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Achievement First Hartford Academy Board Package  
September 15, 2014

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**AGENDA**  
**Achievement First Hartford Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Monday September 15, 2014, 5:00 – 7:00 pm**  
**305 Greenfield Street, Hartford**

**Call to Order** (John Motley)

**Public Comment**

**School Reports (5:15)**

1. Ernest Peterson, AF Hartford Elementary School
2. Meg Smith, AF Hartford Middle School
3. Ben Cruse, AF Summit Middle School
4. Report of the Joint High School Committee (John Motley)

**Board Business (6:00)**

1. Approve Minutes of 3/17/14, 5/27/1, and 7/31/14 Meetings
2. Approve Financial Report
3. Approve 2014-15 Family Handbook
4. Approve 2014-15 School Wellness Policy

**Board Discussion (6:20)**

1. Updates:
  - a. Board Retreat Debrief (Scot Kerr)
  - b. Achievement First updates (Ken Paul)
2. Review and establish Committee Assignments (John Motley)
3. Community Engagement Discussion (Nick Lebrone)

**Adjourn**

## PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

### 1. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Hartford Academy hereby approves the 3/17/14, 5/27/14, and 7/31/14 Meeting Minutes as drafted.

b. Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

c. In Favor \_\_\_\_\_ Opposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Approve Financial Report

a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of AF Hartford Academy hereby accepts the financial report as presented.

b. Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

c. In Favor \_\_\_\_\_ Opposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Approve 2014-2015 Family Handbook

a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy approves a revised Family Handbook as drafted.

b. Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

c. In Favor \_\_\_\_\_ Opposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Approve 2014-2015 School Wellness Policy

a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy approves the 2014-2015 School Wellness Policy as drafted.

b. Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

c. In Favor \_\_\_\_\_ Opposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Attestation of Compliance with Wellness Policy Legislation**

### **Section 1 – Background**

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 specifies new requirements for school wellness policies beyond the original requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. These new requirements were effective with the 2011-12 school year and include:

- developing goals for nutrition promotion;
- informing and updating the public (including parents, students and the community) about the content and implementation of local wellness policies;
- making efforts to include physical education teachers, school health professionals and school administrators in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the policy;
- periodically assessing local wellness policies and making this information available to the public;
- designating one or more district or school officials to ensure that each school complies with the local wellness policy.

### **Section 2 – Summary of action steps and attestation**

Achievement First Charter Schools will be implementing the following protocols to remain in compliance with state regulations:

#### **WELLNESS COMMITTEE CORE MEMBERS**

The Achievement First Network will work annually with school boards to ensure core members of the wellness committee includes the following:

1. A teacher representative from a school in the charter
2. A parent representative from a school in the charter

The committee will be open from participation from the following:

1. Students
2. School board members
3. School Administrators
4. Members of the public

#### **COMMUNICATION OF POLICY**

The approved policy will be disseminated to the broader school communities and will be an agenda item at the Parent Leadership Committees

At the start of each school year schools will be responsible for advertising the wellness policy as well as the safety and wellness committee to solicit participation. The policy will live on the external Achievement First website for public access.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROTOCOL**

The approved policy will be brought to the director of school operations at each school who will be responsible for ensuring the school meets the local wellness policy.

As a part of the annual student services deep dive audit, Regional Directors of Operations will review documentation from Directors of school Operations to ensuring the policy is being implemented as outlined. This deep dive will act as an internal report to the board on the state of the implementation. At this time any changes that need to be implemented will be outlined with deadlines to ensure the school remains in compliance.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY**

The spring meeting of the safety and wellness committee will review the policy focusing on the following:

1. Implementation at the school level
2. Potential additions to the policy

All policy changes will be reviewed by the Regional Director of Operations and sent to the school board for approval.

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of the Authorized Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name of the Authorized Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title (Superintendent of Schools, Business Manager, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date of Authorization)

## **FINAL MINUTES w/revisions**

### **AF Hartford Board Meeting**

**Monday, March 17, 2014**

**5:00-7:00 PM**

### **AF Hartford Academy**

305 Greenfield Street

Hartford, CT

A meeting of the AF Hartford Board of Directors was held at AF Hartford Academy High school located at 305 Greenfield Street, Hartford. The following members were attendance:

#### **Board Attendance:**

Bernice Aljoe, AFHA Board - Yes  
Barry Jacobson, AFHA Board - Yes  
Jean LaVecchia, AFHA Board - Yes  
John Motley, AFHA Board - Yes  
Nyema Pinkney, AFHA Board - Yes  
Angela Scott, AFHA Board - Yes  
Gretchen Unfried-English, AFHA Board - Yes  
Lankford Wade, AFHA Board - Yes  
Nancy Zwiener, AFHA Board - Yes  
Laura Estes, AFHA Board - No  
Denise Gallucci, AFHA Board - No  
James Morton, AFHA Board - No  
Colleen Palmer, AFHA Board - No  
Marshall Ruben, AFHA Board – No

#### **Others in attendance:**

Hillary Bridges, AF Network Support - Yes  
D. Scot Kerr, AF Network Support - Yes  
Emily Banks, School Leadership - Yes  
Liz Ferguson, School Leadership - Yes  
Jeff House, School Leadership - Yes, left at 6:09  
Marc Michaelson, AF Network Support – Yes, via phone, 6:30 -  
Benjamin Cruse, School Leadership – Yes, via phone, 6:30 - 6:48

### **Call to Order**

Board Chair, Ms. Jean LaVecchia called the meeting to order at 5:11 pm

Ms. LaVecchia opened the meeting by welcoming new board members, two of whom were at the meeting in person, Angela Scott and Barry Jacobson, and two were on the phone in transit to the meeting, Nymea Pinkney and Lankford Wade. The Chair explained that we had

distributed a Unanimous Written Board Consent to approve the new directors, but to make it official she asked for a motion to elect them at the meeting.

John Motley moved to adopt resolution 1 - 4, electing each of the directors to the classes and terms specified in the resolutions. Seconded by Nancy Zwiener. All in favor.

### **Election of New Board Members**

1. Elect Lankford Wade
  - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Lankford Wade as a Class II Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/16.
2. Elect Nyema Pinkney
  - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Nyema Pinkney as a Class II Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/16.
3. Elect Angela Scott
  - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Angela Scott as a Class III Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/14.
4. Elect Barry Jacobson
  - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby elects Barry Jacobson as a Class III Director serving a partial term expiring on 6/30/14.

Ms. LaVecchia then asked others in attendance to introduce themselves and the principals gave their reports.

1. Liz Ferguson gave a report of bright spots and growth areas at the elementary school.
  - a. Bright Spots
    - i. Enrollment looks good; hoping to move to 96 per grade with backfilling
    - ii. 30-40% range for the IA
  - b. Growth Areas
    - i. Liz discussed the fact that attendance has slipped below the school's 98% goal to 97% with weather being a contributing factor.
    - ii. She is continuing to work with teachers to prepare them to analyze and texts at a high level to support the rigor of the Common Core standards
    - iii. Liz discussed her desire to implement an outside anti-bullying curriculum to support the school's a safe school climate plan. The board discussed ideas and made suggestions of programs (I am unafraid is what they're using now)

Ms. Ferguson completed her report and turned the floor over to Jeff House, AFHA Middle School Principal, who discussed his bright spots and growth areas of his school

- Growth Areas
  - Middle school attendance is a concern at 96%

- Suspension numbers are high- had a large number of incidents with multi-day suspension- by far the highest in the network. Staff is identifying students with special needs and creating systems to support them
- Bright Spots
  - Additional study hall time to provide additional supports and hired a new dean of students and strengthened math by changing around staff
  - Literacy scores are good
  - SPED – AF is providing greater supports with a SPED education teacher at each grade level and a Dean overseeing them

Mr. House completed his report and introduced Emily Banks, principal of the high school who discussed bright spots and growth areas.

- Growth Areas
  - a. Algebra 1
  - b. Attendance is still very strong but slipped somewhat. Some students have multiple day absences.
  - c. Forecasting next year's enrollment is a bit challenging to forecast the number of scholars matriculating from both the AF and Jumoke middle schools.
- Bright Spots
  1. Lots of students applying to pre-college summer programs (Cornell, Exeter, Columbia, Taft)- investments in school and college are higher once they've had a summer program- purely based on GPA
  2. Working hard to find internships (for next tier of students)- unpaid internships.
  3. Quality of learning has gone up- students spend 3 days learning one subject- the third day is a seminar forum
  4. APs are in mid-May-kids came in on Saturday to take an AP practice test- all 42 students were on time except for 1

With the conclusion of the principal reports, Ms. LaVecchia excused the Principals and thanked them for their dedication to our scholars.

## **Board Business**

1. Approve Minutes of 12/2/13 Meeting (Resolution 5)  
Approve December 3, 2013 Minutes
  - a. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby approves the December 3, 2013



Meeting Minutes as drafted.

Moved:Nancy Zwiener

Second:Barry Jacobson

All in Favor

## 2. Approve YTD Financial Reports (Resolution 6)

Ms. LaVecchia gave the Treasurer's report. She discussed the fact that all schools are running surpluses or on budget. A contributing factor was the receipt of additional Title 1 funding that is derived from a federal and state education funding formula. Ms. LaVecchia suggested that some of the surplus might be spent on the school climate curriculums discussed above.

Ms. LaVecchia than asked for a motion to approve the YTD financials.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby accepts the YTD Financial report dated 1/31/14 as presented.

Moved:Nancy Zwiener

Second:Nyema Pinkney

All in Favor

## Board Discussion

Ms. LaVecchia explained what each of the committees will focus on and the board reviewed the grid of committee members and candidates. Mr. Kerr explained that former ad hoc committees were shaded and on the left. Prospective committees are on the right.

Jean asked each of the Board members to let Scot know which committees they would like to serve on.

1. Committee Appointments
  - a. Principal Committee
  - b. Governance/Nominating Committee
  - c. Finance Committee

## Student recruitment and Advocacy

- a. Ben Cruse, principal of the new AF Summit Middle School reported that applications to the new school are behind goal due to late approval of the school and not being included on the printed version of the Hartford Choice application.
- b. Ben has been on TV and radio to get the word out about AF Summit. Other outreach includes:
  - i. New Community Outreach Fellow on Team X, Nicola Allen, Voices of Women of Color and HART are all helping with outreach

- ii. Printed application is in the field now as is an "Enrollment Interest Form" which enables direct enrollments after the Hartford Choice Lottery is run
- iii. Other school building news: Have done an incredible job building staff for the school; hired TFA core member, Dean of Students out of Columbia Teacher's college, 2 teachers from AFHA

### **Executive Session**

At 6:48 Jean LaVecchia excused the parent and teacher representatives and asked for a motion to to enter executive session to discuss specific personnel matters. The motion was made by Nancy Zwiener and seconded by Angela Scott. All in favor.

The Board exited executive session at 7:25, and immediately adjourned the regular meeting.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm by Jean LaVecchia.

**Minutes taken by:** Hillary Bridges

## **DRAFT**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Achievement First Hartford Academy**

#### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday May 27, 2014, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

305 Greenfield Street, Hartford

Board attendance meeting quorum:

Bernice Aljoe, AFHA Board - Yes  
Barry Jacobson, AFHA Board - Yes  
Jean LaVecchia, AFHA Board - Yes  
John Motley, AFHA Board - Yes  
Colleen Palmer, AFHA Board – Yes (Via Phone)  
Marshall Ruben, AFHA Board - Yes  
Angela Scott, AFHA Board - Yes  
Gretchen Unfried-English, AFHA Board - Yes  
Lankford Wade, AFHA Board - Yes  
Laura Estes, AFHA Board - No  
Denise Gallucci, AFHA Board - No  
James Morton, AFHA Board - No

Nyema Pinkney, AFHA Board - No  
Nancy Zwiener, AFHA Board - No  
Hillary Bridges, AF Network Support - Yes  
D. Scot Kerr, AF Network Support – Yes  
Chastity Lord, AF Network Support – Yes (Via Phone)  
Emily Banks, School Leadership - Yes  
Jeff House, School Leadership - Yes  
Jeff Sudmyer, School Leadership - Yes  
Marc Michaelson, School Leadership – Yes (arrived at 5:45)  
Benjamin Cruse, School Staff - Yes  
Meg Smith, School Staff - Yes

#### **Public in Attendance:**

Elizabeth Smith- Parent  
Rose Pennant- Parent

The meeting was called to order at 5:12 by Jean LaVecchia. The first order of business presented was the election of John Motley as the new Board Chairman replacing Jean LaVecchia.

Moved: Ms. Unfried-English  
Second: Mr. Lankford Wade  
All in Favor

#### **Public Comment**

Elizabeth Smith explained that she is a parent of children in both the middle and elementary schools. She is the President of the Hartford Parent University and a major supporter of AFHA schools. Ms. Smith expressed her concern with bullying in the school and hopes to see more proactive practices in place for next year. She also hopes to see increased communication and cooperation with parents.

Mr. House responded with an acknowledgement of the need for an improved school culture.

Ms. Meg Smith added that the school leaders need to make classrooms more respectful places. For next year she has increased the size of leadership team so that the school will have 3 Academic Deans, 2 Behavioral Interventionists and a Dean of Special Services. This increase in leadership will provide teachers with more coaching and feedback.

Ms. Rose Pennant expressed that she is extremely supportive of AFHA. She also raised her concern that students are not learning to write in cursive. In addition, she explained the importance of teachers reaching out to parents with students with 504 plans as early as possible so that they can work to change troublesome academic patterns before the end of the year. She also mentioned the importance of having unique supports for students which special needs.

Ms. Bernice Aljoe suggested that the school start by clarifying for students what constitutes bullying.

## **School Reports**

### **1. Jeff House**

#### **a. Bright Spots**

- Learned a lot about special education this year
- Incoming principal, Meg Smith is doing a tremendous job preparing for next year

#### **b. Growth Areas**

- Staff turnover is too high
- Number of suspensions is too high
- Need for improvement in terms of community engagement on the Network side

#### **c. Family Engagement, Staff Updates, Upcoming Events**

- Ms. Smith explained that in her plan for next year, parent communication will be a consistent practice.

### **2. Ben Cruse -- AF Summit Middle School preparations**

- Currently have 33 families completely enrolled at AF Summit
- Having difficulty with Student Recruitment in Hartford

Mr. Cruse stated that we are not telling our stories well enough in the Hartford community. Mr. Motley continued this conversation by highlighting the importance of AF having a representative on the ground in Hartford who knows Hartford.

### **3. Report of the Joint High School Committee (John Motley)**

Mr. Motley provided the board with a brief update from the Joint High School Committee meeting.

## **Board Business**

### **1. Approve Minutes of 3/17/14 Meeting (Resolution 1)**

Ms. LaVecchia noted non-substantive corrections to the prior meeting minutes (name conventions, typos) and requested that they be reflected in the final approved versions. Ms. LaVecchia provided a copy of changes to staff.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby approves the 3/17/14 Meeting Minutes with corrections as submitted by Jean LaVecchia.

*Moved by: Mr. Motley*

*Seconded by: Mr. Jacobson*

*All In Favor*

### **2. Approve YTD Financial Reports (Resolution 2)**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy hereby accepts the YTD financial report dated 4/30/14 as presented.

*Moved by: Mr. Wade*

*Seconded by: Mr. Morton*

*All In Favor*

### **3. Approve 2014--2015 Budget (Resolution 3)**

Mr Motley gave an overview of each school's budget. He told the Board that the elementary school is slightly over budget. Although salaries are lower, we are spending more money on technology and furniture. The middle school budget is higher because of Title 1 funding. Although salaries will be slightly lower, the school will be adding 1.5 leadership positions. The high school is also slightly over budget. However he also mentioned that with the \$500 dollar per-pupil increase we will receive from the state, many of the budget shortcomings will be alleviated.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of AF Hartford Academy hereby approves the financial budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

*Moved by: Mr. Motley*

*Seconded by: Mr. Jacobson*

*All In Favor*

**4. Approve revised Financial Policy regarding “Payment of Invoices” (Resolution 4)**

WHEREAS Achievement First is responsible for accounting services including the timely payment of invoices,

AND WHEREAS Achievement First Hartford Academy is responsible for the approval to pay invoices whether by signed check or approved invoice

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Directors of Achievement First Hartford Academy approves a revised policy for payment of invoices to enable the electronic processing of invoices and their approval for payment as drafted.

*Moved by: Mr. Jacobson*

*Seconded by: Ms. Scott*

*All In Favor*

**5. Appoint CohnReznick to audit the fiscal year 2013-14 (Resolution 5)**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of AF Hartford Academy hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick of Farmington, CT to perform the financial audit of the 2013-14 fiscal year.

*Moved by: Mr. Motley*

*Seconded by: Mr. Jacobson*

*All In Favor*

**6. Re-election of directors (Resolution 6)**

The slate of directors, classes and terms recommended for re-election are:

- i. Marshall Ruben, Class III, 7/1/14 - 6/30/17
- ii. Angela Scott, , Class III, 7/1/14 - 6/30/17
- iii. Barry Jacobson, , Class III, 7/1/14 - 6/30/17

*Moved by: Mr. Motley*

*Seconded by: Ms LaVecchia*

*All In Favor*

## **Board Discussion (6:30)**

### Board Retreat Planning

Mr. Kerr discussed the upcoming Board Retreat which will take place on July 21st.

### Achievement First updates

Ms. Chastity Lord discussed Team External Relations' new geographically focused structure. Someone from Team External Relations that will live in each geography. There will be a Community Engagement Associate living in the Hartford area for the upcoming school year.

### Review and establish Committee Assignments

Ms. LaVecchia stated that this discussion will take place in July.

**Adjourn** 7:18 pm

**Minutes taken by:** Hillary Bridges, External Relations

**Achievement First CT Joint Board Retreat  
Amistad Academy  
Elm City College Preparatory  
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy  
Achievement First Hartford Academy  
July 21, 2014, 12 - 5 pm  
Amistad Academy Elementary School  
130 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven**

The following directors and staff were in attendance:

Bill Bouton, Legal Resources - Yes	Barry Jacobson, AFHA Board - No
Susan Shankman, Guest - Yes	Jean LaVecchia, AFHA Board - No
Brianne Gilkes, Guests - Yes	James Morton, AFHA Board - No
Brittney Graham, Guests - Yes	John Motley, AFHA Board - No
Lorraine Gibbons, AA Board - Yes	Colleen Palmer, AFHA Board - No
Michael Griffin, AA Board - Yes	Nyema Pinkney, AFHA Board - No
Jane Levin, AA Board - Yes	Marshall Ruben, AFHA Board - No
Khadijah Muhammad, AA Board - Yes	Angela Scott, AFHA Board - No
Katrin Czinger, AA Board - No	Magaly Cajigas, ECCP Board - Yes
Sheri Gellman, AA Board - No	Erik Clemons, ECCP Board - Yes
Toni Harp, AA Board - No	Richard Ferguson, ECCP Board - Yes
Howard Hill, AA Board - No	Carolyn Greenspan, ECCP Board - Yes
Dorsey Kendrick, AA Board - No	Marnie Halsey, ECCP Board - Yes
Andrew Lachman, AA Board - No	William Heins, ECCP Board - Yes
Paul McCraven, AA Board - No	Patricia Pierce, ECCP Board - Yes
Michael Van Leesten, AA Board - No	Lystra Richardson, ECCP Board - Yes
Caroline Williams, AA Board - No	Laura Saverin, ECCP Board - Yes
James Bennett, AFBA Board - Yes	Kaitlyn Stasik, ECCP Board - Yes
Andrew Boas, AFBA Board - Yes	Pat Sweet, ECCP Board - Yes



Debra Hertz, AFBA Board - Yes	Sharon Oster, ECCP Board - No
Chris Kunhardt, AFBA Board - Yes	Deb Quinsee, ECCP Board - No
Marlene Macauda, AFBA Board - Yes	Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes
Ed Raice, AFBA Board - Yes	Hillary Bridges, AF Network Support - Yes
Judy Andrews, AFBA Board - No	Candice Dormon, AF Network Support - Yes
Dick Kalt, AFBA Board - No	Elandria Jackson, AF Network Support - Yes
Harold Kamins, AFBA Board - No	D. Scot Kerr, AF Network Support - Yes
Cornelius Medas, AFBA Board - No	Jennifer Lindsay, AF Network Support - Yes
Wiley Mullins, AFBA Board - No	Bridget Mercier, AF Network Support - Yes
Max Perez, AFBA Board - No	Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes
Lankford Wade, AFHA Board - Yes	Tony Siddall, AF Network Support - Yes
Nancy Zwiener, AFHA Board - Yes	Robyn Silverman, AF Network Support - Yes
Laura Estes, AFHA Board - No	

A meeting of the joint boards of Achievement First Connecticut schools on July 21, 2014 at Amistad Academy.

## **I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order by Dick Ferguson at 12:26pm.

## **II. High School Programs**

Chris Bostock, Principal of Amistad Academy High school, provided an overview of the Amistad High School program.

Mr. Bostock presented the three main goals of Amistad Academy High; 85% of students graduate from college in four years, 100% in six years, and 50% from top colleges. He described the three pillars of Amistad's college graduation strategy which includes exceptionally high standards, development in strong teachers and leaders, and support for scholars in the college process. He lauded the program as an example of what schools that serve high needs populations must accomplish and successfully prepare students for "the next economy."

