



ACADEMY FOR URBAN LEADERSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL MEETING on ZOOM
Wednesday, March 30, 2022

I. The meeting was called to order at 6:48 pm and presided over by Joshua Bishop-Mbachu

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of this meeting has been publicized by having the date, time and location of the meeting posted at the school, on the school website and advertised in the Home News Tribune which has been designated as the Board's official newspaper within the legal time required. Time will be allotted for public comment at this meeting.

II. FLAG SALUTE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

III. MISSION STATEMENT

To employ an educational design and experience that merges the highest standards of academic excellence while fostering convictions and commitment to social and economic justice. The school acknowledges that both family and community involvement are integral to the student's academic achievement level, and will focus on fostering strong relationships between the school, family and community. Through these partnerships, the school will strive to create a nurturing environment by providing each student with the five resources deemed necessary for healthy child development by the President's Summit for America's Future. These include: a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start, a marketable skill through effective education, and a chance to give back to peers and the community.

In order to provide a quality education, the curriculum offered will involve rigorous academics with a holistic approach to education. Special emphasis will be placed on service learning and espousing the importance of civic and social responsibility. The development of character, leadership skills, conflict resolution abilities, and community responsibility will be stressed to provide the students with the necessary tools to become contributing members of a democratic society.

IV. ROLL CALL

Board Members:		
Lisette Vilanova, President	Present	
Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Vice President	Present	
Angelo Abreu, Corporate Secretary	Absent	
Elba Ceballo, Trustee	Present	
Eloisa Hernandez, Trustee	Present	
Joshua Lisojo, Trustee	Excused	

Stephanie Pabon, Trustee	Absent	
Michelle Roman, Trustee	Present	
Additional Attendees:		
Dr. Mario Barbieri, Interim Lead Person	Present	
Gail Long, Business Admin/Board Secretary	Present	
Peter Salek-Nejad, Director of Special Programs	Present	
Dr. Elizabeth Duran Swinford, Principal	Present	
April Gardner, Dean of Academics	Absent	
Patricia Bombelyn, Board Attorney	Present	

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes will be presented at the next meeting.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence.

VII. PRESENTATIONS (10 minutes each)

1. Dr. Swinford and the Guidance Counselors talked about student progress and Guidance Audit. Dr. Swinford explained that some Class of 2022 students are in danger of not graduating. 16 students need seat time. Students have been taking Accuplacer and Writerplacer in February and March 2022 during the school day in order to help them meet graduation requirements.

2. Mr. Durmo, 21st Century Director, provided a summary of program activities and stated 240 students attend the afterschool program.

VIII. RECOGNITION -

Dr. Swinford recognized the following students:

Audrick Franco
Steven Ojeda
Julissa Henry
Adriel Fernandez

IX. REPRESENTATIVES (5 minutes each)

- Parent: Carolina Bermudez

Ms. Bermudez expressed that the uniform policy should be revised as current uniforms are difficult to obtain and the fabric is low quality. She stated she would like to see AUL implement a Mental Health Month in unison with the PTO Committee and 21st CCLC program. She also stated that she would like to see colleges visit AUL to speak to students, and increase parent involvement. Ms. Bermudez took the time to congratulate two students: Jailani Gerena and Avalynn Correa for getting into the Perth Amboy Softball team.

- Student: Audrick Franco

Mr. Franco expressed that the school uniforms are not outfitted for female students as the fabric is see-through. He stated some female students feel uncomfortable wearing the uniform shirts. He suggested AUL changes the uniform to Polo shirts. Mr. Franco stated he conducted a student survey and 97% said they would come in uniform if polo shirts were allowed.

- Teacher: Mr. Gigl

Mr. Gigl wanted to address the turn-over rate at AUL. He stated in the past 6 months AUL has lost so many staff members, losing quality teachers is detrimental to morale. He suggested AUL removes the last tutoring period to allow teachers to leave at 3pm. Mr. Gigl also stated the school needs to try a radical change to prevent others from leaving.

Mr. Durmos, 21st CCLC director, suggested time for 21st CCLC Program should be adjusted to 3-5pm, however Dr. Jack Perna, 21st CCLC Evaluator, explained that the program needs to be 3 hours daily.

Board President, Ms. Vilanova, said that the topic should be discussed in a committee meeting. Ms. Hernandez, Board member, agreed that Mr. Gigl should discuss ideas during the Academic Excellence Committee.

