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**Amistad Academy, Elm City College Preparatory, AF Bridgeport Academy,
AF Hartford Academy**

Joint Meeting of the School Boards of Directors

Zoom Video Conference

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

5:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Carolyn Greenspan, Amistad Academy Board Chair. The following board members and Achievement First staff were in attendance.

Amistad Academy Board Members in Attendance: Yashira Agosto, Jennifer Alexander, Carolyn Greenspan, Jane Levin, Gayatri Mehra, Tyra Smallwood, Patricia Sweet, Shannelle Whyte

Elm City College Preparatory Board Members in Attendance: LaVonta Bryant, Dick Ferguson, Nicola Fleischer, Stephanie Ma, Laura Saverin

AF Bridgeport Academy Board Members in Attendance: Dick Kalt, Shalia Garnett, Raj Lakra, Marlene Macaуда

AF Hartford Academy Board Members in Attendance: Billie Augustin, Jessica Glover, Erwin Hurst Sr., Patsy Mundy, Lisa Tanen

Achievement First Staff: Fatimah Barker, Beth Cocuzza, Patricia Granda-Malaver, Elise Major, Connor McGann, Ken Paul, Neil Shah, Megan Tokarski

II. Open Session for Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Presentation by Interim CEO Fatimah Barker

Fatimah Barker began her presentation by sharing gratitude for all the adults currently working in AF schools. Remote learning last year was not easy, but in-person school is

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challenging right now too. However, Ms. Barker emphasized the importance of in-person school for students and reviewed AF's COVID response plan.

Ms. Barker shared highlights and updates from the first half of the school year, including Early Decision college acceptances and several facilities projects and improvements across AF's CT schools. She also reviewed student enrollment and attendance, days in school, and staffing data.

Looking ahead to the remainder of the school year, Ms. Barker said the focus will be on keeping schools fully and safely open, including preparing for the possibility of a state and/or district vaccine mandate for students.

A. Questions and Discussion

Billie Augustin prompted a review by Ms. Barker and Neil Shah of how AF schools are using ESSER dollars to support staff recruitment and retention in both the short and long term. Ms. Augustin also reiterated her belief that AF schools need to take steps to become more community-based, including better leveraging community resources and partnering with community organizations to benefit students. She suggested ESSER dollars could be used for this purpose.

Patricia Sweet asked if there is an opportunity for AF to pilot cutting-edge solutions to the issues of staff recruitment/retention and student mental health in ways that could be exported for the benefit of the education sector more broadly. Ms. Barker agreed that the way things have previously been done in schools is insufficient for the current situation and the road ahead. She is in conversations with other CEOs in the education sector and also with consultants about ways to reimagine school going forward.

Dick Ferguson and Patsy Mundy asked about the current and future status of student vaccinations. Ms. Barker said a voluntary survey will go out to families at the beginning of February to begin collecting student vaccination information. She is also creating a video message for families emphasizing the importance of vaccinating students against COVID in order to stabilize and normalize AF schools.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m. by Carolyn Greenspan.

Motion by Patricia Sweet

Seconded by Dick Ferguson

All in favor

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