



## **AF Brooklyn Board Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM EDT

25 Broadway, 14th Floor, Geneva Room New York, NY 10004

Zoom Information: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/83053060440>

### **Attendees**

**Trustees:** Brandon Sorlie, Paul Cabana, Christopher Lynch, Tamika Bradley, Desiree Dalton, Erica Murphy, Kevin Miquelon, David Pollak, Amy Arthur Samuels, Keith Brooks

**AF Staff:** Lisa Margosian, Kristin Damo, Michael Rabin, Jason Russell, Michael Diaz, Omar Mayyasi, Mirtha Camille Sabio, Sulafa Bashir, Ben Schanback

**Guests:** Members of the public present over Zoom: Stephanie Kotnik, Kerrilyn Waters, Caitlin Purdy, Emily Westacott, Bella, Keisha Regular, Nida Sears, Naa Akua

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Brandon Sorlie at 6:02 pm.

### **II. Public Comment**

Mr. Sorlie called on each member of the public present in turn to unmute themselves and make comment if they so wished. Several staff members from Bushwick Middle School - Kerrilyn Waters, Caitlin Purdy, Emily Westacott, Bella, Keisha Regular, Nida Sears - stated that the communication with staff and families about the principal transition was not clear and that they were requesting a town hall for families and staff to provide more clarity.

Stephani Kotnik identified herself as the interim principal of Bushwick Middle School and stated that she was attending the board meeting to learn more about what happens at board meetings, due to her new position and responsibilities.

Mr. Sorlie thanked the members of the public who made comment and reiterated that per procedure the board would respond to public comment at the next board meeting in December and would work with the AF network team members in between to respond to the feedback.

### **III. CEO Agenda Overview**

Mr. Sorlie turned it over to CEO Lisa Margosian who welcomed the board members and prospective members and welcomed the new CFO Ben Schanback who would be joining in November. Ms. Margosian stated that in response to feedback from the board that the presentations would aim to minimize talk time and expand discussion. She then turned it over to Kristin Damo.

### **IV. Mission Moment (Inform)**

Kristin Damo introduced herself as the Executive Director (ED) for New York. She stated excitement about the pending opening of Legacy Middle School and introduced the mission moment which comprised a recruiting video of Legacy Elementary School.

## **V. Regionalization Operating Model**

Ms. Margosian gave some background behind the work that has been undertaken on the regionalization operating model, stating that the driving force was to ensure there was leadership focused around the local context of the communities AF serves.

Mr. Michael Rabin gave an overview of the phases of work that have been undertaken from codifying the future operating model of split-control to starting the multi-year implementation plan. He went on to discuss the rationale for the regional ED model, highlighting the need for accountability, decision-making authority and focus on community relationships, and to describe the ED's roles and responsibilities. He concluded by stressing the balance of keeping AF's core components the same across the regions while allowing for regional variation.

Board members asked clarifying questions on the org structure and cascading of roles and responsibilities for EDs and Regional Superintendents in the new operating model, with emphasis on high school vs K-8. Leadership responded by describing the reduced layers in the new structure and the creation of a Chief Program Officer role to focus on K-16 curriculum and instruction. They shared the phased approach for high school to ensure knowledge transfer and a high-school playbook is in place before this is fully taken on by the EDs.

Board members also asked about the reaction of school leaders and teams to the new operating model, which leadership described as being positive, and the change management which has less impact to the schools where leader retention remains high resulting in school staff feeling stability through the changes.

## **VI. Dialogue with the Regional Executive Director**

Ms. Kristin Damo shared reflections on her role, reiterating her continued focus on instruction, but stated that the scope of the role now allowed her to see the full picture across academies and get a stronger sense of the health of the region as a whole. She highlighted the principal of Aspire Elementary School who has achieved strong growth, and described how it was now possible to have other school leaders visit to observe and learn directly from their peers.