Mr. Bostock detailed the four year college process which begins with the college readiness seminar for 9th graders and reaches its zenith in 12th grade. Students and families are supported

in every aspect of the process including helping them to create their college lists of “best fit” schools that meet their academic, social/emotional, and financial needs. Mr. Bostock described his hope that all AF graduates are able to pass what he calls, “the dorm room test” whereby AF alums “hang out” in their dorm rooms and engage with their peers on topics like literature, art, science, pop culture, and more.

### **III. Board Objectives & Theory of Change**

Tony Siddall, Senior Director of Governance & Authorizer Relations, Team External Relations, gave a presentation that covered the role that boards can play in relation to Achievement First’s “Theory of Change.” Mr. Siddall framed his explanation with two points of reference; 1) Board members as public officials who hold AF accountable and 2) Board members as active participants in building the future strategy of AF schools. Mr. Siddall presented the following as counterparts to the four-part “Theory of Change.”

- Become an excellence and equity exemplar
  - Board members are well positioned to help identify blind spots between network strategy and school reality.
- Concentrate our impact geographically
  - Board members are well positioned to take on community specific roles and serve as ambassadors in our communities.
- Open more gap-closing schools
  - Board members are well positioned to help AF close the structural funding gap in Connecticut by advocating for AF and communicating our philanthropic need to their networks.
- Sharing with and learning from others
  - Board members are well positioned to provide areas of expertise and experience to schools as AF seeks to become an open source organization.

### **IV. Workshop Groups**

Board members split into three working session groups of their choice; Scholar Support and Systems, Board Goals, and Community Engagement to discuss these topics.

At the end of each working session all board members collectively shared with the group.

- Scholar Support and Systems
  - Chris Kundhart, AF Bridgeport Board member, shared that his group spoke primarily about summer internships for students and looking forward to an active strategy to surpass the number of internships from Summer 2014 for the number in Summer 2015.
- Board Goals
  - Marnie Halsey, Elm City College Prep Board member, shared that her group spoke about governance needs for the upcoming school year as well as exciting opportunities for engagement with students and families.

- Community Engagement
  - Magaly Cajigas, Elm City College Preparatory Parent Representative, shared that her group spoke about the continued need to deeply engage and build relationships within our communities. She explained that work can be done to forge new relationships in addition to strengthening our current relationships. In addition, the group discussed how parents are our strongest advocates and how we can continue to empower families.

## **V. Q&A and Greenfield Update**

Dacia Toll, Co-CEO & President, Achievement First, provided updates on student achievement data, suspension data, and AF's two strategies for continuous increases student achievement following by a Q&A. Ms. Toll explained the timeframe and nuances for receiving and analyzing the test scores for the new Common Core-aligned Smarter Balance test that Achievement First's Connecticut scholars completed during the 2013-14 school year. Ms. Toll announced that although AF has more work to do to reduce suspensions, in one year AF schools had a 30% reduction in suspensions. Ms. Toll also described the four pillar approach designed to help AF take "Big Steps" forward as an organization; setting a College Ready Bar, focusing on Intellectual Engagement in Planning & Instruction, solidifying Vibrant School Cultures, and developing "bright spots" to Cultivate Excellence.

Ms. Toll provided an update on Achievement First's second strategy "Greenfield" in order to continuously drive innovation into the education sector more broadly.

Ms. Toll explained that Achievement First has partnered with the top design firm IDEO to create a blueprint for a new school model. Ms. Toll provided an update on Phase I of the AF Greenfield project and described the three anchors for the new model; accelerated expectations of academic achievement, student ownership and personalization of their hard work, and an awesomely powerful community for students, teachers, parents, and families. Ms. Toll explained the model will require a huge investment in technology and a longer school day.

## **VI. Connection to the mission**

During the Connection to the Mission Board members had the opportunity to hear from three Achievement First graduates who shared their personal experiences attending Achievement First and college. At the end of the panel Board Members asked questions and shared the insights they learned from the guests.

## **VII. Adjourn**

Mr. Kerr and Elm City College Preparatory Board Chair, Richard Ferguson closed the meeting expressing thanks to our Connection to the Mission guests. The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 by Richard Ferguson

## **Financial Materials for AF Hartford Board Meeting on Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

### Executive Summary

9/7/14

For all of these reports, it is important to note that they are only for the period ending July 31, 2014, as the board meeting fell too early to be able to fully close the month of August. That means that they do not yet reflect actual enrollment numbers, which are not known until students arrive in August and September, and are not finalized from the official perspective until Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, when the state locks in the amount of per pupil funding. There are definitely risks of lower enrollment than budgeted at all of our schools right now due to the difficult environment in Hartford, but the schools are aggressively managing that issue, and we will have more information on the state of enrollment and the steps being taken to address it in the weeks to come.

#### July 2014 actual vs. budget – AF Hartford Elementary

- As of the date of this report, the elementary school is not forecasting any significant variances from budget. Actual costs for the period are actually significantly below budget, but this is a timing issue only as staff and other expenses had not yet hit the books in July.

#### July 2014 actual vs. budget – AF Hartford Middle

- The middle school report is similar to the elementary school, as the forecast is very close to budget, and the actuals are below budget, but due to timing reasons only. We are concerned about enrollment at the middle school, but the situation currently is in flux, and we will have a better update in the weeks to come.

#### July 2014 actual vs. budget – AF Hartford High School

- The high school leadership is reflecting its concerns about enrollment in their forecast, which they are showing at 13 below budget, for a financial impact of \$174,200. They are aggressively working to increase enrollment while simultaneously starting to look for offsetting cost savings.

#### July 2014 actual vs. budget – AF Hartford Summit Middle School

- AF Summit is also concerned about achieving full enrollment, and their forecast assumes they will be 13 short. However, they have already identified offsetting cost savings, primarily in the area of personnel, so that it would not impact their overall budget performance. They continue to work to increase enrollment as well.

July 31, 2014 consolidated balance sheet

- The balance sheet is healthy looking good with \$2.1 million in cash and no short term payables. The July 15 per pupil payment was received which is why the balance sheet shows deferred revenue, since this amount will be used in August and September.

# Achievement First Hartford Academy Elementary School

Actuals as of:

7/31/2014



	YEAR TO DATE			Full Year			Comments to Board
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	
<b>Income</b>							Note that since this is a July 31 report, we do not yet have firm numbers for actual start of year enrollment. This is primarily Title I funding, which arrives later in the year. This is district SPED funding, which will start to come later in the year
Total General Operating Revenue	422,625	404,458	(18,167)	5,071,500	5,071,500	-	
Total Other Public Revenues	22,945	-	(22,945)	375,231	375,231	-	
Total Special Education Funding	21,071	-	(21,071)	252,852	252,852	-	
<b>Total Public Revenue</b>	<b>466,641</b>	<b>404,458</b>	<b>(62,183)</b>	<b>5,699,583</b>	<b>5,699,583</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Private Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>(130)</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>466,808</b>	<b>404,494</b>	<b>(62,313)</b>	<b>5,701,583</b>	<b>5,701,583</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>							Actual salaries were below budget due to some staff not being on payroll as of July 31. This should catch up.
School Salaries and Wages							
Total School Salaries and Wages	274,471	124,822	(149,649)	3,293,652	3,291,322	(2,330)	
Total Other Personnel Costs	-	-	-	24,380	24,380	-	
Total Salaries and Wages	274,471	124,822	(149,649)	3,318,032	3,315,702	(2,330)	
Total Bonuses	-	-	-	130,341	127,297	(3,044)	
Total Taxes & Benefits	48,028	9,357	(38,671)	584,892	595,090	10,198	
Total Temporary Staff	3,542	6,106	2,564	42,500	42,500	-	
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>326,041</b>	<b>140,285</b>	<b>(185,756)</b>	<b>4,075,765</b>	<b>4,080,589</b>	<b>4,824</b>	
<b>Non - Personnel Expenses (OTPS)</b>							
Total Program Support Activities	2,171	1,408	(762)	126,020	126,020	-	
Total Program Materials & Supplies	34,060	16,947	(17,113)	279,255	282,255	3,000	
Total Operations	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Technology	65,413	41,642	(23,771)	242,191	235,809	(6,382)	
Total General & Administrative	9,395	2,610	(6,785)	151,405	151,405	-	
Total Physical Plant	15,500	4,756	(10,744)	53,000	53,000	-	
Total Supplemental Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Direct to School Services	6,083	-	(6,083)	73,000	73,000	-	
AF Charter Management Fee	46,664	-	(46,664)	559,969	559,969	-	
<b>Total Non Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>179,286</b>	<b>67,364</b>	<b>(111,922)</b>	<b>1,484,840</b>	<b>1,481,459</b>	<b>(3,382)</b>	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>505,327</b>	<b>207,649</b>	<b>(297,678)</b>	<b>5,560,605</b>	<b>5,562,047</b>	<b>1,442</b>	
Contingencies	5,792	-	(5,792)	69,508	68,124	(1,384)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>511,119</b>	<b>207,649</b>	<b>(303,471)</b>	<b>5,630,113</b>	<b>5,630,171</b>	<b>59</b>	
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(50,145)</b>	<b>196,846</b>	<b>246,991</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>(59)</b>	

# Achievement First Hartford Academy Middle School

Actuals as of:

7/31/2014



	YEAR TO DATE			Full Year			Comments to Board
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	
<b>Income</b>							Note that since this is a July 31 report, we do not yet have firm numbers for actual start of year enrollment. This is primarily Title I funding, which arrives later in the year. This is district SPED funding, which will start to come later in the year
Total General Operating Revenue	345,000	329,731	(15,269)	4,140,000	4,140,000	-	
Total Other Public Revenues	19,572	-	(19,572)	252,859	252,859	-	
Total Special Education Funding	29,966	-	(29,966)	359,598	359,598	-	
<b>Total Public Revenue</b>	<b>394,538</b>	<b>329,731</b>	<b>(64,807)</b>	<b>4,752,456</b>	<b>4,752,456</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Private Revenue</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,250)</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>(130)</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>395,955</b>	<b>329,768</b>	<b>(66,187)</b>	<b>4,769,456</b>	<b>4,769,456</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>							Actual salaries were below budget due to some staff not being on payroll as of July 31. This
School Salaries and Wages							
Total School Salaries and Wages	240,437	119,128	(121,309)	2,885,246	2,872,672	(12,574)	
Total Other Personnel Costs	-	163	163	19,000	19,000	-	
Total Salaries and Wages	240,437	119,291	(121,146)	2,904,246	2,891,672	(12,574)	
Total Bonuses	-	-	-	40,800	40,800	-	
Total Taxes & Benefits	43,806	37,430	(6,375)	537,666	538,177	510	
Total Temporary Staff	1,875	3,894	2,019	22,500	22,500	-	
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>286,118</b>	<b>160,615</b>	<b>(125,503)</b>	<b>3,505,212</b>	<b>3,493,149</b>	<b>(12,063)</b>	
<b>Non - Personnel Expenses (OTPS)</b>							
Total Program Support Activities	2,000	9,257	7,257	124,693	131,993	7,300	
Total Program Materials & Supplies	21,000	2,737	(18,263)	144,515	156,715	12,200	
Total Operations	-	-	-	30,000	30,000	-	
Total Technology	39,070	(2,068)	(41,138)	172,951	172,951	-	
Total General & Administrative	7,139	746	(6,393)	123,991	123,991	-	
Total Physical Plant	19,333	11,671	(7,663)	61,000	53,200	(7,800)	
Total Supplemental Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Direct to School Services	6,083	-	(6,083)	73,000	73,000	-	
AF Charter Management Fee	39,454	-	(39,454)	473,446	473,446	-	
<b>Total Non Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>134,080</b>	<b>22,342</b>	<b>(111,737)</b>	<b>1,203,595</b>	<b>1,215,295</b>	<b>11,700</b>	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>420,197</b>	<b>182,957</b>	<b>(237,240)</b>	<b>4,708,808</b>	<b>4,708,444</b>	<b>(363)</b>	
Contingencies	4,905	-	(4,905)	58,860	59,166	306	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>425,102</b>	<b>182,957</b>	<b>(242,145)</b>	<b>4,767,668</b>	<b>4,767,611</b>	<b>(57)</b>	
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(29,148)</b>	<b>146,810</b>	<b>175,958</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>1,845</b>	<b>57</b>	

# Achievement First Hartford High School

Actuals as of:

7/31/2014



	YEAR TO DATE			Full Year			Comments to Board
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	
<b>Income</b>							<p>Note that since this is a July 31 report, we do not yet have firm numbers for actual start of year enrollment. However, the forecast reflects a concern that actual enrollment may be significantly below budget.</p> <p>This is primarily Title I funding, which arrives later in the year.</p> <p>This is district SPED funding, which will start to come later in the year</p>
Total General Operating Revenue	202,117	121,431	(80,686)	2,425,400	2,251,200	(174,200)	
Total Other Public Revenues	16,457	-	(16,457)	259,934	259,832	(102)	
Total Special Education Funding	9,882	-	(9,882)	118,583	118,583	-	
<b>Total Public Revenue</b>	<b>228,456</b>	<b>121,431</b>	<b>(107,025)</b>	<b>2,803,916</b>	<b>2,629,614</b>	<b>(174,302)</b>	
<b>Total Private Revenue</b>	<b>25,833</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(25,833)</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>(172)</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>254,497</b>	<b>121,467</b>	<b>(133,030)</b>	<b>3,116,416</b>	<b>2,942,114</b>	<b>(174,302)</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>							<p>Salaries are running below budget as of the summer.</p>
School Salaries and Wages							
Total School Salaries and Wages	150,257	135,138	(15,119)	1,803,089	1,764,319	(38,770)	
Total Other Personnel Costs	-	4,500	4,500	36,200	70,700	34,500	
Total Salaries and Wages	150,257	139,638	(10,619)	1,839,289	1,835,019	(4,270)	
Total Bonuses	-	-	-	68,750	68,750	-	
Total Taxes & Benefits	26,689	28,287	1,598	326,467	346,122	19,655	
Total Temporary Staff	1,002	4,713	3,711	12,025	14,025	2,000	
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>177,948</b>	<b>172,638</b>	<b>(5,310)</b>	<b>2,246,531</b>	<b>2,263,916</b>	<b>17,385</b>	
<b>Non - Personnel Expenses (OTPS)</b>							
Total Program Support Activities	667	229	(438)	128,295	118,675	(9,620)	
Total Program Materials & Supplies	32,368	6,110	(26,258)	140,588	128,918	(11,670)	
Total Operations	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Technology	41,312	2,031	(39,281)	167,554	160,082	(7,472)	
Total General & Administrative	6,033	899	(5,134)	93,260	89,260	(4,000)	
Total Physical Plant	2,417	-	(2,417)	10,000	7,500	(2,500)	
Total Supplemental Program	6,675	31,946	25,271	26,700	26,700	-	
Direct to School Services	6,083	-	(6,083)	73,000	73,000	-	
AF Charter Management Fee	21,548	-	(21,548)	258,580	258,570	(10)	
<b>Total Non Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>117,103</b>	<b>41,215</b>	<b>(75,888)</b>	<b>897,977</b>	<b>862,705</b>	<b>(35,272)</b>	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>295,051</b>	<b>213,853</b>	<b>(81,198)</b>	<b>3,144,509</b>	<b>3,126,621</b>	<b>(17,887)</b>	
Contingencies	3,276	-	(3,276)	39,306	38,929	(377)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>298,327</b>	<b>213,853</b>	<b>(84,474)</b>	<b>3,183,815</b>	<b>3,165,551</b>	<b>(18,264)</b>	
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(37,996)</b>	<b>(92,386)</b>	<b>(54,390)</b>	<b>2,601</b>	<b>(153,436)</b>	<b>(156,037)</b>	



# Achievement First Hartford Summit Middle School

Actuals as of:

7/31/2014



	YEAR TO DATE			Full Year			Comments to Board
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Actuals-Budget)	
<b>Income</b>							
Total General Operating Revenue	86,250	78,463	(7,787)	1,035,000	908,500	(126,500)	We are concerned enrollment may be significantly below budget, but offsetting cost savings have been identified. This is primarily Title I funding, which arrives later in the year. This is district SPED funding, which will start to come later in the year
Total Other Public Revenues	19,965	-	(19,965)	239,585	239,585	-	
Total Special Education Funding	2,500	-	(2,500)	30,000	30,000	-	
<b>Total Public Revenue</b>	<b>108,715</b>	<b>78,463</b>	<b>(30,252)</b>	<b>1,304,585</b>	<b>1,178,085</b>	<b>(126,500)</b>	
<b>Total Private Revenue</b>	<b>44,167</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(44,167)</b>	<b>530,000</b>	<b>530,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(167)</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>153,049</b>	<b>78,463</b>	<b>(74,586)</b>	<b>1,836,585</b>	<b>1,710,085</b>	<b>(126,500)</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>							
School Salaries and Wages							We have reduced staffing to reflect the lower expected enrollment.
Total School Salaries and Wages	82,245	35,649	(46,595)	986,937	885,585	(101,352)	
Total Other Personnel Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Salaries and Wages	82,245	35,649	(46,595)	986,937	885,585	(101,352)	
Total Bonuses	-	-	-	12,750	12,750	-	
Total Taxes & Benefits	13,293	2,607	(10,686)	163,267	161,762	(1,505)	
Total Temporary Staff	1,008	-	(1,008)	12,100	12,100	-	
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>96,546</b>	<b>38,257</b>	<b>(58,289)</b>	<b>1,175,054</b>	<b>1,072,197</b>	<b>(102,857)</b>	
<b>Non - Personnel Expenses (OTPS)</b>							
Total Program Support Activities	402	2,845	2,443	42,015	44,635	2,620	Reflects lower expected revenue.
Total Program Materials & Supplies	16,750	1,969	(14,781)	78,665	73,165	(5,500)	
Total Operations	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Technology	59,627	41,897	(17,730)	204,042	196,748	(7,294)	
Total General & Administrative	2,511	2,036	(475)	47,490	47,490	-	
Total Physical Plant	30,333	17,553	(12,780)	79,000	79,000	-	
Total Supplemental Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Direct to School Services	6,083	-	(6,083)	73,000	73,000	-	
AF Charter Management Fee	9,460	-	(9,460)	113,523	100,873	(12,650)	
<b>Total Non Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>125,167</b>	<b>66,300</b>	<b>(58,867)</b>	<b>637,735</b>	<b>614,911</b>	<b>(22,824)</b>	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>221,713</b>	<b>104,557</b>	<b>(117,156)</b>	<b>1,812,790</b>	<b>1,687,108</b>	<b>(125,681)</b>	
Contingencies	1,888	-	(1,888)	22,660	21,131	(1,529)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>223,602</b>	<b>104,557</b>	<b>(119,044)</b>	<b>1,835,450</b>	<b>1,708,240</b>	<b>(127,210)</b>	
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(70,553)</b>	<b>(26,094)</b>	<b>44,459</b>	<b>(218,484)</b>	<b>(217,774)</b>	<b>710</b>	



**Hartford**  
**Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2014**

	<u>Current Period Balance</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Assets		
Current Assets		
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	2,098,503	
Total Accounts Receivable	(3,581)	
Total Other Current Assets	(145,481)	Primarily amounts due to AF for management fees
Total Current Assets	1,949,441	
Long-term Assets		
Property & Equipment	<u>3,072,526</u>	Building improvements and computer equipment
Total Assets	<u>5,021,967</u>	
Liabilities		
Short-term Liabilities		
Deferred Revenue		
Total Deferred Revenue	1,882,017	August and Sept. per pupil amounts received in July
Total Other Short-term Liabilities	<u>457,118</u>	\$200K is a start-up loan from Charter School Growth Fund. The rest is primarily bonus and retirement accruals
Total Short-term Liabilities	<u>2,339,134</u>	
Total Liabilities	<u>2,339,134</u>	
Total Net Assets		
	<u>2,682,833</u>	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets		
	<u>5,021,967</u>	



**Achievement First**

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

[www.achievementfirst.org](http://www.achievementfirst.org)

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

**2014-2015**

# Table of Contents

## **Coordinated School Health:**

The Connecticut Achievement First Schools follow the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Coordinated School Health (CSH) approach to school wellness. This model values the physical, mental and environmental health of students, teachers, parents and community. The CSH is recommended as an effective strategy for creating healthy school environments that promote health and learning for all students. CSH is made up of eight inter-related components, and this manual is arranged by these components.

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# WELLNESS COMMITTEE CORE MEMBERS

The Achievement First Network will work annually with school boards to ensure core members of the wellness committee includes the following groups:

1. A Teacher Representative from a school in the charter
2. A parent Representative from a school in the charter
3. A member of the Achievement First Network

The Committee will be open to participation from the following:

1. Students
2. School Board Members
3. School Administrators
4. Members of the Public

## AF COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

Approved Wellness Policy will be disseminated to the broader school communities and will be an agenda item at the school based Parent Leadership Committees.

At the start of each school year Achievement First schools will be responsible for advertising the Wellness Policy along with the Safety and Wellness Committee to solicit participation in the committee. The Wellness Policy will live on the external Achievement First Website.

## AF IMPLEMENTATION PROTOCOL

Approved Wellness Policy will be brought to Director of School Operations at each Achievement First School Site

Each School Director of Operations are responsible for ensuring that the school meets local wellness policy.

