

Achievement First (AF) Brooklyn Charter Schools
Board of Trustees Meeting
Friday, May 1, 2020, 5:00 pm
Zoom Video Conference

Board Members in Attendance:

Deb Shanley, Romy Coquillette, Jon Atkeson, Chris Lynch, Andy Hubbard, Amy Arthur Samuels, Judith Jenkins, Judge Priscilla Hall, Warren Young, Kevin Miquelon, Theresa Hayes

Staff and Guests in Attendance: Sarah Blanton, Ken Paul, Fatimah Barker, Dacia Toll, Amy Christie, Maura Bonnani.

Sarah Blanton recorded the minutes. The meeting was called to order at 5:08 pm.

1. Public Comment

There was no public comment

2. Board Business

a. Set Number of Trustees

With the addition of Theresa Hayes at the last board meeting, the number of members of the Board of Trustees must be set at fifteen, up from fourteen.

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees does, effective May 1, 2020, set the number of members of the Board of Trustees at fifteen (15).

Motion by Chris Lynch

Seconded by Jon Atkeson

All in favor

b. Bridge Scholarship

Amy Christie gave an overview of the Bridge Scholarship program. Earlier in this fiscal year (FY20), the board allocated resources to fund the Bridge Scholarship Program for members of the class of 2020. The bulk of those resources had been allocated towards scholars who applied and were accepted to early decision colleges. The question before the board is whether and to what extent the board is interested and willing to allocate additional resources from the Inter-Charter Fund to support scholars who have applied for the scholarship based on the regular decision results.

Specifically, the board received a proposal to fund up to an additional 18 scholars in the amount of \$104K per year. The board discussed different risks associated with using Inter-Charter Fund resources during this time of unprecedented financial insecurity while balancing those risks against the desire to support the college aspirations of the class of 2020.

After a robust discussion, the board passed the following resolution with eight trustees in favor, three opposing and no abstentions.

WHEREAS, AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees authorized a pilot program to award scholarship money to a subset of graduating AF Brooklyn and AF University Prep High School seniors from the Class of 2019 at its March 28, 2019 meeting, and

WHEREAS, AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees authorized the expansion of the pilot program to award scholarship money to a second cohort comprised of a subset of graduating AF Brooklyn, AF University Prep, and AF East Brooklyn High School seniors from the Class of 2020 at its August 22, 2019 meeting; and

WHEREAS, Achievement First seeks additional funding of \$70,000 in FY21 from the AF New York Inter-Charter Fund to support the second cohort of this pilot program, and

WHEREAS, Achievement First agrees to report to the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees the impact of this funding in FY21 as part of determining whether to provide similar support to future cohorts;

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby authorizes up to \$306,900 in FY21 (up to \$1.2M total commitment for cohorts 1 and 2) from any available AF New York Inter-Charter Fund the first and second cohorts of this pilot program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby authorizes Achievement First to take such actions and carry out the scholarship program as described above, including funding of the first and second cohorts of the program using the AF New York Inter-Charter Funds.

Motion by Jon Atkeson

Seconded by Judge Priscilla Hall

Chris Lynch, Romy Coquillette and Warren Young opposed

Following the motion, Jon Atkeson strongly recommended that Achievement First find a philanthropic solution for the difference between what was approved and what was requested (approximately \$35K).

c. Queens Charter Revision

Fatimah Barker shared that, due to facilities challenges and the COVID pandemic, the AF Queens Elementary School will not be a fully enrolled school by August 2020. The principal is continuing to stay with AF during this year and remains excited about leading the Queens school starting in the 2021-22 school year.

WHEREAS, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees authorized and directed Achievement First to seek additional planning years prior to opening Achievement First Charter School 10 (“AF 10”) and Achievement First Charter School 11 (“AF 11”) from the charter authorizer at its January 31, 2019 meeting;

WHEREAS, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees authorized and directed Achievement First to seek to transfer the charter school location from Brooklyn, NY to Queens, NY for AF 10 and AF 11 from the charter authorizer at its August 22, 2019 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the authorizer approved AF 10 and AF 11’s transfer to Queens, NY and granted additional planning years (i.e., AF 10 approved to open in 20-21 school year and AF 11 approved to open in the 21-22 school year) in February 2020; and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus (“COVID-19”) pandemic has limited the ability to execute a student recruitment and enrollment strategy and to guarantee facilities will be ready at the start of the 20-21 school year; and

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby agrees to seek an additional planning year prior to opening AF 10 in the 2021-22 school year, subject to authorizer approval; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, Achievement First and its designee are, jointly and severally, authorized and directed, in the name of AF Brooklyn Charter Schools, to submit such documents needed to seek charter revisions from the charter authorizer in order to effectuate the foregoing resolution.

Motion by Romy Coquillette
Second by Judge Priscilla Hall
All in favor

3. New Business

There was no new business. In closing,

Deb Shanley applauded AF for its great work in transitioning to remote learning.

4. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm by Deb Shanley.

Motion by Romy Coquillette
Second by Warren Young
All in favor