



JUMOKE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

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,

December 12, 2023 - 6:02-7:33 pm

Meeting ID: 886 6258 1957

Passcode: 7xRnWka

Board Members present:

Myron Stewart, Community Representative Treasurer

George Sutherland, Community Representative

Suzette DeBeathan- Brown, Community Representative

Vera Smith-Winfre, Community Representative

Janelle Lester, Community Representative

Thomas Smith, Community Representative Secretary

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

Guest Present: Vanya and family and Kalonji and family.

OPENING

Welcome & Public Comments

The Jumoke Academy Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

There were no public comments.

BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Opening Remarks

- Welcome Newly Appointed Board Members:
 - Mrs. Vera Smith-Winfree
 - Mrs. Suzette DeBeatham-Brown

The Vice Chair welcomed Suzette DeBeatham-Brown and Vera Smith-Winfree as newly appointed board of Directors.

Mrs. Vera Smith-Winfree currently serves as the Executive Director of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce and Mrs. Suzette DeBetham-Brown is the Deputy Commissioner for the State of Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services.



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The CEO welcomed both new board members and thanked them for their commitment to the Academy and also welcomed parents who attended the meeting in support of their scholars of the month.

CEO/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

PART A

- November - Scholar of the Month Recognition

Vanya Harding, JAH-TED

Principal Johnson presented the scholar of the month for Thelma Ellis Dickerson's Jumoke Academy. Vanya is described as a role model, she has been with the Academy since Pre-K. She meets and exceeds expectations.

The CEO presented a certificate to Vanya and encouraged her to continue to exhibit excellence in all things.

Kalonji Amun, JAH-SMaRT

Principal Green presented Jumoke Academy Honors SMaRT. Kalonji is an 8th grader who embodies the 3-R's. He is prepared for class & shows dedication and takes feedback. He will represent his entire team during the district Spelling Bee competition. He is a valuable member of the Jumoke Academy community.

The CEO extended congratulations to Kalonji and his mom.

Jillian Ventura, JAH-HC

Principal Jacobi presented the scholar of the month for Jumoke Academy Honors at the Hartford Conservatory. Jillian was nominated by the entire 7th and 8th grade team as November scholar of the month. She is self motivated and makes meaningful contributions in class.

PART B

District Updates

Dr. Troy A. Monroe, CEO/Superintendent

- District Report
 - Charter Renewal Updates
 - Public Hearing

We are in our charter renewal process. The Public Hearing is scheduled for January 23, 2024 from 6:00-8:00 pm at JAH-SMaRT. Due to parking constraints we will utilize T.E.D. parking lot as well and run two shuttle vans from T.E.D. to SMaRT.

Communications will be sent out to identify speakers for the public hearing. We are planning to have several speakers as representatives of our community.

CSDE is scheduled for a site visit on December 14th to review our Human Resources department. They may review background checks and personnel files to ensure the Academy is in compliance.



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The Vice Chair requested that a reminder be sent to the Board of Directors regarding the date for the public hearing. The Vice Chair asked if contacts have been made with all speakers to ensure all communications go out to representatives.

The Academy's senior leadership has been working with the school to identify speakers.

- CSDE Human Resources Review

- Human Resources Manager Update

Mrs. Ana Marcil is welcomed as our newest HR Manager. She completed Title IX Training. She will have further training in the area of education.

PART C

Academic Department

Dr. Marie-Gordon Hall, CAO

- Curriculum & Instruction Update
 - 2023-24 Academic Achievement

Dr. Gordon-Hall provided a snapshot of Fall assessments.

Spring NWEA assessment continues to trend upwards in both Math and ELA. We are seeing a steady growth in our Fall assessments. The goal is to get our scholars to proficient level. Our scholars' ELA growth was significant. Science is tested in grades 8, 5 & 11. Our 5th and 8th graders have scored at levels 3 and 4. We received a lower score in the Arts due to the 10th graders attached to Jumoke Academy at Achievement First. The Academy has exceeded scores in comparison to our pre-covid scores.

The Vice Chair asked if the assessment is the same statewide. The Chief Academic Officer confirmed that the same assessment is administered across the State.

The breakdown by cohorts indicate that a few scholars who were homeschooled have returned to the Academy. Our 7th grade cohort is a strong group academically. We also have one class of 8th graders who are outperforming the State because they are exposed to Algebra I.

The State mandated the Science of Reading. K-3 is no longer taking NWEA, only 4-8 is currently taking NWEA Assessments.

We are utilizing Amira to support scholar learning. Amira serves as a personalized tutor for scholars. Amira tracks scholars' proficiency. The on track indicator means that scholars are on track for their grade level. Teachers are being trained on how to administer Amira and we are learning more about the program as a district.

- Academic Plan of Action

Mrs. Kashay Green & Heather Jacobi,
Principals (SMaRT & HC)

Latoya Johnson, Principal (T.E.D)

Principal Johnson shared that interventions support strategies for lessons.



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Each campus has data teams within their grade level. Teachers meet with the Instructional Coach and Reading Interventionist to support scholars. Weekly or biweekly data teams discussions are scheduled. Data charts are available in the classrooms and this is tracked. In the 3rd-8th grade we hold goal setting meetings with scholars; this helps scholars to own the data and it also helps staff become knowledgeable with the data.

A virtual data chat will be held with families. All stakeholders will be able to support our scholars. Data is used to create and facilitate group instructions in small group settings.

A 30-minute block of time is used for teachers to focus the lesson on areas that need to be retaught. IAB's are directly aligned with what scholars will take at the end of the year. IAB's are used to own in on what needs to be done to support scholars.

Reading Intervention Groups.