As a part of the student services deep dive audit Regional Directors of Operations will review documentation from Directors of School Operations ensuring the policy is being implemented as outlined. This deep dive will act as an annual report to the Achievement First Network on the state of the implementation. At this time any necessary changes to implementation will be noted with expected deadlines to ensure school is in alignment with the policy as stated.

## ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY

The Spring meeting of the Safety and Wellness Committee will incorporate a review of the policy focusing on the following:

1. Implementation at the school level
2. Potential additions to the policy
3. Creating a plan on communicating the policy and the desire for community involvement for the coming school year.

All policy changes will be reviewed and approved by the Regional Director of Operations and sent to the Charter School Board for review and approval.

# HIGHLIGHTS from the DISTRICT WELLNESS PLAN: 2014-2015

## ACHIEVEMENT FIRST – DISTRICT WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Below are selected policies and recommendations from the **AchievementFirst Schools**

Wellness Plan, A new concise 'School Wellness Manual' describes what is mandated or recommended in schools, and has resources to facilitate implementation. The Manual will be **distributed to all schools, and will be available to students, parents, teachers and the community at [www.achievementfirst.org](http://www.achievementfirst.org).**

### HEALTHY FOOD

#### Meal Times

School meals will be healthy and tasty, and will meet or exceed federal nutrition requirements. Students will have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch. The only beverages given or sold to students are water, milk and 100% fruit juice.

#### In School Celebrations

It is recommended that schools use nonfood items or do special activities to celebrate birthdays, events and accomplishments. If schools do choose to allow food for celebrations it is recommended that it be healthy food.

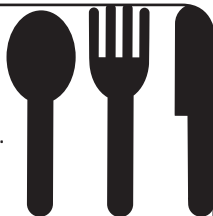
Ideas for nonfood celebrations:

- Have students lead an outdoor class activity or game
- Read a special book to the class or play a special game
- Create a class birthday card, book or poster

#### Rewards

Achievement First schools encourage positive behavior management in schools. Physical activities are encouraged to be used as a reward, such as fun runs, extra time in outdoor recess, or exergaming time.

*Food and beverages should not be used by teachers or staff to reward student academic achievement or good behavior.*



### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

#### Daily Physical Activity:

To meet the state mandate requiring all elementary students to have daily physical activity, and for students to embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, schools will offer opportunities for physical activity such as:

- Recess
- Classroom based physical activity (ex. ABC for Fitness or Take 10!)
- Pedometer programs such as Walk Across America
- Exergames

#### Physical Activity-Policy

Achievement First does not allow teachers or staff to withhold physical activity such as gym class and recess as punishment or for any other reason. Additionally, forced physical activity may not be used as a punishment.



### Healthy Environment-Hand Washing

Schools will provide students with access to hand cleansing at sinks

or hand sanitizing stations before they eat meals or snacks and hand cleansing will be promoted to students by staff.



### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

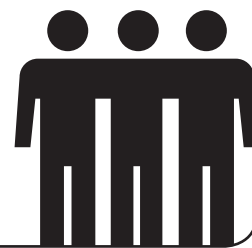
Each school will:

- Have a zero tolerance bullying policy
- Provide information on and access to community programs and services
- Encourage positive behavior management techniques and supports for staff and parents



### FAMILY SUPPORTS

Schools will work to strengthen parent-school partnerships. Schools will have an active Parent Leadership Team which meets regularly and has a school staff member on its team.



# **OVERVIEW of the ACHIEVEMENT FIRST WELLNESS PLAN:**

## **POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL SCHOOLS BASED ON THE COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH COMPONENTS**

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### **Physical Education & Physical Activity Overview**

**All Students will receive physical education and integrated daily physical activity to promote good physical and emotional health, improve social skills and increase their capacity for academic learning.**

All Students will receive physical education and daily physical activity aligned with state and federal mandates.

All elementary school students will have 20 minutes of daily physical activity in accordance with the provisions of Section 10-221o of the Connecticut General Statutes.

School and community personnel will not use physical activity or withholding physical activity (i.e., PE or recess) as punishment per State Statute.

Coaches will appropriately assess students for possible concussions and restrict them from play when needed in full compliance with Connecticut law.

Physical activity as a personal behavior will be encouraged through increased opportunities for afterschool and extracurricular physical activity.

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### **Physical Health Services Overview**

**Health services are designed to ensure access or referral to primary health care services, foster appropriate use of primary health care services, prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems, provide emergency care for illness or injury, and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintaining individual, family, and community health.**

School nurses will address the health and safety of students through the application of state statutes and mandates as well as local requirements and the provision of essential services.

The school nurses offices maintain active health records for students currently enrolled and inactive health records for students no longer enrolled or who graduated, as required by State Statute.

Children without insurance or a primary care provider are identified and referred to appropriate community services, as required by State Statute.

All state mandates regarding organized athletic activities in the Achievement First Schools are met and policies and procedures are in place to promote safety and respond to health issues that may arise

The School Medical Advisor provides expertise to the Board of Education and the School Nursing Program for its schools as required by State Statute.

In the absence of a school nurse, the Director of Operations has responsibility for assuring necessary health services are provided.

Services are provided to address identified priority health needs: mandated health screenings; immunizations; asthma; allergies; concussions; tuberculosis; and other communicable illnesses.

A process will be developed for their early identification and appropriate placement of students with special health needs.

Oral health will be promoted in the schools through a variety of means such as oral health education and dentist visits.

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### **Nutrition & Food Services Overview Achievement First**

**Achievement First strives to create a healthy food environment for all students in accordance with all Connecticut and Federal school nutrition requirements. AF aims to serve delicious, healthy whole foods while minimizing highly processed foods.**



Students will have at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, and students must be permitted to eat during any meetings or activities scheduled during mealtimes per Federal Law.

Schools will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment in accordance with AF policy.

Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior in accordance with AF policy.

Achievement First schools will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet for their children.

Schools should discourage students from sharing food/beverages given allergy concerns.

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## Healthy, Safe & Positive School Environment Overview

To ensure a healthy, safe and positive school environment for all students, this includes the physical and aesthetic surroundings. Factors that influence the physical environment include the school building and the area surrounding it, any biological or chemical agents that are detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and lighting.



The management of pests in the school environment requires an integrated approach that stresses both prevention and safe use of chemicals and other means for control and eradication per State Statute.

Create, distribute and regularly update a Crisis Management Book which will include emergency action plans for a variety of situations ranging from weather to security to biohazard emergencies per State Statute.

A green cleaning program that meets state mandates and whose products meet approved standards/guidelines will be developed.

Procedures for the maintenance of school facilities will be developed to ensure indoor air quality and a prevention program for the ongoing protection of indoor air quality in all of its facilities per State Statute.

As required by the State, each school will have an automatic external defibrillator (AED) and school personnel trained in AED operation and CPR.

Radon testing in school buildings will be performed at appropriate intervals by radon measurement professionals who are appropriately trained per State Statute.

A program to identify friable and non-friable (ACM) asbestos-containing material in any school facilities will be developed and whenever necessary appropriately trained individuals for any remediation efforts will be deployed as required by the State Statute.

The schools will comply with all OSHA mandates including training and maintaining proper paperwork for the following: 1) Slip, Trip and Fall Training; 2) Blood borne pathogens; 3) Proper bending and lifting techniques; and 4) Hazardous Materials.

The District will comply with all regulations and standards for safety inspections of facilities and equipment.

Energy Volunteer Program designed to conserve energy and reduce the carbon footprint by training the end users to take an active role through behavior modification will be developed.

Schools will provide students access to hand cleansing at sinks in bathrooms or hand sanitizing stations elsewhere before they eat meals or snacks.

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## Youth, Family & Community Involvement Overview

Parents, families and community are vital to the success of students and schools at AF. The Achievement First Schools seek to further develop and strengthen partnerships with community agencies, parents and staff to increase the overall wellness of our students, staff and school communities.



AF will seek to further develop and strengthen partnerships with community agents as sources of wellness related programs, resources and expertise.

AF is committed to reaching out to parents to encourage healthy lifestyles along with scholastic achievement.

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## Staff Health Promotion Overview

AF highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and therefore, will seek to further develop an environment that supports personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.



AF will expand the Employee Wellness Program to support the health and well-being of every staff member.

Teachers are role models for their students and are asked to support the work of the Wellness Committee.



# Physical Education & Physical Activity

## State and Federal Standards:

- 60 minutes/week for elementary students
  - 90 minutes/week for middle school students
  - Up to 120 minutes/week for at least one of the four years for high school students
- 
- ♦ Students will be exposed to a variety of activities
  - ♦ Students will engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least half of the PE period
  - ♦ All classes will be taught by a certified physical education teacher in a ratio not to exceed 1:27

## Daily Physical Activity

### *State and Federal standards:*

- All elementary school students will have daily physical exercise for 20 minutes in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-221o. Other grades will have daily activity in accordance with PE standards.
- Recess will be provided
- Teachers should discourage extended sitting
- Physical activity should be encouraged in and out of the classroom

## Physical Activity and Punishment

Physical activity will not be withheld or used as punishment.

- Students will not be asked to do any type of physical activity as punishment
- Recess and Physical Education class will not be withheld as punishment

## Safety and Sports

- The district will provide training for all coaches and staff in appropriate assessment techniques.
- Students will be restricted from playing until such time that students can be fully evaluated and cleared to safely resume athletic activities.

## Broad Impact on Student Physical Activity Goal

Physical Activity opportunities should be available during, before and after school.

- Physical activity should be integrated throughout school day
- Curriculum should link and reinforce knowledge and self management
- Opportunities for extracurricular activities will be provided at each school
- Opportunities for interscholastic sports will be provided at each school
- Afterschool childcare programs will provide daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity
- AF schools encourage community access to building facilities and equipment
- Use of exergaming equipment



# Health Services

## School Nursing Program

A school nurses address the health and safety of students through the application of state statutes and mandates as well as local requirements and the provision of essential services.

The services provided by the school nurse include but are not limited to:

- Screening for compliance with immunizations and physical exams for school entry requirements (*CT State Mandate*)
- Providing care and case management for students with chronic diseases
- Obtaining individualized health care plans and medication orders
- Providing and monitoring safe administration and storage of medications (*District Policy*)
- Providing first aid diagnosis and treatment of minor illness/injuries/allergies
- Providing mandated hearing and vision screenings and referrals (*CT State Mandate*)
- Performing special care nursing services
- Maintaining the school health records during and after the students' school years

## Extramural Sports

Ensure all state mandates regarding organized athletic activities in the A S are met and policies and procedures in place to promote safety and respond to health issues that may arise.

- Sport physicals are required for students to participate in extramural sports, as required by State Statute.
- Trainers will attend home games of all sports and away games/meets for lacrosse, football and any tournaments.
- A staffed ambulance is available for home lacrosse and football games as well as for the PE on the Green, Fitness Fund Run and the Rotary track events.
- Ensure coaches receive training about health and safety issues to cover all extramural athletic activities, that coaching staff meet state requirements for regular re-certification, and that coaching staff have taken the injury prevention module. The BOE will offer the injury prevention module itself and make staff aware of when it is offered elsewhere in the Region.

## Health Services in Absence of School Nurse

The DSO has responsibility for assuring necessary health services are carried out in the absence of a school nurse.

- Responsibilities range from dispensing routine prescribed medications to caring for minor illnesses and injuries to responding to urgent or emergent matters.
- All staff responsible for the delivery of care in the absence of a nurse must have had training in those aspects of care that they are expected to deliver.



## Health Services *continued*

### Services for Priority Health Needs

- Asthma: Asthma management services consistent with recognized best practices will be provided. The School Nursing Program's "Standards for the Management of Asthma in the Schools" is the basis for asthma management services. The School Nursing Program will promote and track the use of Asthma Action Plans (AAPs) for all school children.
- Allergies: Food Allergy Policy seeking to prevent serious food and other allergic reactions as well as to manage effectively any that might occur will be developed, as required by State Statute. School nurses collaborate with parents, primary care providers, and appropriate school staff to develop emergency care plans for each child at risk. School nurses disseminate this to and, where appropriate, train all staff who need to play a role in the child's allergy prevention and management.
- Concussions: A policy will be developed and implemented to address the prevention, identification and management of concussions including the step-wise re-integration of students into physical and academic activities. Appropriate school staff will be trained in injury prevention and the identification of possible concussions that may occur either in or out of school. A policy will be developed to ensure students' safe, step-wise re-integration into physical activities and academics.
- Tuberculosis (TB): A policy regarding the identification of students who are at high risk for tuberculosis will be enforced. Ensure students who are at high risk have had appropriate screening and care management before being permitted entry into the schools. High risk students may be excluded if timely screening and care management are not completed.
- Other Communicable Illnesses: Children suspected of having a communicable illness that could pose risks to others could be separated from others and will be referred for evaluation and appropriate care.

### Children with Special Health Care Needs

- Individualized Health Plans (IHPs) are developed by the school nurse for students with identified special health care needs.

### Oral Health Services

- Take all reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).



# Nutrition & Food Services

## Timing of Meals

- Students will have at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch. Meetings and activities can only be scheduled during mealtimes if students are allowed to eat. (Federal Mandate)
- Schools should arrange bus schedules that will allow students to participate in the breakfast program.

## School Food Service Program

- The School Food Service Vendor will provide all food and beverages to students during meal times. Food should be as balanced meals with any individual foods or beverages meeting specific nutrition standards detailed below in accordance with CT and Federal School Nutrition standards.
- Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. The Food Vendor will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools.
- Free drinking water will be accessible at all schools during meal times. (Federal Mandate)
- Schools should explore participation in alternative breakfast programs such as breakfast in the classroom and grab-and-go breakfast.
- Schools should pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch After School Snack Program if they choose to serve snacks after school.
- Schools open during the summer should offer the Summer Food Service Program for at least 6 weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year (preferable throughout the entire vacation) if more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-priced school meals.

*Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program will:*

- Be appealing and attractive to children
- Maximize use of locally sourced fruits and vegetables
- Be peanut-free
- Be styrofoam free

## Food available on school grounds

- School-sponsored events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances) should follow nutrition guidelines used during the school day.

## School Health Counter-Marketing

- School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited.
- The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is strongly encouraged.



# Healthy, Safe & Positive School Environment

## **Integrated Pest Management**

- Develop and utilize an integrated pest management plan that meets CT state mandates.
- Identify a certified pest control vendor who is trained to implement the plan.
- Develop and implement protocols for the identification and referral of pest problems for appropriate management.

## **School Security and Emergency Preparedness**

A Crisis Management Book will also include:

- How to restrict unauthorized entries and departures to and from the school grounds during the school day.
- A policy for securing schools during emergency situations due to security risk.
- A plan in place regarding closures, delayed openings and early departures and notification of all concerned parties regarding these actions.

## **Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Program**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive Indoor Air Quality Program for its facilities that meets all state mandates.
- In cooperation with the CT DPH, develop school-based Tools for Schools teams to assist in the identification and remediation of IAQ problems.

## **OSHA Compliance**

- Hazmat boxes for health suites and disposal processes will be in place for proper handling of medical wastes.
- A box of gloves for compliance with universal precautions will be made available in each classroom so that school staff may promptly and safely attend to incidents involving bodily fluids or other hazards in the classroom.

## **Mandatory Inspections**

- The District will develop a regular schedule of safety inspections for the following equipment and systems in all NHPS facilities: elevators, boilers, emergency lighting, public address systems, fire alarm systems, fire sprinklers, fire suppression systems, fire extinguishers, and fire drills.



# Staff Health Promotion

## **Support of District Wellness Committee**

To help support teachers as being role models for their students the District Wellness Committee will:

- Establish an onsite coordinator at each school
- Expand promotion of the program and events
- Provide supports when funding allows for schools offering the program

## Resource Section

The following lists by topic provide you with websites and links to community partners/organizations that have useful ideas and materials to support your efforts to implement these school policies/recommendations and promote healthy behaviors of students in school and at home. A description about each link/website is provided for easier navigation through these lists.

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1. Nutrition Education and Promotion. ....	14
2. Physical Activity Opportunities. ....	15
3. Physical Activity Ideas .....	16
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**SITES WITH PRINTABLE FLYERS:**

1. Nutrition Detectives is a manual that provides example activities to implement in the classroom to help children understand nutrition labels, deceptive food marketing schemes and make nutritious choices
  - [www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/nutrition-detectives-2/](http://www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/nutrition-detectives-2/)
2. Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet1ChooseMyPlate.pdf>
3. Below is a link of 10 quick and easy tips to help you eat more vegetables
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet2AddMoreVegetables.pdf>
4. Focus on fruits. The site below promotes fruit and the health benefits it can provide
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet3FocusOnFruits.pdf>
5. Make half your grains whole. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases, check this site out
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet4MakeHalfYourGrainsWhole.pdf>
6. Got your dairy today? Below are tips to help you eat and drink more fat-free or low-fat dairy foods
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet5GotYourDairyToday.pdf>
7. Fruits and vegetables do not have to be dreadful. Fire them up and make them exciting!
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet10LiveUpYourMeals.pdf>

**OTHER GREAT SITES:**

8. Guidelines for promoting health in schools
  - [http://www.iuhpe.org/uploaded/Publications/Books\\_Reports/HPS\\_GuidelinesII\\_2009\\_English.pdf](http://www.iuhpe.org/uploaded/Publications/Books_Reports/HPS_GuidelinesII_2009_English.pdf)
9. CT Nutrition Standards- The Connecticut State Department of Education are required to publish a set of nutrition standards for foods offered for sale to students separately from a reimbursable school lunch or breakfast
  - <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422>
10. CT Beverage Requirements
  - [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418)
11. The Eat Well Guide is an online directory for sustainable, local produce found in: local grocery stores, restaurants, family farms, etc.
  - <http://www.eatwellguide.org/i.php?pd=Home>
12. The link below offers the allowable beverage requirements that can be sold to students in Connecticut public schools
  - <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418>
13. Below is a list of Supporting Organizations for the Connecticut Nutrition Standards
  - <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322434>
14. The site below tells you why it is important to be a healthy weight, factors that contribute to a healthy weight and energy balance
  - [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose\\_wt/index.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/index.htm)
15. A meal menu calculator will help you select a meal and displays calories
  - <http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/menuplanner/menu.cgi>

**SITES WITH PRINTABLE FLYERS:**

1. ABC for Fitness enables children to accumulate 30 minutes or more of physical activity every day. By combining creative teaching techniques with structured activity bursts, the program actually offers the opportunity to increase teaching time each day
  - [www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/abc-for-fitness/](http://www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/abc-for-fitness/)
2. Take 10 for fitness is an evidence-based program that integrates physical activity, nutrition, and health concepts with academic lessons in elementary school classrooms, positively impacting both teachers and students
  - <http://www.take10.net/programmain>

**OTHER GREAT SITES:**

3. Getting active in the classroom will help students improve their health, their focus and ultimately their academic performance. Below are some great ideas for children grades k-8 to be physically active during class
  - <http://www.teachhub.com/top-12-classroom-fitness-activities>
4. East Rock Park: Playground, trails, bicycling, and basketball courts; canoes and rowboats permitted
  - (203)946-6086
5. Edgewood Park: Playground, nature trails, tennis courts, skate park, pond, sports fields and basketball courts
  - (203)946-8028
6. Farmington Canal Heritage Greenway: former train tracks converted to a trail for biking, walking and roller blading
  - (203)562-6312
7. Lighthouse Point Park: New Haven's Public Beach; grass areas, playground, nature trails and volleyball league
  - (203)946-8790
8. Ralph Walker Ice Skating Rink: Reasonable admission and skate rental fees
  - (203)946-8007
9. West Rock Nature Center: Visitor center; brook, waterfall and gorge; woods and fields; trails
  - (203)946-8016
10. Public Gyms and Swimming Pools
  - Hill Regional Career High School, James Hillhouse High School, John S. Martinez School, Wilbur Cross High School
  - (203)946-8020

**SITES WITH PRINTABLE FLYERS:**

1. For school-specific after-school activities please contact the appropriate schools and ask to speak with the after school coordinator
  - <http://www.nhps.net/node/416>
2. Search for a variety of after-school activities by state, and browse additional links provided. Answers to frequently asked questions, tips for starting after-school programs and current related news are also provided
  - [www.afterschool.gov](http://www.afterschool.gov)
3. Activities and programs that your local YMCA offers as well as information on starting after-school programs. Site also includes information on after-school art programs, humanities, sports, international and teen leadership programs and discusses the benefits of after-school programs
  - [www.ymca.net](http://www.ymca.net)
4. After-school programs keep students safe and engaged, often until as late as 6 pm, when they can be returned to the care of their parents or guardians. Here is how to choose the appropriate after-school program for your child and a list of after school programs in the area
  - [http://www.yale.edu/hronline/worklife/2004\\_afterschool.pdf](http://www.yale.edu/hronline/worklife/2004_afterschool.pdf)
5. Take 10 for fitness is an evidence-based program that integrates physical activity, nutrition, and health concepts with academic lessons in elementary school classrooms, positively impacting both teachers and students
  - <http://www.take10.net/programmain>
6. ABC for fitness provides examples of activities to implement in the classroom to provide in-class exercise opportunities
  - [www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/abc-for-fitness/](http://www6.indep.k12.mo.us/programs-services/wellness/abc-for-fitness/)
7. The After-School Lessons Program is the heart and soul of Music Haven. The members of the HSQ teach lessons and group classes in violin, viola, and cello
  - <http://www.musichavenct.org/afterschool.html>
8. LEAP is an after school and summer program developed to achieve positive academic and social outcomes for children living in high poverty urban neighborhoods
  - [https://www.leapforkids.org/Content/Summer\\_Program.asp](https://www.leapforkids.org/Content/Summer_Program.asp)

