

**AF Bridgeport Academy  
Board of Directors Meeting  
DRAFT MINUTES**  
Zoom Video Conference  
Thursday, May 5, 2022  
5:30 p.m.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Dick Kalt. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First staff were in attendance.

Board Members: Dick Kalt, Mike Strambler, Raj Lakra, Ruben Felipe, Ebrima Jobe, Marlene Macaуда

AF Staff: Fatimah Barker, Lisa Margosian, Stephanie Keenoy, Xanthe Jory, De-Lea Deane-Allen, Neil Shah, Kate Aufiero, Isabel Tañedo, Connor McGann, Michael Hendricks, Laura Fisher, Shalia Garnett, Stephanie Fox.

Connor McGann recorded the minutes.

**II. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 17, 2022.

Motion by Mike Strambler  
Seconded by Ruben Felipe  
All in favor

**IV. Board Business**

Dick Kalt introduced Fatimah Barker, current interim AF CEO and Lisa Margosian, incoming interim CEO. Fatimah shared that she would be transitioning from AF at the end of the academic year. Lisa Margosian shared her background in the charter school sector. Mr. Kalt thanked Ms. Barker for her service, and wished success for Ms. Margosia at Achievement First.

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Ken Paul, AF VP of Development, shared with the Board that Team Development had a successful meeting with the Lone Pine Foundation, a supporter of AF Bridgeport Academy earlier in the day.

## **A. Principal Reports**

### **1. Elementary School**

Shalia Garnett, Interim principal at AF Bridgeport Academy Elementary, introduced herself and reported on end of year highlights and events. She shared that managing coverage has been challenging, and accordingly, is prioritizing readiness for the coming year. Additionally, she is also looking ahead to end of year testing, making it a goal that each student passes at least one step level. Ms. Garnett then presented data on teacher retention, leadership team retention, teacher certification, and org health data; on the student side, she reported on scholar attendance, enrollment, suspensions, expulsions, and interim assessment data.

Ms. Garnett entertained questions from the Board on scholar withdrawal, bussing, suspensions, expulsions, academic data and % proficiency pre/post-COVID, and supports for students to catch up on lost learning over the summer.

### **2. Middle School**

Stephanie Fox, Principal at AF Bridgeport Academy Middle School, shared that her goal has been to stabilize the school, after early departures of many teachers, focusing on forward planning, clear goals for students and staff, dean development, positive adult culture and student investment. Ms. Fox then reported on positive teacher retention, effective student incentives and teacher support from the leadership team. Finally, Ms. Fox shared her high-level vision for next year: strong adult culture, strong student culture and strong lesson plans. These priorities are grounded in feedback from staff and scholars.

Ms. Fox entertained questions from the Board regarding end of year assessments, academic performance and progress, and support for student learning over the summer.

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

Mr. Kalt shared highlights from the Amistad Joint High School Committee on May 4,, where Slmon Obas, Amistad High School principal, reported on students and staff.

Mr. Kalt noted that there was public comment by a member of the teaching staff who raised his concern about the title “Master Teacher”.

Highlights from Mr. Obas’ report included: (i) Recruitment challenges and staffing shortages are leaving remaining staff fatigued; (ii) Mr. Obas remains focused on student success despite these constraints; (iii) Mr. Obas is excited to invite families to the school to celebrate senior signing day on May 26; (iv) Seniors are considering a variety of postsecondary options with the support of the AF college counselor. Mr. Obas hopes to recruit an additional college counselor to support scholars; (v) There is a feeling of a return to normalcy in the school, with lunch back in the cafeteria, the return of school events, and an upcoming school dance. Mr. Obas hope this will positively impact behavior; (vi) Suspensions remain at pre-COVID levels, and Mr. Obas is prioritizing enhancing academics and culture next year.

Finally, Mr. Kalt invited Neil Shah, AF Chief Financial Officer and Kate Aufiero, VP of Finance, to clarify that no school will be unable to hire more staff as a result of the 4% raise built into the budget for next year.

Marlene Macauda asked a follow-up question on transportation for the school dance.

### **C. Executive Session: Personnel discussion regarding principal renewal offer for 2022-23 school year**

Michael Strambler exited the meeting early for personal reasons, and did not join Executive Session.

The Board entered Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. and invited the following members of the Achievement First staff to join: Rod Bowen, Stephanie Keenoy, Neil Shah, Kristin Damo, and Michael Hendricks. Mr. Shah and Ms. Damo did not join the session.

Motion by Marlene Macauda

Seconded by Raj Lakra

All in favor.

The Board exited Executive Session at 6:45 p.m.

Motion by Raj Lakra

Seconded by Ebrima Jobe

All in favor.

RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors discussed, the performance of Simon Obas, Amistad Academy High School Principal intending to return for the 2022-23 school year, and the compensation package as proposed by Achievement First, and hereby approves his offer renewal, with a final compensation package as incorporated in the FY22-23.

Motion by Marlene Macauda

Seconded by Ruben Felipe

All in favor

#### **D. Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Shah presented the financial reports and draft budget for school year 2022-2023, noting that revised budgets will be presented to the Board in the fall. Raj Lakra noted the financial position of the charter is strong.

Ruben Felipe noted the budget passed yesterday in the state legislature contained a provision to accelerate the phase-in of weighted funding. Finance did not budget to account for this as it has not yet been signed into law by the governor. If signed into law, it will be included in revised budgets.

Mr. Lakra exited the meeting early. Because the board no longer had quorum, Mr. Kalt decided that remaining business be taken up at a separate special meeting.

#### **E. COO Report**

Xanthe Jory, AF Chief Operating Officer, reported on safety and enrollment. Positivity rates of COVID-19 are increasing across the state, including in Bridgeport. Despite this, the two Bridgeport schools have had zero reported cases since January. Enrollment for next year at both the elementary and middle school is strong.

#### **F. Board Chair Report**

Mr. Kalt invited Ruben Felipe to share state legislature updates regarding CT public charter schools.

#### **V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. by Dick Kalt.

Motion by Marlene Macauda

Seconded by Ruben Felipe

All in favor.

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