



## MINUTES

### Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees Meeting

Venue: Credit Suisse Offices 11 Madison Avenue  
(NE Corner of Madison and E. 24th Street),  
10 Floor West – Boardroom

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/7683567421>

Monday, January 23, 2023, 6:00-8:00 pm

#### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Romy Coquillet at 6:03 pm.

#### Attendees:

#### Trustees:

Name	Present	Name	Present
Romy Coquillet	Y	Desiree Dalton	Y
Christopher Lynch	Y	Akeem Frett	Y
Warren Young	Y	Anup Menon	Y
Alison Richardson	Y	Kevin Miquelon	Y
Jon Atkeson	Y	Will Robalino	Y
Rhonda Barros	N	Amy Arthur Samuels	Y
Tamika Bradley	Y	Josh Vidro	N
Paul Cabana	Y		

AF Staff: Lisa Margosian, Beth Cocuzza, Christi George, Michael Rabin, Blakely Simoneau, Barbara Forti, Karolyn Belcher, John Sharkey, Neil Shah, Xanthe Jory

Guests: Shawn Warner, Angela Tucker

#### II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

#### III. Approval of Minutes

[achievementfirst.org](https://achievementfirst.org)



Ms. Coquillette took the board through approval of the minutes.

It was:

RESOLVED, the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from November 16, 2022.

Motion by Alison Richardson

Second by Jon Atkeson

All in Favor

Ms. Coquillette introduced Ms. Shawn Warner and invited Me. Desiree Dalton to share her impressions from meeting with Ms. Warner. Ms. Coquillette mentioned that Ms. Warner had met with several trustees and with Ms. Margosian, AF Interim CEO and then she invited the Trustee to vote to elect Ms. Warner to the board.

It was:

that the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby elects Ms. Shawn Warren to serve as a Trustee for a 3-year term, ending June 30, 2025.

Motion by Desiree Dalton

Second Chris Lynch

All in favor

Ms. Warner joined the meeting and was congratulated by the Trustees and AF staff members present.

Ms. Angela Tucker, previous parent rep and prospective board member, joined the meeting and was introduced and welcomed by Ms. Coquillette.

Ms. Coquillette then took the board through a motion to reset the number of trustees.

It was:

RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby sets the number of Trustees at sixteen (16).

Motion by Warren Young

Second by Jon Atkeson

All in Favor

#### **IV. Discussion with Achievement First**

[achievementfirst.org](http://achievementfirst.org)

Ms. Lisa Margosian welcomed the trustees and introduced the topics of discussion for the meeting.

A. Academic Improvement Plan + Academic Committee Report

Ms. Carolyn Belcher, Superintendent of Schools, discussed her priorities and key levers for academic improvement, touching upon the mental and social emotional health challenges post-COVID and the focus on returning to what AF does best, which is managing student achievement.

She also discussed the need to clarify AF's high school value proposition and preparing students for college and/or careers that can support a family. Finally she talked about the importance of focusing on people and talent.

Ms. Belcher discussed the planned change in curriculum and answered questions from the Trustees about the magnitude of the change and impact on teachers, emphasizing pilots, early adopters and an opt-in model to support the change management process.

Trustees asked about metrics and how success will be measured and inquired about whether any resources are needed that would support accelerating the progress.

Trustees also asked about supporting students in college applications and helping them get into better colleges and the right colleges versus just getting into college.

Mr. John Sharkey discussed progress toward EOY goals for ELA and Math across elementary and middle academies and across schools within each academy.

He also discussed the progress made based on the academic interventions that had been put into place in the fall as well as giving an update on Tier 1 and 2 schools.

B. Enrollment Response

Ms. Margosian introduced the topic by referencing root-cause analysis and work that was done since the previous meeting to address enrollment challenges.

Mr. Michael Rabin summarized the 4-lever strategy that had been introduced in the November meeting and gave updates on the progress-to-date for each of the levers.

Trustees asked questions about

- how family voice was taken into consideration and there was a request for the family engagement staff member to join a future meeting.
- after-school enrichment which were cut back during COVID and whether they would be brought back given their importance to family
- marketing and outreach materials used to “pitch” AF to students and families

#### C. HR and Finance Investments

Ms. Margosian highlighted the importance of the system upgrades that are being made in response to feedback from schools and from vendors

Mr. Neil Shah described the system upgrades and process improvements in payroll, accounts payable and other key finance functions to support DSOs and improve service to vendors. He also mentioned automation and reduction of manual processes and resulting human error.

Ms. Christi George discussed centralizing HR work away from the DSO function to lighten the load on them, by hiring and investing in HR expertise. She also talked about enhancing the employee experience, reinvesting in teacher experience and performance and career pathways with the goal of better attracting and retaining staff.

Trustees asked questions about whether the job market has gotten easier in terms of teacher recruitment.

#### D. Principal Renewal Process

Ms. Christi George gave an update on the principal renewal process and timeline and indicated that the team would be bringing principals’ renewal indentations to the March board meeting with the goal of sending out offer letters towards the end of March / early April.

### V. Committee Reports

#### A. Finance Committee Report

Mr. Warren Young introduced the excess liquidity policy that is meant to take advantage of current interest rates, and would require board approval of the policy and of setting up a new account.

Mr. Neil Shah then described the differences in the policy being presented at this meeting relative to what had been discussed in the November board meeting with respect to using excess liquidity.

Trustees asked questions about how the amount of cash that is deemed to be excess liquidity is determined each month and what the maturity rates of US treasuries acquired would be.

Ms. Romy Coquillette invited the board to vote on the resolutions related to the excess liquidity policy.

It was:

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the Achievement First Brooklyn Board Excess Liquidity Policy.

Motion by Warren Young.  
Second by Will Robalino.  
All in favor.

RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the opening of a new Custodial Investment Account with Alex Brown, a division of Raymond James.

Motion by Jon Atkeson.  
Second by Kevin Miquelon.  
All in favor.

There was also a question about the interest income and what was allowable for it to be spent on. Mr. Neil Shah said he would look into it and come back to the board.

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

### **A. Proposed Executive Session**

Ms. Coquillette took the board through a resolution to enter Executive Session to discuss the following topics:



1. EBHS Personnel Update
2. AF Network Re-imagining
3. CEO Search Update

Motion by Jon Atkeson  
Second by Akeem Frett.  
All in favor.

The board entered Executive session at 7:55 pm.

## **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by Ms. Romy Coquillette at 8:55 pm.

Motion by Warren Young  
Second by Chris Lynch  
All in favor.