

**Amistad Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
November 16, 2016  
495 Blake Street, New Haven

**I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order by Carolyn Greenspan at 5:46 pm.

The following directors, constituting a quorum, and staff were in attendance:

Carolyn Greenspan, Amistad Chair - Yes	Paul McCraven, Amistad Board - Yes
Caroline Williams, Amistad Vice Chair - Yes (phone)	Khadijah Muhammad, Amistad Board - No
Mike Griffin, Amistad Treasurer - Yes	Tim Pavlis, Amistad Board - Yes
Lorraine Gibbons, Amistad Secretary - Yes	Reginald Simmons, Amistad Board - No
Andrew Lachman, Amistad Board - Yes	
Cassie Crockett, Amistad Board - Yes	
Daisy Gonzales, Amistad Board - No	Christina Pares, AFBA School Leadership - Yes
Jane Levin, Amistad Board - Yes (phone)	Samantha Lucky, AFBA School Leadership - Yes
Pat Sweet, Amistad Board - Yes	Katie Poynter, Amistad School Leadership - Yes
Jennifer Connell, Amistad Board - Yes	Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes
Katrin Czinger, Amistad Board - No	Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

**II. Open Session for Public Comment**

No public comment.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from 9/13/16 and 11/8/16.

Motion by Pat Sweet

Seconded by Caroline Williams

All in favor

**III. Reports**

**A. Executive Session (personnel)**

The board entered executive session at 5:51pm. Motion by Lorraine Gibbons. Seconded by Cassie Crockett.

The board exited executive session at 6:15pm.

### **Additional Business**

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves Christian Pares as principal of Amistad Elementary School.

Motion by Cassie Crockett

Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons

Abstention - Andrew Lachman

All in favor

### **B. Principal Report**

Katie Poynter, Amistad Middle School Principal, shared with the board that they have focused significantly on positive classroom climate at Amistad Middle. They set goals and met them by the tenth week of school. Student survey results were above average for all AF middle schools. In addition, they had a few outlier positive results that reflect the hard work on classroom climate.

All AF schools take weekly quizzes in ELA and math. At Amistad Middle there is no longer a gap in math results compared to NY. They are outperforming several NY middle schools. In ELA, a gap persists but Amistad MS leads the CT middle schools almost every week in almost every grade.

Katie shared, that, on a personal note, one of her former students from 6th grade is one of her daughter's teachers.

Teacher retention from last year to this year was strong. They had a clear plan in mind for this year but a few personnel challenges have arisen due to unexpected health issues. They need a new Dean of Students but Katie has strong internal candidates and the current Dean can go into the classroom and a strong classroom teacher will take the role of Dean.

Katie also spoke about the need to remediate quickly for students who struggle with reading in order to be able to access the rigor in the classroom.

### **C. Board Chair Report**

Carolyn Greenspan shared the importance of setting board goals. She shared the value of the board workshops (Principal in Residence Program and AF through College) and how they impact the issues that the board is seeing. She shared her goals for the board including accelerating the PGP process so the board has a chance to review the PGP before contracts are renewed, evaluating Achievement First, as per the Charter Management Agreement, and others.

The board is interested in getting Christina's weekly newsletter when she starts at Amistad Elementary.

Pat Sweet wants to recommend that all principals need to consistently report in key performance indicators at each board meeting (suspensions, progress on suspensions, IA results). She also shared the importance of re-engaging legislators who haven't been to AF in a while.

Cassie Crockett wants to be sure that everyone is aware of their compliance responsibilities (background check, fingerprinting, training). She also expressed a desire for the board to be nimble and knowledgeable to understand the potential impact of federal changes on charter schools.

Paul McCraven proposed an idea of setting some financial benchmarks as part of board goals.

#### **D. Treasurer Report**

Mike Griffin gave the financial report where he noted the number of students as of October 1 is what the schools receive funding for. Those numbers are what was projected so there is no issue there.

On the audit, he noted a material finding on certification. He then walked the board through a review of the important sections of the audit.

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Motion by Jennifer Connell

Seconded by Tim Pavlis

All in favor

RESOLVED, the Amistad Academy Board of Directors hereby accepts the report of the independent auditors CohnReznik prepared in relation to the fiscal year ended 6/30/16.

Motion by Jennifer Connell

Seconded by Pat Sweet

All in favor

#### **IV. Executive Session (personnel)**

The board entered executive session. Motion by Pat Sweet. Seconded by Lorraine Gibbons.

The board exited executive session at 7:43pm. Motion by Lorraine Gibbons.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm by Carolyn Greenspan