

Achievement First (AF) Brooklyn Charter Schools

Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, September 30, 2021, 6:00 pm

Zoom Video Conference

- DRAFT MEETING MINUTES -

Board Members in Attendance: Deb Shanley, Romy Coquillette, Jon Atkeson, Chris Lynch, Desiree Dalton, Kevin Miquelon, Amy Arthur Samuels, Rhonda Barros, Justin Cohen, Judith Joseph Jenkins, Tamika Bradley, Warren Young

Staff and Guests in Attendance: Sarah Blanton, Ken Paul, Neil Shah, Xanthe Jory, Anup Menon, Akeem Frett, Stephanie Keenoy, Fatimah Barker

Sarah Blanton recorded the minutes. The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by Deb Shanley.

1. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. Student enrollment

Ms. Xanthe Jory, Chief Operating Officer, led a discussion about enrollment at the AF schools and specifically enrollment gaps in kindergarten. The board discussed AF, NYC and national trends impacting enrollment.

Ms. Jory believes that AF should be able to get to full enrollment with the right strategies, investment and resources.

3. Discussion and possible action related to programmatic strategies to address staffing challenges

Ms. Stephanie Keenoy shared with the board the staffing challenges facing the AF Brooklyn schools and potential programmatic strategies the network is considering to address these challenges. Between staffing vacancies, COVID related absences, teachers leaving NYC, and the vaccine mandate, AF is facing varying levels of staffing vacancies across all schools.



achievementfirst.org

Following a discussion about strategies for addressing staffing shortages, the board considered and voted on the following resolution.

WHEREAS, Achievement First (AF) staff have detailed novel challenges and concerns in light of COVID-19, and the board has considered such challenges and concerns;

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Superintendent, in collaboration with school principals, to make temporary programmatic and/or structural changes to the instructional model as permitted by law, between October 1, 2021 and January 27, 2022, subject to authorizer approval,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Achievement First and its designee are, jointly and severally, authorized and directed, in the name of AF Brooklyn, to take any and all actions and/or submit such documents needed to effectuate the foregoing resolution.

Motion by Romy Coquillette
Seconded by Amy Arthur Samuels
All in favor

4. Discussion and possible action related to board succession planning

Board terms are currently limited to two, three-year terms but the board raised concerns that that might not be long enough given the learning curve and length of time it takes to feel like you're adding value. The additional time afforded in a third term is valuable. Due to AF's leadership transitions and COVID challenges, a third term may also provide some needed stability.

The board wishes to request of SUNY an third term for Trustees.

5. Committee Reports

Facilities committee: Mr. Kevin Miquelon gave a report from the facilities committee including updates from Queens, where we will be delaying the second elementary school by one year. Linden is on time and on budget and will likely qualify for the New Markets Tax Credit. He also discussed the conflict of interest waiver the board is asked to approve regarding Mr. David Sweeny.



achievementfirst.org

WHEREAS, Achievement First (“AF”) has detailed the impact of staffing challenges on the AF Facilities Team, and the board has considered such challenges,

WHEREAS, AF has engaged the consulting services of Mr. David Sweeny, and Mr. Sweeny is a member of the Civic Builders Board of Directors (Civic);

WHEREAS, this Board has engaged the services of Civic in relation to a property located at 2400 Pitkin Ave, Brooklyn NY, 11208, and the New Markets Tax Credit deal relating to the same,

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby knowingly waives any potential conflict of interest arising from Mr. Sweeny serving as a consultant for AF.

Motion by Jon Atkeson
Seconded by Justin Cohen
All in favor

Ms. Ketki Harale shared renderings of the design for the Linden project.

Finance committee: Mr. Neil Shah, Interim Chief Financial Officer, gave the finance committee report beginning with the unaudited FY21 P&L and balance sheet from June. He reviewed ESSER spending and the amended budgets.

Deb Shanley acknowledged Fatimah Barker, Interim CEO, and Ms. Barker made some remarks expressing her gratitude for the executive team for their leadership during this difficult time.

Academic Committee: The Academic Committee presented two strong candidates for principal roles at AF Brooklyn Middle Schools. Ms. Shanley noted she will discuss the candidates when taking the votes.

6. Board Business

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from May 27 and August 2, 2021.

Motion by Jon Atkeson
Seconded by Romy Coquilletto
All in favor



achievementfirst.org

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the amended budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Motion by Jon Atkeson

Seconded by Warren Young

All in favor

NOTE: The following two resolutions were approved with an error in the school to which each principal was assigned. In consultation with board chair, Romy Coquillette, the corrections can be found below:

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints Ms. Hope Fox as principal of Achievement First ~~Brownsville~~ ~~Aspire~~ Middle School effective July 1, 2022.

Motion by Jon Atkeson

Seconded by Kevin Miquelon

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints Ms. Samantha Jones as principal of Achievement First ~~Aspire~~ Bushwick Middle School effective July 1, 2022.

Motion by Jon Atkeson

Seconded by Kevin Miquelon

All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the Family Handbook as presented by Achievement First.

Motion by Romy Coquillette

Seconded by Warren Young

All in favor

Romy noted there are typos in the Handbook she hopes will be a fixed.

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Directors hereby elects Mr. Anup Menon, Mr. Akeem Frett and Mr. Josh Vidro to serve as a trustees, each with a three year term ending June 30, 2024, and does, pursuant to the bylaws of AF Brooklyn, effective September 30, 2021, set the number of members of the Board of Directors at eighteen (18).

Motion by Jon Atkeson



achievementfirst.org

Seconded by Chris Lynch
All in favor

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby elects the following leadership slate for the 2021-22 fiscal year:

Romy Coquillette, Chair
Alison Richardson, Vice Chair
Jon Atkeson, Treasurer
Andy Hubbard, Secretary
Motion by Chris Lynch
Seconded by Justin Cohen
All in favor

WHEREAS, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees discussed the merits of amending the bylaws to change the term limit language from two terms to three terms so as to ensure leadership stability,

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby amends the bylaws as described.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Achievement First and its designee are, jointly and severally, authorized and directed, in the name of AF Brooklyn, to take any and all actions and/or submit such documents needed to effectuate the foregoing resolution.

Motion by Warren Young
Seconded by Romy Coquillette
All in favor

7. Additional Business

There was no additional business but former Trustee, Judge Priscilla Hall, joined the meeting to thank Ms. Shanley for her service on the board and share her remarks about Ms. Shanley's contributions to AF Brooklyn and education widely.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm by Deb Shanley.



achievementfirst.org



Motion by Warren Young
Seconded by Romy Coquillet
All in favor



achievementfirst.org

370 James St., Suite 404
New Haven, CT 06513
203 773 3223

335 Adams Street, Suite 700
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718 623 2660

370 Hartford Avenue
Providence, RI 02909
401 347 1106 ext. 30610