



AFRI Board Meeting Minutes

Monday July 7, 2025 at 5:45 to 6:45 PM EDT

RI Education Collective: 235 Georgia Ave, Suite 102, Providence, RI 02905

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/87421121029>

Attendance

Members: Vincent Capellan, Nicole Pollack, Maryellen Butke, James Wiley and Mayor Brett Smiley

AF Staff: Shannon Miller, Lisa Margosian, Michael Rabin, Mirtha Camille Sabio, Kiah Hufane, Jason Russell, Kate Aufiero, and Omar Mayyasi

Guests: Tom McDermott

I. Call to Order

Mayor Smiley called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

II. Public Comment

There were no public members present, thus no public comments. In response to the public comments shared at our last board meeting, we conducted outreach to all families. We were able to speak directly with Ms. Ocasio and Ms. Ramirez, and we are grateful for the time they took to engage with us. Both parents expressed appreciation for Achievement First, highlighting the school's positive culture, strong leadership, and dedicated teachers.

They also conveyed serious concerns about their children transitioning to Providence Public Schools. As a result, their families are pursuing alternative options for their students' educations.

We informed them that we continue to pursue solutions on the facilities front and are actively engaged in conversations with RIDE regarding the possibility of securing lottery preference for affected students, should they wish to return to Achievement First in the future. We remain committed to maintaining communication with these families and will keep them informed as our efforts move forward.

III. Finance Committee: Q3 Forecast and FY26 Budget

Kate Aufiero presented Q3 results, noting a projected surplus exceeding budget expectations owing to increased revenue sources such as Tidal, ESSER, and multi-language learner allocations. While personnel savings were significant due to vacancies, costs increased because of temporary hires.

The balance sheet remained robust with long-term assets and a cash increase from state housing aid and bond draws. Repayment on the 2022 bond series loan began,

with full expenditure slated by July 2026. Enhancements were made for better tracking of financial movement and assets in the budget, showing an increase in federal and state funds allowing more operational leeway. Despite enrollment dropping by 38 students, the difference was offset by anticipated variances.

A proposal to amend the management fee resolution from 11.2% to 12% for fiscal year 2026 was discussed. This adjustment, eliminating an ancillary fee, aims to enhance services in Rhode Island. Discussion also covered future outcomes projections and philanthropy reliance reduction to ensure strategic alignment. Additional follow-up was deemed necessary for clarity on service costs and governance impacts.

The FY26 budget anticipates a 5% revenue increase up to \$3.3 million, fueled by rising enrollment numbers and per pupil funding increases. Philanthropy requirements are to decline significantly. State aid and some financial elements like interest income will see a boost, while personnel and non-personnel costs are set to rise with new initiatives and increased management fees. Despite heightened expenses, a \$1 million surplus is projected, meeting bond covenant stipulations and reflecting financial stability.

IV. Board Resolutions and Approvals

The board moved on to resolutions for approval. The first resolution was to approve the budget as it was presented. Mayor Smiley asked for a motion to approve. James Wiley motioned. Maryellen Butke seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year as presented.

The second resolution for approval was related to the management fee. Mayor Smiley asked to amend the original resolution to remove the final paragraph until further discussion. The board agreed and Shannon Miller amended the resolution on the screen. Mayor Smiley then asked for a resolution to approve the amended resolution. Nicole Pollock motioned. James Wiley seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

2. WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of ACHIEVEMENT FIRST RHODE ISLAND (“AFRI” or “the Board”) is committed to ensuring the continued financial stability and operational effectiveness of the school;

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the current management fee structure and determined that an adjustment is necessary to reflect increased administrative costs, inflationary pressures, and the need for enhanced services;

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that the proposed adjustment will support the school’s ability to provide high-quality education and maintain compliance with all regulatory requirements; and

WHEREAS, Achievement First Inc. currently charges a 10% management fee and a separate ancillary fee of \$740,000, resulting in an effective fee of approximately 11.2%;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of AFRI hereby approves an increase in the management fee from 11.2% to 12% in public revenue effective July 1, 2025, and that effective July 1, 2025, the ancillary fee shall be eliminated;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board authorizes ACHIEVEMENT FIRST NETWORK SUPPORT to take all necessary steps to implement the fee adjustment, including notifying relevant stakeholders and updating contractual agreements as needed.

Mayor Smiley then introduced the consent agenda which contained three resolutions for approval: previous meeting minutes, interim principals, and creation of a facilities committee. After a request for questions, Mayor Smiley asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Maryellen Butke motioned. Victor Capellon seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 24, 2025.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principals, as needed, based on the recommendations by Achievement First through Sept 30, 2025.

AF Envision ES	Emily Travers
AF Illuminar ES	Faith Johnson
AF Illuminar MS	Elizabeth Boyar
AF Promesa ES	Colleen Flaherty
AF Providence ES	Dana Hurley
AF Providence MS	Angela Martinez
AF Providence HS	Kim Kalenda

3. WHEREAS Achievement First Rhode Island Board (“The Board”) values nurturing learning and teaching environments; supports and respects educators as trained professionals; and is committed to ensuring that all students can thrive regardless of their backgrounds;

WHEREAS The Board supports education that values honesty about who we are; integrity in how we treat others; and courage to do what’s right by listening to, learning from, and respecting diverse viewpoints;

WHEREAS The Board recognizes the need for ongoing planning, oversight and management of school facilities to support a safe, efficient, and high-quality learning environment for its scholars;

WHEREAS the Board is desirous of establishing a standing Facilities Committee to advise and assist the Board in matters related to facilities planning, maintenance, improvements and capital projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on this 12 day of June 2025:

1. *Establishment of a Facilities Committee.* The Board hereby establishes a facilities committee as a standing committee of the Board.
2. *Purpose and Responsibilities.* The Facilities Committee shall be responsible for:
 - Assessing the schools short- and long-term facilities need;
 - Reviewing maintenance, safety and operational issues related to school facilities;
 - Advising the Board on capital improvements and facilities related expenditures;
 - Assisting in the development of a facilities master plan;
 - Coordinating with consultants, architects, and other relevant professionals as needed;
 - Reporting regularly to the Board with findings and recommendations.
3. *Composition.* The Facilities Committee shall be composed of at least two members of the Board of Directors.
4. *Appointment of Members.* The Board hereby appoints the following individuals to serve on the Facilities Committee for the 2025-2026 school year, effective immediately:
 - *James Wiley*
 - *Nicole Pollock*
 - *Janelle Clarke-Holley*
 - *Victor Capellan*
5. *Meetings and Reporting.* The Facilities Committee shall meet at least quarterly and provide regular updates and recommendations to the Board at scheduled board meetings.
6. *Duration.* This committee shall remain in effect until dissolved by action of the Board.

V. Executive Session: Employee Related Risk

Mayor Smiley asked for a motion for the board to move into executive session to discuss employee related risk management and invited all AF staff in attendance to join.

Nicole Pollock motioned. Victor Capellon seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained. The board moved to executive session.

VI. Adjourn

The board exited the executive session at 6:43 pm. There being no other business, Mayor Smiley requested a motion to adjourn. Nicole Pollock motioned. Victor Capellon seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.