# Amistad Academy Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

Achievement First
Wednesday, October 21, 2026 (scheduled 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM EDT)
Amistad High School, 580 Dixwell Ave, New Haven, CT 06511
and via Zoom: https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/81838737368

**Attendees:**

Members: Lorraine Gibbons (Chair), Alex Guzhnay, Jason Prime, Shannelle Whyte

Members present via Zoom: Jim Baron

Absentees: Jennifer Alexander, Ricky Horton, Molly Lynch

AF Staff: Geoffrey Cramton, Amy D'Angelo, Mitchell Johnson, Liv Levy, Samantha Lucky, Lisa Margosian (via Zoom), Ash Rodriquez, Ben Schanback (via Zoom), Jasmine Watts, Jeffery Wooten (via Zoom),

## I. Call to Order and Welcome

Jason Prime, Treasurer, called the Amistad Academy, Inc. Board of Directors into session at 5:50 p.m. and welcomed attendees. A quorum was present. Board Chair Lorraine Gibbons arrived at 5:55 p.m. and presided for the remainder of the meeting.

## II. Public Comment

One member of the public, Peter Butler, an Achievement First staff member, offered public comment. Mr. Butler shared his view that the current school year represents the strongest start at Amistad High School since his involvement, which he attributed to greater adult accountability.

## III. Mission Moment

Regional Superintendent Liv Levy introduced the Mission Moment and recognized the Amistad High School varsity football team's first victory in the school's history. Principal Jasmine Watts spoke to the role of athletics and extracurricular activities in building school pride and supporting student recruitment and retention.

## IV. Academic Update: 2025-26 School Year State Test Results

The board received an update from Amy D'Angelo, Executive Director, and the Regional Superintendents, Liv Levy and Samantha Lucky, on the 2025-26 school year state assessment results for Amistad Academy, including comparisons to host districts, statewide results, and Connecticut charter peers. The update also covered this year's areas of instructional focus.

The board discussed family engagement, college and career pathways for students, and student participation in external enrichment programs.

## V. One AF: K-12 School Design

Due to time constraints, this item was not presented. Materials were included in the board pre-read, and the board was informed that staff would offer a follow-up session on the school design work.

## VI. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Overview and Strategy

The board received an overview of teacher recruitment and retention from Ms. D'Angelo and Jeffery Wooten, Chief People Officer, including current staffing levels and the recruitment strategies planned for the 2027-28 school year.

The board discussed factors contributing to teacher attrition and the systems being implemented to strengthen teacher retention and principal hiring.

## VII. Finance: FY26 Q4 Preliminary Results

The board received the fiscal year 2026 (FY26) fourth-quarter preliminary financial report from Ben Schanback, Chief Financial Officer. It was noted that the year-end close is in process with the organization's auditors, and the Finance Committee review of the audit has been scheduled.

Mr. Schanback also reviewed the updated Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM), which was presented for approval as part of the consent agenda.

## VIII. Executive Session

Ms. Gibbons stated that the board would enter executive session to discuss the charter authorizer's monitoring of the school's corrective action plan. Upon a motion duly made by Jason Prime and seconded by Alex Guzhnay, the board voted to enter executive session with all members present voting in favor.

The board entered executive session at 6:58 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:20 p.m. No action was taken in the executive session.

IX. **Board Business**

**ACTION:** Ms. Gibbons called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was made by Jason Prime and seconded by Alex Guzhnay. No objections or abstentions were noted. The consent agenda passed.

**Consent Agenda**

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from September 09, 2026.

2. BE IT RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the updated accounting policies and procedures manual (APPM) titled "Achievement First Charter Schools Fiscal Policies" dated September 2026.

X. **Adjourn**

There being no further business, Ms. Gibbons asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and approved, the board meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

**Draft reviewed by MDG**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded on January 5, 2027 the Amistad Academy Board of Directors approved the October 21, 2026 meeting minutes.

In witness whereof,

_____ _____

[Board Secretary], Secretary Date