**OTHER GREAT SITES:**

9. New Haven Department of Parks and Recreation- Below is a link for information about Recreation Programs with a direct contact and telephone number
  - <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Parks/recreation/index.asp>
  - Contact Felicia at (203) 946-8088
10. Provides information on government after-school initiatives through the Connecticut After-School Network
  - <http://www.cga.ct.gov/coc/>
11. This site provides guidance for parents on differentiating and selecting appropriate after-school programs for children
  - <http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content4/choose.after.school.html>
12. New Haven YMCA
  - <http://www.cccymca.org/locations/new-haven/membership/>
13. Physical Activity and Wellness Program (PAW) provides school infrastructure in the form of School Wellness Teams (SWT) and supports efforts that promote the awareness and practice of good health behaviors school-wide
  - <http://www.nhps.net/node/362>

**SITES WITH PRINTABLE FLYERS:**

1. The link below share ideas for teachers and parents for serving healthy snacks and beverages to children in the classroom, in after-school programs and elsewhere
  - [http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/school\\_snacks.pdf](http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/school_snacks.pdf)
2. The link below illustrates creative ways in making healthy food fun for kids
  - <http://pinterest.com/volunteerspot/healthy-snack-ideas-for-kids/>
  - <http://www.superhealthykids.com/healthy-kids-recipes/category/snacks.php>
3. Here are some quick and healthy snack ideas kids will enjoy—not only eating—but helping you make
  - <http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/nutrition-and-physical-activity/nutrition/healthy-snacks-quick-tips-for-parents>
  - <http://www.nourishinteractive.com/healthy-living/free-nutrition-articles/146-snack-foods-list-food-groups>
  - <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442452012#.UPnE7WfmIuc>  
*\*\*Click “25 healthy snacks for kids”*
4. Parent tips for healthy snacks; 100 calories or less
  - <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/hundredcalories.pdf>
5. Tips on dealing with picky eaters. Click on this link and learn how to get children excited about healthy foods
  - <http://www.healthiergeneration.org/parents.aspx?id=1850>
6. Below are 10 tips on helping parents teach children how to build healthy meals
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet7BuildAHealthyMeal.pdf>
7. Whole grains are important sources of nutrients like zinc, magnesium, B vitamins, and fiber. Consider these tips to select whole-grain products and keep them fresh and safe to eat
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet22ChoosingWholeGrainFoods.pdf>
8. Let’s eat for the health of it. Learn how to build a healthy plate, eat the right amount of calories, be active and use food labels to help you make better choices
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/MyPlate/DG2010Brochure.pdf>
9. Printable MyPlate Graphic Resource Materials: full plate, half plate, fruit group, vegetable group, grains group, dairy group etc.
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/print-materials-ordering/graphic-resources.html>

**SITES WITH PRINTABLE FLYERS:**

1. Kids Health- Informative website providing information regarding the health of your child including: general health, infections, emotional and behavioral issues, growth and development, nutrition and fitness, recipes, medical programs and medical visits
  - [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)
2. Cooking Matters empowers families with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to prepare healthy and affordable meals
  - <http://cookingmatters.org/>
3. Emergency Food Council of Greater New Haven- Coordinates distribution of emergency food to those in need in the greater New Haven area
  - [www.emergencyfoodcouncil.com](http://www.emergencyfoodcouncil.com)  
(203)469-5000
4. CT Department of Social Services (food stamps/WIC)
  - [www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss)  
(203)974-8000
5. Meal planning is a time saver for even the busiest people, meaning healthier eating with fewer trips to the drive thru and more meals at home. So, taking some time to learn how to plan meals will save you time -- and help you eat better -- in the long run
  - <http://www.mealsmatter.org/Articles-And-Resources/Meal-Planning-Articles/How-to-plan-meals.aspx>
6. Everyone including kids, should reduce their sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams a day. Below are quick tips to help you and your children cut back on salt and sodium
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet14SaltAndSodium.pdf>
7. Parent University - Offering seminars for parents and other health and nutrition education at parent workshops, PTO meetings and other parent-focused events where parents can share their healthy food practices and physical activity ideas with others
  - <https://www.facebook.com/ParentUniversityNewHaven>
8. Below is a link for parents to learn how to build healthy meals
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet7BuildAHealthyMeal.pdf>
9. 10 tips on appropriate protein ratios for parents and children
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet6ProteinFoods.pdf>
10. Try something different, have a meat free day. Below is a link for healthy eating tips for vegetarians. Try a meat supplement, you and your children may enjoy it
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet8HealthyEatingForVegetarians.pdf>
11. Here are some quick tips on shopping for fruits and vegetables smart and affordably
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet9SmartShopping.pdf>
12. Get the most for your food budget! The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet16EatingBetterOnABudget.pdf>
13. SuperTracker is an online tool where you can get a personalized nutrition and activity plan. Track what you eat and your activities to see how they stack up, and get tips and support to help you make healthy choices
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet17SuperTracker.pdf>

14. Healthy meals start with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Don't forget dairy—include fat-free or low-fat dairy products on your plate, or drink milk with your meal
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet18EnjoyYourFood.pdf>
15. What you drink is as important as what you eat. Many beverages contain added sugars and offer little or no nutrients, while others may provide nutrients but too much fat and too many calories. Here are some tips to help you make better beverage choices
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet19MakeBetterBeverageChoices.pdf>
16. A critical part of healthy eating is keeping foods safe. Four basic food safety principles work together to reduce the risk of foodborne illness—Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill. These four principles are the cornerstones of Fight BAC!®, a national public education campaign to promote food safety to consumers and educate them on how to handle and prepare food safely
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet23BeFoodSafe.pdf>
  - <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20080212011404.pdf>

**OTHER GREAT SITES:**

17. Encouraging parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the recognized nutrition standards
  - <http://www.carpentercharter.org/ptadocs/lunch%20and%20snack%20ideas.pdf>
18. SNAP – outreach, screenings, and enrollment to reach underserved households in New Haven. The goal is to increase access to nutritious foods for families in New Haven, thereby reducing hunger and improve nutritional status
  - **SNAP Outreach Contact: Sharon Taylor (203)737-5832**
19. WIC – Farmers' Market Nutrition Program- Senior WIC coupons are available through New Haven- area senior centers; WIC coupons are available through New Haven WIC offices
20. You are the most important influence on your child, so be a healthy role model. Below are 10 tips on setting good examples
  - <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet12BeAHealthyRoleModel.pdf>
21. Child Care Aware is a national initiative committed to helping parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their community
  - [www.childcareaware.org](http://www.childcareaware.org)

## Selected Flyers & Handouts for Copying

The following flyers were selected to assist you in promoting your school wellness policies to staff, students and parents.

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Focus on Fruits (1 pg) .....	21
Smart Shopping for Veggies/Fruits (1 pg).....	22
With Protein Foods, Variety is Key (1 pg) .....	23

# 10 tips

Nutrition  
Education Series

## focus on fruits

### 10 tips to help you eat more fruits



**Eating fruit provides health benefits.** People who eat more vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits provide nutrients vital for health, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid). Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. None have cholesterol. Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as a part of the Fruit Group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.

#### 1 keep visible reminders

Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.



#### 2 think about taste

Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor. Add fruits to sweeten a recipe.



#### 3 think about variety

Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice) as well as fresh, so that you always have a supply on hand.

#### 4 don't forget the fiber

Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit, rather than juice, for the benefits that dietary fiber provides.



#### 5 be a good role model

Set a good example for children by eating fruit every day with meals or as snacks.

#### 6 include fruit at breakfast

At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas, peaches, or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes; drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice. Or, try a fruit mixed with fat-free or low-fat yogurt.



#### 7 try fruit at lunch

At lunch, pack a tangerine, banana, or grapes to eat, or choose fruits from a salad bar. Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy and convenient.

#### 8 experiment with fruit at dinner, too

At dinner, add crushed pineapple to coleslaw, or include orange sections, dried cranberries, or grapes in a tossed salad.

#### 9 snack on fruits

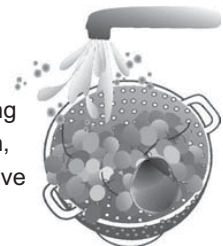
Dried fruits make great snacks.

They are easy to carry and store well.



#### 10 keep fruits safe

Rinse fruits before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub fruits briskly to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. After rinsing, dry with a clean towel.





# smart shopping for veggies and fruits



## 10 tips for affordable vegetables and fruits

**It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget.** Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

### 1 celebrate the season

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season.

They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer's market is a great source of seasonal produce.



### 2 why pay full price?

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

### 3 stick to your list

Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don't shop when you're hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You'll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

### 4 try canned or frozen

Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.



### 5 buy small amounts frequently

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

### 6 buy in bulk when items are on sale

For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

### 7 store brands = savings

Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

### 8 keep it simple

Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.



### 9 plant your own

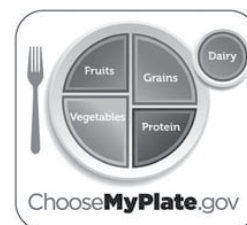
Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.



### 10 plan and cook smart

Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.

# with protein foods, variety is key



## 10 tips for choosing protein

**Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources.** We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough? Most people, ages 9 and older, should eat 5 to 7 ounces\* of protein foods each day.

### 1 vary your protein food choices

Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with main dishes made with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood.

### 2 choose seafood twice a week

Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood—include some that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



### 3 make meat and poultry lean or low fat

Choose lean or low-fat cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 90% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

### 4 have an egg

One egg a day, on average, doesn't increase risk for heart disease, so make eggs part of your weekly choices. Only the egg yolk contains cholesterol and saturated fat, so have as many egg whites as you want.

### 5 eat plant protein foods more often

Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are naturally low in saturated fat and high in fiber.



### 6 nuts and seeds

Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes to replace meat or poultry. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

### 7 keep it tasty and healthy

Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don't add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

### 8 make a healthy sandwich

Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.



### 9 think small when it comes to meat portions

Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a smaller burger or a "petite" size steak.

### 10 check the sodium

Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including beans and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

\* What counts as an ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; or 1 tablespoon peanut butter.



# Family Handbook

## 2014-2015

[www.achievementfirst.org](http://www.achievementfirst.org)



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### **Important Attachments**

Attachment 1: School-Parent-Scholar Commitment Agreement

Attachment 2: School Calendar

Attachment 3: Scholar Behavior System Information

## Welcome!

Welcome to **AF X**. We are thrilled to be working in partnership with you to support your children's academic, social and emotional growth this year. We take the commitment we have made to you and your children very seriously; we promise to provide all scholars with the foundational K-12 education necessary to graduate from college and succeed in the world beyond. Fulfilling this promise requires a meaningful collaboration between our school and you. This handbook outlines the key policies that will enable us all to best support your children. These policies have been carefully researched and implemented over the years to ensure the academic well-being and overall safety of all our scholars. We thank you in advance for believing in our school and working together with us to best support your child's growth this year.

## The Mission of Achievement First

The mission of Achievement First is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all of America's children. We believe that all children, regardless of race or economic status, can succeed if they have access to a great education.

Achievement First schools will provide all of our scholars with the academic and character skills they need to graduate from top colleges, to succeed in a competitive world, and to serve as the next generation of leaders for our communities.

# Attendance

Attendance at school is the most basic requirement for learning. In order for scholars to reach for their personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort at school each and every day. At Achievement First, our curriculum is very rigorous and demanding, and every day is essential for scholars to keep pace. We need parents to ensure that their child is in school, and we ask that you do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illness.

Achievement First considers more than three absences in a trimester or more than seven absences in a year to be excessive. Scholars should make it through the school year with fewer than four absences.

Our school day runs from 7:30-4:00 Monday-Thursday and 7:30-1:00 on Friday, and all scholars are expected to be in school during these times. Parents should not bring scholars late or pick them up before 4:00 P.M. unless it is an emergency. Tardies and early dismissals, like absences, compromise your child's full educational experience. The dean of students will regularly monitor scholar attendance in order to ensure that all scholars come to school to get the education they need and deserve.

Please note the following important attendance policies:

- ***We do not differentiate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences for reporting, awards, promotion decisions, etc:*** We commit to structuring every minute of the school day in a way that will benefit your child academically and socially. This means that any time a student misses a day of school, it has a significant impact on his or her educational experience. For this reason, any day your child does not attend school will be marked an absence. Regardless of the reason, when a child misses school, the impact on his/her education is the same: a full day of instruction was missed. We understand that there will be rare circumstances when scholars will need to miss school due to a serious illness (with a doctor's note), a death in the family, or a religious observance, but the child will still be marked absent for the day. By maintaining a clear policy for how we account for lost instructional time due to absence, this will enable us to most accurately make promotion decisions with your child's best interest in mind. We will take extenuating circumstances into account when considering attendance as a factor in our decision-making.
- ***Never miss school for appointments:*** We ask that parents/guardians schedule medical appointments outside of school time. The best times are Friday afternoons (after 2:30 P.M.) or on another day when school is not in session (for example, professional development days). In the rare case that a scholar has a medical appointment at a time when school is in session, he or she should return to school after the appointment.

- **Early Dismissal:** Scholars are expected to stay in school until the end of the day (4:00 P.M. for regular dismissal and 1:00 P.M. on Fridays). In order to maximize time spent learning and avoid unnecessary disruptions, we ask that parents do not pick up scholars early, except in an emergency situation. Since we are intently focused on climbing the mountain to college, our policy is not to release scholars prior to the end of the school day without prior notification (a note or call before 9:00 AM). Five early dismissals in a year will be counted as one absence. Parents should wait in the designated area until the 4:00 P.M. dismissal.
- **Transportation and Attendance** – Missing the bus is not an acceptable reason to miss an entire school day. Every scholar should have a back-up plan for getting to school if he or she misses the bus. Parents should call the school immediately after the scholar misses the bus so that the school knows the situation and can help problem-solve.
- **Ten absences to start the school year or during the school year** – If a scholar is absent for the first ten days of school, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain his or her absences, that seat will be filled with another scholar from the waitlist. If a child is absent for ten consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain the absence, that seat will be filled by another scholar from the waitlist.
- **Attendance at after-school events** – Scholars who are absent from school cannot attend school events, dances, or other school-sponsored activities on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission. Scholars must be in school for at least seven hours of the regular school day (7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.) to be able to attend school events. For weekend events, scholars must be present at the school on the Friday before in order to attend the weekend event.
- **The school will track and follow up on scholar absences** – The school will take attendance daily and will maintain records of all scholar absences. If a scholar misses school, Achievement First staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the scholar's parent/guardian by telephone, writing, or in person. The dean of students will follow up with parents/guardians about recurring attendance issues.
- **Exams and Quizzes** – If a scholar is absent, he or she must make up any exams, quizzes, interim assessments, or other tests the day he or she returns.
- **Vacations** – We expect that families will schedule vacations when school is not in session. Parents should not take a child on a vacation during the school year.
- **Fifteen Absences in a Year:** If a scholar is absent 15 times in a year, the scholar may be considered truant and is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade. The parent/guardian will be called to the school to meet with the dean of students and/or principal. The principal reserves the right to retain any scholar who is academically



unprepared for the next grade as a result of missing 15 or more days of instruction. In addition, a report may be filed with the appropriate child services agency.

## Tardies & Attendance

Getting to school on time is a key to each child's success – at school and in life. At Achievement First, the learning begins from the moment scholars walk in the door.

Late scholars miss academics, and tardiness can develop into a bad habit that will be challenging to your children in their professional careers. In life beyond school, one of the most common reasons that people lose their jobs is persistent tardiness.

### Definition of Tardiness

Our doors open at 7:15 A.M. each morning. Scholars must arrive between 7:15 A.M. and 7:30 A.M. Scholars arriving after 7:30 A.M. are considered tardy. In cases when a school bus arrives late, those scholars arriving on that bus will not be considered tardy.

**Comment [TS1]:** Please feel free to add more details on where scholars need to be in order to be on-time, e.g. "must be seated in their advisory" or "must be present in the cafeteria"

### Consequences for Tardiness

Since every five tardies will be recorded as an absence, **excessive tardiness becomes an attendance problem.** If a scholar is absent fifteen times (and some or all of these absences may actually be due to excessive tardiness), **the scholar is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade (see attendance policy above).**

## Make-Up Work After Absence

After returning from an absence, scholars are expected to complete any missed assignments. The parent must help the scholar check on missed assignments, and any missed work must be completed. The time generally allowed to complete this work will be the number of days the scholar was absent, except in the case of an extended illness. For example, if a scholar was absent for one day, then he or she will have one day to make up any missed work.

In the event of a planned absence (one that you know about in advance), parents/guardians should notify teachers several days in advance so that they can prepare a packet of work for scholars to complete during the absence. Again, absences from school really compromise a child's academic progress. A child should only be absent in the case of serious illness or real family emergency.

## Homework

Homework is an essential part of the Achievement First educational program: it is designed to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, to help scholars develop a deeper understanding of

concepts, and to promote good study habits. **Homework will be assigned every night at Achievement First. Homework will include at least 20 minutes of required reading every night (including weekends and holidays), for which a parent signature is required on the reading log. Homework must be completed in full and in accordance with Achievement First's high standards for quality work and professional presentation.**

All scholars are provided with Homework Folders that include a nightly Reading Log. Homework folders are designed to teach scholars essential organizational skills. **The Reading Logs must be filled out properly with a parent/guardian signature, and all assigned homework must be completed and in the folder.** There are high standards for homework. All homework must be neat, clean, and thorough.

If a scholar's homework is late, missing, incomplete, or of poor quality, or if the Reading Log is not completed properly, then the scholar may earn consequences. For example, the scholar may be required to make up the work during enrichment classes, breaks, meal times (the scholar will still be allowed to eat), or after school, or the scholar may be required to complete additional assignments. Moreover, since bringing all necessary books and supplies is part of homework, scholar may also face consequences if they do not bring all necessary books and supplies to school. Parents/guardians may receive a phone call if their child has missed several assignments. **Making sure that your scholar completes his or her homework every night is one of the most important ways you can support college readiness!**

## After-School Times

It can sometimes be beneficial to a scholar to remain after school, whether for disciplinary purposes, extra help with schoolwork, assistance with a school program, or other reasons. Teachers may request that a scholar stay after school whenever they believe that it will benefit the scholar.

### Required After School Times

Scholars may be required to go to extension, homework support, or academic intervention services from **Monday through Thursday from 4:00 to 5:30pm, and XXX on Fridays or half days,** and scholars may also be required to attend our **Saturday academic intervention or behavior extension from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.**

Additional after-school or Saturday enrichment programs are privileges, and scholars who do not consistently follow school rules during the regular school day or during the **4:00-5:30 P.M.**

Monday through Thursday/ XXX on Fridays or Saturday times may not be allowed to attend the 4:00-5:30 P.M. or Saturday times.

## Discipline

At Achievement First, our mission is to provide our scholars with both the academic and character skills needed to succeed in college and beyond. As such, school culture and discipline are an important part of what we do every day. We have exceptionally high expectations for scholar behavior, and we “sweat the small stuff” because we believe these high standards create a safe, positive, and productive environment for our scholars.

Our teachers use a large array of strategies to create and maintain joyful, rigorous classrooms. We use positive reinforcement and teach the school’s values, give “shout outs” for exceptional conduct, write “posi-notes” (positive notes) to scholars, and more.

At Achievement First, much of the power of our culture is rooted in the clarity, consistency and rationale guiding our high expectations. Behavior expectations are the same from classroom to classroom. All Achievement First scholars learn and practice common courtesies (e.g. please, thank you, and proper greetings). They sit at their desks and SLANT (Sit up straight, Listen, Ask/Answer questions, Nod, Track the speaker). They raise tall “vertical hands” when they have ideas to share with the group and speak in “loud and proud” voices so that their thoughts are heard. We enforce these expectations because they create an environment where teachers and scholars can focus on rigorous academic learning that is necessary for success in college and beyond.

From the moment our scholars board their buses and all through the day, they are expected to act in a way that befits Achievement First scholars – respectful of themselves and others. Additionally, our discipline policies hold all scholars to high standards. We will make thoughtful modifications and provide additional supports so that our scholars receiving special services have the support (consistent with their IEPs and 504 plans) they need to be successful. See **Appendix C** for more information on Achievement First’s behavioral support of scholars with IEPs.

Through the use of proactive, preventative strategies, we aim to keep all of our students in class all day, every day. While we believe deeply in the power of positive reinforcement, we also believe consequences can play an important part in encouraging scholars to make more positive choices. Moreover, consequences also help us ensure the safety of each individual

child as well as the entire school community. Parents and scholars should understand that making up work or serving consequences after 4:00 P.M. on weekdays or on Saturdays is part of the regular program of the school, and the school requests cooperation from all parents to ensure that each scholar gets the help they need to succeed.