X. LEAD REPORT

Dr. Mario Barbieri stated that the number of Covid cases have decreased. Discipline infractions have increased. Dr. Barbieri stated that the enrollment lottery hosted on March 24, 2022 was a success. He also explained that there is a bill being proposed at State level to have High Schools start at 8:30AM and will keep the Board informed of any updates regarding this bill.

Enrollment as of 3/30/2022: 416

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Board President invites members of the public to present any comments to the Board (limited to 3 minutes)

Blanca Blanco, staff member who resides in Perth Amboy, NJ, stated that the school needs to publicize committee meeting dates so that more staff members can participate.

David Sweatte, teacher at AUL, stated that due to the lack of space there is difficulty having student activities as 21st CCLC utilizes the gym, girls' basketball practice ends late. This affects the overall participation in afterschool programs.

Carolina Bermudez, parent of 1 AUL student who resides in Perth Amboy, NJ, stated that she does not understand why our enrollment numbers are declining. She also stated that many parents aren't aware of things and she has never seen AUL represented in any community events. She expressed her gratitude towards AUL and said we need to let people know we are here. AUL should offer more classes and promote ourselves.

Stephanie Manchame Cardenas, 10th grade student at AUL, said she is sad to see great teachers leave and asked why AUL can't retain good teachers.

Miriam Rodriguez, HR Generalist at AUL, stated that 50 staff members attended AUL's Wellness Fair.

Gustavo Martinez, 11th grade student at AUL, stated he has been a student at AUL since 7th grade and has noticed a decline in the bond between teachers and students post-Covid. Stated there is no connection between students, peers and teachers.

Michelle Roman, Board member, asked if the lack of connection between students and teachers could be due to Covid.

Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Board Vice President, challenged students to bring back some events they enjoyed in previous years and to discuss them with the Administration so that everyone can participate in activities that increase the school spirit.

XII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Academic Excellence – Eloisa Hernandez said that in regards to public comment ideas on student activities, they should be discussed at student government meetings.
- Human Resources and Recognition – Michelle Roman stated the committee met at the beginning of the month and there are interviews coming up.
- Finance and Facilities – Joshua Bishop-Mbachu said the committee discussed the 2022/23 108 Line Budget.
- Executive – Lisette Vilanova said the committee discussed investigations, and said NJSBA will work with AUL on Lead Person search.

XIII. MOTIONS – Consent Agenda

The Interim Lead Person recommends the following items for approval:

Remove from Consent Agenda under Academic Excellence, motion # 2.

Motion items: Academic Excellence # 1, 3, 4; Human Resources and Recognition # 1, Finance and Facilities # 1.

Motion: Lisette Vilanova Second: Eloisa Hernandez

Roll Call Vote:

Lisette Vilanova: Yes; Joshua Bishop-Mbachu: Yes; Eloisa Hernandez: Yes; Elba Ceballo: Yes; Michelle Roman: Yes.

5 yes; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained.

Motion Passed

Academic Excellence

1. Move that the Board of Trustees approve a field trip to Sea Life Aquarium in East Rutherford, NJ for 55 students and 11 chaperones on April 28, 2022 for an amount not to exceed \$1,400.00 funded through the 21st Century grant.
3. Move that the Board of Trustees approve, under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person to change the graduation date from Friday June 24, 2022 to Thursday June 23, 2022.
4. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person, approve Middlesex College as the venue for the Graduation 6/23/2022 at a cost of \$2,175.

Human Resources and Recognition

1. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Administrator accept the following resignation:

Name	Position	Resignation Date
Sweatte, David	Computer Science Teacher	5/27/22
Syed, Saad	Science Teacher	5/28/22 (requesting early release 4/28/22)

Finance and Facilities

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person, approve the Bill List from 2/24/22 to 3/30/22 in the amount of:

Payroll:2/28/2022	\$258,851.25
Payroll 3/15/2022	\$250,362.39
Payroll 3/30/2022	\$268,234.04
Warrants from 2/24/2022 – 3/30/2022	<u>\$212,501.51</u>
Total:	\$989,949.19

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Public bodies may meet in closed session when the matters under discussion are:

- (1) Matters made confidential by state, federal law or rule by court.
- (2) Disclosure would result in an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy, unless the person affected consents in writing.
- (3) Disclosure would impair the body's right to receive federal or state funds.
- (4) Collective bargaining.
- (5) Lease or acquisition of property, setting of banking rates, investment of public funds if disclosure would harm the public interest.
- (6) Investigations into violations of law.
- (7) Strategies to protect public security. Pending, ongoing or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation, including attorney-client privilege. The threat of litigation must be more than theoretical for this exemption to apply.
- (8) Personnel matters affecting employees of the public bodies, unless all parties request or consent to a public hearing. Prior to discussion of personnel, affected employees must be given notice, known as a Rice notice, which gives the employee the right to request a public hearing.
- (9) Proceedings that could result in a suspension, civil penalty, or loss of a license or permit.

