



**DRAFT Minutes**  
**Achievement First Hartford Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**

Venue: Zoom

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

Thursday, Dec 1, 2022, 5:30-7:00 pm

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Erwin Hurst, Sr. at 5:31 pm.

Attendees:

The following board members, constituting a quorum, were in attendance:

Erwin Hurst, Sr.	Y	Alice Turner	Y
Jessica Alhasnawi	Y	Francoise Deristel-Leger	Y
Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine	Y	Charon Smalls	Y
Surbhi Patel	Y		

Achievement First Staff: Lisa Margosian, Beth Cocuzza, Sulafa Bashir, Neil Shah, Xanthe Jory, Jesse Balis-Harris, John Sharkey, Dumar Paden, Raven Obas, Ken Paul, Oraina Simmons

Sulafa Bashir recorded the minutes.

**II. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

An amendment was made to the minutes to correct the spelling of Mr. Smalls' name.

It was:

RESOLVED, that the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes as amended from September 19, 2022.

Motion first by: Jessica Alhasnawi

Second: Francoise Deristel-Leger

All in favor



#### **IV. Discussion with Achievement First**

Ms. Lisa Margosian opened the meeting and introduced AF's new Acting Superintendent, Karolyn Belcher.

Mr. John Sharkey framed the academic data to be presented saying that there is modest progress compared to last year.

##### **A. Principals' Reports**

Ms. Raven Obas gave the elementary school Principal's report. Overall highlights include student attendance remaining strong and student pulse survey results were 88% favorable. Academics remain a challenge as is enrollment and the resulting budgetary implications. Reading proficiency is ahead of the region, while Math proficiency is at or above, but both are below where we want to be. Student experience and culture continues to be a bright spot. Staff and family pulse surveys are at over 85% favorability.

*Board members discussed how parents are reacting to cutbacks due to budget*

Mr. Jesse Balis-Harris added that the school is off to a great start this year.

*Board members discussed rates of IEPs, 504 services and/or other interventions.*

Ms. Simmons gave the middle school Principal's report. Attendance is a highlight along with an increase in parent engagement. Current challenges include vacancies and temporary staffing solutions. Additionally, reading and math data show learning gaps. In response, shifts have been made to target PD for teachers to help close the reading gaps. Student experience is a work in progress as the teaching staff is fairly new and still developing skills for creating the most optimal student experience.

Mr. Dumar Paden gave the high school report on behalf of Principal Thomas. Attendance is a bright spot and staffing has improved from SY 21-22 but STEM and Special Education continue to be challenging. The school is working with an employment agency to bring in special education teachers part time to fill the void. Academics remain challenging as demonstrated by STAR Reading data and data around students' course pass rates.

*Board members discussed questions around suspensions, family satisfaction, and racial makeup of teachers.*



Mr. Erwin Hurst, Sr. thanked all the principals for their presentations and commented that upon visiting the schools, he feels a positive difference.

B. Update on Enrollment <Proposed Executive Session>

Mr. Erwin Hurst, Sr. motioned to go into executive session

Second: Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

All in Favor

**V. Committee Reports**

A. Finance Committee

Mr. Neil Shah shared the Q1 financials as previously shared with the board in the pre-read materials.

**VI. Board Discussion and Business**

A. Election of New Board Member

It was:

RESOLVED, that the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors elects Ms. Surbhi Patel to the Board for a 3-year term, ending June 30, 2025.

Motion by: Jessica Alhasnawi

Second: Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

B. Approval of Interim Principals

RESOLVED, that the AF Hartford Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principals, as needed, based on the recommendations by Achievement First, between December 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

- Elementary School: Sueleidy Cruz
- Middle School: Tara Donavan
- High School: Jahki Manley

Motion by: Lisa Tanen-LaFontaine

Second: Francoise Deristel-Leger

All in favor

C. Update on CEO Search



Ms. Lisa Margosian updated the board on the CEO search. She shared that the committee was formed in October and has been busy at work on a job description and selecting a search firm.

*Board discussed questions around the CEO search.*

D. Other Business

Mr. Erwin Hurst, Sr. reviewed the upcoming CT board meetings schedule.

**VII. Adjourn**

Mr. Erwin Hurst, Sr. adjourned the meeting at 7:03pm.

Motion by: Surbhi Patel

Second: Charon Smalls

All in Favor