

Achievement First - Providence

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday December 2, 2015 at 5:30 PM

Location

370 Hartford Avenue, Providence RI 02909

Board Members Present

Brian Gallogly, Jorge Elorza, Macky McCleary, Reshma Singh, Soraida Morales

Board Members Absent

Guests Present

Andrea Summers, Ben Smith, Karla Villar, Ken Paul, Kevin Lohela, Morgan Carter, Sarah Blanton, Sheila Dormody

I. Opening Items

A.Record Attendance and Guests

B.Call the Meeting to Order

Jorge Elorza called a meeting of the board of directors of Achievement First - Providence to order on Wednesday Dec 2, 2015 @ 5:42 PM at 370 Hartford Avenue, Providence RI 02909.

II. Reports

AAF Providence Mayoral Academy Elementary School

Ms Morgan Carter updated the board that the new 3rd grade math teacher is doing great and is getting stronger every day. Last week on the math quiz, the scholars had a 12 point jump which reflects all the hard work she and the Academic Dean Dan Ochs have been putting in.

Family feast a couple weeks ago was a huge success. Families came, brought dishes from home. Soraida Morales reported that many parents came and it was quite fun.

Over the past 5-6 weeks, the focus has been on academic rigor and teachers have been planning ever better lessons. Now the school is transitioning into a new period called "rapid feedback" which focuses on giving quick, clear, actionable feedback to the scholars as they do their work.

Ms. Carter said that advocacy is weighing heavily on her as she thinks about the 3rd graders becoming 4th and then 5th graders and wanting them to continue at an AF middle school. AF Providence Mayoral Academy was and is being renovated as a K-8 school and there would be plenty of room for a full elementary and middle school once AF Illuminar moves out.

The school is focusing on engaging staff and parents around diversity and inclusiveness. They are piloting some ideas, including creating forums for parents and staff to be better educators. The cafeteria has three maps, families put up indicators of where they were from and flags decorate the school.

Upcoming events

- December 18th REACH Circle 8am
- January 7th Report Card Night. The school day is a half day, with one-on-one meetings with parents to give updates on how their children are performing. 15 minute conferences. Here is what's going well... Here is what could be improved....Here is what you can do at home.

Organizational Health Survey Results will come back soon and Ms Carter is looking forward to getting the results.

B.AF Illuminar Mayoral Academy Elementary School

Mr. Kevin Lohela reported that student attendance is at 98%. Any scholar who is absent gets a call home. Scholars with more than three absences or four or more tardies, they receive a written notice.

Family Engagement

- AF Illuminar hosted a Report Card Night with 94% attendance. Feedback from parents was positive and translation services were provided as needed. Some parents felt that 15 minutes wasn't enough to engage with teachers so the school is looking to find ways to give more time.
- The fourth meeting of the Family Leadership Committee (FLC) is soon.

Mr. Lohela spoke about the philosophy that all families want the best for their children and he believes that their high numbers of participation reflect that underlying assumption.

Reshma Singh asked about how AF Illuminar is ensuring that kids are feeling strong about their culture and what they bring to school. Ms. Andrea Summers talked about forming partnerships with families around academic success. The FLC itself is diverse and that group encourages the school to pursue ways of helping scholars explore their cultural identity.

On the curriculum side, in dance they study Misty Copeland, in history, the school has decenter world history (starting with Mesopotamia). They are also seeking input directly from families. Mr Lohela shared with the board that he is talking about unconscious bias with teacher candidates prior to making hiring decisions.

Organizational Health

Illuminar took a mini-health survey and results were very high. Staff culture is the top priority. Without an intensely strong staff culture, it is impossible to get the results you want for kids.

C.Community Outreach

Ms. Elizabeth Winangun and Paige Maclean, VP Strategic Partnerships, met with the Superintendent about AF's Residency Program for School Leadership as well as getting Providence teachers into AF's PD sessions. One of the challenges about the Residency Program is that the cohort meets weekly in New Haven. The question then becomes whether we could create enough of a cohort to get weekly meetings in RI and recreate the program in Providence. The Superintendent believed that there could be four school leadership openings that would be receptive to graduates of the Residency Program. Reshma questioned whether other districts might be able to provide other options. Funding opportunities were discussed. We want to be sure the partnerships are two way streets and we can learn from the traditional district schools.

Macky McCleary suggested speaking with BVP about their partnerships work with Pawtucket.

Ms Winangun shared the good news that we already have 400 applications entered into the SchoolMint system for the March 1 lottery for Kindergarten seats.

The board discussed the facilities situation for AF Illuminar in the future. Ms. Winangun reported that some parents are applying to move their kids over to AF PMA so their kids can stay in the current building which they enjoy so much.

III. Finance

A.Treasurer's Report

Macky McCleary gave the financial report to the board. He shared that there is a gap but AF feels strongly that it will be resolved. Within the operating capabilities the organization should be able to maintain solvency.

AF is not getting reimbursed for backfilled seats.

The vote on the charter approval indicated a "projected" enrollment but it is not clear whether that means that if you're below, you don't get funded, or if you go over, you get more.

Reshma suggested that Brian Gallogly speak with Pete Cymrot and perhaps, then, David Abbott.

IV. Board Business

A.Resolution 1: Resolution to Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

M. McCleary made a motion to Accept.

Reshma Singh seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B.Resolution 2 : Resolution to Approve Financial Report

M. McCleary made a motion to accept.

Reshma Singh seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Adjourn Meeting

AAdjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Gallogly