

- DRAFT -

Amistad Academy

Board of Directors

Zoom Video Conference

Wednesday, May 12, 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

Ethan Tyminski - Yes

Tyra Smallwood - No

Shannelle Whyte - Yes

Priyanka Junankar – No

Yashira Agosto - Yes

Brooke Williams, Amistad School Leader

Lashell Rountree, Amistad School Leader

Jesse Balis-Harris, AF Network Support

Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support

Neil Shah, AF Network Support

Ken Paul, AF Network Support

Xanthe Jory, AF Network Support

II. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Board Business

Prior to voting on board business the directors and Amistad leaders each introduced themselves and shared why they are excited about doing this work.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 10 and May 5, 2021.

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Jane Levin

All in favor

IV. Discussion and Additional Business

A. Principal Reports

Brooke Williams, principal of Amistad Elementary School, shared the structure of remote and hybrid school with the breakdown of which grades and percentages of students are participating in which model. She discussed student investment data comparing results from the fall to the spring – both of which were strong. She reported that between February and April, the school has seen strong academic

growth in grades K-2. They start state testing in grades 3-4 and are working on preparing the students.

In planning for next year, they are considering how to plan the day to best support students. AF is offering remote summer academy and Amistad Elementary is encouraging everyone to attend.

She shared the very high teacher retention (98%) for next year and how positive that will be for adult and student culture. The board applauded her strong leadership.

Lashell Rountree is currently serving as the interim principal of Amistad Middle School. She shared that she's never seen the adult culture at the school as strong as it is. Everyone has been nimble, accommodating and supportive of one another through the transitions in and out of remote learning.

Students seem happy to be in the building. State testing began this week and everything has gone smoothly. She is hoping for a strong turnout for summer academy and they are encouraging participation.

Ms. Rountree concluded her remarks by acknowledging Rosie Basile's leadership as principal.

Jesse Balis Harris, regional superintendent, spoke about the summer academy which will be virtual and run by the same group that ran NSSI last summer. He also shared with the board that AF Camp is launching this summer with 500 seats available to students across the AF network.

B. Joint High School Committee Report

Jane Levin gave the Joint High School Committee report noting teacher and leader retention. She noted that much of the discussion from the Committee Meeting focused on the senior class and their plans for next year.

She shared that the school is not focused on academic testing, but instead has been about supporting the mental health and sense of safety of the students.

C. Board Chair Report

Carolyn Greenspan updated the board on the loan refinancing. The closing will be Thursday, May 13 and it includes a capital reserve and will put leases into place at the Edgewood and James St buildings.

The board had asked the lawyer to review the contracts for the solar panel project. That has taken place.

She also updated the board on the Amistad Renaming process. After the most recent survey, there was no consensus around a new name. The results showed support for changing the name - 57% of respondents wanted a name other than Amistad. Senior leaders are continuing to work on a strategy to get to consensus. The board will continue to discuss this and revisit in the new fiscal year.

She also shared updates on the Vision Process which has had three summits, each with a different focus. The next meeting is May 27th and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

She introduced AF's new COO, Xanthe Jory. Ms. Jory shared that she is in her second week at AF and shared that her work is going to focus on student enrollment, school operations and facilities. She shared her background in school leadership and operations and hopes to bring both of those lenses to this work. Most recently she worked on the pre-K expansion at the NYC Department of Education.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby dissolves the Amistad Renaming focus group effective May 12, 2021 and thanks the focus group for its efforts.

Motion by Yashira Agosto
Seconded by Ethan Tyminski
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-election of the following directors with a three year term ending June 30, 2024:

Ms. Jennifer Alexander
Ms. Yashira Agosto
Ms. Patricia Sweet
Ms. Lorraine Gibbons

Motion by Jane Levin
Seconded by Shannelle Whyte
All in favor

D. Treasurer Report

Pat Sweet began her report by speaking of the audit firm that has performed the audits and has provided engagement letters to perform the FY21 audit.

On the year to date financials, she shared that all three schools are looking to break even this year. Neil Shah, AF's interim CFO, presented the proposed budget for the 2021-22 school year. He discussed federal stimulus funds and the additive resources we will be able to provide over the next 2-4 years to supplement the educational program. AF is working with principals to determine how they want to allocate those resources.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick to perform the financial audit of the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Motion by Pat Sweet
Seconded by Carolyn Greenspan
All in favor

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

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Yashira Agosto
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget as prepared by Achievement First for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Motion by Pat Sweet
Seconded by Jane Levin
All in favor

E. New Business

There was no new business.

V. Adjourn

There being no other business before the board, it was unanimously decided to adjourn at 6:36 pm.

Motion by Jane Levin
Second by Shannelle Whyte
All in favor