

Amistad Academy
Joint High School Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, September 22, 2021, 4:00 pm

I. Call to Order and Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 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
Jennifer Alexander, Amistad Board - Yes

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
Julia Halberstam, ECCP Board - No

Simon Obas, Amistad HS Principal
Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support
Rod Bowen, AF Network Support
Ken Paul, AF Network Support

Public: Julie Hajducky, Peter Butler

II. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. School Report

Mr. Simon Obas updated the Committee on COVID safety protocol. The school is following the guidelines set forth by Achievement First and Mr. Obas is working closely with Mr. Rod Bowen, the regional superintendent, and the regional director of operations.

Mr. Obas shared some positive organizational health results from a survey given to teachers and staff at the start of the school year. He noted that the staff is working very hard and is already fatigued between instructional responsibilities and COVID safety measures.

There have been no mid-year staff departures. He still needs to hire three positions but has an interview for one of those roles this week.

Mr. Bowen affirmed the stability of staffing and adult culture at Amistad High School.



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Students are participating in athletics and Mr. Obas shared that the field now has a scoreboard which allows Amistad High to host home games. After school clubs will start in the next few weeks.

Students are, for the most part, happy to be back in the building learning. Intellectual stamina is difficult – the day is long. The school has moved to 90 minute blocks with four blocks per day compared with seven or eight periods per day last year. Students have more time to complete work and they are able to focus on fewer subjects each day.

Mr. Obas reviewed all AP and ECE courses offered, as well as new curricular options.

Mr. Obas is proactively addressing student behavior, especially in the 9th and 10th grades. He shared they no longer run a demerit system. As incidents arise, the team makes a decision, leading with empathy and based on what that student needs. There are still behaviors that trigger automatic consequences but they are now ensuring that the conversation and engagement with students happens concurrently.

He affirmed that his door is always open to students and staff.

There is a national shortage of bus drivers, Mr. Obas acknowledged, and they are feeling the impact of that.

Personally, Mr. Obas affirmed that he's doing well and he feels supported by the AF network and by Rod Bowen, in particular.

Ms. Laura Saverin gave a financial report.

The board discussed showing appreciation for the teachers.

IV. Board Business

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy High School Committee hereby approves the meeting minutes from May 12, 2021.



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Motion by Dick Kalt
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 2021-22 fiscal year as prepared by Achievement First.

Motion by Carolyn Greenspan
Seconded by Dick Ferguson
All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy High School Committee hereby intends to express their appreciation and support for their hard work.

Motion by Jane Levin
Seconded by Carolyn Greenspan
All in favor

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 by Jane Levin.

Motion by Laura Saverin
Seconded by Dick Ferguson
All in favor



Recommended Resolutions

Resolution 1:



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