



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE; May 1, 2015

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ACHIEVEMENT FIRST RECEIVES OVER 21,000 LOTTERY APPLICATIONS FOR 1,000 BROOKLYN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL SEATS

Record Number of Applications Received, but Thousands of Students Remain on Waitlists

BROOKLYN, N.Y. – The demand for seats at Achievement First public charter schools in Brooklyn increased by more than 150 percent since the 2013-14 school year, with schools receiving 21,474 lottery applications for a projected 1,000 open seats.

Overall, Achievement First received 21 lottery applications for every open seat, with some individual schools and grades registering even higher numbers. For example, at Achievement First Brownsville Elementary, 204 second-grade families entered the lottery for a single open seat. In the 2013-14 school year, Achievement First received 8,215 total lottery applications for 1,080 open seats, for an average of eight applications per seat.

The significant uptick in demand for a spot at one of Achievement First's 17 Brooklyn public charter schools, and the thousands of families that remain on the waiting list, reflect the strong performance of Achievement First schools as well as the growing urgency and demand to expand access to high-quality public schools in underserved Brooklyn neighborhoods.

“We are proud of our teachers and school leaders who have worked together to create great schools that are in such high demand,” said Dacia Toll, Achievement First co-CEO and president. “However, this demand is also a sobering reminder of the need to create more great schools.”

Toll added, “This time of year is always bittersweet because we know that for every student we serve, there are so many more stuck on waiting lists who are still looking for a great school to attend.”

Achievement First students are admitted through an open admissions process and a free, blind lottery. The majority of lottery applications in this year’s April 8 lottery (13,087), came from students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

“Parents are sending a loud and clear message—we need more high-quality public schools in our communities,” Toll said. “Charter schools are a part of the solution, and it is time for our state leaders to listen to that message, lift the cap on charter schools and make more great schools available to more families.”

To learn more or to visit a school, contact Amanda Pinto at amandapinto@achievementfirst.org or 203-726-0168.

About Achievement First

Achievement First is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that currently operates 29 public charter schools in



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New York, 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, Achievement First schools are attaining breakthrough academic gains, and 100% of AF high school graduates are accepted into colleges and universities. During the 2014-15 academic year, more than 9,500 students attend AF schools, the majority of whom are from historically underserved and low-income communities. For more information, visit AchievementFirst.org.

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