



R H O D E I S L A N D  
MAYORAL ACADEMIES

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## **PROVIDENCE CITY COUNCIL APPROVES USE OF FORMER PERRY SCHOOL FACILITY FOR ACHIEVEMENT FIRST PROVIDENCE MAYORAL ACADEMY**

February 25, 2013 – PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Achievement First, a high-performing network of 22 non-profit, college-preparatory public charter schools in Connecticut, New York and Rhode Island received approval from the Providence City Council to use the former Oliver Hazard Perry Middle School facility for its Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy Elementary, opening in August 2013 with 176 kindergarten and first-grade students.

Achievement First's use of the Oliver Hazard Perry Middle School that closed in 2009 will be cost-neutral for the City of Providence, a requirement set forth in the RFP process. Achievement First will assume a long-term lease of the building with the City of Providence maintaining ownership, and the public charter school is investing \$10 million over the next three to four years through a combination of private philanthropy and non-profit lending sources to renovate and remediate the facility. Remediation will include extensive asbestos abatement, and renovations will include cosmetic and structural enhancements.

"Achievement First has already built community partnerships with the Boys & Girls Club and the Providence Housing Authority family developments at Manton Heights and Hartford Park, and staff members have walked throughout the area to talk with our new neighbors," commented Ben Smith, founding director of school operations for Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy Elementary. "We are excited to partner with the neighborhood and look forward to the school's opening in August."

All students will be admitted to Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy through a lottery that will include preferences for low-income families. Achievement First will serve all students, regardless of special needs, language or citizenship. There are no admission requirements or interviews, and there are no admission or tuition fees. The school will be located in Providence, but will also serve the communities of Cranston, Warwick and North Providence. Any and all age-appropriate students from those communities will be eligible for Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy.

### **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 22 public charter schools. In the 2012-13 academic year, Achievement First is educating more than 7,000 students in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods in Connecticut and New York (with Rhode Island opening in August 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.

For more information, please visit <http://www.AchievementFirst.org>.

### **About Rhode Island Mayoral Academies**

Rhode Island Mayoral Academies is a nonprofit organization supporting and overseeing the expansion of Mayoral Academies in Rhode Island. Mayoral Academies are public schools that are run by successful charter school operators and governed by mayor-led school boards.

For more information, please visit <http://www.MayoralAcademies.org>.

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