



AGENDA
Elm City College Prep
Board of Directors Meeting

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/82354348956>

Thursday, April 25, 2024, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

I. Call to Order

Richard Ferguson called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

Attendees

The following board members, constituting a quorum, were in attendance:

Name	Present	Name	Present
Dick Ferguson	Y	LaVonta Bryant	Y
Laura Saverin	Y	Patric Gregory	N
Stephanie Ma	Y	Shashank Ghiria	N
Prish Pierce	N	Alajandra Lopez	Y

Also in attendance: Shannon Miller, Blakely Simoneau, Brooke Williams, Charmayne Joseph, Dumar Paden, John Sharkey, Lauren D'Addario, Lisa Margosian, Neil Shah, Ru Sharma, Tanesha Forman and Amy D'Angelo.

II. Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

III. Board Business

- A. Board Resolutions and Approvals: Previous Meeting Minutes, Increasing Educator Diversity Plan, and Healthy Schools (5 mins)

Dick Ferguson asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda resolutions including Previous Meeting Minutes, Increasing Educator Diversity Plan, and Healthy Schools.

Patric Gregory motioned, Laura Saverin seconded. All in favor, none opposed.



IV. Discussion with Achievement First

A. CEO Welcome and Principal Updates (10 mins)

Mr. Ferguson turned the meeting over to AF CEO Lisa Margosian. She welcomed everyone on the call and highlighted that Amy D'Angelo is in attendance as a potential board member. Ms. Margosian took the group through the agenda for the meeting.

Ms. Margosian introduced Elm City College Prep Elementary School Principal Lauren D'Addario for her principal report. Ms. D'Addario shared about a recent event in coordination with the middle school to get kids hyped up for the state tests that begin next week. She also shared about additional upcoming events for the board to attend. Ms. D'Addario discussed her school's strong results from both the organizational health data and family and student experience data. Mr. Ferguson noted that Ms. D'Addario will be leaving the school at the end of the year and thanked her for her many years of service to Achievement First.

Tanesha Forman, Elm City College Prep Middle School Principal, presented her principal report next. She discussed a mentoring program that has allowed them to provide small group math interventions which is a critical need due to staffing shortages. She said students have benefited from the targeted math support in advance of the state tests. Ms. Foreman mentioned that staff organizational health is in the top three for middle schools, and family surveys showed 90% favorability with a 60% completion rate. Student experience survey data was at 64%.

Ms. Foreman highlighted upcoming events including SBAC testing, a basketball challenge, a Ramadan celebration, the Fairhaven parade, and a theater production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." There will also be a career Day featuring various small businesses and public services, offering students insights into different careers and college or career readiness.

B. Postsecondary Persistence Approach and Results (30 mins)

Dumar Paden presented data for the class of 2023 revealed that 87% of AF scholars showed up to their post-secondary plans post high school, outperforming national high poverty schools at 50%. Since the first graduating class in 2010, 46% of AF scholars have graduated college, showing significant progress compared to national

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high-poverty schools. Mr. Paden explained summer melt as a national phenomenon where a significant percentage of students, especially from high poverty backgrounds, do not show up for college on day one. Achievement First has a notably lower SummerMelt rate of only 8%. Mr. Paden further discussed the strategies and actions to maintain and improve persistence data, with a focus on reducing the dropout rate further.

Amy Christie highlighted the three key conditions for achieving positive outcomes in post-secondary pathways: strong academic preparation, exceptional post-secondary advising, and a high-touch, intentional process. Ms. Christie highlighted the programmatic pieces in high schools, financial aid award letters review, intentional decision-making support, and transitioning to alumni support structures. She expressed concern about the potential enrollment crisis due to FAFSA delays and highlighted the importance of programs like the Collaborative in addressing this issue. Ms. Christie talked about how the program leverages alumni as mentors and advisors for current students, leading to a stronger alumni network and support system.

Lisa Margosian highlighted the need for ongoing fundraising efforts to support alumni programs, mentioning the current expenditure of about 3 million dollars and the anticipated increase to 5.5 million by 2029. There was discussion on the importance of alumni support and the need to avoid a 'colossal waste of money' by not providing adequate post-secondary support.

C. Academic Updates (25 mins)

John Sharkey, Chief Academic Officer, acknowledged the improved performance and the need to continue pressing on with the chosen strategies to further improve student outcomes. Mr. Sharkey presented data showing substantial growth in elementary math and literacy proficiency compared to the previous year, demonstrating the effectiveness of the academic program changes. (40:31)

Mr. Sharkey shared that middle school ELA performance showed growth year over year, outperforming last year's performance and exceeding network-wide goals. Math performance in middle school trending positively year over year, with improvements in various measures.

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Mr. Sharkey discussed the significant decrease in ELA proficiency from the beginning of the year to the second assessment raises concerns about performance in high school. The discussion highlighted the comparison of assessments, growth in prioritized standards, and the anticipation of stronger results in upcoming assessments. Mr. Sharkey mentioned the continuous improvement cycle leading to stronger growth over time and targeting efforts for improvement. He also discussed focusing on teaching writing skills, curriculum changes emphasizing different types of texts, and projects to enhance writing abilities.

D. Finance Update (10 mins)

Neil Shah and Omar Mayyasi gave the finance committee report. The balance sheet remains relatively unchanged with increased cash reserves, allowing for operational needs and ESSER funds utilization for personnel and non-personnel expenses. There was a discussion on the audit process, including the bidding and interview process, with a recommendation likely to retain Code and Resnick for another year.

V. Board Business

A. Executive Session: Principal Mid Year Reviews & Amistad HS Update (10 mins)

Mr. Ferguson asked for a motion to go into executive session for principal mid year reviews and an updated on Amistad HS. Laura Saverin motioned, Patric Gregory seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The board entered executive session at 6:40 pm.

VI. Adjourn

The board exited executive session at 6:50 pm. Mr. Ferguson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laura Saverin motioned, Patric Gregory seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 pm.



RECOMMENDED RESOLUTIONS

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from December 14, 2023, March 4, 2024, and March 19, 2024.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors hereby approves the School Boards' Increasing Educator Diversity Plan.
3. BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.
4. BE IT RESOLVED that, the Elm City College Preparatory Board of Directors will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sale

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