Elm City College Prep Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Achievement First
Monday, June 8, 2026 at 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM EDT
Zoom: https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/86311084034

Attendees:

Board Members: Dick Ferguson, LaVonta Bryant, Shannon Garfield, Kevin Torres, Latisha Douglas
Board Fellow: Brian Fan
AF Staff: Amy D'Angleo, Serena Johnson, Leisel Renaud, Roseann Basile, Olivia Levey, Samantha Lucky, Ben Schanback, Sulafa Bashir, Ash Rodriguez

I. Call to Order

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

II. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

III. Welcome and Agenda Overview

CT Executive Director Amy D'Angelo welcomed the board members and AF staff and started the meeting with acknowledgements of the school year's end and gratitude to school leaders, highlighting Elm City's three-year charter renewal and introducing the new Chief of Academic Programs Lavinia Mackall who joined AF earlier in the month.

IV. Mission Moment

A mission moment was presented by Sam Lucky where the Elm City team was commended for fostering a positive and collaborative atmosphere during state testing, with events such as pep rallies and participation from middle school cheerleaders. ES Principal Serena's second annual principal Award dinner was also celebrated, underscoring community pride and engagement through academic and character awards.

V. Amistad Academy HS Update

Rosie Basile provided an update about the Amistad High School, citing significant enrollment and academic progress updates. She reported substantial growth in AP exam scores at Amistad High, especially in AP World History, and discussed ongoing attendance issues and strategies involving academic deans. Enrollment is projected to exceed targets, with efforts to over-enroll and eliminate waitlists.

The board discussed challenges with chronic absenteeism, particularly among 9th grade students, and explored potential solutions including morning assemblies and events to showcase the school to incoming students.

When discussing SAT and college matriculation gaps, Rosie identified that stronger math and ELA instruction would be key indicators for improving SAT outcomes, citing continued growth in STAR reading scores, improved performance on IAs, increased AP course enrollment, and expanded course offerings as leading indicators for future improvements.

VI. **SY 26 Reflections and Looking Ahead to SY 27**

Amy D'Angelo shared reflections focused on organizational priorities and lessons learned from the previous year. She highlighted the need to focus on outcomes rather than inputs, and a shift toward clarity of targets and goals, introducing shared metrics called "top line goals" to align network support teams and reduce the noise from multiple KPIs. The organization is pivoting to focus on key outcomes including enrollment, chronic absenteeism, daily attendance, and state test performance, with specific targets like 10% year-over-year gains on SBAC.

In response to board member questions, the team discussed staffing noting that the middle school had four vacancies which the recruitment team was prioritizing and redirecting applicants from other schools to address the critical staffing needs.

Principal Serena Johnson named coaching and development as a core priority at Elm City Elementary,and noted strong teacher retention overall, though it was more challenging to retain teachers in kindergarten through second grade compared to third and fourth grade positions, with the upper school having more veteran teachers.

The board discussed the significance of student culture and experience in relation to enrollment and persistence, with Liv Levey explaining that they are implementing student persistent KPIs to measure whether students and families want to stay in the community.

VII. **Charter Renewal Update**

Amy D'Angelo shared that charter renewal was granted unanimously for three years, with ongoing efforts to increase traditionally certified teachers. Board governance changes are planned to meet state requirements, including more meetings and teacher and parent representation. Continuous improvement will target chronic absenteeism and academic gains. Community support was evident at the renewal meeting, with representatives from various groups present, demonstrating strong community backing.

VIII. **Executive Session on EOY Principal Evaluations**

Mr. Ferguson stated that the board needed to go into executive session to discuss principal EOY evaluations. He made a motion for the Elm City College Prep Board to enter an Executive session to discuss this topic. The motion was seconded by LaVonta Bryant. All were in favor and the board entered the executive session at 6:28 pm and exited at 6:44 pm.

IX. **Finance Committee Report**

CFO Ben Schanback presented the FY26 results showing an anticipated deficit due to Amistad High's under-enrollment challenges, with Employee Retention Credit funds helping to address the gap. He walked the board through the proposed budget for FY 27, describing new state funding received that would be held in reserve for addressing long-term needs. He also introduced a capital budget, detailing investments in facilities improvements and technology upgrades. He requested the board's approval on the $15 million balanced budget.

Operating Budget	FY 2027 *($ in millions)*
Revenue	
Per Pupil Revenue	$10.8
Employee Retention Credit Reserve	$0.2
Philanthropy	$2.0
All Other	$1.9
Total Revenue	$14.9
Expenses	
Personnel	$8.9
Nonpersonnel	$6.0
Total Expenses	$14.9
Surplus/(Deficit):	**$0.0**

Capital Budget	FY 2027 *($ in millions)*
Planned Cash Expenditures:	$0.0
Planned ERC Expenditures:	$0.4
Planned Operating:	$0.0
Planned Other Sources:	$0.0
Total Capital Expenditures:	**$0.4**

X. **Board Resolutions**

Mr. Ferguson requested a motion for the board to approve the consent agenda which included the budget approval. There was a motion by LaVonta Bryant, seconded by Kevin Torres. All were in favor and the consent agenda passed.

<u>Consent Agenda</u>

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 20, 2026.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby re-elects Dick Ferguson, to the Board of Directors for a two-year term ending June 30, 2028.

3. BE IT RESOLVED, the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby re-elects LaVonta Bryant as Parent Representative, to the Board of Directors with a two-year term ending June 30, 2028.

4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as presented.

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the Elm City College Prep Board of Directors hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principal as needed through October 31, 2026, for a period of time not to exceed sixteen weeks, based on the recommendations by Achievement First.

School	Interim Principal 1	Interim Principal 2
Elementary School	Erin Laskey	Ruth Ann Phillips
Middle School	Rachel Siegel	N/A

Authorized Signatories for School Food Authority Reimbursement Claims

6. WHEREAS, Elm City College Prep Charter School participates in the National School Lunch Program and other child nutrition programs administered by the Connecticut State Department of Education (“CSDE”); and

   WHEREAS, CSDE requires the School Food Authority to designate authorized officials to approve and sign reimbursement claims and related program documentation; including the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs between CSDE and the School Food Authority; and

   WHEREAS, the Board of Directors desires to update the authorized signatories for the School Food Authority;

   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby designates the following individuals as authorized signatories for the School Food Authority, effective immediately:

   1. Controller, Achievement First, (currently Kimberly Holzmann-Krolick) as Primary Authorized Signatory (Authorized Signer 1 on the ED-099 AGreement for Child Nutrition Programs); and
   2. Regional Director of Operations, Achievement First, (currently Melissa Izzo) as Secondary Authorized Signatory (Authorized Signer 2 on the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs).

   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the foregoing authorized signatories are empowered to execute and sign the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs and any addenda thereto, and to execute any reimbursement claims, certifications, and other documents required for participation in the National School Lunch Program and related child nutrition programs on behalf of the School Food Authority.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the officers of the School and Achievement First are authorized to complete and submit any forms, certifications, or other documentation necessary to implement this resolution and to notify CSDE of these authorized signatories.

XI. **Adjourn**

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Ferguson noted for the board members that the board meeting calendar dates shown on the screen had been set for next year and that calendar holds would be sent out in July.

There being no other business, Mr. Ferguson requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shannon Garfield so moved, and the motion was second by Kevin Torres,

All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.