If scholars make poor choices, we employ developmentally appropriate consequences such as loss of privileges (e.g. attendance on a field lesson) or attendance at afterschool or Saturday Extension. During Extension, scholars may receive additional academic help, and they may also have to write apology letters, talk to a teacher or administrator, or research and/or plan a solution to remedy the impact their behavior had on the school community. Scholars/families are responsible for transportation to/from home.

In the rare instance in which a scholar's behavior requires a suspension, Achievement First staff will work with the scholar, family and teachers to support this scholar's re-entry into school. **Scholars who are suspended are asked to make appropriate amends for their actions before being welcomed back into our community.** Suspended scholars will also be responsible for making up all missed work within an agreed upon timetable.

In case of severe or repeated violations that endanger the physical welfare of scholars and/or staff, the principal may recommend that a scholar be expelled. Expulsion only takes place after a hearing with a hearing officer or panel designated by the Board of Directors.

## Code of Conduct

Achievement First provides a safe and structured environment that promotes scholars' academic and social development. The school's disciplined environment is a key element of our academic success. Scholars who fail to meet our clearly defined standards for appropriate and acceptable conduct are not allowed to disrupt the education of others. Scholars are held accountable through clear consequences for violating the school's rules.

We care about our scholars' safety and conduct not simply when they are in school – but at all times, including when they are traveling to and from school or school activities. Therefore, a disciplinary offense is a violation of the school's Code of Conduct if it occurs while the scholar is at school and/or on school grounds; is participating in a school-sponsored activity; is walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event; is walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or is walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity. School-related disciplinary offenses may also include serious misconduct outside the school where evidence exists that the scholar's conduct had a significant impact on the educational environment and/or continued

presence as a result of such conduct would have a substantial detrimental effect on the school, including the safety of the scholar, other scholars, or staff members.

Disciplinary offenses result in consequences subject to the discretion of the principal or his/her designee(s) and may include demerits, Scholar Dollar deductions, extension, school service/cleaning (if the offense is related to defacing or damaging school property), loss of school privileges, Homework Extension, Saturday Extension, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion. The list of punishable offenses below is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather provides examples of prohibited conduct. The school's rules and regulations may be supplemented by teachers' rules for their classes and other school events. A pattern of behavior resulting in demerits and/or extension may lead to suspension. Suspended scholars are not allowed to participate in school activities. Any breaches of state or federal law may be handled in cooperation with the police department or other authorities.

Scholars may be removed from class and/or school immediately if the scholar's presence in school or class poses a continuing danger to persons or property, an ongoing threat of danger, or a serious disruption to the academic process.

In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel who are authorized to impose disciplinary penalties may consider, among other things, the scholar's prior disciplinary record.

The following list illustrates potential disciplinary offenses and corresponding consequences. This list is meant to be more illustrative than comprehensive. Additional violations of school rules and behaviors that compromise the school community and the learning of others will also merit consequences.

## **INFRACTIONS**

### ***Violation of School Rule***

- Being out of uniform
- Chewing gum
- Arriving late to school or class
- Mistreatment or inappropriate use of technology or school property
- Possession of inappropriate property or technology
- Unauthorized use of the building elevator

### ***Disrespect***

- Minor disrespect of a fellow scholar(s)
- Minor disrespect of a faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, school transportation providers, or other members of the school community

***Disruptive, distracting behavior***

- Disrupting class for any reason at any time
- Horse-playing
- Running in hallways
- Making unreasonable or distracting noise
- Being off-task
- Failing or refusing to follow directions
- Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic
- Misbehaving on school-provided transportation, on school grounds, or while walking to/from school or a school event

***Being unprepared for class***

- Being unprepared for class
- Failing to have school document, homework, or exam signed
- Failing to complete homework or other assignment

***Other***

- Any other behavior deemed by school staff to be inappropriate or disruptive

**INFRACTIONS: Range of School Responses, Interventions, and Consequences**

- Non-verbal warning
- Verbal warning or reprimand
- Time out within the classroom
- Confiscation of property
- Scholar-teacher conference
- Scholar-administrator conference
- Call home to parents
- Note home to parents to be signed and brought back to school
- Meeting with parents before the scholar can return to class
- Time out outside the classroom
- Sent to dean's office, principal's office or other designated area
- Loss of classroom or other school privileges
- Modified classroom participation (e.g. limited partner work, etc.) to best support the scholar
- Seating arrangement changed
- Exclusion and/or removal from a particular class or event
- Extension
- Suspension of Transportation
- Friday Extension
- Saturday Extension
- Paying for or replacing any damaged or missing property
- Verbal or written apology
- Parent asked to attend class with child
- Sitting in their seat during breaks
- Eating lunch alone and/or lunch extension
- Missing school events, trips, or activities
- Remaining in school for the entire day during ½ days
- Reflecting on their behavior orally and/or in writing

- Performing extra service for the school
- In-school suspension
- Other consequence deemed appropriate by school staff

## **SERIOUS INFRACTIONS**

### ***Disrespect***

- Serious disrespect of a fellow scholar or scholars
- Serious disrespect of a faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, school transportation providers, or other members of the school community
- Using an abusive, vulgar, or profane word or phrase

### ***Not being where the scholar is supposed to be***

- Cutting school, class, or required in-school or after-school activity (including extension, homework make-up, required tutoring, etc.)
- Departing, without permission, from class, floor, building, or school-sponsored activity
- Refusing to leave an area where the scholar is not supposed to be – or refusing to leave an area where the scholar is distracting others

### ***Not following consequences***

- Failing to comply with school-imposed consequences
- Disrupting Friday Extension, In-school suspension, or another significant consequence through misbehavior

### ***Pattern of misbehavior***

- Being removed from class/asked to report to the dean of students' office, principal's office, or other designated area during class more than one time in a given day
- Being removed from class/asked to report to the dean of students' office, principals' office, or other designated area during class more than three times in a given week
- Excessive and/or repeated afterschool extensions
- Repeated offenses for which the scholar has already earned in-class or in-school suspension or other consequences.

### ***Other serious offenses***

- Other breaches of the school's rules or values judged to be serious by the principal or dean of students.
- This includes but is not limited to serious versions of issues listed under the offenses category.

## **SERIOUS INFRACTIONS: Range of School Responses, Interventions and Consequences**

- Any consequence listed above for infractions
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Other consequence deemed appropriate by school staff and board of directors, including, but not limited to, consequences outlined for offenses.

## **MAJOR OFFENSES**

### ***Medication or Tobacco***

- Using or possessing over-the-counter medication inappropriately

- Using or possessing tobacco products

***Fleeing or blocking access***

- Fleeing an area, which includes but is not limited to running around the classroom for more than five seconds, running in the hallways away from adults, running out of the building, running between floors
- Blocking access to any part of the school building

***Action that impairs the school's ability to function***

- Action that seriously impairs the ability of the school to function, including, but not limited to, extreme language, refusal to move, intentionally sustained distracting behavior, or demeaning or intimidating speech.

***Damaging Property***

- Damaging or destroying personal or school property – or attempting to do so
- Throwing, pushing, or moving furniture/classroom objects in an aggressive or upset manner
- Gross disrespect or destruction of school property, including graffiti

***Abuse or Harassment***

- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation
- Bullying, intimidation, hazing, threats, and/or harassment of another scholar

***Physical Aggression***

- Making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise
- Fighting, pushing, scratching, shoving, biting, punching, grabbing, slapping, kicking or any other unwanted physical contact – or any contact with the intent to hurt
- Any action that presents imminent threat to physical safety of self or others (see below for specifics)
- Throwing an object at another person or in the classroom
- Altering records
- Gross disrespect of faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, school transportation providers, or other members of the school community

***Sexual Activity***

- Engaging in sexual activity or inappropriate touching
- Indecent exposure

***Endangering Others***

- Creating a hazardous or offensive condition
- Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats

***Gambling, Stealing, Lying, Forgery, Plagiarism***

- Gambling
- Lying
- Stealing
- Forgery, plagiarism, or cheating, including forging of parental signatures

***Other Major Offenses***

- Other breaches of the school rules and values judged to be major offenses by the principal or dean of students.



## **MAJOR OFFENSES: Range of School Responses, Interventions and Consequences**

- Other consequence deemed appropriate by school staff and board of directors, including, but not limited to, consequences outlined for serious infractions or infractions
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion

## **EGREGIOUS OFFENSES**

- Strong versions of major or serious offenses or other offenses judged by the regional superintendent to create an unsafe condition for other members the school community; strong individual acts of any offense listed under major offense will be considered an egregious offense; for example, strong acts of bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation of other scholars will be considered egregious offenses
- Repeated major offenses and/or repeated and fundamental disregard for school policies and procedures
- Sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances, including, but not limited to, illegal drugs (e.g. marijuana), drug paraphernalia, prescription medication, tobacco or alcohol, on school grounds or at a school sponsored event
- Possession, use, or transfer of a firearm or weapon or mock weapon, including, but not limited to, the following: firearm, air gun, BB gun, knife, bludgeon (e.g. metal knuckles), sling shot, explosives, dangerous chemicals, lighter, any sharp pointed instrument or other dangerous instrument intended as a weapon (e.g. broken glass, baseball bat, etc.)
- Possession, use, or transfer of drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances, including, but not limited to, illegal drugs (e.g. marijuana), drug paraphernalia, prescription medication, tobacco or alcohol, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event
- Assault and/or use of extreme force against or an attempt to inflict serious injury upon another scholar or scholars, school personnel, or other member(s) of the school community.
- Sexual assault
- Physically assaulting a staff member or other adult members of the school community; this includes, but is not limited to hitting, kicking, punching, slapping, or pushing
- Significant destruction or attempted significant destruction of school property, including arson
- Scholar charged with or convicted of a felony
- Making bomb threats or violent verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise
- Scholars with a protective order against them that is based on or involves violence, severe harassment, or threat of violence against another scholar or staff

## **EGREGIOUS OFFENSES: Range of School Responses, Interventions and Consequences**

- Other consequence deemed appropriate by school staff and board of directors, out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion
- Other consequence deemed appropriate by school staff and board of directors, including, but not limited to, consequences outlined for major offenses, serious offenses, or infractions
- When an egregious offense occurs, both the principal and regional superintendent should be notified immediately.

In keeping with the Gun Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to suspend a student for one full calendar year whenever the student is in the possession of a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a). The Board shall modify the term of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

## **Behavior Beyond the School Building**

### **Field Lessons**

As part of our rigorous academic program, we require outside learning experiences, such as trips to museums and college campuses. During these activities, scholars are responsible for adhering to the same behavioral expectations as within the school building. Permission slips will be sent home for each field lesson and must be signed in order for a scholar to attend. A scholar may be considered ineligible for a trip/event for reasons including, but not limited to: not returning the school-sponsored trip permission form, involvement in a disciplinary incident on a prior trip, poor school attendance, misbehavior or severe lack of academic effort in the day of or days prior to the trip, low **Scholar Dollar paychecks**, etc. Scholars who are considered ineligible for attending a trip will be required to attend school that day.

### **Bus Behavior**

Busing for Achievement First schools is provided by the local school district. Unsafe behavior on the bus endangers our scholars, and it will not be tolerated. A pattern of unsafe behavior may result in loss of bus privileges.

Bus drivers must focus on the road to make sure all scholars arrive to school and home safely. At dismissal, scholars should go directly to their bus, greet the bus driver, and have a seat. On the bus, scholars must remain in their seats, talk quietly, and follow all directions given by the bus driver. Scholars should not communicate with scholars on other buses or any people outside the bus. Scholars who behave poorly on the bus compromise the safety of themselves and others. Poor bus behavior may result in suspension or termination of transportation services. If your child is suspended from the bus, it will be your responsibility to arrange for alternative transportation.

The Achievement First Code of Conduct applies on school bus transportation. Scholars who take the school bus are expected to act responsibly and respectfully at all times. All school rules apply on the bus. Certain additional rules will apply to the bus. Scholars may be given assigned seats. An administrator will meet the bus every day. No child will exit the bus before the administrator checks with the driver as to behavior. Failing to be in the assigned seat, putting hands out of the bus, throwing things, using bad language, not obeying the bus driver, are all infractions, as well as those listed throughout the Code of Conduct. More serious behavior (e.g. fighting) will be investigated and assigned consequences as well just as if it happened on school

grounds.

Number of Infractions	Consequence
1 Infraction	Loss of bus privileges for a week
2 Infractions	Loss of bus privileges for two weeks
3 Infractions	Loss of bus privileges for a month
More than 3 infractions	Loss of bus privilege for an additional month, up to a full year

Infractions, if serious enough, can warrant immediate loss of bus privileges for the year. A scholar is entitled to a hearing for any loss of bus privileges over 10 days. Other consequences (e.g., demerits, extensions, suspensions) may apply as well. *Families are strongly encouraged to reinforce the importance of proper bus behavior and the potential consequences for bad behavior.* Consequences for misconduct by Special Education scholars riding on transportation provided by their Individual Education Plan will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

**Comment [TS2]:** Schools: Please note the requirement of a hearing for loss of bus privileges over 10 days.

## Cheating, Plagiarism and Copying Other's Work

Cheating on homework or exams, using resources inappropriately, and copying other people's work is not only unfair, it also means that a scholar is not actually learning the material. If scholars are unsure about an assignment, a test question, or a testing procedure, they should go to their teacher and ask for direction. **Specific guidelines regarding cheating and plagiarism will be reviewed with scholars during Scholar Orientation and continued throughout the year.** The school will determine appropriate consequences, but cheating, plagiarism, and copying other's work may result in in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, loss of academic credit, and/or other consequences.

## Scholar Searches

In order to maintain the security of all its scholars, Achievement First staff reserve the right to conduct searches of scholars and their property when there is reasonable suspicion that the scholar has violated the law or a school rule. If searches are conducted, the school will make every effort to ensure that the privacy of the scholars is respected and that scholars and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search. The school authorizes the principal and the principal's designee(s) to conduct searches of scholars and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in the evidence that the scholar violated the law or the school's Code of Conduct or otherwise constituted a threat to the health, safety, welfare, or

morals of the school, other scholars, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function. In authorizing searches, the school acknowledges both state and federal constitutional rights which are applicable to personal searches of scholars and searches of their possessions.

Scholars may be subject to personal searches and searches of their possessions where reasonable individualized suspicion exists to conduct such search. Reasonable individualized suspicion to conduct a search of a scholar or a scholar's possessions and the scope of the particular search shall be based upon, among other things, the scholar's age, the prevalence and seriousness of the problem to which the search is directed, the urgency necessitating an immediate search, and the probative value and reliability of information used as justification for the search.

Scholars have no reasonable expectation of privacy rights in school lockers, cubbies, desks, or other school storage places. The school exercises overriding control over such school property, which may be opened and subjected to inspection at any time by school officials.

## Transportation, Arrival, and Dismissal

### School Bus Transportation

As noted above, busing for Achievement First schools is provided by the local school districts. While they determine the eligibility of a scholar for yellow school busing, Achievement First reserves the right to suspend an eligible scholar from the bus if he or she in any way threatens the safety and well-being of his or her peers.

### Notifying the School of Transportation Changes

**Please arrange transportation home before your child leaves for school in the morning.**

**Scholars will not be allowed to call home to check if they are being picked up.** If you need to pick up your child from school and your child usually rides the bus, or if you must otherwise change your child's transportation for that day, please do one of the following:

- ***Be at the school at dismissal time*** – All bus riders are walked to the buses daily. If you need to pick up your child instead of them getting on the bus, you should be at the school at dismissal to be able to pick up your child as he/she is in the bus line. If you are not here by the time the buses leave, your child will be sent on the bus.
- ***Send in a note*** – Send a note to school with your child detailing the change in plans and providing a clear description of who will pick up your child.

- ***In an emergency, call the school*** – If you or your family is having a medical emergency that requires a change in your child’s transportation plans, please call the school immediately to make arrangements. **The school does not accept transportation change requests by telephone except in the case of an emergency.** If your child normally rides the bus and you wish to pick him or her up from school and you have not notified the school in writing that morning, you must meet your child at the school at dismissal time.

### **Late Pickup From School**

Scholars who are picked up by their parents or another adult after school are expected to be picked up promptly at the end of the school day (4:00 P.M. for regular dismissal and 1:00 P.M. on Fridays). Elementary scholars who ride the bus must have an approved adult meet the child at the bus stop daily. When a parent comes late to pick up their children (or is not at the bus stop at the specified time), it makes the job of our already very hard-working school staff even harder. The school will log late pick-ups daily. Parents of scholars who have three or more late pick-ups in a trimester or six or more in a year may be required to have an in-person meeting with the principal or dean. If a parent is more than an hour late picking up his or her child, the school reserves the right to take the child to the local police precinct for safe supervision.

### **Parent/Guardian Late to Pick Up from Bus Stop**

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to pick up their elementary school child when the bus is at their designated school bus stop. Parents/guardians who are late to pick their children up make the bus run late and inconvenience other families. When parents/guardians of elementary schools are not present, scholars will be returned to the school. It will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians to retrieve scholars from the school once they are returned by the bus driver.

Repeated failure to pick up a child from the bus stop at the scheduled time may result in the following consequences, to be determined by the dean of students/principal: 1) for the first violation, the scholar’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be contacted to pick up their child from the school and will be issued a warning in writing; 2) for a second violation, the scholar’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be contacted to pick up their child from the school and the scholar will be suspended from the afternoon bus for a period of up to one week; 3) for a third violation, the scholar’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be contacted to pick up their child from the school and the scholar will be suspended from the afternoon bus for a period of up to one month; and 4) for a fourth violation, the scholar’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be contacted to pick up their child from the school and the scholar may be suspended from the afternoon bus for the remainder of the academic year.

## **Arrival**

Scholars should not arrive at school earlier than 7:30 A.M. At dismissal, scholars should either leave the school building or attend afterschool tutoring. Scholars are never allowed to wait in any other portion of the building. They must wait in a designated afterschool location, under the supervision of a staff member. Scholars may not wait outside without staff supervision.

Buses will pick up and drop off scholars next to the building. As a result, we ask that parents who are dropping off and/or picking up scholars be mindful of the tight traffic situation, arrive on time, and plan accordingly.

## **Scholars Who Walk**

Parents of middle or high school scholars may give permission to have their child walk home or take the city bus. Under rare circumstances and with parental permission, parents of elementary School scholars may walk home or take the city bus.

For scholars who walk to and from school, and for scholars who may be walking from the public transportation stops, a number of streets must be crossed. Families should instruct scholars to use all of the appropriate crossing lights at each intersection, and to cross each intersection only when it is safe to do so within the designated crosswalks. Parents are urged to call the local police department for questions or concerns.

Scholars who walk to and from school act as representatives of the school. The same standards of behavior outlined in this document apply while scholars are traveling to and from school.

## **After-School or Saturday Transportation**

When a scholar remains after school, the school administration will see that the scholar's parents/guardians are given notice, and arrangements are made for the scholar's safe return home. The school does not provide transportation for most after-school or Saturday activities.

## **Staff Rides**

Under exceptional (and rare) circumstances, with parental permission, a scholar may be driven home by a member of the Achievement First staff.

# **School Uniforms**

**Note: Schools should change this section a bit more if necessary to align to their exact policies.**

All scholars must come to school in the Achievement First uniform every day. If a scholar arrives to school out of uniform, parents will be called and asked to bring in a uniform before the scholar is sent to class. We have a required school uniform for several very important reasons:

1. **Uniforms unite us as a community.** When you look at the Achievement First shirts, it is a powerful visual statement of our community. Scholars make a commitment that when they put on the Achievement First uniform, they are agreeing to live up to the school's REACH values.
2. **Uniforms reduce distractions and clothing competition.** Often scholars spend more time discussing and evaluating what others are wearing or not wearing than they spend focusing on learning. Wearing uniforms eliminates this distraction.
3. **Uniforms make us all equal.** Whether families have high incomes or low incomes, the scholars come to school looking the same way. No one is made to feel bad about the clothes they have or don't have.
4. **Uniforms look professional.** Scholars look neat when they arrive to school with shirts tucked into their khaki pants. The scholars come mentally prepared for school and "dressed for work."

## General Uniform Requirements

**Shirts (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade):** Uniform shirts must be purchased through our uniform vendor, Flynn & O'Hara. On top, scholars must wear an Achievement First collared shirt. Shirts must be in the school colors and have the Achievement First logo stitched into the fabric. The middle school shirts are dark blue, and the lower school shirts are light blue. Shirts are available in both long-sleeve and short-sleeve. If a scholar chooses to wear an undershirt, it must be white or match the uniform shirt color. Shirts should be the appropriate size, fitting the scholar without being tight. In addition, scholars must wear Achievement First shirts in the proper way – with the shirt tail tucked in.

**Sweaters (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade):** Uniform sweaters must be purchased through our uniform vendor, Flynn & O'Hara. Scholars may wear either the AF long-sleeve sweaters or the AF sweater vests with the uniform shirt underneath.

### How to Purchase Uniform Shirts & Sweaters:

1. Mail in the order form with a money order or check. Order forms and envelopes are available at your child's school. Your school also has a list of places nearby that issue money orders.
2. Call and order with a credit card. Call 800-441-4122.
3. Order online at [www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com)

4. Go to the Flynn and O'Hara store. The store maintains a list of nearby Flynn and O'Hara stores.

- **Dress Pants:** All scholars must wear plain, khaki-colored pants (with belt loops for boys). No baggy or multi-pocketed pants. The pants should fit on the hips. Scholars should wear the size of pants that would be appropriate to wear in a professional workplace. This means that very loose pants, baggy pants, or very tight pants are not acceptable. The school has the authority to determine what pants are acceptable. Pants should fit snugly on the waist without a belt, *but a plain black belt should be worn in order to ensure the pants stay snug and to look sharp.* No underwear should show.

