



JUMOKE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS

REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA

In-person Session

999 Asylum Avenue, 5th Floor Conference Room, Hartford, CT 06105

Loving Scholars, Nurturing Minds and Empowering Futures

Tuesday, October 10, 2023 - 6:00 pm

Meeting ID: 233 393 1960

Passcode: P8rw74

Board Members Present:

Leticia Acosta, Teacher Representative

George Sutherland, Community Representative

Myron Stewart, Community Representative Treasurer

James Michel, Board Chair

Damien Pittola, Community Representative

Janelle Lester, Community Representative

Thomas Smith, Community Representative Secretary

Staff Present: Arnel Hines, Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, Joleen Fernandez, Sharron Solomon-McCarthy, Kashay Green, Heather Jacobi, Latoya Johnson and Tanisha Whitter.

Guest Present: Aryana, Morgan and Jae’Nivea and family.

I. OPENING

The Jumoke Academy Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by the Board Chair. The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the start of the new school year. There were no public comments.

II. BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Opening Remarks

Dr. Gordon-Hall announced that nominations are open for the position of Board Chair for the 2023-24 academic year. Mr. Stewart nominated Mr. Michel as Board Chair for the 2023-24 academic year and this was seconded by Mr. Sutherland. The motion was carried unanimously. The Board announced that at a later meeting the board will vote for the remaining sub-committee assignments.

The Board Chair then turned the remainder of the meeting over to the Chief Academic Officer.



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III. CEO/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

PART A

- **September - Scholar of the Month Recognition**

Aryana Carr, JAH-TED

Principal Johnson presented the scholar of the month for Thelma Ellis Dickerson's Jumoke Academy. Aryana is described as an exemplary scholar who is focused in class and respectful to her peers.

Morgan Benjamin, JAH-SMaRT

Principal Green presented for Jumoke Academy Honors SMaRT. She stated that she has seen Morgan grow from elementary to middle school. He is a respectful scholar who brings his enthusiasm to the learning environment.

Jae'Nivea Williamson, JAH-HC

Principal Jacobi presented for Jumoke Academy Honors at the Hartford Conservatory. Jae'Nivea has improved greatly since the beginning of the year. She participates in class and asks questions.

The Chief Academic Officer presented a gift bag to each scholar and congratulated them for their hard work. The Board Chair congratulated the scholars & encouraged the scholars to continue to do well.

PART B

- **District Updates**

Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, CAO

1. **District Report**

- **Board Retreat Review**

During the Board Retreat our guest speaker, Taylor Shead the CEO and founder of Stemuli spoke profoundly about the importance of technology in education and keeping students engaged. The District Improvement Plan and Strategic Roadmap were discussed in detail. The Academy District Improvement Plan aligned with Ms. Shead's recommendations as we have committed to move our scholars forward with current trends in Next Level Frontier Industries.

- **CTCSA Board Symposium**

The CT Charter Schools Association has a scheduled Board Symposium on Wednesday, Oct 25, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Common Ground High School in New Haven. At least one board member is asked to attend on the behalf of the board. The Executive Assistant will send the information to the board via email.

- **Gala Review**

We are excited to announce that ticket sales for the gala went well. We were 10 tickets short of being sold out for the event. The event was awesome and we appreciate the board support and donations. The Fire sale is open and is available on the website.



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- **Charter School Renewal**

In preparation for the Academy charter renewal the board is asked to arrive at 12:30 pm at Jumoke Academy Honors SMaRT for lunch after which they will attend the Focus group from 1:15-2:15 pm. The Board Chair asked for a description of the process. The Chief Academic Officer explained that the Academy had to submit an application for renewal on September 8, 2023. This is followed by the scheduled site visit on November 7th and culminates with the public hearing on January 23, 2024. The questions to be asked of the board are unknown to the Academy.

