

- Approved on 3/18/15 -

Joint Session of the Boards of Trustees of
Achievement First Aspire
Achievement First Apollo
Achievement First Brownsville
Achievement First Bushwick
Achievement First Crown Heights
Achievement First East New York
Achievement First Endeavor

Board of Trustees Meeting

January 22, 2015, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

AF Network Support Offices, 335 Adams Street, Suite 700, Brooklyn, NY

I. Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Deb Shanley.

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

Amy Arthur Samuels, Trustee - Yes	Matt Tartaglia, Trustee - Yes
Jon Atkeson, Trustee - Yes	Kelly Wachowicz, Trustee - Yes
Justin Cohen, Trustee - No	Ambrose Wooden, Jr., Trustee - Yes
Ted Coons, Trustee - Yes	Angela Tucker, Trustee - Yes
Lee Gause, Trustee - Yes	Amy D'Angelo, AF Network Support - Yes
Lee Gelernt, Trustee - Yes	Pete Cymrot, AF Network Support - Yes
L. Priscilla Hall, Trustee - Yes	Megan Tokarski, AF Network Support - Yes
Andy Hubbard, Trustee - Yes	Elandria Jackson, AF Network Support - Yes
Judith Jenkins, Trustee - Yes	Max Koltuv, AF Network Support - Yes
Adrienne Loiseau, Trustee - Yes	John Furniss, AF Network Support - Yes
Claire Robinson, Trustee - Yes	Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes
Gabriel Schwartz, Trustee - Yes	Dacia Toll, AF Network Support - Yes
Deborah Shanley, Trustee - Yes	Chastity Lord, AF Network Support - Yes

Please list any other attendees guests: Dr. Lillian Hamer - Chair, Board of Trustees for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School

II. State of the Network

Ms. Dacia Toll, Co-CEO of Achievement First, gave an update on school performance, noting the

emphasis on increasing student discussion in classes. She also discussed how school culture is a focus to ensure scholars are happier, more focused, and on task. Mr. Coons asked for specifics on areas where gains are needed. Ms. Toll highlighted efforts to increase ELA proficiency. Board further discussed specific subjects and how AF is working to achieve gains in those areas.

Ms. Toll shared that suspensions are down 47% over the past two years, and that school culture has improved. Mr. Schwartz inquired about whether decrease was due to policy changes to which Ms. Toll explained how policy changes, particularly around low level offenses, as well as increased teacher and school leader skill have contributed to the decrease in suspensions. Ms. Wachowicz asked about the use of positive metrics around school culture. Ms. Toll noted that tools such as student surveys and observation rubrics could be used. Mr. Koltuv noted the vision of better integrating engaging classrooms and positive school culture.

Ms. Toll summarized the Organizational Health Survey results. Data suggests that AF is a very engaged organization, among schools and at Network Support. However, there is an opportunity to further reduce teacher workload to increase positivity about working at AF schools.

Ms. Toll explained that AF would be opening two new schools next year - Elm City Imagine in New Haven, CT and Providence Elementary #2. Despite being approved to open additional schools in NY, AF has decided to seek a planning year as additional time is needed to identify a school leader.

III. State of the Board

Ms. Deborah Shanley and Ms. Toll led the Board in a discussion on key areas for improvement. The group discussed opportunities and challenges surrounding disciplinary hearings, principal transitions and Board time commitment.

Mr. Pete Cymrot, Senior Counsel, gave an update regarding disciplinary practices in schools. He described his work to update the Family Handbook and personal involvement in future disciplinary hearings. Additionally, he noted that moving forward, a core group of school and network leaders that will decide on any major disciplinary actions.

It was generally agreed that there should more transparency into the principal pipeline. Several Board members also indicated a desire to have more visibility into the principal selection process.

Finally, several changes have been made to committee meeting schedules to minimize Board member time commitment. The Academic and Development committees will meet three times a year, the Family Engagement Committee will meet twice a year, and the Finance Committee will meet before every board meeting. The Board discussed opportunities to maintain contact with families in light of fewer Family Engagement Committee meetings.

IV. Personnel Updates

The Board approved AF Brownsville ES principal candidate, Katherine Roger.

