

**Achievement First Rhode Island  
Board of Directors Meeting**

December 20, 2017, 5:30 pm  
370 Hartford Avenue, Providence

**I. Call to Order & Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 5:47pm by Mayor Jorge Elorza. Due to the Mayor's schedule, the agenda was reordered to discuss the most important board business while the board had quorum. The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Achievement First Staff were in attendance:

Jorge Elorza, AFRI Board - Yes  
Brian Gallogly, AFRI Board - Yes  
Macky McCleary, AFRI Board - No  
Reshma Singh, AFRI Board - No  
John Iglizzi, AFRI Board - No  
Soraida Morales, AFRI Board - No  
Ben Smith, AFRI Board - Yes  
Maryellen Butke, AFRI Board - Yes  
James Wiley, AFRI Board - Yes

Robert Luciano, AFRI Board - No  
Percy Ballah, AFRI Board - Yes  
Ken Paul, AF Network Support - Yes (phone)  
Sarah Blanton, AF Network Support - Yes  
Elizabeth Winangun, AF Network Support - Yes  
Lisa Desfosses, AF Network Support - Yes (phone)  
Morgan Carter, School Leadership - Yes  
Kevin Lohela, School Leadership - Yes  
Libby Miller, School Leadership - Yes

Public: Lily Gutterman

**II. Open Session for Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Business**

Sarah Blanton presented the parking agreement between AF and the Providence Housing Authority which would create 30 additional parking spots for the AF Rhode Island teachers and staff.

**RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the parking agreement, attached as Exhibit A, between Achievement First and the Providence Housing Authority.**

Moved By Maryellen Butke  
Seconded by James Wiley  
All in Favor

Ben Smith shared the highlights of the conversation with the auditors. Payments on some loans will increase in two years - something to be aware of. The Mayor reviewed the audit management letter.

**RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby accepts the report of the independent auditors, CohnReznik, prepared in relation to the fiscal year ended 6/30/17.**

Moved by Brian Gallogly

Seconded by Maryellen Butke  
All in Favor

#### IV. **Reports**

##### A. Principal Reports

Morgan Carter, AF Providence Elementary School Principal, shared the school's excitement about their commended school status. Detective Roberson came and spoke and one of the 4th grade scholars gave a speech. The kids received awards and many scholars were tearful with pride.

After Thanksgiving, they did a school culture reboot. Normally, they do it after winter break so they moved it earlier by one school break. It has been very successful. More students are on task on a regular basis.

Students have gotten invested in the reward system which includes leader pins which, when the full set is complete, results in being eligible to get a blazer.

Based on the October IAs, some grades and subjects are up over last year, but there were three areas (grade/subject level) in 3rd and 4th grade which are either flat or declining. Morgan is going to be leaning in to help and Kevin's leadership team observed and debriefed and problem solved together. After winter break, it's another chance to build off the Thanksgiving reset.

The organizational health data showed significant growth - many questions had results with double digit growth.

Student attendance is 97.1% so Morgan is going to be working with the operations team to bring this number up.

Kevin Lohela, AF Illuminar Elementary School Principal, is very proud of year over year academic gains. STEP (reading) results are up across the board. Particularly, in kindergarten, 59% were at proficient last year and this year 92% this year. 28% were advanced and 49% are advanced this year. ELA results in 3rd grade, Illuminar was #3 in the network and other grades and subjects were generally strong compared with other AF elementary schools. Out of school suspensions are very low. Four students have withdrawn from the school (including reasons like moving out of the district).

Enrichment teachers will be focusing on after school Friday expedition-like opportunities.

Organizational health results were excellent. At this point, Kevin believes it's the leadership team members and fellows who are leading their teams and shaping the strong results.

Report card night attendance was around 92% and Kevin feels that parent involvement remains consistently strong.

Libby Miller, AF Providence Middle School Principal, shared that they are in the middle of Expeditions. Every day, for three hours in the morning, scholars are engaged in experiential projects. There are five expeditions: photojournalism, healthy eating/nutrition, coding and robotics, basketball, and theater. It's been astonishing how the scholars have grown in their skills and their sense of accomplishment and inspiration. Their Showcase is on Friday at 11am where the scholars will present what they've learned. Investment has really spiked because the kids are loving what they're doing. During Expeditions, one scholar said it was the best day of his life.

Expeditions help AF build relationships with community partners such as Trinity Rep. They're also partnering with other community organizations and the feedback has been excellent.

Ben Smith asked about challenges they've faced, especially having heard about challenges from the New Haven Greenfield school. Libby said that any challenges were immediately mitigated and one huge piece of that was ensuring that the community partners are supported by the school team and that it's truly collaborative.

Org health results were strong. October IA results were very strong compared to the overall network. Not all assessments are exactly the same but where they could compare across schools, they were in the top four middle schools in the network.

Math night was a huge success and they plan to do it earlier next year.

Student attendance is 97.9%.

Maryellen asked about Scholar Circles. Because of expeditions, they haven't had them but the scholars are missing them and can't wait for their return.

#### B. Facilities Update

Lisa Desfosses updated the board on the progress made on two potential buildings - one at 870 Westminster Street in Providence and the other at 85 Garfield St (20 year lease) in Cranston. AF has reached agreements with both.

#### C. Community Outreach Report

Elizabeth reported that they have received 600 applications for AF Providence Elementary (90 open Kindergarten seats - 15 will probably go to siblings, and the other grades are hard to predict), 500 for Illuminar Elementary (90 open Kindergarten seats) and 150 for the Middle School. Schoolmint has been really helpful. Almost every application names that they've heard about AF from a friend of family member. AF will backfill through March 19th. AF sends an intent to return survey to families to see if any are planning to move or withdraw.

Elizabeth spoke briefly about the admissions policy and highlighted the withdrawal policy which allows a student a temporary withdrawal without losing the seat which will actually be helpful for one family.

Elizabeth is hosting parents of 4th graders to see the Expedition showcase. Meeting families at 10:45am.

D. Additional Business

The following resolutions will be moved to the January 17 meeting.

**RESOLVED, the Achievement First Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from 10/11/17.**

**RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the admission policy, attached as Exhibit B, which amends and replaces the existing admission policy in its entirety.**

**RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the financial report as presented.**

**RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the Board Designated Reserve Policy, attached as Exhibit C.**

IV. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm by Brian Gallogly.

Motion by Ben Smith

Seconded by James Wiley

All in favor