OR

- **Plain Shorts:** During warm-weather months, the principal or dean of students will let scholars know when they can wear plain, khaki-colored shorts (with belt loops for boys) that are no shorter than one inch from the knee. This means that very loose shorts, baggy shorts, or very tight shorts are not acceptable. The school has the authority to determine what shorts are acceptable. If the shorts have belt loops, scholars must wear a belt. Belts are an essential part of the dress code. No underwear should show.

OR

- **Long Skirt (Girls Only):** Instead of pants, girls may choose to wear a long, plain, khaki-colored skirt. All skirts should go at least four inches below the knee.
- **Shoes and Socks:** Scholars must also wear closed-toed sneakers daily. Because scholars walk a lot during each day and have exercise time each day, we ask that scholars wear sneakers instead of dress shoes. All sneakers should be plain black without any distinctive logos or markings. Scholars should wear plain white or black socks.
- **Jackets:** Scholars may not wear jackets inside the school building. If a scholar is worried about being cold inside the building, he or she should wear a uniform sweater or a long sleeve shirt (of the color of the uniform shirt or white) under their uniform shirt.
- **Jewelry:** Scholars should not wear jewelry that distracts from the uniform, like large earrings, multiple chains or rings, or lots of bracelets. If a scholar chooses to wear jewelry, it must be modest. **Scholars may wear only one chain or necklace, and it must be tucked neatly under their uniform shirt. Scholars may only wear very small earrings.** Scholars may not wear "name chains" or name earrings, large belt buckles, large or heavy chains, or any piece of jewelry that is large or distracting. If a scholar wears jewelry that the dean of students or principal considers excessive, then the scholar will be asked to remove it.

**Comment [TS3]:** Please feel free to add additional specifics, e.g. "no larger than a quarter"



- **Hats:** Scholars are not allowed to wear baseball hats, scarves, head bands, or bandanas in the building. Small clips or bands for the hair are permitted. Head-coverings for religious reasons are permitted. Hats worn inside the building will be taken from scholars and stored at the front desk for parents to pick up.
- **Make-up:** Make-up (lipstick, glitter, blush, eyeshadow, etc.) is strictly not allowed. Lip gloss is not permitted. Scholars may use Chapstick or other similar non-glossy lip moisturizers, but if the application of it becomes distracting to the learning process, the scholar will not be allowed to use it.
- **Physical Education (P.E.) Shirts:** There is no gym uniform and scholars may not change clothes for P.E. If you are concerned about wear and tear on your child's uniform, we suggest you purchase multiple sets. Middle school scholars may wear an Achievement First P.E. shirt under their uniform shirt. Before P.E., the scholar may then take off their uniform shirt and use the t-shirt for P.E. After P.E. class, the scholar may then change back into the uniform shirt.
- **Hair, Nails, and Tattoos:** Hair colors or shades of hair other than black, brown, blond, and red are not permitted. Dyed hair or a hairstyle that serves as a distraction – at the determination of the school – will not be permitted. Any tattoos – small or large – must be covered at all times. Fingernails should not be or potentially be a distraction to others. Simple polish only is acceptable.
- **No Changing at School:** While on school property or on school transportation to and from school, scholars must wear their uniform only; while at the school, scholars may not change for events or activities later on in the day.
- **Uniforms on Field Lessons:** Because field lessons are an opportunity for AF scholars to represent their school outside of the building, all uniform standards apply for field lessons. For longer, overnight field lessons, the school may specify the dress code.

Scholars who do not abide by all the above uniform guidelines will not be allowed to attend class.

## Promotion to the Next Grade

### About Promotion at Achievement First

Achievement First provides a rigorous, college-preparatory educational program, and the faculty, staff, and administration are committed to helping all students satisfy all requirements for promotion and graduation. *Our ultimate goal is college readiness.* We believe that in some

instances it will be better for a scholar to repeat a grade in order to fully develop the skills, habits and knowledge required for the next grade and for rigorous colleges and careers.

We recognize that retention is a major decision that has important ramifications for a scholar and family. We take seriously the responsibility to make good decisions regarding retention. In fact, our consideration of the long-term ramifications is what often underlies our decision to retain a scholar. When a student's performance indicates that they are not ready to move on, we would much rather have scholars repeat a grade while with Achievement First so that we can provide intensive support and work in close partnership with families – as opposed to sending a scholar off to the next grade where he/she may not be set up for success. Because Achievement First's academic and behavioral standards are more rigorous than many traditional schools, we often have different and more rigorous promotional criteria.

- The school sees it as its job to help all scholars meet promotion criteria and ultimately to be prepared for success in the next grade. There are times when a scholar simply needs another year to be able to fully tackle the work, and the school is committed to ensuring that a scholar's second year in a grade involves a clear plan to provide the scholar additional supports.
- The school will share promotion-in-doubt status with parents at multiple points in the years (e.g. Report Card Nights in December and March/April).
- The school's administrative team (and ultimately the principal) has full authority to make all promotion decisions.
- The school does not "socially promote." That is, scholars will not be promoted to the next grade simply because they are "old enough" to be in that grade. The school may also choose to non-promote a scholar even if he or she has been retained before. Readiness for the next grade is demonstrated by mastering rigorous academic standards, and behaving in a way that reflects the school's values.
- Achievement First often will retain early elementary scholars (K-2) who are not meeting our rigorous standards. It has been our experience that early elementary scholars who are retained are often able to get the extra time and support they need to meet our rigorous standards, thus setting them up for long-term academic success.

## Promotion Criteria

The school will consider a student who fails to meet **ANY** of the following criteria to be at risk of non-promotion. The principal has final authority to make promotion decisions based on a scholar's readiness for the next grade.

## State and Other Test Scores

For Kindergarten – Grade 2 students:

- Below grade level on nationally normed reading assessment as determined by Achievement First

In Grades 3 – 8:

- Score of 1 on any state test

#### **Attendance**

15 or more absences in a year (5 tardies and/or early dismissals count as one absence); there is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences.

#### **Course Grades (5 – 8)**

- Failing two or more of the following classes: math, reading, writing, history, and science

#### **Course Grades (9 – 12)**

- Failing two or more core/required class (math, reading, writing, history, science, college readiness, required elective) after the summer academy session is over OR
- Being deficient two credits from any year of high school upon entering the grade. Some examples:

Situation	Retention Decision	Reason
Scholar fails two classes in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade, successfully completes summer academy, fails one class in 10 <sup>th</sup> grade.	Will this scholar move to 11 <sup>th</sup> grade?  If he/she successfully completes summer academy, YES.	After 9 <sup>th</sup> grade, he/she was behind two credits, one was made up in summer academy, he/she then failed another in 10 <sup>th</sup> grade, but if that credit is made up in summer academy, he/she will only be one credit behind.
11 <sup>th</sup> grade scholar has never failed a class before, but fails three courses in grade 11.	Will this scholar move to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade?  NO.	Even if this scholar attends summer academy, he/she will be behind <u>two</u> credits and scholars cannot enter a year of school more than one credit deficient. This scholar will repeat grade 11.

#### **Summer Program Completion (9 – 12)**

- Successful completion of an AF-approved summer program
  - Pre-College
  - Internship
  - Growth program
  - Summer Academy and/or SAT Boot Camp

#### **Additional Non-Promotion Criteria:**

The following criteria indicate promotion in doubt. Promotion in doubt means that a student may not yet have the skills and knowledge necessary in order to be prepared for the next grade.

Kindergarten to Grade 2:

- The student scores below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the TerraNova math exam
- The student scores below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the DRP reading assessment

Grades 3 – 8:

- CT: Score of a “low 2” (defined by AF’s scaled score chart) on two of the three (math, reading, writing) state tests
- A student scored a 2 on the state test for two straight years on any of the reading, writing, or math tests.
- The student scores in the bottom 10% of the AF Network on Achievement First end of year reading or math exam.

### **Final Grades**

Grades 3 – 8

- The student’s final grade in MATH class is lower than a 70
- The student’s final grade in READING class is lower than a 70
- The student’s final grade in WRITING class is lower than a 70
- The student’s final grade in HISTORY class is lower than a 70
- The student’s final grade in SCIENCE class is lower than a 70

**Note:** The minimum grade for a trimester is 55. This gives students the chance to pass for the year after one bad trimester. In order to pass for the year with one trimester at 55, the other two have to average at least 77.

### **Promotion for English Language Learners (ELLs):**

State law require that we evaluate the promotion of English Language Learners differently.

If the ELL student has enrolled for the first time in a U.S. school and has attended for fewer than 12 calendar months, the student MAY be exempted from the reading and writing portions of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) or the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT).

### **Promotion for Students with IEPs:**

The purpose of an IEP is to outline the support a student needs to reach an ambitious and achievable academic bar. When a student does not meet the bar, burden of proof falls on the school to demonstrate that we provided the services the student needed and the student was still not able to reach the academic bar. We do not have the same autonomy that we do in general education - our local districts oversee our special education programs. We must accomplish the following for students with IEPs:

- Ensure that all IEPs document the services the school provides and that the school has a signed copy of the IEP
- Send home IEP progress reports as often we send home report cards (signed and returned); IEP progress reports should indicate whether or not a student is on track to meeting her/his IEP goals and should align to the student's general performance

**For students with IEPs who are held to the standard promotional criteria (NOT modified criteria):**

- These students must meet the standard criteria set out for all students. In cases where a student received a 1 on a state test, the school may consider a student portfolio of work to determine if the student does meet grade level standards (including writing assignments, classwork, projects, unit tests, etc.). The school may promote this student if the portfolio indicates >Level 2 proficiency and demonstrates that the student is prepared for the rigors of the next grade.
- At the first sign a student with an IEP is at risk of retention, the school must ensure that robust and appropriate supports are in place in order for the student to make appropriate academic progress.
- In the rare case where a student with an IEP is at risk of a double retention, the school must consider using a portfolio of work to indicate demonstrate grade level proficiency.

**For students with IEPs who have modified promotional criteria and take state assessments:**

- In the rare case where a student has a modified promotional criteria on the IEP, the school should clarify the exact modified criteria and the content they apply to (ELA and/or Math) at the beginning of the year, write a non-official IEP amendment, and communicate the promotional criteria to the parents. The modified criteria should explicitly outline the growth that the student will demonstrate and the way that growth will be measured (i.e. "Grow 1.5 grade levels as measured by STEP").

**For students with IEPs who have modified promotional criteria and take alternative assessments:**

- These students reflect <1% of our student population and are exempt from all standard promotional criteria; in these cases, promotion is based on meeting IEP Goals.

**Supporting Non-Promoted Students**

When a scholar is not promoted, we will create a clear action plan for the scholar. This plan is designed to ensure that the scholar's second time in a grade is not just a repeat of the previous year. The plan will detail additional academic and social/behavioral supports, incentive systems, consequences, and other relevant information.

**Informing Other Schools**

It is Achievement First's policy to inform other schools of the scholar's promotion status. For example, if a third grader is not promoted to fourth grade at an Achievement First school and the parent decides to enroll the child in another school, Achievement First will inform the school that the scholar did not meet the requirements for promotion to fourth grade and should be a third grader when enrolling in the new school.

### High School Graduation Requirements

In order to ensure the integrity of the diploma graduates earn upon completion of the course of studies, the faculty, staff, and administration are committed to consistently and judiciously upholding the graduation criteria. Students who do not meet the promotional criteria in a given year will not advance to the next grade and will instead be expected to repeat the same course of studies. The faculty, staff, and administration recognize that some students, depending on their educational development, will require more than four years to successfully meet the school's graduation requirements. Students who do not meet the graduation requirements within the traditional four-year period will be required to attend until they complete the remaining requirements.

Course	# of Credits - CT
Literature (9 – 12)	4
Writing (9 – 12)	4
Mathematics (to at least Pre-Calculus)	4
Science (to include Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	4
History (to include US and Global; Econ/Gov't in NY)	4
College Readiness Seminar	2.5
College Readiness - Health	n/a
College Readiness - SAT Prep	1
Foreign Language	2
Electives (not including Art/PE/Composition/CRS)	4
Art/Music	1
P.E.	1

Non–Course Requirements	CT
Completion of approved summer program	3 credits
Admission to a 4-year college/university	Yes
ELA Regents	n/a
Algebra Regents	n/a
One additional Math Regents	n/a
One additional Science Regents	n/a

US History Regents	n/a
Global History Regents	n/a
Required Community Service hours	Yes

\*Scholars in CT are expected to take the CAPT assessment until they score a 3 or better on each section.

## Closed Campus

Achievement First takes the safety of our scholars very seriously. Except under written agreements approved and signed by the principal, scholars are not to leave the school building (or areas of the school building designated for his/her grade) or use any exit other than the ones designated by teachers for scholar use without permission. A scholar with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult – who has physically come to the office to sign a scholar out – unless the school has been given prior written permission authorizing unaccompanied departure. Once scholars have entered in the morning, they may not leave the building unless a staff member escorts them.

## Civility Code

Our families are partners with Achievement First staff in creating a warm and respectful environment for everyone in our team and family. We work hard to ensure that the school's values permeate all interactions with families and scholars. Therefore, school staff and families are both responsible for ensuring that all communication be mutually respectful.

While we encourage families to share any and all concerns with the appropriate school staff, the school will retain the right to end any meeting or phone conversation in which the volume, tone, or substance of the communication is rude (name-calling or frequent interruptions), profane (cursing or profane language), or threatening. Moreover, when conversations have clearly gone past the point where productive problem-solving is an option, the school reserves the right to end the conversation and schedule additional time at a later date. At the same time, families have the right to end conversations if staff members are not displaying mutual respect and should reschedule for a later date. Families also have the option of addressing the actions of a staff member during a meeting via the family concerns procedure (see **Appendix E** for Addressing Family Concerns).

The school reserves the right to require parents, guardians, or community members who violate the civility code to provide written requests for meetings, outlining the nature of the concern and with whom they would like to speak. Because of the school's commitment to ensuring the safety of scholars and staff, and maintaining a calm, productive, positive learning environment, the

school reserves the right to bar an individual from the school site if there are repeated violations to the civility code. In such a case, the school staff member will meet with a parent off-campus at an agreed-upon location (e.g. a public library, community center) or meet on campus 30 minutes after school ends.

## School Visitor Policy

Parents/guardians/families are a vital part of the Achievement First community. We welcome you as a partner in the education of our scholars, and you should feel free to observe regularly at the school. In order to maximize our scholar's learning time and minimize distraction in our classrooms, we ask that you do the following:

- Please let us know in advance if you plan to visit.
- Upon arriving, sign-in with the Main Office and obtain a visitor badge to wear while in the building.
- Refrain from interacting with scholars so that they are able to pay attention to their teachers at all times.
- Turn off your cell phone prior to entering the classroom.
- Sit behind all scholars (at the back of the classroom) so that you are not blocking a child's view.
- If you would like to speak with the teacher following your visit, please contact them by phone or call the school to set up a follow up meeting. Teachers will generally be unable to meet or talk with you during their teaching time.

If a visitor is coming to school to drop something off for a scholar or to leave a message, we still require that the visitor come first to the main office. For the sake of scholar safety, we cannot have anyone unannounced in the building.

## Emergencies

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the school either by phone or in person. Under no circumstance should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms, including after school, or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the school office.

### Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures



Please note, some procedures may change once the school year has officially begun. Scholars will be notified of and trained in any significant changes.

In case of emergency, if a scholar or staff member sees fire or smells smoke, he or she should close the door and notify an administrator. Upon hearing an alarm, school staff will assemble scholars in their rooms and proceed out of the building according to the fire evacuation plan posted in each room. Scholars should follow the direction of staff members who will verify the safety of the stairwells and lead scholars outside the building to the designated locations, where school staff will line up scholars by class and take attendance.

Frequently throughout the school year, scholars and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency.

In case of a more serious emergency, should it be necessary to evacuate our school before, during, or after the school day – and it appears that we will be unable to return to the school for an extended period of time or for the rest of the day – school staff and scholars will evacuate according to the school’s evacuation plan. Staff will line up scholars in a safe and orderly fashion on the sidewalks outside the evacuation site. After staff takes attendance, should conditions permit, all staff and scholars will return promptly to school.

## Addressing Family Concerns

Achievement First is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between its teachers, staff, our scholars, and their families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and encourage you to contact the appropriate staff member at the school.

### Procedures for Addressing Concerns

**Step 1: Contact Staff Member Involved:** If a parent has an issue or concern, the first step towards resolving the issue will be to contact the staff member involved by phone or email. The parent should call the school’s front desk to obtain phone and email contact information. The staff member and the parent will then set up a meeting to discuss the issue either on the phone or in-person and work to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.

**Step 2: Contact the Principal:** If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent’s next step is to reach out to the principal via phone or email or use the “parent concern process form” to explain the issue in writing. Even if the issue is a problem with the principal directly, the parent should go through this step. It is important to work to resolve the issue directly first. The parent should

contact the school's front desk to obtain contact information for the principal. The principal will reply within 3 business days, at least acknowledging the complaint has been received, and the principal may take up to 5 additional business days to investigate and reach a decision.

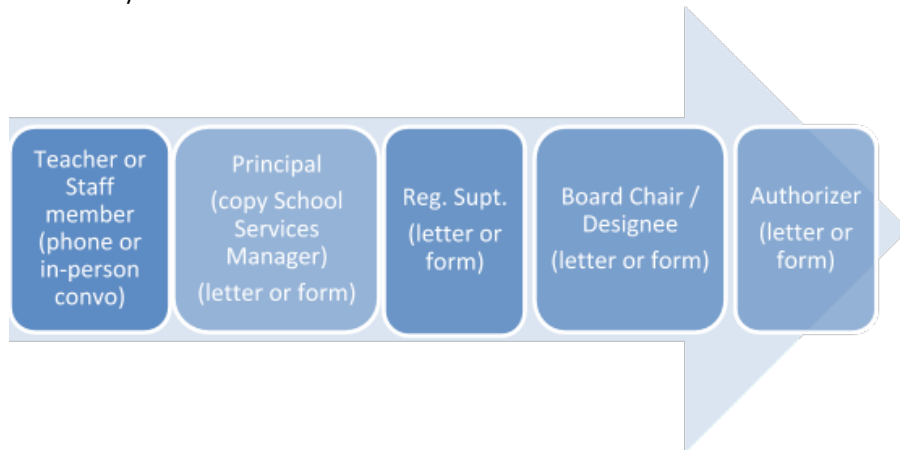
**Step 3: Written Complaint sent to Principal's Supervisor:** If the parent is unsatisfied with the principal's decision or response, the parent may write a letter to the regional superintendent who supports the school or use the "parent concern process form" to explain the issue. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter/completed form, and the office staff will ensure that the communication gets to the regional superintendent. If the parent would like to reach out to the regional superintendent directly, the parent should contact the front desk of the school to get his/her contact information. The regional superintendent will reply within 3 business days and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The regional superintendent will send a written decision via regular mail to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. Please note that the regional superintendent will not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-2. A member of the front office staff member will put a copy of the complaint form and the regional superintendent's response in the scholar's file, and the front office staff will also ensure that a summary of the complaint and resolution is logged in the school's scholar information system.

**Step 4: Written Complaint to the School's Board of Directors:** If the parent is unsatisfied with the Regional Superintendent's decision or response, the parent may write a letter to the school's Board of Directors or use the "parent concern process form" to explain the issue. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter. The Board or its designee will reply within 3 business days and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The Board or its designee will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. Please note that the Board or its designee will generally refer complaints that have not gone through steps 1-3 back to the school. A member of the front office staff will put a copy of the complaint form and Board's response in the scholar's file, and the front office staff will also ensure that a summary of the complaint and resolution is logged in the school's scholar information system. If an individual or group voices a complaint at a public meeting of the School's Board of Directors or to individual directors, directors shall not respond to the substance of the complaint, but instead shall thank the individual or group for their time and direct them to this complaint procedure.

**Step 5: Written Complaint to the Authorizer:** If the parent is not satisfied with the Board's decision, the parent may present their concern to the authorizer, the Charter Schools Office of the State Department of Education. These organizations will investigate and respond. The parent can get contact information for the authorizer from the school's front desk. (Please note that the school will ask the authorizer not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-4.)

Please note that if the school gets multiple complaints on the same or a similar subject, the school may elect to consider all of the complaints in one process to ensure the process is clearly and effectively communicated to each family fairly and

consistently.