Ms. Damo shared some wins from the first 90 days in her role as ED around strong kick-offs with school leaders and staff as well as academic gains that have been achieved. She discussed challenges around enrollment declines and the focus on increasing achievement for K-8 ELA and MS Math.

Board members asked about enrollment and recruitment strategies and leadership described collaborating with school leaders to expand strong engagement and digital marketing strategies, which have been seen to pay off and result in greater ROI. Leadership also highlighted the benefit of strengthening relationships across academies to aid in increasing matriculation from elementary to middle and to high school.

## **VII. Academic Review: Gauging Impact and Charting Next Steps**

Ms. Damo introduced Michael Diaz who supports high schools. She shared highlights of K-8 ELA and Math results, described how they compared to charter peers and the extent to which they varied across schools. She attributed slower growth in MS to lower teacher retention in previous years which has improved this year. Mr. Diaz shared high school results, discussing some bright spots in SAT growth, AP results and STAR reading, while highlighting the need to focus on

declines in Regents performance. Mr. Diaz attributed the results to changes that were made in the high schools to diversify course offerings available to I students as well as in response to staffing shortages experienced after the pandemic.

Ms. Damo shared responses to questions posed by the Academic Committee around AF's performance compared to host district, the city and other charters as well as around whether performance on state tests is being accelerated across all levels of achievement, and not just for the highest achieving students at levels 3 and 4 of proficiency.

Ms. Damo described how the academic results informed the K-8 goals for SY 25-26 around achievement, attendance and retention. Mr. Diaz also explained high school achievement goals.

Ms. Damo closed by sharing the key levers that were the focus for the school year, which were developed based on the root cause analysis and would center on the regionalization strategy and on improving consistency across the region.

Board members asked questions about strategies for middle school and leadership emphasized curricular changes, as well as the focus on matriculation which is impacted by strong family engagement and outreach, and teacher and leader retention for stabilization and growth.

### **VIII. Executive Session**

Mr. Sorlie stated that the board would now move into Executive Session and requested a motion. Erica Murphy motioned. Chris Lynch seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

The board went into executive session at 7:15 pm, and exited at 7:46 pm.

### **X. Board Resolutions and Approvals**

Mr. Sorlie requested a motion to pass the consent agenda. Chris Lynch motioned. Amy Arthur Samuels seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

The consent agenda passed.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from June 3, 2025.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Tamika Bradley to serve as a Parent Representative for an additional 1-year term ending June 30, 2026.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby sets the number of Trustees at thirteen (13).
4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby elects the following leadership slate for the 2025-2026 fiscal year:
  - a. Brandon Sorlie, Chair
  - b. Paul Cabana, Vice Chair
  - c. Chris Lynch, Treasurer
  - d. Akeem Frett, Secretary

5. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints the following committee members:
  - Executive Committee: Brandon Sorlie (Chair), Chris Lynch, Paul Cabana, Akeem Frett, Erica Murphy
  - Facilities Committee: Kevin Miquelon (Chair), Tamika Bradley, Romy Coquillet, Chris Lynch
  - Finance Committee: Chris Lynch (Chair), Romy Coquillet, David Pollak
  - Academic Committee: Erica Murphy (Chair), Romy Coquillet, Desiree Dalton, Brandon Sorlie, Andrea Kilpatrick, Amy Arthur Samuels, Keith Brooks
  
6. BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the 2025-2026 AF Family Handbook.
  
7. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the amended AF NY District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2025-26 School Year.
  
8. BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints D'Asia Adger as principal of the following Achievement First Legacy Middle School effective October 15, 2025.
  
9. BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints Michael Ortiz, as principal of the following Achievement First Bushwick Middle School effective October 15, 2025.
  
10. BE IT RESOLVED that the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principal, as needed, for a period of time not to exceed sixteen weeks through October 1, 2026, based on the recommendations by Achievement First.

