

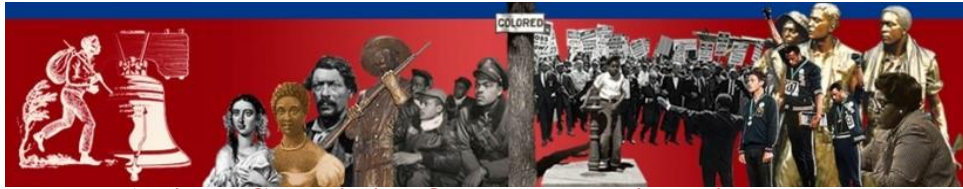


COMMISSION MEETING

Agenda

**Friday
March 21, 2025
1:00 PM
Teams Meeting**

- I. Public Session: Call to Order – (2 Minutes)**
- II. Pledge of Allegiance (1 Minute)**
- III. Actions Item: (20 Minutes)**
 - A.** Approval of Draft Minutes from the September 27th Meeting – **Attachment III-A**
- IV. Introduction of New Amistad Office Employees – Trevor Melton**
- V. Discussions of Preliminary Bylaws Reading – Executive Committee-Attachment V**
- VI. Draft Agenda for Board Retreat – Lavonne Bebler-Johnson- Attachment VI**
- VII. Budget Update for Fiscal year 2026 – Rosie Grant**
- VIII. Update on New Website Update - PL**
- IX. Executive Director Report (15 Minutes) - Attachment IX**
 - B.** Summer Institute 2025 Overview and Registration Process
 - C.** Status of Strategic Planning
 - D.** Update on NJEA and Alternative Plan
 - E.** Partnerships and Collaborations
- X. Open Public Comments and Remarks: General Public (10 minutes)**
- XI. Adjournment**



Amistad Commission Quarterly Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2025

Commissioners

Patricia Atkins, Lavonne Bebler-Johnson, Rosie Grant, Danielle Jones; Antwan McClellan; Jason Redd; Joyce Ship-Freeman (Vice Chair); Andrea Roseborough-Eberhard; Senator Singleton; (Kemani Scott). Khyati Joshi, Tom Puryear

Amistad Staff

Patrick Lamy, Trevor K. Melton, Iman AQuddus

DOE/AG Staff

Amna Toor, Kerlyn Espinal

Public

Members of the general Public (1 Guest)

Meeting Called to Order

Vice Chair Joyce-Ship Freeman began the meeting officially at 1:22 pm with confirmation of a quorum and roll call.

Chair Edwards thanked all participants for joining the meeting of the Amistad Commission and referenced the statement pertaining to the public session of the Commission meeting to ensure compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Draft Minutes for December 13, 2024, Commission Meeting

The minutes we reviewed and there was a vote to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2024 meeting of the Commission. There was a motion to approve the minutes. The Commissioners all voted in favor. Motioned by Commissioner Grant and seconded by Bebler-Johnson. There was a correction which noted Commissioner Puryear as excused from the meeting.

New Approval of Meeting Dates for Calendar Year 2025

Calendar Year 2025: The Commission Quarterly Meeting dates had to be revised on the Governor's' Office announcement of holiday days for 2025. There was motion to change original date of June 20th to June 27th. Motioned by Commissioner Bebler-Johnson and seconded by Puryear. There was also discussion on executive meetings and reserving the dates for the Board Retreat on August 6-7, 2025 in Atlantic City.

General Updates

- **Dana Communication and New Website Update:** The new website is in the final stages of testing and review. We are experiencing a delay in the launch date and currently intend to launch on February 17th. The site meets all the expectations previously discussed and will be a useful tool for NJ educators and students.

- Update to Members of Standing Committees:** There was update on members of all standing committees of the board. The following committee memberships were re-introduced.

Personnel Committee: (Dr. Lillie Johnson-Edwards, Chair; Joyce Ship-Freeman: Dr. Nyeema Watson; Jay Redd. Esq; Dr. Patrick Lamy

Governance and Bylaws: The Honorable Lavonne Bebler-Johnson, Chair; Patricia Atkins, Esq., Vice-Chair; Joyce Ship-Freeman; Tom Puryear

Finance: Rosie Grant, Chair; William D. Payne; Derrick Green; Tom Puryear; Dr. Lillie Johnson-Edwards

Teaching Resources and Educator Support: Dr. Khyati Joshi-Chair; Ane Roseborough-Eberhard; Fatima Heyward; Danielle Johnson

