Amistad Academy Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Achievement First
Monday, June 15, 2026 at 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM EDT
Zoom: https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/84811027256

Attendees:

Board Members: Lorraine Gibbons, Jason Prime, Jim Baron, Jen Alexander, Alex Guzhnay, Shanelle Whyte
AF Staff: Amy D'Angelo, Ben Schanback, Samantha Lucky, Ash Rodriquez, Sulafa Bashir, Olivia Levey

I. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Lorraine Gibbons at 5:32 pm.

II. **Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present.

III. **Welcome and Agenda Overview**

Ms. Gibbons introduced Ricky Horton, a teacher at Amistad High School, who was a prospective board member that the board would be voting on to serve as a teacher representative later in the meeting.

Amy D'Angelo welcomed participants and explained that the absence of principals at this meeting was due to end-of-year priorities and emphasized the importance of consistent principal participation in future meetings, announcing a rotation system for next year.

IV. **Mission Moment**

The mission moment focused on Amistad High School celebrating senior signing day and graduation, with four students receiving the Pennington Scholarship for full rides to the HBCU of their choice. At least two recipients attended the associated elementary and middle school, highlighting the holistic K-12 educational experience provided by the school.

V. **Finance Committee Report**

CFO Ben Schanback presented the Finance Committee report covering Q3 2026 results showing an anticipated deficit due to Amistad High's under-enrollment challenges, with Employee Retention Credit funds helping to address the gap.

He shared the proposed budget for school year 26-27 which included a conservative projection, revising down the number of students at Amistad High School due to the expected enrollment decline. He also shared new state funding received that would be held in reserve for addressing long-term needs, and introduced a new capital budget, detailing a minor investment in an oven replacement funded by ERC. He requested the board's approval on the $19 million balanced budget.

Operating Budget	FY 2027 *($ in millions)*
Revenue	
Per Pupil Revenue	$15.5
Employee Retention Credit Reserve	$0.2
Philanthropy	$1.0
All Other	$2.5
Total Revenue	$19.2
Expenses	
Personnel	$11.1
Nonpersonnel	$8.1
Total Expenses	$19.2
Surplus/(Deficit):	**$0.0**

Capital Budget	FY 2027 *($ in millions)*
Planned Cash Expenditures:	$0.00
Planned ERC Expenditures:	$0.02
Planned Operating:	$0.00
Planned Other Sources:	$0.00
Total Capital Expenditures:	**$0.02**

VI. **Board Resolutions**

Ms. Gibbons moved on to the approval of the board resolutions. She asked if there were any questions about the proposed resolutions, and hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Jason Prime so moved, seconded by Alex Guzhnay. All were in favor and the consent agenda passed.

<u>Consent Agenda</u>

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 21, 2026.

2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amistad Academy Board of Directors reelects Shannelle Whyte to the Board as a parent representative for a 1-year term, ending June 30, 2027.

3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amistad Academy Board of Directors elects Ricky Horton as a teacher representative to the Board for a 3-year term, ending June 30, 2029.

4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby elects the following officers:
    a. Jennifer Alexander, Vice Chair
    b. Shannelle Whyte, Secretary

5. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as presented.

6. BE IT RESOLVED that the Amistad Academy 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	Emma Tingley	Olivia Dardy
Middle School	Khalil Smith	Kevin Sharkey
High School	Myles Maybry	n/a

Authorized Signatories for School Food Authority Reimbursement Claims

7. WHEREAS, Amistad Academy 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 Amistad Academy 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.

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

Ms. Gibbons stated that the board needed to go into executive session to discuss principal EOY evaluations explaining that Ricky would be recused from this discussion due to his role as teacher representative. She requested a motion for the Amistad Academy Board to enter an Executive session to discuss this topic.

The motion was made by Jen Alexander and seconded by Jim Baron. All were in favor and the board entered an executive session at 5:47 and exited at 6:31, following a motion by Jim Baron, seconded by Alex Guzhnay.

Ms. Gibbons needed to leave the board meeting and she designated Vice Chair Jen Alexander to finish chairing the meeting in her absence.

VIII. **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 stated that the organization planned to focus more on student outcomes, rather than classroom inputs, revising training and expectations for leaders and implementing direct-to-teacher professional development to address content knowledge gaps. Internal assessments will be used for better proficiency data, with some alignment to SBAC standards.

Clear TopLine goals are being established across network teams, aiming for an 80% proficiency rate for grades three to eight in Connecticut, with a 10% annual increase as an interim goal. The organization continues to emphasize professionalism, clear goals, and recognition of achievements, accelerating academic outcomes and amplifying external support in Connecticut.

IX. **Charter Renewal Update**

The board discussed the successful three-year renewal of Amistad's charter with a unanimous vote and no questions asked. Amy noted the need to operationalize the renewal conditions including six annual board meetings and monitoring absenteeism and teacher certification, adding that continued focus on teacher certification is planned, as well as supporting MLL and SPED certification through funding and partnerships. She shared a commitment to simplify ongoing reporting, streamlining the process to ensure principals can report meaningful information efficiently.

X. **Adjourn**

Before adjourning, Ms. Alexander noted for the board members that the Amistad Academy board meeting calendar dates for SY 26-27 had been set and had been included in the board package. She stated that the board would be receiving calendar holds for these dates during the month of July.

There being no other business, Ms. Alexander requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Jim Baron, seconded by Alex Guzhnay. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.