



DRAFT Minutes
Elm City College Preparatory
Board of Directors Meeting

Venue: Zoom

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/7382361994>

Wednesday, November 30, 2022, 5:30-7:00 pm

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dick Ferguson at 5:31 pm.

Attendees: Board Members

Name	Present	Name	Present
Dick Ferguson	Y	LaVonta Bryant	Y
Laura Saverin	Y	Katie Hagen	Y
Stephanie Ma	Y	Erica Demond	Y
Prish Pierce	Y	Patric Gregory	N

AF Staff: Lisa Margosian, Neil Shah, Karolyn Belcher, Xanthe Jory, John Sharkey, Beth Cocouzza, Jesse Balis-Harris, Brooke Williams, Tanesha Forman, Sulafa Bashir, Sultana Salma, Ken Paul

Sulafa Bashir recorded the minutes.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ferguson took the board through approval of the previous meeting minutes.

It was:

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from September 29, 2022.

Motion by Prish Pierce

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Second LaVonta Bryant
All in favor

IV. Discussion with Achievement First

A. Principals' Reports

Prior to commencing the presentation, Ms. Lisa Margosian, Interim Chief Executive Officer, introduced newly appointed Acting Superintendent, Ms. Karolyn Belcher.

Mr. John Sharkey gave an overview to frame the data from the initial round of internal assessments, sharing that there continue to be incremental improvements in ES and MS that suggest that there is modest progress from last year. However, there is a need to increase the rate of progress in order to achieve the year-end goals set.

Ms. Brooke Williams, Regional Superintendent for ES, shared the principal report on behalf of Principal Lauren D'Addario. Highlights included positive student and family experience survey results as well as strong adult culture based on the network-wide health survey. Mr. Jesse Balis-Harris added that the survey provides access to national comparative data, which puts the school in the 87th percentile.

Ms. Williams shared academic data and challenges related to student achievement, while emphasizing the school's focus on leveraging reading programs' progress monitoring tools to assess scholar development. Similarly, in Math, she mentioned interventions including a focus on CGI instruction and ensuring teachers are facilitating robust math discussions.

There was also a discussion on safety which was a growth area based on family survey responses.

Ms. Tanesha Forman shared the MS principal report, discussing the staffing and academic challenges. She noted the school stabilization as a highlight which moved from an average of 1.8 to 3.0 on foundational teacher skills and habits during classroom walkthroughs. Another highlight was student experience and community partnership, which included prioritizing student belonging and teacher relationships.

Ms. Forman presented the academic data which included STAR reading assessment which shows Grade Level Equivalency (GLE) achieved by scholars compared to their grade. To reduce the variance, the school has prioritized phonics and guided reading to (re) build foundational reading.



Ms. Forman also presented on the student culture, including the student experience where learning favorability increased 7 points and is the highest level achieved in the last 2 years.

Board members asked questions and requested data comparing results with state, district and national results where possible. There was also a discussion on the challenges of staffing including the impact of the flu season, and the overall implications thereof. The school is trying to find creative ways to fill the gap in staffing, which will be a multi-year initiative.

There was a discussion on celebrating the work being done and the board expressed interest in supporting a staff celebration event.

V. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

Mr. Neil Shah, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Q1 Financials focusing on the P&L. He noted that the audited statements will be reviewed in December, which will then be reported during the January 2023 meeting. The board members were invited to attend the review meeting.

B. Amistad Joint HS Committee

Mr. Dick Ferguson shared an update from the Amistad Joint High School Committee meeting, stating that hiring is a challenge, particularly in STEM. He noted concern about the STAR reading assessment results and the reported grade level assessment for 12th grade. It was acknowledged that this was a nation-wide issue and had significant impacts on college readiness and remediation needed.

Mr. Ferguson mentioned attending a celebration for students with academic honors at the high school earlier that month. Ms. Prish Pierce remarked that she had noticed that the majority of students receiving the awards were female and was curious about national trend data on the variation between girls and boys recognized for high academic achievement. Ms. Margosian noted that AF staff will follow up on the matter.

There was also a discussion on AF's shift away from "college for all" to college-ready, recognizing that some students will opt for alternatives to the college route. Ms. Margosian noted that the revised framework of what it means to be college ready will be shared in January 2023.



VI. Board Discussion and Business

A. Approval of Interim Principals

Mr. Ferguson took the board through a resolution to extend the duration (through the end of the year) of the previously approved candidates who would act as interim principals in the event of an unanticipated leave by a current school principal.

It was:

RESOLVED that the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principals, as needed, based on the recommendations by Achievement First, between November 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

Elementary School: Julia Leonard

Middle School: Serena Johnson

Motion by Laura Saverin

Second by LaVonta Bryant

All in favor

B. Update on CEO Search

Mr. Ferguson noted that the search committee has been established and consists of board members from AF Inc and some AF school boards as well.

Ms. Margosian stated that the committee has already vetted search firms and drafted the CEO job description. During the December/January break, potential candidates will be identified.

C. Other Business

Mr. Ferguson presented the calendar of upcoming board meetings for 2023.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Dick Ferguson at 6:35 pm.