smallwood

All in favor

130 Edgewood Capital Loan. Approval of a loan from Lender in the original face amount of approximately \$202,000 to establish a capital reserve account for real estate located at 130 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT (the “130 Edgewood Capital Loan”), upon the terms and conditions described in the Lender’s term sheet. By this resolution, the board of Amistad Academy grants authority to the Authorized Officers, for and on behalf of and in the name of Amistad Academy, to negotiate, execute, deliver and perform for and on behalf of Amistad Academy, (i) the 130 Edgewood Capital Loan, substantially accordance with the terms set forth on the attached Term Sheet, with such changes as the Authorized Officer executing the same may approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval, and any other finance documents to which Amistad Academy is a party with respect to the 130 Edgewood Capital Loan, and (ii) all other instruments, certificates, papers, agreements and other documents (the “Other Documents”) which the Lender may require in connection with the 130 Edgewood Capital Loan in such form and of such content as any such Authorized Officer shall approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval;

Motion by Jane Levin

Seconded by Jen Alexander

All in favor

403/407 James St Capital Loan. Approval of a loan from Lender in the original face amount of approximately \$202,000 to establish a capital reserve account for real estate located at 403/407 James Street, New Haven, CT (the “403/407 James Capital Loan”), upon the terms and conditions described in the Lender’s term sheet. By this resolution, the board of Amistad Academy grants authority to the Authorized Officers, for and on behalf of and in the name of Amistad Academy, to negotiate, execute, deliver and perform for and on behalf of Amistad Academy, (i) the 403/407 James Capital Loan, substantially accordance with the terms set forth on the attached Term Sheet, with such changes as the Authorized Officer executing the same may approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval, and any other finance documents to which Amistad Academy is a party with respect to the 403/407 James Capital Loan, and (ii) all other instruments, certificates, papers, agreements and other documents (the “Other Documents”) which the Lender may require in connection with the 403/407 James Capital Loan in such form and of such content as any such Authorized Officer shall approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval;

Motion by Yashira Agosto

Seconded by Pat Sweet

All in favor

Preparation of Property Leases. Approval of preparation of leases by and between Elm City Prep and Amistad Academy, for 580 Dixwell and 403/407 James St.

The terms and conditions to replicate current arrangements as closely as possible to the extent that such terms cover debt service, maintenance of the facilities, and capital reserves. Each party to a lease shall have boards of directors that do not contain any common members who negotiate on an arms’ length basis and in good faith. By this resolution, the board of Amistad Academy grants authority to the

Authorized Officers, for and on behalf of and in the name of Amistad Academy, to negotiate, execute, deliver and perform for and on behalf of Amistad Academy, (i) the leases, substantially accordance with the terms set forth above, with such changes as the Authorized Officer executing the same may approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval, and (ii) all other instruments, certificates, papers, agreements and other documents (the "Other Documents") which may be required in connection with the execution of the leases in such form and of such content as any such Authorized Officer shall approve, such execution to be conclusive evidence of such approval;

Motion by Jane Levin

Seconded by Pat Sweet

All in favor

F. Proposed Executive Session: Personnel discussion regarding principal renewal offers for the 2021-22 school year

Carolyn Greenspan made a motion to go into executive session at 6:35 pm to have a personnel discussion regarding principal renewal offers for the 2021-22 school year. She invited Christina Ellington, Jesse Balis-Harris, Sarah Blanton and Ken Paul to join the board. Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons.

The board exited executive session at 6:49 pm. Motion by Ethan Tyminski. Seconded by Tyra Smallwood. All in favor.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors has discussed the performance of the Amistad Academy Principals intending to return for the 2021-22 school year and the compensation package as proposed by Achievement First, and hereby approves the renewal of the following principals, with a final compensation package to be incorporated in the FY22 Budget to be reviewed and approved in May 2021:

- Brooke Williams, Principal, Amistad Academy Elementary School
- Roseanne Basile, Principal, Amistad Academy Middle School
- Simon Obas, Principal, Amistad High School

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Jen Alexander

All in favor

Prior to adjourning, Shannelle Whyte raise a concern about the new, later start time and the new, earlier dismissal time. Christina Ellington addressed her concerns acknowledging the challenges for working parents as well as some teachers. She committed to reevaluating.

V. Adjourn

There being no other business before the board, it was unanimously decided to adjourn at 7:05 pm.

Motion by Jane Levin

Second by Shannelle Whyte

All in favor