The process described above is designed so that parents/guardians can speak with the staff members who are most directly involved with the situation. Usually, this is the best way to resolve a concern or complaint because staff members can more quickly and efficiently address family concerns. *Parents do have the right, however, to submit concerns directly to the Board or to authorizers. In this case, the board will determine whether the complaint alleges a violation of the law or of the charter. If it does not, the Board will generally direct the parent/guardian back to the school level.*

## Grievances Related to Discrimination Issues

Achievement First does not condone or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs or activities. Families have the right, therefore, to file a formal grievance if they believe that AF has violated a discrimination law (including Section 504, Title IX, and Title VI). The grievance procedure for discrimination issues is included in **Appendix D**. The purpose of this formal grievance procedure is to provide a simple and accessible process to address problems and claims of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

## School Calendar and Closings

### School Closure Policy

Because we believe maximizing instructional time is critical to closing the achievement gap, Achievement First schools will only close under extreme circumstances. In such circumstances, **Achievement First will follow the lead of our host district unless you have explicitly heard**

**otherwise from us at least 24 hours in advance.** If you have any doubt as to the status of school, please listen to local radio and television stations. Again, unless you have explicitly heard otherwise from Achievement First 24 hours in advance that we are making a different decision, if the host district announces a closure, delayed start, or early dismissal, Achievement First will do the same. To avoid parent confusion, Achievement First will not make separate closure announcements through local media outlets (i.e. TV or radio). As the situation allows, Achievement First will however reiterate the delay, closure or cancellation of after school events via auto-dialer and/or text message.

### **Special Circumstances**

While Achievement First believes that following our host district's lead applies for 95% of all school closure scenarios, there are some highly unusual situations where Achievement First would decide to make a different decision. While it is hard to predict the exact scenarios where we would not simply follow our host district's lead, we have experienced this on several occasions on days when Achievement First schools are in session and our host district's are not (e.g. AF schools typically start the school year earlier and/or finish later than our host districts.) In such instances, Achievement First will proactively reach out to all families via auto-dialer and/or text message at least 24 hours of advance notice so that families are aware and can plan accordingly.

### **School Closure Make-Up Plan**

- Our regular school year is generally between 185 and 190 days, 5 to 10 more days than required by the state, because we believe that scholars need more time to master our advanced curriculum. In the case of lost days, our network-wide minimum number of days is 180 days, and schools will need to make up days if they fall below this minimum.
- In terms of timing, any and all days that need to be made up will typically occur immediately following the conclusion of the regular academic year. So if for example the school year ends on a Friday and due to excessive closure the school needs to make up five days, those days would generally be made up the following Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- Therefore families, staff and scholars are strongly encouraged to refrain from making any definite plans for the week immediately following the conclusion of the school year just in case additional days are required.

We firmly believe that this make-up plan is sufficient to work in 99% of all scenarios. However in truly extreme and unforeseen circumstances (e.g. if a school experiences greater than 15 days of closure during the school year), we reserve the right to adjust the make-up plan to better meet the needs of our scholars.

## **Student Computer and Internet Use Policy**

Achievement First schools uses computers, networks and Internet services, as one way of enhancing its mission to provide all of our students with the academic and character skills they need to graduate from top colleges, to succeed in a competitive world and to serve as the next generation of leaders in our communities.

The following rules are intended to provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited computer and Internet uses, but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Failure to comply with Achievement First's Student Computer and Internet Use Policy and these rules may result in loss of computer and Internet privileges, and/or legal and disciplinary action.

#### **A. Computer Use is a Privilege**

Student use of Achievement First's computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege. No one will deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, network resources, or assist another in doing the same.

#### **B. Acceptable Use**

Student access to Achievement First's computers, networks and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the curriculum and instructional goals. The same rules and expectations govern student conduct and communication on computers and online services. Students are expected to comply with these rules and all specific instructions from staff members when accessing computers and network resources.

#### **C. Prohibited Use**

The student is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school computers, networks and Internet services, and for his/her information, files, passwords and accounts. Examples of unacceptable uses that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Accessing Inappropriate Materials- Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, down loading, scanning or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal
2. Illegal Activities- Using computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or that violates other Achievement First policies, procedures and/or school rules
3. Violating Copyrights- Copying or downloading copyrighted material without the owner's permission
4. Plagiarism - Representing as one's own work any material obtained on the Internet

5. Copying Software/Media Files- Copying or downloading software without the authorization of the system administrator; illegally downloading music, photos, movies or other such files
6. Non-School Related Uses- Using the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain; commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes
7. Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access- Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission and/or accessing other user accounts
8. Malicious Use/Vandalism - Any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.
9. Unauthorized access to Social Networking/Chat Rooms/News Groups- Accessing social networking sites or software, chat rooms or news groups without specific authorizations from the supervising teacher

#### **D. No Expectation of Privacy**

Achievement First retains control, custody, and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by Achievement First. Achievement First reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, software accounts, Internet services, email, and stored files.

Each person will respect the rights of others to the protection of the files they store on a computer and will not alter or damage such files or accounts.

### **Cyber Bullying**

The law defines "cyber bullying" as the use of digital information and communication devices to willfully and repeatedly hurt either a person or persons through the medium of electronic text, photos, or videos. Examples of this behavior include but are not limited to:

- *Sending false, cruel, vicious messages*
- *Creating websites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others.*
- *Breaking into an email account and sending vicious or embarrassing materials to others.*
- *Engaging someone in electronic communication, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information and forwarding that information to others.*
- *Posting of a student picture without their permission.*

The online activities and technologies often used by students engaged in Cyber Bullying include but are not limited to social networking sites, chat rooms and discussion groups, instant messaging, text messaging, computers, cell phones and personal digital devices, digital cameras, cell phone cameras, and webcams. As new technologies emerge, they too may be included with the above forms of electronic communication.

#### **Communication**

The school will inform students annually of procedures for reporting bullying procedures, either by including this policy in the Family/Student Handbook or by other means.

Additional information about reporting, investigation, intervention, and prevention of cyber bullying is included in **Appendix A**.

## **Nursing Services & Medication**

Nursing services for Achievement First are provided by the nursing staff assigned to the school building. We recommend, however, that parents have a doctor or health center look into any recurring health problem a child is having.

The nurse is responsible for checking all health records to be certain that each scholar is properly immunized. The School is required by law to have a completed health form on file for every scholar within 14 days of a child attending our school. The health form documents the vaccinations that a child has received to date. If you have not received this form from the school, please contact the school's director of operations immediately.

If your child requires medication during school hours, please contact the school's director of operations to request a Medical Administration Form (or MAF). The building nurse has the training and resources to store and administer medication. However, medication cannot be administered to your child until your child's physician has completed the form. This is a requirement of the Health Department and pertains to all medicine, including aspirin, Tylenol, and other over-the-counter medicines.

The building nurse will keep a detailed log of all medicines that are administered.

## **School Lunch Program**

Both breakfast and lunch will be available at Achievement First. As part of its participation in the School Nutrition Program (a federal program that subsidizes scholar meals), the school must collect completed lunch application forms for all its scholars. The lunch application form is used to determine the level of assistance that a child will receive. Families who qualify for partial assistance only, and families who are not eligible for assistance, will be billed monthly for the cost of each lunch. The school's director of operations will be in touch to review the costs and set up a payment plan.

It is the policy of Achievement First to require all parents, regardless of whether the parent believes the child will qualify for free and reduced lunch, to fill out and turn in a free/reduced

lunch form. This policy helps the school ensure that we maximize the reimbursements we receive from the federal government.

Parents may send lunch to school. If you are sending lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send in nutritious foods. Please do not let your child bring unhealthy drinks (e.g., sodas or juices heavy in sugar) or unhealthy snacks (snacks high in sugar) to school. The school reserves the right not to allow scholars to consume unhealthy food and drinks at school. Please see the healthy foods policy below for more information.

## Healthy Foods Policy

Scholar nutrition and health is a big concern at Achievement First schools. Poor eating habits can adversely affect scholar performance by causing, among other things, a lack of focus, low stamina, and/or behavioral outbursts – and, of course, long-term health consequences. In an effort to curb the consumption of low-nutrition foods, the following policy has been created.

Food and beverages brought to school must meet dietary guidelines and contribute to the health of scholars. The school will prohibit the consumption of foods of low nutritional value during breakfast, designated snack periods, lunch and other times scholars have access to food during the school day. Food of low nutritional value consists of:

- Chewing gum and candy
- Food and drinks containing high sugar or other sweeteners
- “Juice” or juice products containing little fruit or vegetable juice
- Foods with high fat/serving ratio (e.g. cookies, cheetos, potato chips, foods fried in oil)
- Carbonated beverages
- Cakes/cupcakes (unless this is part of a celebration approved by the teacher)

Teachers planning fundraisers, parties, or other school-related events are encouraged to consider healthier alternatives. If scholars bring foods low in nutritional value to school, AF teachers and staff will hold them at the front desk until parents pick them up.

### Candy and Snacks

Scholars may not have any candy with them at school. Teachers will take any candy from scholars and treat it like “non-academic material,” and will give it the school operations team. (Parents may come to pick up the candy if they want.)

### Food not During Designated Times



Scholars may not eat food except during breakfast, lunch, and snack times. Scholars may not have food in their pockets or with them in any way except during snack and lunch. All snack food must be completed during snack time – and in the classroom. Scholars may not take snacks out of the classroom (for example, to the bathroom). Teachers will take food that scholars have out during unauthorized times and treat it like “non-academic” material. (Parents may come to pick up the food if they want.)

#### **Gum**

Scholars (and teachers) should not chew gum. Scholars with gum may face a consequence, and repeat offenders will face more serious consequences.

#### **Classroom Parties, Birthdays, and Other Events**

Achievement First supports scholar’s social and emotional growth by celebrating their achievements. Most of these celebrations take the form of school-wide or grade-level events which celebrate scholar academic achievement and character growth. In addition, each class usually celebrates scholars’ birthdays by singing happy birthday and other rituals in a uniform way that is the same for and fair to all scholars. Teachers seek to make scholars feel truly special on their “special” day.

To maintain the structure and consistency of the school day as well as to preserve sacred learning time, Achievement First does not allow individual celebrations of birthdays or other holidays during the school day. Families should not bring in food treats or other gift items for birthdays or holidays as the school cannot commit teacher or other staff time to distributing them and because such items can distract scholars from their learning.

Families wishing to involve classmates in the celebration of their scholar’s birthday or other holidays can do so by inviting them to a party that occurs outside of school hours. The school can support such families by distributing a flyer to families in that scholar’s class. To avoid hurt feelings and distractions from learning, the school can only do this if every scholar in the class is invited. Families wishing to have such an invitation distributed should send it to school in the scholar’s homework folder. Invitations must be general (as in not addressed to specific scholars) and must be issued to all scholars in the class.

In order to minimize competition and distractions from learning, scholars must be in full uniform on their birthdays and other holidays.

## Statement of Understanding

By signing this, scholars indicate that they have received and read a copy of Achievement First's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. Scholar signatures further show that scholars understand that if they ever have any questions regarding school policies, they can always ask their parent/guardian or other member of the school community for a further explanation.

By signing this, parents indicate that they have received and read a copy of Achievement First's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. Parent signatures further show that parents understand that if they ever have any questions regarding school policies, they can always ask a teacher or staff member for further clarification.

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Scholar Name

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Parent / Guardian Name

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Scholar Signature

---

Parent / Guardian Signature

---

Date

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Date

A signed copy of the Statement of Understanding is due one week after receipt of the Handbook.

We thank you for your cooperation and look forward to partnering with you as a member of the Achievement First community.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Reporting, Investigation, Intervention, and Prevention of cyberbullying

### Reporting Cyber Bullying

- 1) If a student feels that he/she is a victim of cyber bullying, or witnesses a student being bullied, the student may report the incident to the dean of students. Students may report cyber bullying situations anonymously.
- 2) If a parent or guardian suspects cyber bullying, they may report it to the dean of students.
- 3) Any staff member who witnesses or receives any report of cyber bullying shall notify the dean of students.
- 4) All reports will be documented and maintained for the duration of the student's' tenure at the school.
- 5) The school will maintain a list of the number of confirmed acts of cyber bullying, without specific names. The school will make the list available upon request and will provide the number of confirmed acts of cyber bullying as required to the State Department of Education.

### Investigation

- 1) As with any situation involving a breach of school culture, the dean of students will take the following action.
- 2) The dean of students will investigate, in a timely fashion, parents' reports and will review students reports, anonymous or otherwise, to determine the proper action.
- 3) The dean of students will question the reporting student or parent about specific details, which may include date of incident, time, location, and what was said or done to the student being cyber bullied. If the reporter is anonymous, the dean of students will question those who are listed in the report. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- 4) The dean of students will then meet with and question the student(s) accused of bullying, as well as the student(s) being cyber bullied.
- 5) The dean of students or his/her designee will call the parents or guardians of all students involved in verified incidents of cyber bullying and inform them of the incident, the school's response, the consequences.
- 6) At the discretion of the dean of students or his/her designee, the parents of both parties may be required to come in and meet with the dean of students and Social Worker for mediation.

### Intervention and Prevention

#### A. Intervention

- 1) The school will promote the use of interventions that are least intrusive and most effective, and will develop case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated acts of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. Intervention may include, but not limited to the following:
- 2) As the situation may warrant, the school may provide counseling or refer students to outside counseling to address the needs of the victim(s) of the bullying.
- 3) As the situation may warrant, the school may provide or refer out for counseling and support to address the behavior of the students who bully (e.g. empathy training, anger management, and social skills), and will take other disciplinary measures as appropriate.
- 4) The school will monitor each individual situation to ensure that the bullying ceases for individual victims and on a school-wide basis.
- 5) Disciplinary sanctions and consequences will be commensurate with the situation.

#### **B. Prevention**

Consistent with Achievement First's values orientation and ongoing REACH character education, the school will send consistent messages to students throughout the school year that bullying is not part of our school's culture and will not be tolerated. Prevention may include, but it not limited to the following:

- 1) The school will maintain rules prohibiting cyber bullying, harassment and intimidation and will establish appropriate consequences for those who bully other students.
- 2) As part of our regular REACH character education program, the school will provide advisory time and age appropriate curricula for all classes to discuss bullying in school and the effects of it.
- 3) The school will implement an on-going cyber safety curriculum to ensure that students are knowledgeable about how to safely interact online.
- 4) The school will work to protect the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
- 5) The school will discuss REACH values with parents during orientations.
- 6) The school's Friday PD program will contain a time to discuss promoting positive school culture including character development and bullying prevention.
- 7) The school will use common time with students to discuss cyber safety and cyber bullying issues with students.
- 8) The school will host tech sessions to teach parents how to monitor their children's behavior on the Internet and their phones.

#### **Appendix B: Disciplinary Procedures and Due Process Rights**

The discipline policy of Achievement First is an important part of how we build a learning-focused, safe, and positive school environment. However, it is important that we implement these policies in a fair and transparent way. Scholars and their families deserve and are entitled to the due process protections outlined below.

**NOTE:** Students who have previously been identified as having one or more disabilities under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may require alternative and/or additional procedures related to discipline. Specific procedures regarding disciplinary action for those students are set forth more fully below.

## **Classroom Removals**

- A teacher has the authority to remove a scholar from the classroom when the scholar's behavior poses a continuing danger to scholars or staff or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process.
- When a scholar is removed, the teacher must notify the dean of students or the dean's designee at once and send the scholar to a designated area.
- As soon as the child is able to have a calm conversation, the scholar will have the opportunity for an informal hearing with the dean or dean's designee to hear the reasons for the removal and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the staff member makes a decision whether to assign additional consequences. (Connecticut law requires a scholar to have this informal hearing before he or she is removed from class more than six times in one school year or more than twice in one week. However, we think it is good practice to have an informal hearing, to the greatest extent possible, in connection with each removal.)
- The overall goal is to get the scholar back on track and back in class as quickly as possible. In order to return to class, the scholar may have to complete a reflection form, not be disruptive in the removal area or other classrooms or offices, demonstrate that he/she is calm and ready to return to class, and have a satisfactory conversation with the dean or dean's designee about the behavior and how the scholar is to behave the rest of the day and in the future. In addition, the scholar may be required to have a discussion with and apologize to the relevant teacher or staff member before re-entering the class.
- In cases of major or egregious behavior, the principal or dean may decide that the behavior warrants additional consequences that would keep the scholar from returning to class.
- The dean, principal, or designee will record the amount of time lost from class. In most cases, the scholar will be able to return to class in 20 to 60 minutes.

## **In-School Suspensions**

The principal or a dean of students, as a designee of the principal, also has the authority to issue in-school suspensions (ISS). An ISS involves the scholar attending school but not attending regular classes and lasts between 90 minutes and ten days. An ISS can only be issued by the principal or dean. When a scholar has done a behavior that could warrant an in-school suspension, the following steps must take place:

- 1) Review the evidence and ensure that the incident giving rise to the suspension is properly documented. (May be done by the principal, dean, or designee.)
- 2) Except in cases where a scholar's behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of scholars or staff, the principal or dean will conduct an informal hearing with the scholar. In this informal hearing, the scholar will hear the reasons for the removal from class and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the principal, or dean makes a decision whether to assign In School Suspension.
- 3) After the informal hearing, the principal or dean will determine the appropriate consequence and, if it's an in-school suspension, the length of suspension. In determining the length of the in-school suspension, the principal or dean may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary

problems which have led previous disciplinary actions. The decision of the principal or dean with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including in-school suspensions shall be final.

- 4) The principal, dean or their designee will make reasonable attempts by telephone to immediately notify the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension, stating the cause(s) leading to the discipline, the length of in-school suspension, and what the scholar must do to re-enter the school community.
- 5) The principal, dean or their designee will send written notification of the in-school suspension to the parent/guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address known to the principal, dean, or designee) stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, and what steps the scholar needs to complete for a successful re-entry into the school community.

Misbehavior during an in-school suspension may result in an out-of-school suspension or other consequence.

### **Out-of-School Suspensions**

The principal or a dean of students, as a designee of the principal, also has the authority to issue an out-of-school suspension, which is a suspension that lasts between 90 minutes and 10 days. When a scholar has done a behavior that could warrant such a suspension, the following steps must take place:

1. The principal or dean will review the evidence and ensure that the incident giving rise to the suspension is properly documented.
2. Except in cases where a scholar's behavior poses an immediate threat to the safety of scholars or staff, the principal or dean will conduct an informal hearing with the scholar. In this informal hearing, the scholar will hear the reasons for the removal from class and have an opportunity to informally present the scholar's version of the relevant events before the principal or dean makes a decision whether to assign additional consequences, including out-of-school suspension.
3. After the informal hearing, the principal or dean will determine the appropriate consequence and if they determine out-of-school suspension, the length of suspension. In determining the length of the suspension, the principal or dean may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to previous disciplinary actions. The decision of the principal or dean with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including short-term suspensions shall be final.
4. The principal, dean, or their designee will make reasonable attempts by telephone to immediately notify the parent/guardian of the suspension, stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, and what the scholar must do to re-enter the school community.
5. The principal, dean or their designee will send written notification of the short-term out-of-school suspension to the parent/guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address known to the principal, dean, or designee) stating the cause(s) leading to the suspension, the length of suspension, the time and place for alternate education, and what the scholar will be asked to do to re-enter the school community, and the parent's right to request an informal conference with the principal.

### **Hearing Regarding Out-of-School Suspension Decisions**

When notified about an out-of-school suspension decision, a parent may request an informal conference with the principal and to present the scholar's version of the incident and question the complaining witnesses against the scholar. The school may limit or prohibit questioning of other scholars if there is good reason to do so (e.g. bullying, harassment, or any other situation that might impact the social, emotional, or physical well-being of a scholar). This hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible and normally within one day. The out-of-school suspension will stand while the hearing is taking place, although it will be removed from the child's record if the hearing reveals that the suspension decision was made in error.

### **Work completion during suspension and documentation of suspensions**

Scholars are responsible for completing academic work missed during the suspension. During the suspension, scholars have the right to substantially equivalent education in addition to IEP services. The completed work will receive full credit if it is submitted by the deadlines in accordance with the school make-up policy. If a scholar does not complete this work, the scholar may face standard academic consequences (e.g., Homework Extension, no academic credit).

### **Re-entry from In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension**

We ask all scholars who are suspended to take the following steps before they re-enter the school or classroom. We believe that the following practices are essential to set up the scholar for success. The length of a longer suspension may be reduced (at the discretion of the principal) if the following are satisfied:

- The scholar and parent meet with the principal, dean, or dean's designee
- The scholar writes a letter of apology of acceptable quality (as deemed by the principal or dean) based on the child's academic level.
- The scholar presents this letter to Achievement First staff and/or scholars.
- Scholars who are suspended two or more times may be asked to submit a reasonable and realistic, plan for improvement (based on a template / guidance given by the school). This plan must be of acceptable quality, as defined by the principal or dean.
- The scholar may be asked to meet additional conditions if school staff believes these conditions will improve the likelihood of the scholar returning to school successfully.

### **Recommendation for Expulsion**

An expulsion may be recommended by the principal. It is the removal of a student from school for more than 10 days or up to one year) due to serious, major, or egregious infractions. An expulsion can only be ordered by the Board of Directors or a duly appointed Hearing Officer ("Fact-Finder"), after a formal hearing following the procedures set forth below. A scholar may appeal an expulsion decision to the Board of Directors, and thereafter to the Commissioner of Education.

### **Hearing Procedures**

Except in an emergency situation, prior to long-term discipline of a scholar, a hearing shall be conducted by a "Fact Finder" (which could be the Board of Directors or a designated Hearing Officer), and governed by the procedures outlined below. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for above shall be held as soon as possible within the time limits set forth by law.

