

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**  
**Achievement First Bridgeport Academy**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**

Venue: Bridgeport Academy Middle School, 529 Noble Avenue

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/7382361994>

Wednesday, September 28, 2022, 5:30-7:00 pm

**Trustees in Attendance:** Rajeev Lakra, Dick Kalt, Ebrima Jobe, Debra Hertz, Dewey Loselle, RoAnne Thomas, Michael Strambler, Kimberly Bruce, Marlene Macaуда

**Staff in Attendance:** Lisa Margosian, Beth Cocuzza, Sulafa Bashir, Neil Shah, John Sharkey, Jesse Balis-Haris, Ketki Harale, Ken Paul, Michael Rabin, Patricia Granda-Malaver, Sultana Salma, Nakia Hall, Shalia Garnett, Brooke Williams, Adrienne Minniefield, Stephanie Fox

Patricia Granda-Malaver recorded the minutes.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:36PM by Mr. Rajeev Lakra, Bridgeport Board Chair.

**II. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Lakra moved the board to vote on the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from August 9, 2022.

Motion by Dick Kalt  
Seconded by Ebrima Jobe  
All in favor

#### **IV. Presentation by Achievement First**

##### **A. Principals' Reports**

Ms. Shalia Garnett, Bridgeport Academy Elementary School Principal, provided updates on the strong start to the 2022-2023 year. She shared that student enrollment is at 100% with a long waiting list and are almost fully staffed. Ms. Garnett elaborated on the engaging in-person beginning for scholars by showing a video depicting an exciting classroom activity that highlights the intentional work teachers are engaging in to make the learning experience truly “magical”. She concluded her presentation by sharing her recent principal classroom tour which has allowed her to introduce herself to scholars and get them excited for the school “principal award”. The board entered discussion, and Ms. Garnett answered questions regarding parent engagement.

Next, Ms. Stephanie Fox, Bridgeport Academy Middle School Principal, presented start of year updates. She noted that student enrollment and staffing is at 100%, and the school has the funds to hire additional teachers assistants. Other highlights that Ms. Fox discussed include: 1) Back to School Night where over 130 families attended for a BBQ and teach meet-and-greet, 2) positive staff feedback on summer professional development workshops, and 3) highest student attendance of all the 41 AF schools for the first month of school. Ms. Fox then answered a question about the change in school culture, particularly celebrating scholars as that was challenging during virtual learning.

The board thanked principals for their informative and concise updates, and they offered to get involved with future school events by providing a food truck or refreshments. Ms. Lisa Margosian, interim Chief Executive Officer, mentioned that she had the privilege of attending both schools earlier in the week with funders, and everyone was impressed with the positive spirits of scholars and staff.

##### **B. Deep dive on Academic Data**

Mr. John Sharkey, Interim Chief Academic Officer, presented a summary deep dive of Bridgeport academics. He began by explaining the importance of triangulation of data as a single data point does not speak to all the accomplishments that have been reached. There have been overall academic improvements from the 2020-2021 school year. In general, reading has been easier to rebound than math because math challenges are rooted in lack of foundational skills necessary to succeed in future levels. Bridgeport specifically exceeded performance in comparison to CT averages in

ELA and math. For this school year, AF will continue to measure performance through internal assessments, STEP, STAR, MAP, and mock state assessments. These results will prove whether curriculum pilots are being effectively implemented and supported. Mr. Sharkey then continued with bar charts to provide the board a visual representation of the Bridgeport schools' academic data and pointed out performance comparisons with other AF CT schools and the overall AF Network.

After his presentation, Mr. Sharkey provided insight on AF's response and academic initiatives for this school year. The three main tactics he focused on were:

- 1) Curricular pilots in ES
- 2) Improvements in data reporting and response
- 3) Shifts to school support from network academic teams

The board members asked clarifying questions throughout the presentation to fully understand the data provided.

### **C. Presenting New Board Dashboard**

Mr. Michael Rabin, Deputy Chief of staff, gave a brief overview of the purpose of the new board dashboard, which was noted in the board book as well. He reminded board members that the dashboard will provide high-level overviews of critical data and ensure the Board understands AF's progress before AF leaders provide more context during meetings. After reviewing a draft version, Mr. Rabin stated that for future meetings, board members will receive a copy of the dashboard ahead of time and will be asked to review it in order to actively participate in meeting conversations. He also encouraged board members to provide feedback over the school year to continue to improve this useful tool. No questions were asked.

### **V. Committee Reports**

Mr. Neil Shah, Chief Financial Officer, presented on the FY23 revised budget as there needed to be an incorporation of changes due to staffing and enrollment numbers. Mr. Shah answered lingering questions about staffing trends. Mr. Lakra then moved the board to vote on the matter.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the amended budget as recommended by the Finance Committee and prepared by Achievement First for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Motion by Dewey Loselle  
Second by Dick Kalt

All in favor.

## **VI. Board Discussion and Business**

Mr. Lakra moved the board to vote on the following matters:

### **A. Approval of Interim Principals**

BE IT RESOLVED that the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby *conditionally\** approves the following individuals to serve as interim principals, as needed, based on the recommendations by Achievement First, between September 28 and November 21, 2022.

- Elementary School: Lakendra Thompson
- Middle School: Abraham Akanmu

*\* Approval is conditional on the board meeting the two candidates to be scheduled shortly.*

Motion by Ebrima Jobe  
Second by Michael Strambler  
All in favor.

### **B. Election of New Members and Committee Members**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby appoints the following committee members:

- Finance Committee: Dewey Loselle (Chair), Rajeev Lakra, Dick Kalt
- Personnel Committee: Michael Strambler (Chair), Debra Hertz, Rajeev Lakra
- AF Joint Amistad Committee: Dick Kalt, Michael Strambler, Kimberly Bruce

Motion by Ebrima Jobe  
Second by Michael Strambler  
All in favor.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby elects

RoAnne Thomas to serve as a Teacher Representative for a 3-year term, ending June 30, 2025.

Motion by Dick Kalt  
Second by Ebrima Jobe  
All in favor.

### **C. Approval of SY 2022-2023 Family Handbook**

BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the 2022-2023 AF Family Handbook.

Motion by Ebrima Jobe  
Second by Michael Strambler  
All in favor.

### **VII. Adjourn**

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Lakra reminded board members to complete the action items provided in the board book by the given deadline. He also proposed the board discuss suggestions to principal and school appreciation in future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00PM by Mr. Rajeev Lakra.

Motion by Michael Strambler  
Seconded by Ebrima Jobe  
All in favor