

**DRAFT Minutes
Elm City College Prep
Board of Directors Meeting**

Venue: Virtual Meeting

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/89966838394>

Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 5:30-7:00 pm

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dick Ferguson at 5:32 pm.

Attendees

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

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

AF Staff: Lisa Margosian, Karolyn Belcher, Neil Shah, Michael Rabin, Christi George, Blakely Simoneau, Lauren D’Addario, Tanesha Forman, Brooke Williams, Sulafa Bashir

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Resolutions and Approvals Previous Meeting Minutes, Membership

Welcome new Yale Board Fellow Shashank Ghiria.

Meeting minutes approved.

It was:

- RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 10, 2023 and April 4, 2023.
- RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves Mr. Shashank Ghiria to serve as a Yale SOM Board Fellow for an 18-month term, ending June 30, 2024.

Motion by Laura Saverin
Second by Lavonta Bryant
All in favor.

IV. Discussion with Achievement First

A. Welcome (5 min)

Lisa Margosian, Interim CEO, welcomed the board.

B. Principal Reports (10 min)

Lauren D’Addario provided an update on the ECCP Elementary School, including recent and upcoming events. Tanesha Foreman provided an update on ECCP Middle School. Both principals concentrated on the partnership between the two schools, following their slogan “Two Schools One Mission.”

Karolyn Belcher provided updates on Amistad High School, including culture set backs and how AF is thinking through a reset and concentrating on restorative practices and deescalation.

Karolyn Belcher provided an update on the academic progress at the school. She acknowledged that there is not the achievement that AF aspires to, but that there is some growth. Ms. D’Addario raised that many of the students didn’t finish the test, but also that testing lasted two days and they felt it was too much to put students through multiple days of testing. Ms. Belcher confirmed that this is a mock test, and is longer than other tests.

Board members asked about the test and academic improvement. Mr. Ferguson asked about how AF scholars are doing compared to the district. Ms. Belcher explained that the information will come from the district, but that doesn’t come until later. She highlighted that they are in the process of redoing the curriculum which could be part of the reason why the results are the way they are. The focus on school culture this year is paying off with less staff

turnover and improving culture can lead to better academic performance.

C. Amistad HS Committee Report (5 min)

Ms. Belcher provided updates on high school academics. She acknowledged that there is more work that needs to be done around reading. She also presented on post-graduate plans, and noted that the majority of the students graduating will be going to four year colleges.

D. State of Our Students - student wellness, academic progress, and high school update (20 min)

Ms. Belcher presented information on the state of the students, including mental health needs and safety responses. She acknowledged that academics, mental health, and safety go together. Mr. Ferguson asked about any serious incidents, and Ms. Belcher and Ms. Margosian confirmed that nothing additional has happened.

E. Finance Committee Report

1. Q3 Financials and FY 24 Budgets (15 min)

Neil Shah presented the Q3 financials and FY 2024 budgets. He noted that the assets far exceed liabilities. He requested the board approve the next year's budget. He noted that there is less revenue due to ESSER, but fewer expenses as well. There is increased public funding and also philanthropy. Ms. Saverin confirmed that there is no change in philosophy, but that the big change is in philanthropy.

2. Fiscal & Procurement Policies, and Audit Engagement (5 min)

Mr. Shah provided information on Key Bank, where Elm City keeps its funds. Mr. Shah noted to that regional banks are failing, and requested permission to move the accounts to Bank of America as it is a safer option.

Mr. Shah pointed out changes to the fiscal and procurement policies, which were included in the pre-read. Mr. Shah also asked for approval to use Cohen Reznik as auditors.

Mr. Ferguson called for a motion to approve the resolutions. Ms. Saverin moved, Mr. Pat Gregory seconded. No opposed, all in favor.

It was:

RESOLVED, that the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year as presented.

RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick to perform the financial audit of the 2023-24 fiscal year and prepare the IRS Form 990s.

RESOLVED that Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby ratifies the revisions to the Fiscal Policies and to the Procurement Policies as presented.

RESOLVED that the Elm City Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the opening of 1 checking account and 1 savings account at Bank of America.

RESOLVED that the Elm City Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the closure of 3 bank accounts at Key Bank.

F. Charter Renewal Next Steps (5 min)

Michael Rabin presented on the charter renewal next steps, which includes three areas of improvement - staff certification, academic improvement, and chronic absenteeism. Mr. Rabin explained that they are working with the Connecticut State Department of Education and have submitted plans, but are waiting on CSDE feedback.

G. SY 2023/2024 Strategic Imperatives (5 min)

Ms. Margosian provided updates on the progress toward the Strategic Imperatives for SY 22-23. She presented on the Strategic Imperatives for the coming school year.

H. Schools Portfolio Planning (5 min)

Mr. Rabin presented on the timeline for schools portfolio planning, and confirmed there are no major changes right now but that the board will be brought along every step of the way. Mr. Rabin confirmed that this was really meant as a preview of the process. Ms. Margosian offered background on the consolidation of two AF New York high schools.

V. Board Business

A. Proposed Executive Session: CEO Search and Talent Update (10 min)

Motion by Laura Saverin
Second by Pat Gregory
All in favor.

VI. Adjourn