Moved by: Ms. Deborah Shanley

Seconded by: Ms. L. Priscilla Hall

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Committee Reports

A. Academic

Ms. Wachowicz provided a topline report in light of the performance data shared by Ms. Toll. In general, the Academic Committee is interested in better understanding the data they should be reviewing versus what should be shared with the full board. Mr. Schwartz requested additional detail, particularly on the AF school list provided.

B. Development

Mr. Ambrose Wooden reported on behalf of the Development Committee. The committee is reaching out to various banks and foundations in their personal networks and will be introducing representatives to Mr. Ken Paul and the AF Development team. Finally, the Development Committee will be giving a report at the next Board meeting regarding Board giving goal.

VI. Board Business

A. Financial Report

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the financial report as presented.

Moved by: Mr. Jon Atkeson

Seconded by: Ms. Kelly Wachowicz

B. Charter School Growth Fund Loan

RESOLVED, that the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees be, and hereby is, authorized and directed to enter into a loan agreement with the Charter School Growth Fund in the amount of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) to support the startup costs at AF North Brooklyn Prep Elementary; Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) to support the startup costs at AF Linden Elementary; and Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) to support the startup costs at AF Apollo Middle;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of AF Brooklyn and his designee(s), be, and hereby are, jointly and severally, authorized and directed, in the name and on behalf of

Achievement First, Inc., to execute and deliver according to the terms of the loan agreement in substantially the form submitted to the Board of Trustees for their review, and to do, or cause to be done, such acts and things, including, without limitation, any such actions as are required pursuant to the loan, and to enter, execute and deliver such documents, expend such funds and take such action as may be necessary or appropriate in order for AF North Brooklyn Prep Elementary to acquire the loan and to effectuate the foregoing resolutions.

Moved by: Mr. Jon Atkeson

Seconded by: Mr. Gabe Schwartz

C. Previous Meeting Minutes

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from November 18, 2014 with the following corrections in the Finance Committee report: “He summarized the outcome of the financial audits for all AF New York schools. He detailed that all but two AF New York schools are within budget. Mr. Schwartz stated that the two schools exceeding their budget have been able to reduce spending elsewhere to mitigate any deficit.”

Moved by: Ms. Deb Shanley

Seconded by: Mr. Jon Atkeson

D. Disciplinary Committee

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby agrees to delegate authority to a sub-committee of Trustees to, as necessary, hear long-term suspension or expulsion hearings, consider appeals, delegate authority over such hearings to a hearing officer, and to otherwise oversee and make determinations on school disciplinary matters.

RESOLVED FURTHER, such disciplinary sub-committee will consist of no fewer than three members of the Board of Trustees to be determined based on availability and other factors, and that each individual Trustee, as a participant in the disciplinary sub-committee, hereby is authorized to act on behalf of AF Brooklyn in connection with the determinations of the disciplinary sub-committee and is further authorized to designate any person as agent of AF Brooklyn to do and carry out any or all of those actions as are permitted to be done and carried out by such Trustee or sub-committee in connection with the determinations of the disciplinary sub-committee.

Moved by: Ms. Deb Shanley

Seconded by: Ms. L. Priscilla Hall

E. Achievement First Charter 10

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees, on behalf of Achievement First Bushwick, hereby agrees

to seek a planning year from its charter authorizer prior to opening Achievement First Charter School 10.

Moved by: Ms. Deb Shanley

Seconded by: Mr. Lee Gelernt

VII. Other Updates

- A. School Leadership Appreciation - Board members signed photographs for school leaders.
- B. Summer Internships - Mr. Lee Gause shared his experience as a summer internship host. Board members relayed successes of the summer internship program and noted opportunities to improve to improve, particularly scholar prep and follow up.
- C. DOE Questionnaire - Follow up sent after the meeting
- D. Community Partnerships - Ms. Shanley highlighted the work AF is doing with other community organizations to provide support and resources to young men 16-24 who have been impacted by violence. AF will host a conference at AF Brooklyn HS on April 10, 2015.

VIII. Adjourn

Adjourned at 8:10pm by Deborah Shanley.