

## **Achievement First Rhode Island, Inc.**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Thursday, September 29, 2016, 9:00am

AF Providence Mayoral Academy

Jorge Elorza, AFRI Board - No

Brian Gallogly, AFRI Board - Yes

Macky McCleary, AFRI Board - Yes

Reshma Singh, AFRI Board - Yes (phone)

Norman McCulloch, AFRI Board - Yes (phone)

John Igliozi, AFRI Board - Yes

Soraida Morales, AFRI Board - Yes

Ben Smith, AFRI Board - Yes

Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes (phone)

Elizabeth Winangun, AF Network Support - Yes

Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes

Scot Ker, AF Network Support - Yes

Public: Dan McGowan, Christopher Ireland, Courtney Richardson, Diana Ferreira, Margarita Mendez, Yaneli Almonte, Alfred Brown, Karla Alvarez, Evelyn Lopez, Joanne Gilbert, Jose Miguel Sanchez

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10am by Brian Gallogly. Mayor Elorza was unable to stay for the meeting but was present briefly prior to the call to order. It was shared, for the record, that the Mayor reviewed the resolutions and provided his support of both and if he were at the meeting he would vote in favor. A signed copy of the resolutions was obtained following the meeting.

Dacia Toll gave a brief presentation about the proposed growth plan following the growth chart shared with board members and entered into the record by John Igliozi.

#### **Public Comment**

Five AF parents spoke: Christopher Ireland, Courtney Richardson, Diana Ferreira, Margarita Mendez, Yaneli Almonte. Collectively and individually, they shared their experiences at AF Providence and AF Illuminar Elementary Schools. All of the parents spoke about how fortunate they feel to have had their children admitted through the lottery but know many more children who did not. They also spoke about their children's strong academic skills, motivation to learn, and the excellent job the teachers, staff and school leaders are doing. They all spoke about wanting this opportunity for more children.

Courtney Richardson, whose son is a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader at AF Illuminar said, "I love everything about this school." She shared that her son is very high energy and he attended a different school last year. At AF Illuminar, he has learned to trust teachers. "School is a part of home and home is a part of school." He has been printing his homework packets for friends who didn't go to AF Illuminar so that they can do the same work. "This school is part of our family. I know they are invested in my son. He comes home talking about citizenship and integrity." Ms. Richardson attended private school and she feels that this is better

than what she had and she wants to see this opportunity available to more kids. “Kids are learning at an early age that everyone can be brilliant and everyone can go to college.”

## **Board Business**

### **Resolution 1**

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of Achievement First Rhode Island (“AFRI”) proposes to submit an application authorizing Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy (“AFPMA”) and Achievement First Illuminar Mayoral Academy (“AF Illuminar”) to serve students through grade 12;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of AFRI approves the submission of an application authorizing AFPMA and AF Illuminar to serve students through grade 12.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board of Directors of AFRI hereby authorizes and directs Achievement First Network Support to prepare, execute, and deliver such application and to take and carry out any other action required by this resolution.

Motion by Macky McClearys

Seconded by John Igliozi

All in favor

### **Resolution 2**

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of AFRI proposes to submit an application authorizing it to open a new school serving grades K-8 with students feeding into a high school serving students from AFPMA and AF Illuminar;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of AFRI approves the submission of an application authorizing it to open a new school serving grades K-8 with students feeding into a high school serving students from AFPMA and AF Illuminar; provided, however, that if authorization to open the new school be granted, AFRI will only open such school with a subsequent affirmative vote by the Board of Directors of AFRI and provided further that such vote must include an affirmative vote by the Mayor of Providence based on his assessment that the opening of this additional school will be aligned with the best interests of the Providence Public School District.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board of Directors of AFRI hereby authorizes and directs Achievement First Network Support to prepare, execute, and deliver such application and to take and carry out any other action required by these resolutions.

Motion by Macky McCleary

Seconded by Ben Smith

All in favor

Abstention: Sandy McCulloch (phone)

Following the vote on the resolutions, two board members expressed their thoughts about the AF expansion plans.

John Igliozi talked about how he has been in public service for a long time and typically, school board meetings are very stressful. He finds it remarkable that at Achievement First Rhode Island board meetings, it's completely the opposite, a dramatic stark contrast. He finds AF extremely impressive. He went on to talk about how he went to school in this building, as did his father and other relatives. He was happy to have been involved in bringing AF here and now he's proud that he is able to be a part of the growth of the schools. In response to the remarks of the parents who spoke during public comment, he said he doesn't hear these types of positive stories at the Providence Public Schools board meetings and he feels, as a father of two children, that he's always looking for partners in education. It sounds like the parents here have found a partner for their children. He thinks it's wonderful that AFRI is seeking expansion to create opportunities.

He does not want the additional caveat in the second resolution to become an impediment to future growth. He supports the expansion but does not like the condition of the additional approval because in his experience, that can sometimes become a barrier in the future.

Reshma Singh wanted to echo Councilman Igliozi's comments. She is excited AF is moving forward. She spoke about how meaningful it is to hear from parents who took time out of their busy lives to share their experiences. It's a testament to the hard work the schools have done to build relationships with families. Nine applications for every seat is a function of the word of mouth of parents. She would be extremely disappointed if we let political circumstances hold us back from providing another strong educational option for more Providence children. She concluded by restating her support this resolution and is "so excited that we're putting an application forth and would support without the conditions."

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43am by Brian Gallogly.

Motion by Macky McCleary

Seconded by Ben Smith

## Achievement First Rhode Island

### Recommended Resolutions

#### RESOLUTION 1

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#### RESOLUTION 2

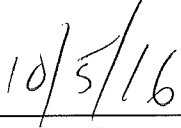
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RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board of Directors of AFRI hereby authorizes and directs Achievement First Network Support to prepare, execute, and deliver such application and to take and carry out any other action required by these resolutions.

The signature below indicates approval of Resolution 1 and Resolution 2:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jorge Elorza, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date