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# JUMOKE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

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## REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

### In-person Session

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

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

**Tuesday, February 13, 2024 - 6:04 - 6:41 pm**

Meeting ID: 876 3480 2825

Passcode: 8vv9Fe

#### Board Members Present:

James Michel, Community Representative  
Leticia Acosta, Teacher Representative  
Vera Smith-Winfree, Community Representative  
Damien Pittola, Community Representative  
Suzette Debeatham-Brown, Community Representative  
Thomas Smith, Community Representative

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

#### **i. OPENING**

##### Welcome & Public Comments

The Jumoke Academy Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by the Board Chair at 6:04 pm who welcomed everyone present. There were no public comments.

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

##### Opening Remarks

There were no additional remarks.

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

##### **PART A**

- January - Scholar of the Month Recognition
  - Juvia Lawson, JAH-TED

The CEO/Superintendent introduced the scholars of the month to the board.

Dean Myles presented the scholar of the month for Thelma Ellis Dickerson’s Jumoke Academy Elementary. Juvia is described as helpful and considerate and kind and friendly and respectful to her peers. She started out in a larger kindergarten classroom which was sized down and she has been thriving. The CEO/Superintendent congratulated Juvia and encouraged her to continue her growth.

- Shaniqua Fletcher, JAH-SMaRT

Principal Green presented Jumoke Honors SMaRT Research and Technology scholar of the month. Shaniqua is described as a kind, respectful scholar and a collaborator who is a pleasure to have in class. She is a role model for her peers and an example of a scholar who is respectful, responsible and ready to learn at all times. The team is excited to honor Shaniqua as their district scholar of the month.

- Tariq Robinson, JAH-HC

Principal Jacobi presented for Jumoke Academy at the Hartford Conservatory scholar of the month. Tariq is described as a scholar who contributes to class discussions, listens to others and uses appropriate language. He is always eager to assist in class and makes sure materials are in place.

The CEO/Superintendent congratulated all three scholars and encouraged them to continue their growth and positive behaviors. The Board Chair wished the scholars well and encouraged them to continue to be successful and thanked the staff who worked with them to get them to where they are today.

## **PART B**

- District Updates

Dr. Troy A. Monroe, CEO/Superintendent

### 1. District Report

- Jumoke Academy Scholar Wins Senator's Essay Competition

Markayla Johnson, a 5th grader at the Academy, was recognized and honored for her essay for Senator Chris Murphy's Black History Month Essay Competition. There were over 1,650 entries and Markayla's essay was one of the one's selected. Markayla was honored at the Senator's brunch on Sunday 2/11 supported by her family and teacher Alexis Bradley. The CEO/Superintendent thanked the Jumoke Honors SMaRT Research and Technology leaders and staff who molded and supported her.

- Charter School Renewal – Public Hearing Update

The CEO/Superintendent thanked members of the board who attended and supported the charter renewal public hearing. We had over 191 attendees from our community which included political and faith based leaders who came out to speak, wrote letters and spoke highly of the work the Academy is doing for our scholars and community. A video snippet of the evening was shared with the board. It was a very positive night. The Academy continues to be viable for our scholars and community. The Academy has asked for the maximum of 5 years. The Board Chair thanked the CEO/Superintendent and his team for the work they continue to do. The Board Chair asked for context as to what the next three to six months will look like and how the board can further support our charter renewal. The CEO/Superintendent stated that we are awaiting the State board decision which will take place at their April 3rd board meeting. He also reiterated that we are still accepting letters of support from any individual within our network and will forward those letters to the CT State Department of Education(CSDE). The letter template will be shared with the board.

- District Spelling Bee

The Academy's annual District-wide Spelling Bee took place on January 31, 2024. The scholars had a very competitive spirit and the winner Ewarama Obuobi will compete at the State-wide Spelling Bee on Sunday, March 3rd at 1:00 pm at the University of St. Joseph. The CEO/Superintendent congratulated Dr. Gordon-Hall, Principal Green and Dean Barry for another successful event.

- PCLB Update,

The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation continues to support the Academy. We are submitting our grant application this Thursday by close of business. This grant will have a significant impact on our operation budget. The PCLB team is scheduled to visit the Academy on Tuesday, February 27th to visit classrooms and meet with the leadership team.

- Teacher Leadership Evaluation Model

The State of Connecticut is adopting a new teacher evaluation model for the 2024-25 school year. Both the CEO/Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer attended the training sessions with the final training scheduled in March. The focus will be on ensuring that teachers are trained and that they have the right skills and the right structures are in place to ensure their success. The leaders of the Academy will collaborate with the teachers in supporting and helping them to achieve prescribed goals. Everyone's goal will be aligned to the District Strategic Roadmap which has been the practice at the Academy. The State is implementing this model to ensure that goals are consistent Statewide. The Academy will likely adopt the State model. The board will need to review, approve and vote on the document prior to implementation.

The Board Chair congratulated the Academy for moving in the right direction, he stated that it appears that the State is following the corporate model in which the company goals are linked with the leaders and all employees goals are aligned with the goals of the organization. The board also asked if this new model will be linked to teacher compensation. The CEO/Superintendent stated that he is not aware of this being tied to compensation.

