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# JUMOKE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

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## REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA

### Zoom Session

**“Loving Scholars, Nurturing Minds, Empowering Futures”**

**Tuesday, January 9, 2024 - 6:04 - 6:56 pm**

Meeting ID: 832 1992 8417

Passcode: 6pVmxT

#### Board Members Present:

Suzette Debetham-Brown, Community Representative  
 Myron Stewart, Community Representative  
 George Sutherland, Community Representative  
 Mrs. Leticia Acosta, Teacher Representative  
 James Michel, Community Representative  
 Janelle Lester, Community Representative  
 Thomas Smith, Community Representative

Staff Present: Dr. Troy A. Monroe, Arnel Hines, Dr. Gordon-Hall, Mrs. Solomon-McCarthy, Kashay Green, Heather Jacobi, Latoya Johnson, Summer Myles and Tanisha Whitter.

Guests Present: Chrishawn and family, Markayla and family.

#### **i. OPENING**

Welcome & Public Comments

The Jumoke Academy Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by the Board Chair at 6:04 pm.

#### **II. BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Opening Remarks

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the first board meeting of the year. He again welcomed the two new board members as well. There were no public comments. The Board Chair welcomed staff to the new school year and encouraged everyone to continue their efforts to educate our scholars as they are the future leaders.

#### **III. CEO/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT PART A**

- December - Scholar of the Month Recognition

Chrishawn Hamilton, JAH-TED

The CEO/Superintendent introduced Chrishawn to the Board of Directors. Dean Myles presented Thelma Ellis Dickerson Elementary scholar of the month. Chrishawn is described as having a positive attitude and being a role model for his peers. The CEO/Superintendent congratulated Chrishawn & his family, and also stated that we look forward to his continued growth. A gift bag will be brought to the elementary school as a reward for his hard work.

Markayla Johnson, JAH-SMaRT

The CEO/Superintendent introduced Markayla to the Board of Directors. Principal Green presented for Jumoke Honors SMaRT Research and Technology. Markayla is described as a great role model. She advocates for herself and asks questions. The 5th grade team was happy to select her as SMaRT December scholar of the month.

## Victoria Ward, JAH-HC

The CEO/Superintendent introduced Victoria to the Board of Directors. Principal Jacobi presented for Jumoke Academy at the Hartford Conservatory. Victoria takes pride in her work. She is not afraid to ask questions when faced with a challenge. She completes her work efficiently and we are excited to see her grow and prepare for transition to high school. The CEO/Superintendent congratulated Victoria for a job well done! The Board Chair congratulated all three scholars and stated that he looks forward to hearing more about their individual accomplishments.

### **PART B**

- District Updates

Dr. Troy A. Monroe, CEO/Superintendent

- 1. District Report

- Holiday Support for Families

The Academy was adopted by the Hartford Chapter of Kappa Fraternity. They have committed to supporting the Academy through donations to scholars and families in need. One family was given funding which offered an opportunity for them to shop for items at the supermarket for Thanksgiving. This was a significant success and the selected family was very appreciative.

- Room 2 Read Initiative

Room to Read partnered with Hartford Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity to provide reading materials for scholars to encourage reading and support our literacy program. Room to Read believes that children that are well educated will succeed. On January 11th books were donated to the elementary school under this initiative; the selected literature this year is, I am Martin Luther King, Jr. written by Brad Meltzer. The theme of the book focuses on how ordinary people change the world.

- MLK Brunch

The Jumoke Academy MLK Brunch is returning to the Academy and is being spearheaded by Dr. Gordon-Hall. The event includes brunch, scholars' performances and will take place on January 15th at SMaRT from 10:00-12:30 pm. Board members are invited to attend this event and enjoy brunch with our community.

- Charter School Renewal – Public Hearing

The Public Hearing for the Academy's charter renewal will take place on January 23rd at SMaRT in the auditorium from 6:00-8:00 pm. This is an opportunity for the community to advocate for the Academy giving their testimony concerning their experiences from the perspective of scholars, parents, staff and vendors. Members of the board are invited to attend and give their testimony as well. The Board Chair implored the board members to attend for the future of the Academy. The board engagement is an essential component of the Academy's charter renewal. Shuttle van services will be provided and will run to and from the elementary school to the middle school from 5:30 pm through to 8:15 pm.

- Districtwide Spelling Bee

Our annual Spelling Bee finale will take place on January 31st at SMaRT from 5:30 - 7:00 pm. The winner will enter the Statewide Spelling Bee competition. This is a great opportunity to see our scholars compete. Last year 's event was a great success and members of the board are invited to attend this year's event.

- PCLB Site Visit

The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation (PCLB) will visit the Academy on February 27th. This foundation has supported the Academy with funding that has helped us tremendously over the years. The Board Chair asked if board representation is needed. The CEO/Superintendent confirmed that the site visit includes classroom visits and a formal meeting focused on discussion around how the foundation can support the Academy; the board is not required to attend. No additional questions were asked.

- Edlio - Jumoke Academy App

The Academy is in the process of launching an App for our community. This App will provide the entire district and families with access to the Academy right from their phones. We are currently in the planning stage and will launch the App in mid-February.

