

DRAFT MINUTES

AF Hartford Board Meeting

Monday, March 17, 2014

5:00-7:00 PM

AF Hartford Academy

305 Greenfield Street

Hartford, CT

A meeting of the AF Hartford Board of Directors was held at AF Hartford Academy High school located at 305 Greenfield Street, Hartford. The following members were attendance:

Board Attendance:

Bernice Aljoe, AFHA Board - Yes
Barry Jacobson, AFHA Board - Yes
Jean LaVecchia, AFHA Board - Yes
John Motley, AFHA Board - Yes
Nyema Pinkney, AFHA Board - Yes
Angela Scott, AFHA Board - Yes
Gretchen Unfried-English, AFHA Board - Yes
Lankford Wade, AFHA Board - Yes
Nancy Zwiener, AFHA Board - Yes
Laura Estes, AFHA Board - No
Denise Gallucci, AFHA Board - No
James Morton, AFHA Board - No
Colleen Palmer, AFHA Board - No
Marshall Ruben, AFHA Board – No

Others in attendance:

Hillary Bridges, AF Network Support - Yes
D. Scot Kerr, AF Network Support - Yes
Emily Banks, School Leadership - Yes
Liz Ferguson, School Leadership - Yes
Jeff House, School Leadership - Yes, left at 6:09
Marc Michaelson, AF Network Support – Yes, via phone, 6:30 -
Benjamin Cruse, School Leadership – Yes, via phone, 6:30 - 6:48

Call to Order

Board Chair, Jean LaVecchia called the meeting to order at 5:11 pm

Ms. LaVecchia opened the meeting by welcoming new board members, two of whom were at the meeting in person, Angela Scott and Barry Jacobson, and two were on the phone in transit to

the meeting, Nymea Pinkney and Lankford Wade. The Chair explained that we had distributed a Unanimous Written Board Consent to approve the new directors, but to make it official she asked for a motion to elect them at the meeting.

John Motley moved to adopt resolution 1 - 4, electing each of the directors to the classes and terms specified in the resolutions. Seconded by Nancy Zwiener. All in favor.

Election of New Board Members

1. Elect Lankford Wade
 - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Lankford Wade as a Class II Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/16.
2. Elect Nyema Pinkney
 - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Nyema Pinkney as a Class II Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/16.
3. Elect Angela Scott
 - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Angela Scott as a Class III Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/14.
4. Elect Barry Jacobson
 - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Barry Jacobson as a Class III Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/14.

Ms. LaVecchia then asked others in attendance to introduce themselves and the principals gave their reports.

1. Liz Ferguson gave a report of bright spots and growth areas at the elementary school.
 - a. Bright Spots
 - i. Enrollment looks good; hoping to move to 96 per grade with backfilling
 - ii. 30-40% range for the IA
 - b. Growth Areas
 - i. Liz discussed the fact that attendance has slipped below the school's 98% goal to 97% with weather being a contributing factor.
 - ii. She is continuing to work with teachers to prepare them to analyze and texts at a high level to support the rigor of the Common Core standards
 - iii. Liz discussed her desire to implement an outside anti-bullying curriculum to support the school's safe school climate plan. The board discussed ideas and made suggestions of programs (I am afraid is what they're using now)
 - Liz will look into NCCJ (NCCJ National Conference of Community and Justice and the Anti-Defamation League)

- Angela Scott will follow-up with the name of program
- Scot Kerr suggested the Anti-Defamation League

Ms. Ferguson completed her report and turned the floor over to Jeff House, AFHA Middle School Principal who discussed his bright spots and growth areas of his school

- Growth Areas
 - Middle school attendance is a concern at 96% (MS)
 - suspension numbers are high (MS)- had a large number of incidents with multi-day suspension- by far the highest in the network
 - identifying students with special needs and creating systems to support them
- Bright Spots
 - Additional study hall time to provide additional supports and hired a new dean of students and strengthened math by changing around staff (MS)
 - Literacy scores on the are good (MS)
 - SPED - we are providing greater supports with a SPED education teacher at each grade level and a Dean overseeing them (MS)

Mr. House completed his report and introduced Emily Banks, principal of the high school who discussed bright spots and growth areas.

- Growth Areas
 - a. Algebra 1
 - b. Attendance is still very strong but slipped somewhat. Some students have multiple day absences.
 - c. Forecasting next year's enrollment is a bit challenging to forecast the number of scholars matriculating from both the AF and Jumoke middle schools.
- Bright Spots
 1. Lots of students applying to pre-college summer programs (Cornell, Exeter, Columbia, Taft)- investments in school and college are higher once they've had a summer program- purely based on GPA
 2. Working hard to find internships (for next tier of students)- unpaid internships. Some suggestions came from board members:
 - a. Blue Hills Civic Association
 - b. Change the program description to "job shadow" instead of "internship" to assist with those companies that have strict rules around paying

interns.

3. Quality of learning has gone up- students spend 3 days learning one subject- the third day is a seminar forum
4. APs are in mid-May-kids came in on Saturday to take an AP practice test- all 42 students were on time except for 1

With the conclusion of the principal reports, Ms. LaVecchia excused the Principals and thanked them for their dedication to our scholars.

Board Business

1. Approve Minutes of 12/2/13 Meeting (Resolution 5)

Approve December 3, 2013 Minutes

- a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby approves the December 3, 2013 Meeting Minutes as drafted.

Moved:Nancy Zwiener

Second:Barry Jacobson

All in Favor

2. Approve YTD Financial Reports (Resolution 6)

Ms. LaVecchia gave the Treasurer's report. She discussed the fact that all schools are running surpluses or on budget. A contributing factor was the receipt of additional Title 1 funding that is derived from a federal and state education funding formula. Ms. LaVecchia suggested that some of the surplus might be spent on the school climate curriculums discussed above.

Ms. LaVecchia than asked for a motion to approve the YTD financials.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby accepts the YTD Financial report dated 1/31/14 as presented.

Moved:Nancy Zwiener

Second:Nyema Pinkney

All in Favor

Board Discussion

Ms. LaVecchia explained what each of the committees will focus on and the board reviewed the grid of committee members and candidates. Mr. Kerr explained that former ad hoc committees were shaded and on the left. Prospective committees are on the right.

Jean asked each of the Board members to let Scot know which committee they would like to serve on.

1. Committee Appointments
 - a. Principal Committee
 - b. Governance/Nominating Committee
 - c. Finance Committee
2. Student recruitment and Advocacy
 - a. Ben Cruse, principal of the new AF Summit Middle School reported that applications to the new school are behind goal due to late approval of the school and not being included on the printed version of the Hartford Choice application.
 - b. Ben has been on TV and radio to get the word out about AF Summit. Other outreach includes:
 - i. New Community Outreach Fellow on Team X, Nicola Allen, Voices of Women of Color and HART are all helping with outreach
 - ii. Printed application is in the field now as is an "Enrollment Interest Form" which enables direct enrollments after the Hartford Choice Lottery is run
 - iii. Other school building news: Have done an incredible job building staff for the school; hired TFA core member, Dean of Students out of Columbia Teacher's college, 2 teachers from AFHA

Executive Session

At 6:48 Jean LaVecchia excused the parent and teacher representatives and asked for a motion to to enter executive session to discuss specific personnel matters. The motion was made by Nancy Zwiener and seconded by Angela Scott. All in favor.

The Board exited executive session at 7:25, and immediately adjourned the regular meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm by Jean LaVecchia.

Minutes taken by: Hillary Bridges