The Board Chair asked if there were any questions. Mr. Smith mentioned that in the past the board would do a bit of preparation. The board Chair stated that it would be helpful to have a similar discussion. Ms. Lester stated that during the last renewal process the district Strategic Roadmap and District Improvement Plan data were very useful. The Academy is asked to provide opportunities for the board to discuss, review and ask questions. This could be a remote session.

PART C

- **Academic Department Dr. Marie-Gordon Hall, CAO**
 - **Curriculum & Instruction Update**

The Chief Academic Officer stated that the Academy is wrapping up Fall assessments. Professional Development took place October 9th, staff participated in training on new resources, and they were also given time for lesson planning. This Thursday, October 12th we will host our first Parent Workshop. The theme is “What is My Scholar Learning.” Members of the Academic team will provide instruction on how parents can utilize the resources available to them to support learning at home. We will begin with dinner and close out the evening with Q&A. The Academy will also sell uniforms onsite at a discounted price.

The Board Chair asked if assessments will be used to drive plans for improving scholars’ scores and when the assessments will take place. The Chief Academic Officer explained that scholars are tested twice, once in the Winter and again in the Spring after which the results are reviewed and learning interventions are provided where needed.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of June Minutes**
- June, July & August Financial Statements**

The Board Chair requested a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mrs. Acosta. There was no abstention and the vote was carried unanimously.



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The CFO stated that the June report is not yet audited and is preliminary until audited, however the July and August reports are completed. If there are changes the board will need to vote on its approval.

V. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT Mr. Arnel Hines, CFO

i. Audit Update

THE CFO stated that the 2022-23 Fiscal year audit has started. Both the CFO and Accountant will work closely with the auditor to finalize. The junior auditor is no longer with O'Connor & Pace. The CFO has been meeting with the senior auditor. Mr. Stewart asked what is the due date for the audit. The CFO stated that the audit must be submitted by December 31, 2023.

No additional questions were asked.

VI. SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. 325 Blue Hills Avenue Status Update

**Mr. Thomas Smith, Sub-Committee Chair
& Mr. Arnel Hines, CFO**

The Building Sub-committee met on September 20th as there were concerns regarding the project completion for the 325 Blue Hills Avenue property and changes in cost. Mr. Smith stated that the initial cost was \$590,000. Concerns were raised about Downes Construction not giving attention to the project claiming that we are a smaller company. The Academy requested information on what minority contractors Downes Construction had contacted for bids and asked that they include a minimum of three contractors that are plumbers, electricians and carpenters. Downes Construction claimed none of the minority contractors responded to bid for the project.

The Board Chair asked if we knew why none of the minority contractors responded. Mr. Smith stated that Downes Construction said some are not responding because of prevailing wage scale. The academy has since pushed back for more efforts on the part of Downes Construction for additional information.

Mr. Smith asked the CFO if the Academy received any additional information from Downes Construction. The CFO stated that he has sent referrals to Downes Construction and advised each Contractor to reach out to him directly if they are unresponsive.

Mr. Sutherland asked for clarity on prevailing wages. The Board Chair stated that prevailing wage ensures that contractors pay employees a certain wage based on similar work across the threshold, leveraging wages across the board. Prevailing wage is also applicable to grants according to the CFO.



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Mr. Sutherland inquired about a contractor he recommended. The CFO stated that he spoke with the contractor whose information was passed on to Downes Construction to bid for the project. The Board Chair stated that it's time to move forward with another contractor.

Mr. Smith stated that during the Sub-committee meeting it was suggested that the Academy reach out to John Menna for recommendations. The CFO stated that the roof has been completed. The Academy was initially told that a wrap-around ramp was too expensive and a lift would be more cost effective. Now we are being told that the lift is far more expensive than the wrap around ramp due to material cost. Mr. Stewart stated that he has another contractor who will bid on the project. The CFO stated that we will need to have a RFP to move forward with another contractor.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no executive session.

VIII. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

There were no items for future agenda.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The Board Chair requested a motion for the adjournment of the board meeting. Mr. Thomas moved for the adjournment and this was seconded by Mr. Sutherland. The vote was carried unanimously at 6:34 pm.