The Reading Interventionist pulls tier 2 groups to identify gaps in reading to support closing the achievement gap.

iReady Designed Lessons

Amira in action - video of kindergarten scholar utilizing the program. If the scholar had errors Amira would create a personalized plan for the scholar.

Ms. Lester asked if Amira is available to use at home. Dr. Gordon-Hall confirmed that the tool is available to scholars at home but the results go directly to the teacher.

Ms. Lester asked what digital resources does the Academy have that are available to families. Dr. Gordon-Hall stated that Parent HUB provides curriculum instruction and tools for families to use to support scholars' learning.

Instruction

Principal Jacobi stated that all instructional materials take the form of scholar binders. All classrooms have elements such as small group instruction. This gives the administrator a map to follow during instruction. Illustrative Math and World Language is used for 5-8 grade scholars at HC. The data is observed, reviewed and administrators provide feedback and PD training for teachers.

Professional Development

Principal Green shared that district wide Professional Development is scheduled as well as building based training. AVID training will take place tomorrow 12/13 across the district. The focus will be on what scholars need based on their performance on IAB's. Feedback is given across the district and staff are surveyed after the Professional Development training and the data is used to direct instruction.

Principals receive coaching from the Instructional Coach. At the middle school level the Reading Interventionist and Instructional Coach helps to build staff capacity and the Chief Academic Officer provides coaching as well.



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The Academy has an annual teacher goal setting as soon as the first benchmark is completed. Social Emotional learning goals are tied to those goals as well. January and February will be used to make adjustments as needed.

Evaluation cycle includes informal and formal sessions. Walkthroughs are scheduled to take place daily. Principals are reviewing the dashboards and providing feedback. As a follow-up within the next day principals are looking for changes that have been made. Weekly and monthly discussions take place to best support scholars based on best practices.

Mr. Sutherland asked if parents are held accountable without crossing any boundaries and are parents supporting the district and are they receptive.

Principal Green stated that getting the scholar to buy-in has proven successful. This is tied to scholar led conferences. Parents are getting involved. When scholars can communicate to parents what they are learning helps parents to see scholars' progress. In addition it is important that staff frame conversation with parents so that it's not confrontational. Parent workshops are being used to educate parents on how to support their scholars.

Mrs. DeBeathan-Brown asked if the material can be simplified for parents' understanding and training should be made available online as well. She also spoke about the acronyms used and the importance of explaining them to ensure we all understand.

Mrs. Smith-Winfree stated that it is important that parents understand the value of advocating for their scholars. That way as they get older children become advocates for themselves.

Ms. Lester asked about comments made by CSDE regarding scholar engagement. During the recent CSDE site visit the State highlighted where scholars were voicing discontent. She would like to hear more from the district on how we plan to address this and possibly bring it back as an agenda item for the board meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

- **Approval of November Minutes**
- **October Financial Statement**

The Vice Chair requested a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was made by George Sutherland and seconded by Janelle Lester. There were two no opposition, however there were two abstentions.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

- **Audit Update**
- **2024-2025 Budget Update**

Mr. Arnel Hines, CFO

Mr. Walter O'Connell
(Oconnell, Pace & Company, PC)

The Chief Financial Officer introduced Walter O'connell from O'connell, Pace and Company, PC. The audit was delayed because they lost two members of staff. Al will return to the Academy Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, he will be joined by Cindy who will work on the State report. The Annual audit needs to be preplanned at a



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minimum 60 days after the end of year. Mr. O'connell suggested a layout of the budgeted timeline with more budgetary format. This should include having bank records and bank statements completed. A calendar layout on when the audit processes can be done would be helpful. Mr. O'connell is willing to discuss this in detail with Dr. Monroe and Mr. Michel.

The Vice Chair asked if the information being requested was consistent on a yearly basis and how the staff shortage impacted the audit completion for the Academy. This is the second year in a row when we have had to file for an extension.

Suzette DeBeatham-Brown stated that given the delay is out of the Academy's control we should not be penalized. Failure to meet the January 2nd deadline should not be a fine to us as the issue is staffing challenges on the part of the audit firm.

Mr. George Sutherland stated that the CFO is not a one man show as he has support from the Accountant and the Accounting Analyst.

Mrs. Suzette DeBetham-Brown asked if the Finance Sub-Committee had already started exploring other options. The CFO is preparing a State approved list for the board to consider.

Mr. Smith stated that it is his understanding that after the first appointed cycle we are allowed to RFP and move forward with a new firm. He then asked if within the previous years the audit was late. We will need to verify if we are still within the window where we are required to stay under the State appointed mandate.

Ms. Lester stated that the audit firm is not taking responsibility for the audit.

Mrs. Smith Winfree asked that we should have in writing that we are not charged when the audit firm fails to complete the audit in a timely manner.

The audit will remain as a recurring agenda item for the board meeting.

- 2024-2025 Budget Update

The CFO stated that we will begin preparing files for the annual budget. The final budget is approved in June.

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 325 Blue Hills Avenue Update

Downes Construction removed the chimney and fixed the roof at a total cost of \$77,000. The Academy worked with our attorney to draft a RFP. We received a call from one construction company. We also received a referral, Joe Brooks and are currently



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waiting for responses. RFP will run through to January 8th and scoring rubric will be used. This is a grant funded project and must be spent by September 2024. The 325 Blue Hills Avenue space is to be used as a joint space between Jumoke and the community.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- N/A

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- N/A

ADJOURNMENT

The Vice Chair requested a motion for the adjournment of the board meeting. Mr. Sutherland moved for the adjournment and this was seconded by Mrs. Smith-Winfrey. The motion was carried unanimously at 7:33 pm.