



**ACADEMY FOR URBAN LEADERSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
612 AMBOY AVENUE, PERTH AMBOY, NJ
7:00 PM
Wednesday, November 29, 2023**

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM 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:

Mr. Joshua Bishop-Mbachu - President - present
Ms. Michelle Roman – Vice President - present

Mr. Saad Syed – Corporate Secretary - present
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez - present
Ms. Yadira Puntiel - excused
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez - present

Additional Attendees:

Dr. Natasha Howard - Interim Chief Administrator - present
Ms. Tobi Knehr - Middle School Administrator - present
Ms. Joyel Furges - Principal - present
Ms. Lauren Gonzalez – Interim Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Support Services - excused
Ms. Patricia Bombelyn - Board Attorney - present
Ms. Bernadette Pinto – Interim BA/Board Secretary - present

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Move that the Board of Trustees approve the meeting minutes from October 25, 2023.

Motion: Ms. Roman

Second: Mr. Ramirez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

2. Move that the Board of Trustees approve the meeting minutes from October 30, 2023.

Motion: Ms. Roman

Second: Mr. Ramirez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

VI. CORRESPONDENCE - None

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Board President invites members of the public to present any comments to the Board (limited to three minutes).

Ms. Stracensky, parent and PTO Vice President, advised Board of Trustees that Ms. Teresa Nunez, President and herself are the new PTO officers and provided an email to the Board members. She spoke regarding the quality of the lunch program as a concern and shared that a parent communicated to her that her daughter was coming home hungry each day as she did not want her school lunch. In addition, she spoke about the teacher response time to emails being approximately five days and that teachers are taking 5-10 days to post grades in the portal. The concern is related to not having grades in real time for parents and students to be actively engaged in. She provided that grades were changed after the marching period was closed creating students not to be in Honor Roll. She stated that the middle school needs a math teacher and added that it has been two years since the school had one.

VIII. PRESENTATIONS

1. 2022-23 School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* presented by Ms. Howlett, Guidance Counselor
2. Shop with a Cop was presented by Ms. Arias, SetUp Coordinator

IX. STAKEHOLDER REPORTS - None

X. INTERIM CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Enrollment 337
Professional Development Days
HIB Cases
Safety Drills
Health / Safety
School Wide Activities
ST. Michael's Meeting on 11.27.23

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Academic Excellence
2. Human Resources and Recognition
3. Finance and Facilities
4. Executive

XII. MOTIONS

Academic Excellence

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve submission of the 2022-23 School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*.
2. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the MOA between AUL and the Jewish Renaissance Foundation for the Shop with a Cop event for December 14, 2023.
3. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following changes to the 2023-24 School Year Calendar:
 - a) Add Special Education Parent Advisory Group meeting dates: 12/13, 2/7, 5/15
 - b) Add noon student dismissal for HS midterm exams: Jan 29-31
 - c) Clarify noon student dismissal for HS only for final exams: June 24-26

4. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following professional development requests:

Professional Development	Staff Member	Date(s)	Location	Cost
Women's Educational Leadership Forum and Breakfast	Manuela Jimenez, English Teacher	Nov 29, 2023	Kean University	\$55.00
Desmos Math	Munira Jamali, Math Teacher	Dec 14, 2023	Virtual	\$279.00

Human Resources and Recognition

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following applicants for the 21st Century AUL Afterschool Program to be funded by 21st CCLC Grant Account #: 20-451-100-101 not to exceed 2 hours a day from October 2, 2023 – June 14, 2024:

Candidate Name	Position/Club	Amount
Esteves, Maxine	Better Together	\$40/hr
Tejada, Joanny	ESL Club	\$40/hr
Alvarez, Rosa	ESL Club	\$40/hr
Mendez, Carmen	ESL/Sports	\$40/hr
Kirner-DePeri, Cara	Girl Talk	\$40/hr
Frost, Douglas	AV Club	\$40/hr
Sena, Maria	Spring Showcase Advisor	\$40/hr
Herrera, Hermione	Youth Helper	\$15/hr

2. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following appointment for the 2023-24 school year:

Candidate Name	Position Title	Stipend	Start Date
Rose Berberich	National Honor Society Advisor	\$750.00	11/29/23

3. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, accept the following resignation:

Name	Position	Effective Date
Alyssa Abreu	Paraprofessional	11/23/23

Finance and Facilities

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the Bills List for the period of 10/30/23 to 11/29/23 totaling \$618,118.08.
2. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the Board Secretary's (A148) Report for the month ending October 2023. Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, approve the certification of funds pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:23A-16.10(c)3, that as of October 31, 2023, no budgetary line item account has encumbrances and expenditures that in total exceed the line item appropriation in violation of 6A:23A16.10(a).
3. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, approve the submission of the Annual Charter/Renaissance School Fiscal Questionnaire to the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Charter and Renaissance Schools as presented.

Motion: Ms. Hernandez

Second: Ms. Roman

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

4. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, accept \$10,000.00 in grant funds from Bluepoint Wind to support after school STEM activities.

Discussion: Ms.Hernandez asked if the activities have been predetermined. Dr. Howard confirmed that they have been provided.

Motion: Ms. Hernandez

Second: Ms. Roman

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

5. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following 2023-24 professional services contracts with MRDA Incorporated pending counsel review:
 - a) Per diem substitute administrator at a rate of \$900/day;
 - b) USDA Farm to School Grant Coordinator at a cost not to exceed \$12,000.00; and,
 - c) Grant-writing at a rate of \$900.00/day for up to four days per month for a total cost not to exceed \$36,000.00 annually.

Discussion: Ms. Hernandez requested clarification on the annual cost versus monthly costing.

Motion: Ms. Roman

Second: Ms. Hernandez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

XIII.OTHER MOTIONS

1. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve tuition payments of \$135.00 per Spring 2024 course for students participating in the Middlesex College High School Scholars program for a total amount not to exceed \$10,000.00.

Discussion: Ms. Hernandez requested the number of students attending. Ms. Farges stated that they have opened up to students and the exact total is not available at the moment. The Board expressed that they are willing to increase the current not to exceed in the future to support students' attendance if needed.

Motion: Mr. Ramirez

Second: Ms. Hernandez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

2. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve the following field trip request:

Field trip	Students / Sponsor	Date(s)	Location	Cost
Statehouse and State Museum	35 HS students / Rose Berberich	1-10-24	Trenton, NJ	Bus - \$650.00

Motion: Mr. Ramirez

Second: Ms. Hernandez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

3. Move that the Board of Trustees, under the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrator, approve a medical leave of absence from 11/27/23 to 1/22/24 as requested by Employee #15222.

Motion: Ms. Hernandez

Second: Mr. Ramirez

**All In Favor: 5: Mr. Bishop-Mbachu, Ms. Roman, Mr. Syed, Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Ramirez;
Abstained: 0; Opposed: 0**

MOTION PASSED

XIV.PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Board President invites members of the public to present any additional comments to the Board (limited to three minutes). No public comments.

XV.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:

1. Attorney-Client Privilege
2. Kelly v. AUL
3. Negotiations Update
4. Personnel

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:47 pm.

Motion: Mr. Syed; Second: Mr. Ramirez
Voice Vote: All In Favor: 5; Opposed: 0

The Board came out of Executive Session at 11:58 pm

Motion: Ms. Roman; Second: Mr. Syed
Voice Vote: All In Favor: 5; Opposed: 0

XVI.ADJOURNMENT

The Board President entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:59 pm.

Motion: Ms. Roman; Second: Mr. Syed
Voice Vote: All In Favor: 5; Opposed: 0