- Marketing Campaign Updates

The Academy has contracted with NBC and Telemundo in marketing the Academy to our community. We will have multiple segments and on air rotations during commercials and sporting events in both Spanish and English. The Academy will also be featured on CT Live and also streamed on Peacock and NBC Universal. This is a major effort on the part of the Academy and filming starts this Friday, February 16th. The dates when the videos will be aired will be shared with the board. The goal is to run these late February through to early March as we enter our recruiting season.

- Project Lead the Way Launch Grant

The CEO/Superintendent stated that we have received a second grant which will support training for teachers in STEM. This initiative is an opportunity to equip our teachers to deliver Science content to our scholars. Dr. Gordon-Hall will provide additional information on this initiative.

### **Part C**

- Curriculum & Instruction Update Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, CAO
  - Project Lead the Way Launch Grant

The Chief Academic Officer completed an application for two grants. We initially received the 6-8th grade grant which was shared with the board during last month's meeting. We have since been approved for the second grant for PreK-5 grade. The grant will focus on courses around STEM and hands-on work for the 2024-25 school year. The Board Chair asked how the grants will be used? Dr. Gordon-Hall stated that this initiative will be at SMaRT our STEM middle school. The grant will cover the cost for registration and to train up to 10 teachers including the STEM Coordinator and Science teachers at both middle schools for the next two years. The Board Chair congratulated the Chief Academic Officer and the entire team for this level of work.

## **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **i. Approval of January Minutes**

The Board Chair requested a motion to approve the January board meeting minutes, the motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mrs. Smith-Winfree. There were no abstentions or oppositions and the vote carried unanimously.

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

### **i. December Financial Statement**

The Chief Financial Officer stated that the Finance Committee met and pulled the December Financial Statement from the consent agenda after the Finance Subcommittee meeting. This is because the expenses appear to exceed revenues in the amount of \$900,000. The CFO stated that there is no risk or concern the deficit is as a result of monies that have not yet been received and Title funds drawdown has not been finalized. Also the PCLB funds which we budgeted for \$550,000. Since this is a 6 month period, the projection column will be updated come January and beyond. The deficit will be removed once all revenue is accounted for. The Board Chair asked if the \$900,000 deficit is as a result of timing of revenues versus expenses. The CFO confirmed. The Board Chair reiterated that the \$900,000 deficit is as a result of the timing of when the revenues and expenses occur and by year end the budget should balance. There were no additional questions asked.

## ii. Audit Update

The Chief Financial Officer will continue to work on the annual audit with the audit firm. The Board Chair asked if the extension has been filed? The CFO confirmed that the EFS Audit was filed and received by the State on January 3rd. The Board Chair asked if Walter will be scheduled to attend a meeting when the annual audit has been completed.

## iii. Staff Update

The former Accountant has moved on to take on a leadership role; as of January 5th she is no longer with the Academy. The Accounting Analyst has taken on the responsibility of completing Payroll. The Business Office had been working with our Human Resources Manager to fill the Accountant position. We are excited to announce that we have hired an Accountant who started on February 12th. She does not have a background in the education industry but comes with a wealth of experience in the accounting field. With her confidence and enthusiasm, we believe she is a great fit and are happy to have her on the team. The Board Chair wished the former accountant well in her new role and welcomed the new Accountant to the team.

The Board Chair asked if the CFO had anything else to share. The CFO asked for the board consent to approve the December Financial Statement. The Board asked for confirmation that the Financial Statement was voted on unanimously by the Financial Sub-committee. The CFO confirmed that it was. The Board Chair requested a motion for the approval of the December Financial Statement. Mrs. Suzette-Debeatham-Brown made the motion and this was seconded by Mr. Thomas Smith. There were no abstentions or oppositions and the vote carried unanimously.

## **VI. SUB COMMITTEE REPORT**

### i. 325 Renovation Update

February 5th was the extended date for the Request for Proposal (RFP). We have not received any official bids but received interest. One company toured the building but has not yet completed their proposal. The Chief Financial Officer and the Facilities Supervisor have followed up with this contractor but have not received a response. He further stated that they received two additional referrals including one referred by Mr. Stewart. The team has been in communication with him but due to his traveling schedule they have not met but will seek to connect with him next week.

Two additional referrals were received and the team has reached out to both contractors and is planning to meet with them this week. The Building Sub-committee will meet and create a rubric and get back to the board at the next board month. The Board Chair asked what is the deadline for use of the funds, and asked Mr. Hines to confirm that the deadline was June 2024. The CFO stated that the goal is to have a signed contract for the project immediately as the funds will need to be obligated by September 2024. He stated that the hope is that the project will be completed within that time frame. The Board Chair asked if this is all Federal grant. The CFO confirmed that the allotted funds are Federal grants and has communicated to all interested contractors that as a result; the prevailing wages requirement is applicable. He also stated that there are two to three promising companies we hope to receive bids from. The Board Chair asked if there were any questions from the board. No additional questions were asked.

## **VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There were no Executive session.

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

The Curriculum and Instruction Department will share additional information on the Teacher Leadership Evaluation Model.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The Board Chair requested a motion for the adjournment of the board meeting.

Mrs. Debeatham-Brown moved for the adjournment and this was seconded by Mrs. Vera Smith-Winfree. There were no abstentions or oppositions and the motion was carried unanimously. The board of Directors meeting concluded at 6:41pm.