

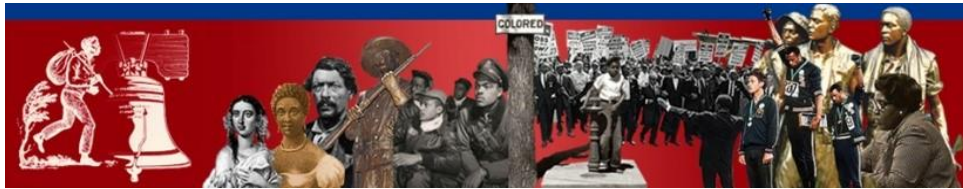


AMISTAD COMMISSION MEETING

**June 14, 2024
1:00PM - 3:00PM
Teams Meeting**

Chair, Dr. Lillie Edwards

- I. Public Session: Call to Order – 1:00PM (2 Minutes)**
- II. Pledge of Allegiance (1 Minute)**
- III. Voting Item: Approval of Draft Minutes from the March 22, 2024, Meeting (5 Minutes) - Attachment III**
- IV. Status of the Strategic Plan for the Commission – Chair Edwards (5 Minutes)**
- V. Executive Director Report (25 Minutes)**
 - A. Exemplary Award Process)**
 - B. Summer Institute 2024 and 2025**
 - C. Status of New Website Development**
 - D. Student Advisory Group**
 - E. Status of NJEA Collaboration and Travel to Ghana**
 - F. Update on Search for New Fulltime Personnel**
- VI. Open Public Comments and Remarks: General Public (10 minutes)**
- VII. Adjournment**



Amistad Commission Quarterly Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2024

Commissioners

Patricia Atkins, Lavonne Bebler-Johnson, Lillie Johnson (Chair), Rosie Grant, Fatima Heyward, Danielle Jones, Khyati Joshi; Antwan McClellan; Bill Payne; Tom Puryear, Jason Redd; Ane Roseborough-Eberhard; Joyce Ship-Freeman (Vice Chair); Kamani Scott (Singleton).

Amistad Staff

Patrick Lamy, Trevor K. Melton

DOE/AG Staff

Amna Toor, Kerlyn Espinal

Public

Members of the general Public (6 Guests)

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Edwards began the meeting officially at 1: 11 pm, assured the presence of a quorum, and officially called the meeting to order.

Chair Edwards thanked all participants for joining the meeting of the Amistad Commission and read the statement pertaining to the public session of the Commission meeting to ensure compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. The Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon in accordance with the provisions of this act. The Amistad Commission has posted notice of this meeting to be published by having the date and time in place thereof posted in the Department of Education, Secretary of State's Office. The notice was also given to the State House Press Corps and the Governor's Office.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Edwards began the meeting with the reading of the Pledge of Allegiance and asked all participants to join.

Approval of Draft Minutes from the December 15, 2023, Commission Meeting

There was a vote to approve the minutes from the January meeting of the Commission. There were thirteen in favor and 1 abstention. Motioned by Bebler Johnson, seconded by Jason Redd.

Discussion on the Content of the Strategic Plan for The Commission

Dr. Edwards provided an overview of the strategic plan and the delay related to the state-wide survey. The hope is to have the survey approved as soon as possible to move forward with the Strategic Plan. Thank you for the feedback from all Commissioners.

Summer Institute 2024 Overview

Dr. Lamy reported record levels of attendance at this year's Amistad Commission's Curriculum Summer Institute for New Jersey Educators. As of the date of the meeting, there were 210 registered participants. In addition to the 210 registered participants, the Amistad Office is also planning a special forum for district leaders and board of education members on August 1st. The theme for the 2024 Summer Institute is

“Reimagining Our Purpose: Rights & Responsibilities in History”. The sessions and workshop selections will reflect the theme for the institute. The critical components of the 2024, Amistad Commission’s Summer Institute are:

- 1) The values of teaching from the lens of diversity.
- 2) Race and culture in America.
- 3) the significance of slavery and the Civil Rights Movement in US and world history.
- 4) New Jersey’s position in the landscape of African American history.

There are 120 educators expected in-person and 90 remotely to date. The Commission is at capacity for in-person attendance..

MOA with NJEA Update – Concerns with Ghana Trip

The Amistad Office is in the process of finalizing the MOA with NJEA. The MOA has been with the Deputy Attorney General since mid-December of 2023, pending reviews and revisions. The preliminary planning for the trip to Ghana is completed.

New Curriculum Website Bidding Process

The Amistad Commission was approved to move forward with a state contracted vendor for the design of the new Curriculum Website. There was a preliminary meeting with the vendor on March 12, 2024, and we anticipate a proposal of services by the first week of April. The scope of work for the redesign of the curriculum website will require final approval from the Executive Committee of the Board. This is a major investment by the Commission. The Amistad Commission’s Website serves as the primary resource for New Jersey educators to facilitate access to creative lesson plans. We have identified 14 requirements for the website including a focus on designation of appropriate lesson plans and resources for K-5; 6-8; and grades 9-12 as well a historical timeline that ends in year 2024.

Exemplary Award Process

The goal of the Amistad Commission’s Exemplary Lessons is to acknowledge those individual teachers who create a classroom lesson that highlights the contributions of Africans or African Americans in American and World History. The commission will use those lessons selected as “Exemplary” as model lessons to be posted on the Amistad Commission’s Web-based Curriculum Website. These “Exemplary Lessons” will be used as a resource for all educators in New Jersey.

Based on the legislation, the Commission is developing the Award committee that must select two teachers to receive the Amistad Commission Exemplary Award: One teacher representing Grades K-8 and one teacher representing Grades 9-12. Each award recipient will receive \$2,500 in recognition of his or her extraordinary contributions. In addition, the recipient’s school district will receive \$2,500. The funds are for the districts to create a plan to implement the Amistad curriculum. In the Summer of 2023, the Amistad Commission developed the first scoring scale for submissions.

Delay in New Employee Search Process

The Amistad Office is waiting for the final approval to post the two full-time positions and Interns/Consultants who will be reporting directly to the Amistad Office. All search related preparations are completed including establishing a search committee and interview questions. There will be a first round of interviews by the Search Committee. The Committee will move four finalists forward for final interviews with the Executive Director and the Executive Committee of the Board. We hope to have a final resolution on this matter immediately.

Future Agenda Items for the Next Meeting of Commissioners

Strategic Plan (summary of survey if available); Bylaws for the Commission; Projected Budget for FY 25 and FY 26; 2024 Summer Institute Update on Schedule/Outline; NJEA Collaboration

Open Public Comments and Remarks: General Public

There were general comments regarding the template and importance of the new website.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 2:13pm