### Part C

- Project Lead the Way Grant

Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, CAO

Dr. Gordon-Hall applied for the Project Lead the Way Grant. This grant will cover training for teachers and hands-on workshops which focus on supporting scholars' success in STEM education in middle school. The award is \$9,100 over two years which will cover all fees and training for up to 6 teachers to support the Academy as a Project Lead the Way school. We also applied for a K-5th grade grant and are waiting for the status update. The Board Chair congratulated Dr. Gordon-Hall and the team for a job well done.

### Part D

Sharron Solomon-McCarthy

Student Support Services Director

- Attendance

The Academy has seen a dip in truancy but we are working through some challenges with some scholars irregular attendance. The numbers are still extremely high and that's a concern. One contributing factor is that families go away for extended periods and are not completing a withdrawal form which by State standards requires the district to keep those scholars on the enrollment books. We find that some families have also moved out of State. In addition we experience high absenteeism before and after a vacation.

The State has mandated that all scholars in PreK are fully vaccinated as of December 31 through to April 1st. Any PreK scholar not fully vaccinated is not permitted to attend school. Some families opted not to get their scholars vaccinated. The Academy has partnered with Community Health Clinic and offered Flu vaccines to support families. The Student Support Services Department has done attendance visits and completed 75 home visits last school year. Attended Talk Tuesdays & Cafe Friday once per month, these are State meetings which provide information on how to address the attendance issues across school districts Statewide. The Academy holds district-wide monthly attendance meetings. The State now uses a new slogan - "School is Better with You," to change the narrative to support scholars' attendance. Our district has become creative in providing dress down days, pizza days and other forms of incentives to encourage attendance. Letters are sent to families monthly and telephone calls are made when scholars are exhibiting truancy behaviors.

Average daily attendance at T.E.D. from September to December is 90%. We have seen where our PreK and K & 4th grade scholars' attendance dropped. At JAH-HC we made gains with an increase in attendance for 8th grade scholars from 83% to 92%, we also saw an increase in attendance for 6th grade up from 90% to 93%. At JAH-SMaRT attendance remains stable with 5th grade and an increase in attendance for 7th grade. We did see a drop in attendance however for both 6th and 8th grade. The Board Chair asked for an update at a follow up meeting requesting information on what the Academy is doing to lower the number of scholars not attending school regularly.

- Behavioral Support

There has been an escalation in behavioral issues as scholars are not learning appropriate behaviors which can become disruptive to the learning environment. In response to this concern the State has offered grants for Behavioral support and the Academy has been utilizing the grant funds to fill openings for clinical staff. They have also provided Student Emotional Learning (SEL) professional development and LEAP which focuses on re-engaging families back into school.

The Academy's Response - Student Emotional Learning (SEL).

Staff at the Academy participate in Physical Management Training (PMT). This is training for staff on appropriately administering physical restraints when scholars become out of control. We currently have 21 Staff trained across the district.

The Academy has also engaged Social Workers in Trauma informed Professional Development. We are seeing an increase in trauma such as homelessness and food insecurities. Positive behavior strategies are used to provide support to our teams on best practices.

The Deans and Social Workers are working with parents to partner with staff to ensure that each scholar is successful across the board. The Academy is working with outside agencies as well.

- **My People Clinical Services**

The Academy received State grant funding in the amount of \$200,000 to be used over three years for services for scholars. We hired a Behavior Interventionist at T.E.D. and partnered with My People Clinical Services offering support for our middle schools. Scholars are chosen from Dessa Mini Assessments. This Assessment highlights scholars with high needs for SEL support. This initiative focuses on self awareness, trust and relationship building in an effort to empower our scholars.

The Board Chair asked if there were additional questions from the board. No questions were asked.

Mr. Sutherland received a donation for the Academy. The donor request is that the money be used to support scholars in need. Mr. Sutherland will drop off the check once it is received. The Board Chair thanked Mr. Sutherland for the support and thanked the donor for his contribution to the Academy. The CEO/Superintendent expressed his appreciation to both Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Nedd.

#### **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

- i. Approval of December Minutes
- ii. November Financial Statement

The Board Chair requested a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Stewart motioned for the approval and this was seconded by Ms. Lester and Mr. Sutherland. The Motion carried unanimously.

#### **V. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT**

Mr. Arnel Hines, CFO

- i. Audit Update
  - a. EFS/AUP
  - b. Annual Audit

The CFO provided an update that the EFS/AUP has been filed and was received by the State as of January 2, 2024. There are no penalties to the Academy. The Annual audit is to be completed by the end of the month, January 31, 2024. The Board Chair asked if there were any questions from the board, none were asked.

#### **VI. SUB COMMITTEE REPORT**

- i. RFP Update

The Academy's RFP was posted in the Hartford Courant. The cut off date for proposals was scheduled for January 8th. We did not receive any bids. We learned that London Way, LLC and Matter Real Estate are interested in the project. The RFP will be extended through to February 5th at 5:00 pm.

#### **VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There were no executive session.

#### **VIII. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

There were no items for future agenda.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The CEO/Superintendent informed the board that Mrs. Smith-Winfrey's mother passed away on New Year's Day. The Board Chair encouraged members of the board to reach out to her.

The Board Chair requested a motion for the adjournment of the meeting. Mrs. DeBetham-Brown made the motion and this was seconded by Mr. Sutherland. The vote was carried unanimously and the Jumoke Academy Board of Directors meeting concluded at 6:56 pm.