

**Achievement First Rhode Island, Inc.**  
**(d.b.a.) Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
September, 30 2015, 5:30 – 8:00 pm  
370 Hartford Avenue, Providence

The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

**I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 5:42 pm by Brian Gallogly.

Norman McCulloch, AFRI Board - Yes  
Jorge Elorza, AFRI Board - No  
Soraida Morales, AFRI Board - Yes  
Macky McCleary, AFRI Board - Yes  
Brian Gallogly, AFRI Board - Yes  
Reshma Singh, AFRI Board - Yes  
John Igliozi, AFRI Board - Yes

Kevin Lohela, School Leadership - Yes  
Morgan Carter, School Leadership - Yes  
Elizabeth Winangun, AF Network Support - Yes  
Karla Villar, AF Providence Mayoral Academy - Yes  
Andrea Summers, AF Illuminar Mayoral Academy - Yes  
Ben Smith, AF Network Support - Yes  
Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes  
Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes

**II. Open Session For Public Comment**

No public comment.

**III. Reports**

**A. Principal Reports**

**1. AF Providence Mayoral Academy (Morgan Carter)**

Ms. Morgan Carter reported very strong academic results from the prior year. AF Providence Mayoral Academy math scores were among the highest in the AF network. The first six weeks, where the focus was on setting up joyful classrooms, were a great success. The focus for the next five weeks will focus on academic rigor.

REACH circle is on Thursday at 3:05pm. All are invited.

Ms. Carter mentioned two staffing challenges. First, they had to make a transition in 3rd grade math but already have a new teacher who is doing well. They are also trying to hire an ELL coordinator but have

been challenged to find someone who is certified in that position and very few applications have come through. If any board members have recommendations, please send.

## **2. AF Illuminar Mayoral Academy (Kevin Lohela)**

Mr. Kevin Lohela reported on the progress the school has made in the first six weeks.

Attendance has been 98% which is at goal. Family engagement has been excellent and Mr. Lohela spoke about back to school night where 88 percent of families attended. Family leadership meeting saw 40 families in attendance. All families get a call from a teacher every two weeks and Mr Lohela shared that the highlight of his week is making positive calls home to parents. Family literacy night had 40 families in attendance. The school will be working on ensuring that they are engaging the English Language Learners.

Staff morale is strong based on a staff survey. Both principals agreed that co-location is going well. Communication is strong between the two schools

### **B. Community Outreach (Elizabeth Winangun)**

Ms Elizabeth Winangun reported that Mayor Elorza came to Visitor Day and welcomed scholars from AF Illuminar at the front door. She also spoke about the Ambassador program recruiting and training parents to be strong advocates for AF and charter schools. Trainings are on Saturday mornings and Macky McCleary suggested that board members attend.

Visitor Days are great opportunities to bring additional people in to see the school. Ms. Winangun encouraged board members to invite friends. Twenty people attended the first Visitor Day and left with a strong impression of the school. She reported that the best way to get people to attend is word of mouth and personal invitations. Either Sarah Blanton will email out or we will share it through Board on Track. Mr. John Igliozi encouraged Ms. Winangun to identify parents by district when inviting legislators. Ms. Winangun shared success stories when that has been done. Mayor Lombardi came to visit twice last year.

The Board discussed advocacy strategies at both the legislative and executive branch.

### **C. Treasurer's Report (Macky McCleary)**

Mr. Macky McCleary gave the Treasurer's Report focusing largely on the funding provided to the schools based on the number of students that RIDE allotted (based on the original charter which anticipated attrition). AF backfills seats vacated by any scholars who leave the school which was not the policy under the original charter.

Mr. Ken Paul discussed the importance of building the donor base in Rhode Island.

#### **IV. Board Business**

##### **A. Resolution 1: Resolution to approve Previous Meeting Minutes (5/27/15 and 6/29/15)**

Moved by: John Igliozi

Seconded: Macky McCleary

All in Favor

##### **B. Resolution 2: Resolution to approve Financial Report**

Moved by: John Igliozi

Seconded: Sandy McCulloch

All in Favor

##### **C. Resolution 3: Resolution to approve entering into transaction with Webster Bank**

Moved by: Brian Gallogly

Seconded: Sandy McCulloch

All in Favor

#### **V. Board on Track Presentation (Marci Cornell-Feist)**

Ms. Cornell-Feist, founder and CEO of BoardonTrack, has worked with over 500 charter schools over the course of the past 20 years. She is a believer that knowledge + action = results. This process to help you get better at governing. They've built an online cloud system that can do everything needed to support the board.

Board on Track focuses on data driven governance, collecting and providing rich data to compare the AFRI board to other boards nation-wide.

Ms. Reshma Singh posed a question about measuring fundraising. Ms. Cornell-Feist said that Board on Track is set to support our board in two different ways: logistics and strategic planning (board recruitment, fundraising, strength assessment, legal counsel, goals for the year). AF is assigned a coach to help develop a workplan.

Can do everything online, can print and/or use phone, ipad, laptop, etc.

Mr. Ken Paul explained that we are planning to pilot this tool with two of our boards this year. Ms. Sarah Blanton has access to the admin management of the website itself. The focus is on minimizing the logistics and making life easier. We will not be evaluating our principals using this tool (for now).

We will start using this tool in the next couple of weeks. Based on our capacity, we will add historical documents and minutes.

#### **VI. Advocacy Discussion (Elsa Dure)**

Ms. Elsa Dure spoke with the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors about the priorities of RIMA.

- Broadly supporting the network of schools under RIMA to be as successful as possible focusing on advocacy and policy work.

- Equitable funding
- Ensuring that charters receive equity around facilities
- Incentivizing district charter collaborations
- Helping build bridges to have conversations that promote the good work happening at the charters

The greatest opportunities now are around the collaborations between districts and charters as well as charters with other charters. In the early years all the focus is on opening schools. Now that the schools are growing, RIMA wants to consider how to leverage that experience. The newer schools can benefit from the more established schools. RIMA is working on articulating the collaborations that have been happening already.

A new collaboration between Pawtucket and Blackstone Valley Prep HS is working on personalized learning. RIMA has helped make the connection and help push the progress to help Pawtucket as a district. Mr. Sandy McCulloch spoke about how they are learning from Summit Schools, a network of schools that has totally opened up their processes to others schools at no cost. RIMA sent 12 teachers to learn how they run their schools. Four of the 20 schools selected to learn from Summit were from RI, two charters and two district schools. They attended a “boot camp” of best practices and techniques and returned “starry eyed.”

Mr. Ken Paul shared with the board the work of the Partnership Team at Achievement First.

Ms. Reshma Singh asked about the offensive strategies RIMA is employing. Ms. Elsa Dure spoke about introducing RIMA’s own bills - figuring out what those are and finding allies to support the bills (facilities, funding, collaboration, pension). Teacher certification is not a near term strategy but they are starting to have conversations about what it would mean to change the teacher certification laws.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm by Brian Gallogly.