



Amistad Academy Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM EDT

AF Hartford Elementary School

305 Greenfield Street Hartford, CT 06112

Attendees: Lorraine Gibbons, Shannelle Whyte, Camila Novo-Viano, Jim Baron, Michael Burke, Henry Melzer, Jennifer Alexander

I. Call to Order

Amistad Board Chair Lorraine Gibbons called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

II. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

III. Board Resolutions and Approvals

Ms. Gibbons introduced the consent agenda containing the meeting minutes from the February meeting and the Healthy Food Certification for the schools. She asked if there were any questions and hearing none asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Micheal Burke motioned. Jim Baron seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

Consent Agenda

IV. BE IT RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from March 5, 2025.

V. Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, Amistad Academy Board of Directors certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

VI. The Amistad Academy Board of Directors will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and

interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.

VII. Adjourn

There being no other board business, Ms. Gibbons asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Baron motioned. Michael Burke seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed or abstaining. The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 pm.



AF Joint CT Board Meeting Additional Meeting Notes

4/10/2025 5:30 PM EDT

AF Hartford Elementary School, 305 Greenfield Street Hartford, CT 06112

I. CEO Agenda Overview

AF CEO Lisa Margosian kicked off the meeting with an overview of the meeting's agenda. The agenda focused on providing updates regarding the AF 25 Summit, academic progress, and the strategic plan.

II. AF 25 Summit

Michael Rabin shared that the summit will feature keynote speakers Misty Copeland and Geoffrey Canada. He highlighted the agenda which includes various engaging sessions, such as presentations on the impact of Achievement First education, evolving school design, alumni and leadership panels, and insights from external experts. There are also special events planned for Friends of AF, including school tours and an educator roundtable, as well as an evening celebration.

III. Academic Updates: Mock State Test Data

John Sharkey presented academic updates, primarily centered on mock state test data. He explained that Achievement First administers three rounds of interim assessments throughout the year to monitor student growth and project potential performance on the state exams. These assessments include Interim Assessment (IA) 1, IA2, and the mock state test, administered in October, January, and March, respectively. The mock exams are designed to closely simulate the actual state tests. Analysis and recommendations are shared following each exam to drive instructional adjustments.

The presentation of mock test results indicated low and inconsistent progress, signaling a need for urgent intervention. Elementary schools demonstrated a trend of -2% in ELA and -4% in Math, with both content areas showing regression. In response, elementary schools are receiving weekly math support from network leaders, and additional ELA support is being provided by the regional superintendent and CAO. Middle schools showed a trend of -1% in ELA and +15% in Math, indicating significant math growth, though ELA growth was limited. While some schools showed positive growth, others, like Elm City MS and Amistad MS, demonstrated declines, particularly in ELA. Overall, Connecticut's student performance reveals that only about a third of students are proficient in ELA or Math, with small year-over-year declines. To address these findings, Achievement First is focusing on increased progress monitoring, timely instructional analysis, targeted instructional resources, and enhanced network support.

IV. Strategic Plan Update

Lisa Margosian provided an update on the strategic plan. Achievement First is in the process of transitioning to a more community-centered organizational model. This transition involves a greater emphasis on local communities, a better balance between centralized control and local needs, and increased cohesion within the K-12 program. The strategic planning process has included research, stakeholder feedback, and analysis of other multi-state charter organizations. Internal stakeholder feedback highlighted challenges such as inequitable support across regions, inefficient decision-making, gaps in local influence, and a lack of infrastructure to support regional complexities. The analysis of other multi-state charter operators revealed that many have adopted regional leaders and structures, which contrasts with Achievement First's historically centralized structure. Achievement First believes that education is most effective when decisions, resources, and autonomy are localized as much as possible. The transition to this community-centered model is planned to occur over multiple years, spanning from 2024 to 2027. The board's support was requested for talent recruitment to fill new leadership roles and for sharing expertise in restructuring and change management.

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.