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Achievement First to Dedicate Bridgeport Academy Middle School

*\$4.2 Million Project Gives Public Charter School
Long-term Home on Noble Avenue*

**Where: Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Middle School
529 Noble Avenue, Bridgeport, Connecticut**

When: June 1, 2012, 12 p.m.

BRIDGEPORT, CONN- Achievement First will celebrate the completion of an extensive construction project that transformed a once vacant property into Bridgeport Academy Middle School's long-term home.

At Friday's dedication ceremony, Mayor Bill Finch will join with members of the Achievement First team and family to honor those whose generous philanthropic donations made possible the \$4.2 million renovation and expansion project. Financial contributions from the Low Income Investment Fund, Andrew and Carol Boas, Lone Pine Foundation, Newman's Own Foundation, Shelly and Michael Kassen, UIL Holdings Corporation Foundation, The Vince and Linda McMahon Family Foundation and The William H. Pitt Foundation have enabled students to gain life-changing educational opportunities in the East End school for many years to come.

"Establishing a long-term home for Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Middle School on Noble Avenue is a great accomplishment both for our students and for the neighborhood," said Andrew Boas, chairman of the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors. "We are excited to bring new life to what had been a vacant school building. We hope it will serve as an anchor for revitalization and development in the larger community."

Judith Kende, the managing director of the eastern region for the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF), said the organization was proud to provide financing that helped Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Middle School secure a more permanent home.

"As a nonprofit community capital organization, LIIF's mission is to invest in projects that create economic opportunity, and Achievement First has an outstanding track record of providing exceptional academic opportunities in neighborhoods that are often left behind," Kende said. "For LIIF, investing in Achievement First Bridgeport Academy is an investment in the success of the students, the Achievement First team and the community of Bridgeport."

Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Middle School—the first Achievement First school located outside of New Haven—opened in August 2007 with 85 fifth graders. The school's site, a building that

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once housed the Barnum School, underwent a large-scale renovation and expansion project. After three years of planning and one year of construction, Achievement First is excited to dedicate the completed building at Friday's ceremony.

For more information about the event, contact Amanda Pinto at 203-726-0168.

ABOUT ACHIEVEMENT FIRST

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 20 public charter schools. In the 2011-12 academic year, Achievement First is educating nearly 6,200 children in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods in Connecticut and New York (with Rhode Island opening in fall 2013).

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.

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