Discussion Items:

Attorney Client Privilege

RICE Notice

Motion: Lisette Vilanova; Second: Eloisa Hernandez

Voice Vote: All In Favor: 5; Any Opposed: 0

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:57 pm.

Motion: Michelle Roman; Second: Elba Ceballo

Voice Vote: All In Favor: 5; Any Opposed: 0

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:00 pm.

XV. OTHER MOTIONS

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person, approve the 2022/2023 108 Line Budget

Motion: Michelle Roman**Second: Elba Ceballo****Roll Call Vote:**

Lisette Vilanova: Yes; Joshua Bishop-Mbachu: Yes; Eloisa Hernandez: Yes; Elba Ceballo: Yes; Michelle Roman: Yes.

5 yes; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained.**Motion Passed**

2. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person approve the proposal for Saturday School starting 4/1/2022 not to exceed \$20,000 which would include lunch for students to be funded CRRSA Learning Acceleration grant

Motion: Michelle Roman**Second: Lisette Vilanova****Voice Vote:**

All In Favor: 5 Lisette Vilanova, Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Michelle Roman, Eloisa Hernandez, Elba Ceballo; Any Abstained: 0; Any Opposed: 0

Motion Passed

3. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person accept the terms and conditions of the Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science (PLTW) Grant Application

Motion: Eloisa Hernandez**Second: Lisette Vilanova**

The Board discussed this grant proposal and decided they did not have enough information to be comfortable voting on this at this time.

Motion was not Voted on

4. Move that the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person approve the following staff for home instruction at a rate of \$40 per hour:

Staff	FT Position
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Irudhayasamy, Anasthasia	ELL Teacher
Martin, Erica	English Teacher
Pak, Meltem	Paraprofessional

Motion: Lisette Vilanova Second: Eloisa Hernandez Voice Vote:

All In Favor: 5 Lisette Vilanova, Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Michelle Roman, Eloisa Hernandez, Elba Ceballo; Any Abstained: 0; Any Opposed: 0

Motion Passed

5. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person approve a Leave of Absence without pay for Munira Jamali March 20, 2023 to April 24, 2023.

Motion: Lisette Vilanova Second: Elba Ceballo Voice Vote:

All In Favor: 5 Lisette Vilanova, Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Michelle Roman, Eloisa Hernandez, Elba Ceballo; Any Abstained: 0; Any Opposed: 0

Motion Passed

6. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person approve the following bill payments:

Empire Charter Consultants IOWAdvisors/ECC	\$40,000
Total	\$40,000

Motion: Lisette Vilanova Second: Eloisa Hernandez Voice Vote:

All In Favor: 5 Lisette Vilanova, Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Michelle Roman, Eloisa Hernandez, Elba Ceballo; Any Abstained: 0; Any Opposed: 0

Motion Passed

From Consent Agenda: # 2 from Academic Excellence:

- 7.. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person approve the English Language Learner Three Year Plan 2021 – 2024.

Motion: Lisette Vilanova Second: Eloisa Hernandez Voice Vote:

All In Favor: 5 Lisette Vilanova, Joshua Bishop-Mbachu, Michelle Roman, Eloisa Hernandez, Elba Ceballo; Any Abstained: 0; Any Opposed: 0

Motion Passed

8. Move that the Board of Trustees under the recommendation of the Interim Lead Person terminate Nicole Cannella's contract with AUL with 60 days' notice effective today, March 30, 2022. Ms. Cannella will remain on administrative leave for the duration of the 60 days with pay.

Motion: Eloisa Hernandez

Second: Lisette Vilanova

Roll Call Vote:

Lisette Vilanova: Yes; Joshua Bishop-Mbachu: Yes; Eloisa Hernandez: Yes; Elba Ceballo: Yes; Michelle Roman: Yes.

5 yes; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained.

Motion Passed

XVI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Board President invites members of the public to present any additional comments to the Board.

No Public Comments

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

The Board President entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hernandez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Ceballo seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Gail Long
Board Secretary