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## **ACHIEVEMENT FIRST PLANS TO OPEN NEW PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN CENTRAL BROOKLYN**

*Proposed Schools Are in Response to Tremendous Demand for Seats at AF Schools*

JUNE 13, 2014 – BROOKLYN, N.Y. – Achievement First, a high-performing network of 25 non-profit, college-preparatory public charter schools in New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island, plans to open three new schools that would serve the communities of central Brooklyn. The proposal is in response to the overwhelming demand for seats in its schools and for more high-quality, college-preparatory public school choices in Brooklyn.

In its most recent student recruitment season, Achievement First garnered, on average, more than eight lottery enrollment forms for each open seat in its Brooklyn schools. According to the New York City Charter Center's 2013 Lottery Report, New York City public charter schools received an estimated 181,600 lottery enrollment forms for 18,600 available seats in that spring's lotteries. A majority of enrolling students live in Harlem, the South Bronx and central Brooklyn.

In response to this need, Achievement First will submit the new school proposal to the State University of New York (SUNY) Charter Schools Institute. If approved, the first of the three Achievement First schools will open in 2015-16 serving 184 students in kindergarten and first grade. It will serve 840 students in grades K-8 in its fifth year of operation. The second school would open in 2016-17 with 184 kindergarten and first-grade students, growing to 840 students in grades K-8 in its fifth year of operation. The third school would open in 2016-17 serving 96 fifth-grade students, and would serve 540 students in grades five through 12 in its fifth year of operation.

Achievement First is committed to serving all students, including English Language Learners and students who require special education services. Achievement First is deeply invested in building strong community partnerships and engaging community members as it opens new schools. Since community voices are vitally important in its planned growth, Achievement First invites local leaders and neighbors to meet with us and share feedback. A survey is also being circulated to gather highly valued community input about the expansion: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AFCharterApplication>.

In its Brooklyn schools, Achievement First serves nearly 4,600 K-12 students from low-income communities in Crown Heights, Bushwick, East New York, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville. For two consecutive years, AF Bushwick received an A and scored in the top 15 percent of all city schools on the New York City Department of Education Progress Reports. The NYC DOE highlighted AF Bushwick as one of eight city schools with high-needs populations that excel at preparing students for college and careers. AF Bushwick earned special credit for making outstanding gains with special education students. In May, AF Brooklyn High's second graduating class carried on the school's tradition of 100 percent college acceptance.

### **About Achievement First**

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, currently operates 25 K-12 public charter schools in Brooklyn, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The mission of Achievement First is to close the achievement gap and deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all children, regardless of race, economic status or zip code. With its college-preparatory focus, the Achievement First approach is attaining breakthrough academic gains throughout its network of 25 public charter schools. In the 2013-14 academic year, Achievement First is educating more than 8,100 students in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods.

Achievement First's approach to teaching and learning enables every student to succeed at the highest levels. This involves:

- Providing students with more time on task and intense intervention when they are struggling so that no child falls through the cracks;
- Recruiting and developing successful teachers and school leaders and empowering them to use student data to strategically drive instruction;
- Creating a joyful school culture where it is "cool to be smart" that emphasizes character education and focuses students on college.

For more information, please visit [www.AchievementFirst.org](http://www.AchievementFirst.org).