Executive Committee: Dr. Lillie Johnson Edwards, Chair; Joyce Ship-Freeman, Vice Chair; the Honorable-Lavonne Bebler-Johnson; Rosie Grant; Dr. Khyati Joshi; Dr. Patrick Lamy, Executive Director, ex officio with vote
- Discussion on Board Retreat and Bylaws:** Lavonne Bebler-Johnson provided an update on the Bylaws and the next steps for a two-part review. A meeting of the Committee will be organized to review the revisions from DAG Amna Toor. The next version of the Bylaws will undergo a preliminary review prior to the March Meeting of the Commission. A second review and vote for approval will follow at the June meeting of the Commission. The Board Retreat is scheduled for Atlantic City as an added component to 2025 Summer Institute. The Board Retreat will begin on the morning of August 6th and end in the late afternoon on August 7th. There is no anticipated cost for Board members with exception to travel reimbursement expenses – post event.
- NJEA Ghana Trip Collaboration:** There was a motion for the Board to move into executive session to discuss the agreement between NJEA and the Commission. Motioned by Commissioner Edwards and seconded by Bebler-Johnson. Dr. Lamy provided an update on recent developments regarding the MOA and its status. A confidential discuss on details ensued including deadlines for the Board to reach a decision.; details on travelers, and general scope of the trip. The was a motion to return to the public meeting. Motioned by Commissioner Puryear and seconded by Bebler-Johnson.

Executive Director’s Report

- We are excited to begin our series of activities for the 2025 calendar year. The Amistad Commission Office remains focused on launching the new strategic plan and the new Curriculum Website as their top priorities. Below are updates on items recently discussed at the last Commission Meeting on December 13, 2024.
- The announcement for the 2025 Summer Institute was distributed statewide on January 14, 2025. The event will be held at Stockton University – Ocean Campus in Atlantic City, New Jersey from August 4-7. The announcement was sent to multiple educational agencies. As of January 22, 2025, 22 educators have pre-registered for the Summer Institute. We are continuing our plan to administer a registration fee of \$100 per educator attending in-person. In-person attendance is limited to 125 participants, while remote participation is unlimited.
- The goal of the Amistad Commission’s Exemplary Lessons was introduced. The commission will use selected “Exemplary” lessons as model lessons to be posted on the Amistad Commission’s Web-based Curriculum Website, serving as a resource for all educators in New Jersey. The “Amistad Commission’s Exemplary Award.” Codified by the

New Jersey Legislature and signed into law by Governor Phil Murphy on August 31, 2021, the Award promotes teaching the Amistad curriculum in New Jersey classrooms. The Award committee selects two teachers to receive the Amistad Commission's Exemplary Award: one representing Grades K-8 and one representing Grades 9-12. Each award recipient receives \$2,500 in recognition of their extraordinary contributions. Additionally, the recipient's school district will receive \$2,500. We are currently in the intake process for applications for 2025.

- The Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Commissioners on December 13, 2024. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group (SPAG) met on January 22, 2025, at 1 PM. The SPAG will meet three times annually to advise on the implementation process for the Strategic Plan. They will also assist in publicizing and serving as collaborators and supporters of the Amistad Strategic Plan. A full launch is anticipated by July 2025.
- The Amistad Office has completed all required tasks from HR and the Civil Service Commission. The two full-time employees were offered the positions and both agreed, their first day will be February 10, 2025. Additionally, the three part-time employees have also been given offers of employment and should also be able to start by February 12, 2025.
- The Amistad Commission has partnered with EDUSWAG (Educational Consultant Group) to continue serving as a model for districts across New Jersey. Empowering educators to effectively infuse African American History into their curriculum is essential to its success. We have 54 teachers from the 2024 Summer Institute enrolled in the continuing PD sessions for the 2024-2025 academic year. There was a report by Trevor Melton on several other new initiatives including: MOA with NJ National History Day Implementation; Amistad Commission Student Leadership Council; New Jersey Amistad Commission's African American History Day Competition for 4th and 5th Graders; and Collaboration with Camden School District and the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Commission.

Open Public Comments and Remarks: General Public)

There was only one comment by a Guest regarding his impression of the great work of the commission along with a question on the impact of the new presidential administration on the future of the Commission. A response from Dr. Lamy indicated that the Commission will move forward with its new strategic plan with optimism and pivots as necessary in the near future.

Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Grant. The meeting was adjourned at 2: 44pm.