Written notice of the hearing must be given within a reasonable time prior to that hearing to the scholar, or if a minor, to his/her parent/guardian or person legally responsible for the scholar.

**Specifically, the school shall provide written notice to the Parent or Guardian within 48 hours of the incident of the date and time of a formal hearing, which shall occur no less than 5 days after the incident in question, but within 10 days of the incident.**

A parent may request to postpone the hearing beyond ten days for a reasonable period time to allow the parent and scholar to prepare their case. In such cases, the scholar must remain out of school while awaiting the hearing; alternative instruction will be provided by the school. A scholar may be represented by counsel at the hearing at the scholar's/parent's own expense.

A scholar may be represented by any third party of his/her choice, including an attorney, at his/her own expense or expense of his/her parents/guardians. A scholar may be entitled to free or reduced legal services through various agencies. A parent may request information about such services from the principal or dean of students.

A scholar is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the School or the Board, whenever the scholar or his/her parent/guardian do not speak the English language or is handicapped.

The hearing will be conducted by the Presiding Officer, who will call the meeting to order, introduce the parties, Board members and counsel where applicable, and swear in any witnesses called by the administration or the scholar.

A verbatim record of the hearing will be made either by a recording or by a stenographer.

The charges will be introduced into the record by the principal/designee.

Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Fact-Finder has the right to accept hearsay and other evidence if it deems that evidence relevant or material to its determination.

Each witness for the administration will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, he/she will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or his/her legal counsel and by Board members.

After the administration has presented its case, the scholar will be asked if he/she has any witnesses or evidence to present. If so, the witnesses will be sworn, will testify, and will be subject to cross-examination by the administration and to questioning by the Board. The scholar may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the scholar chooses to make a statement, he/she will be sworn and subject to cross-examination by the administration and questioning by the Board. Concluding statements will be made by the administration and then by the scholar and/or his/her representative. The parties may submit written position statements within 48 hours of the close of the hearing.

In cases where the scholar has denied the allegation, the Fact-Finder must determine whether the scholar committed the offense(s) as charged by the Principal/designee.

The Fact-Finder must also deliberate on the disciplinary action to be imposed upon the scholar. The Fact-Finder may review the scholar's attendance record or academic record during its deliberations on the issue. The Board may ask the principal or designee for a recommendation as to the discipline to be



imposed.

Evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to the removal from a classroom, suspension or expulsion of a scholar being considered for expulsion at a disciplinary hearing may be received, but may only be considered in the determination of the length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity being offered.

Where administrators presented the case in support of the charges against the scholar, such administrative staff shall not be present during the deliberations of the Fact-Finder either on questions of evidence or on the final discipline to be imposed. The superintendent/designee may, after reviewing the incident with administrators, and reviewing the scholar's records, make a recommendation to the Fact-Finder as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.

The Fact-Finder shall make findings as to the truth of the charges, if the scholar has denied them, whether the school has followed proper procedures, and in all cases the disciplinary action, if any, to be imposed.

In keeping with the Gun Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to expel a scholar for one full calendar year whenever the scholar is in the possession of a firearm. The Fact-Finder shall modify the term of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

The Fact-Finder shall report its final decision in writing to the scholar, the Parent or Guardian, and the Board of Directors if conducted by a Hearing Officer, within 10 days of the hearing, or if the scholar is a minor, also to the parents/guardians, stating the reasons on which the decision is based and the disciplinary action to be imposed. Said decision shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. Only the Board of Directors, through a designated panel of directors or the hearing officer authorized by the board, can expel a scholar.

Notice of expulsion and the conduct for which the scholar was expelled, shall be included on the scholar's cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon the possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the scholar graduates from high school.

When a scholar withdraws from school after having been notified that an Expulsion Hearing is pending, the hearing will naturally be canceled.

Achievement First will maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions, including the name of the scholar, a description of the offending behavior, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a scholar has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

The Scholar/Parent may appeal an Expulsion Decision to the full Board of Directors within 10 days of the decision by submitting the Statement of Reasons for Appeal. The Board of Directors shall review the record, including all documents and recordings related to the hearing, and convene a meeting to vote to affirm or reverse the decision of the Hearing Officer. The Board's Role is not to re-hear the evidence, but to determine based on the record whether there a) is sufficient evidence to indicate that a scholar has committed an offense or a pattern of behavior that meet this policy's definition of an expellable offense and b) the school has followed the policies outlined in the handbook adequately. If the answers to a) and b) are yes, then the Board will validate the recommendation to expel.

The Board may order that the scholar return to the school, or may remand the case for further consideration by the Hearing Officer. The Board may also, at its discretion, request that the Scholar/Parent attend the meeting to discuss the substance of the appeal and/or answer any questions that are unresolved in the record. The Board may also preside over a full fact-finding hearing if circumstances so require.

It is important that the Scholar/Parent present all evidence to the Board of Directors at the hearing, as new evidence and arguments generally may not be presented on appeal. Where additional information is discovered **after** the hearing, the Scholar/Parent may request permission to present said evidence to the Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer shall have discretion to grant or deny such requests for consideration of newly discovered evidence or for a hearing to consider such evidence.

The Scholar/Parent may submit any complaint regarding this process to the authorizer, the CT State Department of Education Charter Schools Office.

### **Alternative Instruction**

The alternative instruction will begin no later than two days after the final decision is rendered. The alternative instruction will occur during or after the school day at the school, the scholar's home, or the nearest public library, at the discretion of the school. This alternative instruction will continue for the duration of the time the scholar awaits disposition on his or her expulsion hearing. The school will provide alternative instruction to suspended and expelled scholars to the extent required by law.

## **Appendix C: Discipline of Scholars with Special Needs**

Scholars with disabilities may be disciplined in accordance with the procedural safeguards set forth in both federal and state law and regulations under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Achievement First shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of scholars with a disability including the name of the scholar, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a scholar has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Scholars for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the scholar or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) or Section 504 Team for consideration of a change in the BIP and/or IEP.

If a scholar identified as or suspected of having a disability is suspended or expelled from school more than ten consecutive days, or if the student is issued a series of suspensions or removals that constitute a pattern because they add to more than 10 school days in a school year or constitute a change in placement pursuant to the IEP or Section 504 Plan, a PPT or Section 504 Team meeting shall be promptly convened to determine whether the misconduct is a manifestation of the scholar's disability.

A parent shall be informed of the need to convene a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting on the date on which the decision to discipline a student is made, or as soon as possible

thereafter. The parents of the scholar shall be provided with a procedural safeguards notice setting forth their rights under the IDEA. As soon as possible but no later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made, the PPT or Section 504 Team shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability for that particular behavioral event. The student shall receive an alternative educational plan in accordance with the IEP as modified by the PPT in light of the discipline.

Parents may request a due process hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If the PPT finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the PPT and school shall consider the student's misconduct and revise the IEP/BIP to prevent a recurrence of such misconduct and to provide for the safety of the other students and staff. If there is no current behavior intervention plan, the school, in consultation with the PPT must also develop such a plan to address the behavior that led to the disciplinary action.

### **Provisions of Services during Removal**

Those scholars removed for a period fewer than 10 consecutive days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of his or her suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended scholar to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals, equals 10 or more school days during the year, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher PPT or Section 504 Team, shall make the service determination.

## **Appendix D: How to File a Grievance about Discrimination**

### **Non-Discrimination**

Achievement First does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, or activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 194 (ADEA). In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Achievement First on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. No person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or access to the courses of scholar offered by the school on the basis or race, sex, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Finally, pregnant scholars are allowed to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant scholars throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave (Title IX).

Achievement First does not condone or tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs or activities. The purpose of this formal grievance procedure is to provide a simple and accessible process to address problems and claims of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Achievement First will keep these proceedings as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure. These policies do not limit the right of the complainant having a problem to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the administration. Additionally, parents have the right to deliver the formal grievance directly to the Board.

Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered as a maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The time limits specified may, however, be extended by mutual agreement in writing.

If a complainant does not file a grievance in writing as provided herein within 60 days after the aggrieved person knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based, then the grievance shall be considered waived. Achievement First reserves the right to extend the 60-day limitation to file a grievance for just cause. An Achievement First staff member will, if requested, assist in preparing any written documents described within this grievance procedure.

### **Internal Resolution Process:**

Any student, employee, applicant to a program, or third party who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability shall contact the Title VI, Title IX or Section 504 Coordinator within 60 calendar days of the date on which he or she knew or should have known of the alleged occurrence to discuss the nature of the complaint. For Grievances concerning allegations of a violation of school charter, the complainant shall contact the Director of School Operations.

The Coordinator shall maintain a written record which shall contain the following:

1. The name and address of the Complainant;
2. The full name and position of person(s) who allegedly discriminated against the complainant, if applicable;
3. A concise statement of the facts constituting the alleged discrimination; and
4. Dates of the alleged discrimination.

At the time the alleged discrimination complaint is filed, the Coordinator shall review and explain the grievance procedures with the complainant and answer any questions. An investigation of the complaint shall begin as soon as practical, but in no case, more than ten (10) school days from the time the complaint was received. Within this time limit, the Coordinator shall meet separately with the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. The Coordinator and/or his or her designee shall conduct a prompt, adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. The Coordinator shall provide confidential counseling where advisable and shall seek an informal agreement between the parties concerned, where appropriate. Every attempt shall be made to seek a solution and resolve the alleged discrimination complaint at this level. It is important to note, however, that the informal process can be ended, by the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged or by the Coordinator, at any time in order to begin a formal stage of the complaint process.

If the complainant is not satisfied with these initial informal procedures, within twenty (20) school days from the date of the original discussion with the Coordinator, more formal procedures may be initiated by the complainant to further explore and resolve the problem

### **Formal Procedure:**

**Level One – School Principal:** If a complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of the problem through informal procedures, he/she may seek review of his/her claim as a formal grievance or appeal in writing to the principal. Level One Grievances shall be submitted to the **School Services Manager (SSM) on the Parent Grievance Process Form (“Grievance Form”)** or by letter, who will then forward the Grievance to the principal. The SSM is responsible for monitoring the implementation and documentation of the complaint system.

The principal shall reply in writing within three (3) school days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. The principal shall review the Coordinator’s investigation and information submitted by the complainant and may conduct additional investigation as necessary. Within ten (10) school days the principal will render a decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant and the person who allegedly discriminated against the complainant, with a copy to the Regional Superintendent.

**Level Two – Regional Superintendent Hearing:** If the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant, if applicable, is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, or if no decision has been rendered within ten (10) school days after presentation of the grievance in writing, the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant may file a written appeal for a hearing by the Regional Superintendent of Schools within ten (10) school days. The Regional Superintendent shall reply in writing within three (3) school days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. (Please note that the Regional Superintendent will not respond to complaints that have not, without good cause, first been addressed by the Coordinator or DSO, and the principal).

Level Two Grievances shall be submitted to the SSM to forward to the Regional Superintendent, **who will then forward the Grievance to the Regional Superintendent.**

Within ten (10) school days after receipt of the written appeal for a hearing by the Regional Superintendent, he or she shall conduct a hearing with the complainant and the person alleged to have committed the discrimination for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The Regional Superintendent shall provide the parties an opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the Regional Superintendent. The Regional Superintendent shall within ten (10) school days of the hearing render the decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the complainant and the person who allegedly discriminated against the complainant.

**Level Three – Board of Directors Hearing:** If the complainant or the person alleged to have discriminated against the complainant, if applicable, is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, or if no decision has been rendered within ten (10) school days after first meeting with the Superintendent, the person may file the grievance with the Board of Education within ten (10) school days. The Board shall reply in writing within three school (3) days acknowledging receipt of the Grievance to the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged. Level Three Grievances shall be submitted to the SSM to forward to the Board Chair.

Within fifteen (15) school days after receiving the written appeal, the Board or an Impartial Hearing Officer designated by the Board shall meet with the complainant for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The Board or Impartial Hearing Officer shall provide an opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and other evidence. A full record of such hearing shall be kept by the Board. The decision of the Board shall be rendered in writing within ten (10) school days.

**Level 4 – Charter Authorizer Review:** If the parent is not satisfied with the Board’s decision, the parent may present their complaint to the Charter Schools Office at the State Department of Education. Level Four Grievances shall be submitted to the **School Services Manager (SSM) on the Grievance Form or by letter, who will then forward the Grievance to the Office of Charter Schools.** The authorizer will investigate and respond. (Please note that the school will ask the Authorizer not respond to complaints that have not gone through Informal Resolution and Levels One through Three).

## **General Provisions**

Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 protect complainants from retaliation for reporting allegations of discrimination and participating in an investigation. The administration will take steps to prevent retaliation and take strong responsive action should retaliation occur.

In the event that there is a finding of discrimination, the administration will take steps that are reasonably calculated to end discrimination; to prevent recurrence of any discrimination; and to correct discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate.

The administration will contact the person raising alleged violations within a reasonable period of time following conclusion of the investigation and grievance process to assess whether there has been on-going discrimination or retaliation, and to determine whether additional supportive measures are needed.

## **Additional procedures for Claims Alleging Harassment or Hostile Educational Environment**

The administration, when evaluating whether there is a hostile environment for a student, will consider the effects of harassment that occurred in school and those incidents that occurred outside of school that may affect the school environment.

Alleged victims of harassment will not be required to work out the problem directly with alleged perpetrators without appropriate involvement by administration. Any informal process can be ended by an alleged victim at any time in order to begin a formal stage of the complaint process.

The administration will consider providing interim measures to an alleged victim pending the outcome of the recipient's investigation, when appropriate (such as prohibiting the alleged perpetrator to contact the alleged victim; changing the alleged perpetrator's class and bus schedule to minimize contact with the alleged victim, etc.).

The administration will maintain on-going contact with the alleged victim throughout the investigation.

The administration will provide counseling and academic services, as appropriate, to the alleged victim.

Any person may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights at the same time he/she files the grievance during or after use of the grievance process, or without using the grievance process at all. If a complaint is filed with the Office for Civil Rights, it must be filed in writing no later than 180 days after the occurrence of the possible discrimination.

Complaints may be filed at <https://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>. Complainants may also contact the Regional Office for further information as follows:

Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
8th Floor  
5 Post Office Square  
Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111  
FAX: 617-289-0150; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

The Special Services Coordinator, [INSERT NAME] is the Title VII, Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator and may be contacted at [INSERT NUMBER AND EMAIL].

## Appendix E: Parent Concern Form

Achievement First is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between our teachers, staff, scholars, and families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and encourage you to contact the appropriate staff member at the school. Please use this form to describe an incident/issue and submit the form to the school's principal, dean, or director of operations.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Scholar: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you discussed this issue with anyone at the school yet? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, who were you in touch with?:

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the result?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the Incident / Issue in the space below. Be sure to include the DATE of the incident and the NAMES of any people who were involved. (Please attach extra pages if you need more space).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix F: Additional Information

### Title I

The Federal *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child. **SCHOOL NAME** is a Title I school.

As a recipient of these funds, **SCHOOL NAME** will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to receive the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

**SCHOOL NAME** is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. Please feel free to contact the school if you wish to receive this information or if you have any questions.

### Public Documents / Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Achievement First fully complies with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Any requests for school records or information from the school must be in writing and submitted to the principal or to his/her designee(s). Within five business days of receipt of a written request, the school, depending on the requested information, responds by:

- Making the information available at the school itself during normal business hours to the person requesting it;
- Denying the request in writing; or
- Providing a written acknowledgment of receipt of the request that supplies an approximate date for when the request will be granted or denied.
- If the person requesting information is denied access to a record, he/she may, within 30 days, appeal such denial to the principal or to his/her designee(s). Upon timely receipt of such an appeal, the school, within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal, fully explains the reasons for further denial or provides access to the record(s) sought. The school also forwards a copy of the appeal, as well as its ultimate determination, to the Committee on Open Government. If further denied, the person requesting information may further appeal through an Article 78 proceeding.
- The school may deny access to requested records if:
  - Such records are specifically exempted from disclosure by state or federal statute;
  - Such access would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
  - Such records, if disclosed, would impair present or imminent contract awards or collective bargaining negotiations;

- Such records are trade secrets and which, if disclosed, would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of a commercial enterprise;
- Such records are compiled for law enforcement purposes for which disclosure is precluded by state or federal law;
- Such records, if disclosed, would endanger the life or safety of any person;
- Such records are computer access codes; and/or
- Such records are internal materials which are not statistical or factual tabulations of data, instructions to staff that affect the public, a final policy, nor external audits.

The school may charge a copying fee for each page requested to be copied. The fee can be no more than the fee allowed by state law.

## Open Meetings Laws

1. All meetings of the Board of Directors and all committees of the Board ("Board meetings") will be open to the general public.
2. A calendar of all scheduled Board meetings will be posted at the school.
3. The school will provide notice of the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled more than one week in advance to the new media and shall conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.
4. The school will provide the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled less than one week in advance and will conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at a reasonable time in advance of the scheduled meeting. Public notices will be placed on the bulletin board in the reception area. Public notices will reflect the location of Board meetings or any location changes.
5. To the extent possible, the school will publicly post notices of Board meetings immediately after each meeting date is determined.
6. For the purposes of determining a quorum, Directors must be physically present at the meeting; members not physically present may join discussions via electronic means but may not vote.
7. Written minutes will be recorded of all Board meetings. Minutes will include:
  - a. The date and time of the meeting
  - b. A summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions, and other matters formally voted upon
  - c. A record of how each Trustee voted on each matter
  - d. In the case of an executive session, the minutes will include a record of the final determination of any action that was taken.
8. Minutes of open sessions will be available to the public upon request from the director of operations within two weeks of the date of the meeting; minutes of executive sessions will be available within one week of the meeting.
9. All executive sessions shall be conducted as part of an open meeting; they are not considered separate meetings per se. An executive session may be called via motion and majority vote by the Board; the motion must specifically identify the general area of areas to be considered.
10. All Board members may participate in the executive session, and the Board may authorize others to be present as well.
11. No public funds may be appropriated during an executive session.
12. An executive session can only be conducted by the Board for consideration of one or more of the following matters:
  - a. Matters which imperil the public safety if disclosed;
  - b. Matters related to students about which state and federal privacy laws apply;

- c. Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
- d. Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
- e. Discussions regarding proposed or pending litigation;
- f. Matters which apply to school employees or collective negotiations which are within the scope of Article 14 of the Civil Service Law;
- g. The medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation;
- h. The preparation, grading, or administration of examinations; and
- i. The proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.

## Use of Pictures & Videos of Scholars

Achievement First often takes pictures and videos of scholars during regular school activities to capture the joy and excitement of learning that takes place and to celebrate the accomplishments of our teachers and scholars. Pictures and videos taken of scholars and staff are used for many purposes. We put pictures of scholars and staff in our scholar information system so that teachers and staff can identify all scholars and call them by name (internal); we publish photo directories of scholars and staff (internal); and we post pictures of scholars and staff at the school (internal). It is AF's policy to use pictures and videos of scholars for these uses. By reading the family handbook, parents are consenting to allow their child's photo to be used for internal purposes. If the parent does not want his or her child's photo to be used for such purposes, he or she should let the school's director of operations know in writing.

AF also allows pictures and videos to be used for print and broadcast media purposes (external), and includes pictures and videos of scholars and staff on our website, on social media, and in promotional materials used to recruit scholars and staff and explain AF to external audiences such as charter authorizers, researchers, and funders (external). By signing the Media/Publications Consent and Release form, parents are consenting to allow their child's photo to be used for external purposes. If the parent does not want his or her child's photo to be used for such purposes, he or she should not sign the media release.

## Scholar Records

The school administration is responsible for all scholar records. They will discuss, explain, and/or make available to an eligible scholar (18 years old or greater) or parents/guardians any records on file. If a parent would like to examine a child's record, the parent should submit a request in writing to the principal or the director of operations. Within 10 days, the eligible scholar or parent will be allowed to inspect the file and may request a copy of some or all of the information contained in the record. There are two different types of scholar records, which will be treated differently:

1. *Directory Information:* Directory Information is basic information about scholars such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth, participation in activities, awards received, etc. This information may be made available to others for specific use without the consent of the

parent/guardian. For example, teachers may distribute class lists to everyone in the class so that scholars may help each other with homework. If a parent/guardian would not like such information released, he or she should submit a request in writing to the principal.

2. *Confidential Records:* Confidential Records include grades, evaluations, disciplinary actions, and health records. Confidential records will not be made available to any non-school personnel without consent by the parent/guardian.

### **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of scholar education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funding under an applicable program of the U.S.

Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the scholar when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Scholars to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible scholars."

In accordance with FERPA law:

- Parents or scholars over 18 years of age have the right to inspect and review the scholar's education records maintained by the school.
- Parents or scholars over 18 years of age have the right to request that the school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible scholar then has the right to a formal hearing. The issue will first be heard by the superintendent of Achievement First or the superintendent's designee. If the parent or eligible scholar is still not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent or the superintendent's designee, a hearing with the board of directors or a designated subcommittee of the board may be requested. The decision of the board of directors or its designated subcommittee is final.
- The school may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a scholar's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Any parent who does not want such directory information included should contact the Director of School Operations.
- This listing in the parent handbook serves as the school's annual notification of parents and eligible scholars of their rights under FERPA.
- Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible scholar in order to release any information from a scholar's education record. However, the school may disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a scholar is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a scholar;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.