School Name	Principal	Interim Principal #1	Interim Principal #2
AF Apollo ES	Jessica McDonald	Amanda Mercado	Jessi-Ann Wellington
AF Aspire ES	Shane Ramos	Matilde Acevedo	Jayda Harmon
AF Brownsville ES	Ana Samper	Jerrell Hawthorne	Kwame McLeod
AF Bushwick ES	Courtney Saretzky	Jessica Morales	Jenna Bicerro
AF Crown Heights ES	Mallory Bodhuin	Yoowon Park	Erica Gordon
AF ENY ES	Meryl Senter	Codara Bracy	Jennifer Pascal
AF Endeavor ES	Colleen McKinnon	Orobosa Omede	Anika Locklear
AF Legacy ES	Stephanie Cruz	Felicia Winsboro	Ashley Wilson
AF Linden ES	Mariama Diallo	Diamond Clarke	Javan Stewart
AF North Brooklyn ES	Daliza Lawrence	Matilde Acevedo	Troye Thomas
AF Apollo MS	D'Asia Adger	Warner Radliff	Mashawna

			Snead-Watkins
AF Aspire MS	Shai Phillips	Kaylah Boston	Melissa DHaiti
AF Brownsville MS	Elizabeth Harnett	Jose Guerrero	Tiarah Coston
AF Bushwick MS	---	Stephanie Kotnik	Tierra Chavis
AF Crown Heights MS	Don Hardin	Carolina Garvey	Lakeisha Swaby
AF ENY MS	Shamel Duncan	Mike Ortiz	Thaysha Menardy
AF Endeavor MS	Jadine Boone	Ronnica Jenkins	Taylor Buck* Andreius Coleman * Taylor will be on maternity leave Oct-Feb. During this time it will be Andreius.
AF Legacy MS	TBD		
AF Linden MS	Stephanie Blieka	Brittany Gill	Alisha Sealy
AF North Brooklyn MS	---	Randi Moses Rodgers ** ** Randi is serving as interim, so naming an additional backup in case both others are unavailable.	Adriana Leroy JeQuese Bruce
AF Brooklyn HS	James Fernandez	Zoe Sumner	Sonia Castleberry
AF University Prep HS	Jason Coalter	Nana Akuba Sackey	Corina Perez
AF Ujima HS	Nana Effah	Cristina Lopez del Castillo de la Cruz	Lucretia Chambers

Next, Mr. Sorlie moved on to the resolution on the Management Fee and there being no questions, asked for a motion to accept the resolution. Chris Lynch motioned. Paul Cabana seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained. The resolution passed.

- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of AFBK hereby approves an increase in the management fee from 10% plus the ancillary fee, to a flat 13.5% of 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;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board approves an increase of the management fee to 15% of public revenue with an effective date of July 1, 2026. ACHIEVEMENT FIRST NETWORK SUPPORT is authorized by this Board to implement two annual incremental increases, each occurring on July 1, 2025 and July 1, 2026, respectively.

## **IX. Finance Report: Operating with Impact**

Interim CFO Omar Mayyasi provided the finance committee report with a budget update describing the year-end surplus from FY 25, which was driven by non-recurring items and how schools used it to make investments in after-school tutoring, facilities and graduation activities. He walked the board through the balance sheet and P&L. He also summarized the spending to-date on the NY Initiatives, the bulk of which went to student recruitment activities as previously discussed. He concluded by sharing the overall school metrics around enrollment, headcount and net income.

Chris Lynch added a comment about the variation in metrics among schools, noting that even though year-over-income was relatively flat or trending up, looking at individual schools revealed significant variation in enrollment and staffing challenges and he highlighted the continued need to focus on the schools exhibiting anomalous metrics.

## **XI. Adjourn**

Before adjourning, Mr. Sorlie acknowledged and thanked Jon Atkeson who resigned from the board in August after decades of service as a board member and advisor to the network. He also reminded the board of the upcoming school visit and next board meeting.

There being no other business, Mr. Sorlie called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Chirs Lynch, seconded by Desiree Daltion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.